



The Thistle

Journal of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

Volume 40

Winter 2021/22

Foreword

Brigadier GE Lowder MBE

Chairman of the Regimental Trustees, President of the Regimental Association and Chairman of the War Memorial Fund Trustees.



Former Royal Scots at the RS Memorial, Palace Barracks,
30 November 2021

After 2 years of COVID restrictions and effects it does finally feel as though we are beginning to emerge into the new different. The future is unlikely to see a return to everything as it was, as the latest global pandemic will likely be a catalyst for some lasting changes. As an antecedent Regiment we will continue to adapt to this changing world and wherever possible try to capitalise on the opportunities that it presents.

Our work to establish a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) continues apace under the Regimental Secretary's oversight. We will bring the Regimental Trust, Museum Trust and Association together into a single SCIO. We are currently finalising the Constitution of the new SCIO, incorporating all the Objects of the Regimental Trust, Museum Trust and Association. I was grateful for the chance to explain all this again at the recent Association and Club AGMs and would like to take this opportunity to thank Association Office Bearers and Members and Club Members for their support on this matter.

Concurrently, we are reviewing the governance of our fourth pillar; The Club. It may surprise many, but The Royal Scots Club (RSC) does not have charitable status. The War Memorial Fund (WMF) was established as a Scottish Public Trust. As part of our wider governance work, we have begun to re-investigate the benefits of attaining charitable status for the RSC. This was considered in 2013, but it is time to review it again in light of current challenges and post COVID recovery. The Society of Writers to Her Majesty's Signet (WS Society) were established via a similar construct and have recently,

through working closely with OSCR, attained charitable status. At the beginning of this year we met with the WS Society to understand their journey and what may be required to move the WMF and Club to charitable status. Once this is achieved the next step will be to consider the benefits of bringing the WMF and Club into the SCIO.

The gradual relaxation of COVID restrictions means that trading in the Club is improving. We are very grateful to Adrian and his team, supported by Norman Soutar and the Board of RSC Management Ltd, for the trading position that was achieved at the end of 2021, much better than forecast following a very difficult year. 2022 will also be a challenging trading year and although the Club has survived, there is a COVID loan to be repaid. We must all do our bit to support the Club. I make no excuse for restating the symbiotic relationship between Regiment and Club. This has been demonstrated in many ways over the last 2 years of COVID. We have made the most of the opportunities that this has presented and will continue to do so.

I would like to thank all those involved in establishing the subsidised Other Ranks (OR) membership scheme. It is a truly team effort involving WMF Trustees, Association, Regimental Trustees and the Executive and Adrian and his office team. The scheme is picking up and helping to cement the relationship between ex-Royals and the Club. Annual OR subsidised membership costs £50.00, with the remainder of the military membership fee being found by the Regimental Trust from office rent paid to the Club.

10 August 2022 marks the centenary of the occupation of the premises at Abercromby Place and options are being considering for the most appropriate way to mark this milestone.

The Officers' Dinner in October has been held on the last Friday in October for a number of years, in an attempt to establish a routine to encourage maximum participation. Trustees meet earlier that day and Brian de la Haye has kindly organised a golf match for those who wish to play. Although the Dinner has been relatively well attended, it has been decided to shift it to the first Friday in November, to deconflict with English half term. We will decouple the Trustees meeting from the Dinner and see if this rescheduling results in better take up for the Dinner. Of course, we will never find a date that suits everyone, but will give this a go to try to boost numbers.

Despite COVID restrictions we were well represented at commemorative events in November 2021. Thank you to all those who turned out, these are covered in more detail in this edition. Can I again urge you to take photographs of these events, to maintain a record of our participation.

On Saint Andrew's Day 2021, I and the Chair of The Association with representatives of the NI Branch and a few others attended the re-designation parade and events in Belfast, where 1 SCOTS rebadged to become a RANGER Unit, part of the new RANGER Regiment, manned

from the Scottish, Irish, Welsh and Yorkshire Division of Infantry. A poignant and sad day made more so by storm Arwen bringing torrential rain and gales. This moment was also marked in the Club.

For now, our property, pictures and silver with 1 RANGER will remain there. I am grateful to Jim Blythe and Tom Gordon, our Museum Attendant who will conduct a full property check of RS pieces in Palace Barracks.

The Volunteers Christmas Lunch was postponed in mid-December as the Omicron variant took hold and restrictions on gatherings were re-imposed. The postponed lunch was held in February 2022 and provided an opportunity to thank all our Volunteers and again Jimmy Springthorpe and especially John Dent. Since retiring from regular service John has been involved with the Board of Directors of the Club and latterly as the Secretary to the Regimental Trustees and the Executive. I am personally very grateful to John for all his support and wise counsel over the last 7 years.

Andy Kay has relinquished his voluntary duties as Thistle Editor, which he fulfilled for the last 3 years having taken over from Anne-Marie Corkerton. Many, many, thanks to Andy for his editorial efforts. We continue to look for a Volunteer to take on the Thistle Editor role.

David Jack, our new Regimental Secretary, has settled into the role well and is bringing energy and rigour to a raft of work strands. I have asked David to conduct a review of our communications across

all channels. We have a good website, but are tending to cascade information via the Guestbook, which has drawbacks and certainly does not reach everyone. There are gaps in our use of other channels and our ability to communicate to the widest possible Regimental audience in a timely way has some room for improvement.

There has for all my time as a Royal Scot been discussion and speculation regarding our continued occupation of the former Garrison Gymnasium, (the Museum) and the Old Provost Marshall's House in the Castle. This has now been brought into sharper focus by the announcement that MOD funding for our Museum Attendant will be withdrawn in 2030. We have now formally begun to review all the options and seek formal positions on the matter from The Royal Regiment of Scotland and other key stakeholders. If we do end up having to move the collection, we will need to raise significant funds. The experience of other antecedents tells us that we should also allow at least 5 years for such a project and thus the need to determine our preferred course of action now. We will keep you informed of progress.

Yours Aye,

George Lowder

Brigadier
Chairman of the Regimental Trustees

Regimental Office

There has been some change in the Regimental Office, with Ellie Weir leaving on 30 September 2021 and Jimmy Springthorpe retiring at the end of November 2021. The title of Regimental Secretary has been re-established and this combines the functions that were previously carried out by Jimmy as the Regimental Administrator, Ellie as the Assistant Administrator, John Dent as Secretary to the Trustees, and Andy Kay as Thistle Editor. The office is open every weekday unless I have commitments elsewhere and all visitors are welcome. Andy Kay has relinquished his role as Thistle Editor as

he has moved to the Royal Hospital Chelsea as an in-pensioner. A volunteer to take on the role of Editor would be greatly appreciated. As COVID restrictions are eased, there will be the opportunity to resume many of the normal Regimental events that we have missed over the last couple of years. The forecast of events is included at the end of this publication, but it is worth drawing attention to some specific events. It is the centenary year of the Royal Scots Golf Club and there will be a number of golf matches throughout the year to commemorate this milestone.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

Benevolence

The Royal Scots Regimental Trust continues to provide funds for benevolence to support those in need of financial assistance. The routine administration of cases passed to RHQ SCOTS in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreed in July 2021 and this procedure is now well established and functioning smoothly. SO2 Welfare RHQ SCOTS deals with the cases, applying the criteria we had previously used, which are set out in the MoU. The process is monitored by the Regimental Secretary and quarterly reports are provided by RHQ SCOTS for the information of the Trustees. Although the administration of disbursing financial assistance has been passed to RHQ SCOTS, fund-raising to support benevolence is as important as ever. Donations are gratefully received and much appreciated.

If you are seeking assistance or know someone in the Regimental Family who needs assistance, please do not be put off by these changes.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

Contact Numbers for Benevolence enquiries:

SSAFA general number (for all of UK): **0800 731 4880**

Poppyscotland (Will refer cases in Scotland): **0131 550 1557**

Regimental Office: **0131 557 0405**

Association News

Firstly, I must thank Jimmy Springthorpe for his handover and the way that he has left the Association in such a good state, and I wish him well in his retirement and the improvement of his golf.

This will not be a long report on Association matters as COVID has continued to dampen our abilities to meet and socialise; hopefully now this is nearing its end as regards socialising and meeting is concerned and should be finished completely by the time this is printed. I must thank those members who have organised functions such as the Nagpore and Regimental Dinner Nights and this edition of the Thistle has some notes on them.

We now look forward to a full calendar of events this year and maximise our ability to reacquaint ourselves with each other, socialising again and representing the Association at Remembrance and other events including Le Paradis with more notes on these in the next edition. Indeed this has started with some events at Heart Of Midlothian FC.

The new RS soldier membership for the RS Club appears to be being well received with around 18 new members joining. As a former RS soldier you can join for £50 and utilise the club whenever you are in Edinburgh. Can I dispel some rumours. No, you don't need a shirt and tie to come in; No, it is not an officers' club; it is The Royal Scots living war memorial! IT IS YOUR CLUB.

You will see within this edition mention of SCIO and the pillars; the Association is one of them so no change for us, just a realignment for the future of the Association and the Regimental Family as a whole.

As the year goes on let's all try and attend at least one function or gathering and say hello as this will allow us to meet and greet each other and say what we want from our Association.

We must now reach out to those former members of our Regiment and encourage them to come join us. I recently chatted to



Maj Stu Marshall

someone who believed that they were too young and hadn't served long enough to join. If we can attract a few younger members then I believe that success breeds success! Hopefully will see you all out and about.

Museum and Heritage

Disappointingly the Museum was closed between March 2020 and May 2022. Up until now it was due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, just as we were preparing to re-open in January a problem was discovered as the floor started to give in the area of Display Case One. On investigation it transpires that over a prolonged period of time water has seeped into the structure of the Museum floor and rotted some of the support beams. Historic Environment Scotland is investigating how the water is getting into the Museum and once they find the area of fault they will repair it and then the floor can be fixed. In the meantime the area is cordoned off and the Museum is now open again.

The Museum's accreditation, which is required every 5 years, was delayed in 2020 due to Covid-19. The Museum was granted 2 extensions until the end of March 2022. The paperwork was submitted to Museums Galleries Scotland via the Arts Council England accreditation portal. All plans and supporting documents, some 14 in all, were submitted on 20 Feb 2022; it will take anything between 3 to 6 months before we find out if we have been successful. Over the last 7 years since the last accreditation, the Museum has received some £120K in grants to support the Museum in keeping it in good order in addition to supporting new projects to enhance the physical and digital Museum such as:

- The Waterloo Colours now on permanent display.
- The Uniform project (long term care and preservation).
- The Digitisation of the card index system onto the bespoke museum ADLIB program.
- The new shelving in the store room.
- The Roll of Honour covering WW1 and WW2.
- The Veterans films on the web site.
- The books, "Collection of Essays", "The Museum in Words and Pictures" and "1RS's 13 Operational tours" all of which are also on the website.



One of the new Colour Belt cases (all cases are identical)

Whilst we have remained closed as a Museum, the following projects have been completed:

The main project has been the upgrading of the post-1945 area of the Museum which has cost in the region of £50K. This has upgraded the post-1945 information, upgraded the Gulf War 1 diorama and seen the introduction of a Northern Ireland diorama. Whilst the displays and information boards are complete and established in the Museum, the interactive TV screens still need to be fitted. The films/photographs and information pages are nearing completion and they will be installed soon. One will cover the post-1945 era and will be installed beside the new display. The other will cover WWII and will be placed beside the French diorama at the beginning of the WWII section.

The Roll of Honour covering 1918 to 1939 and 1945 to 2006 has been completed and is now on the website. The film "The Royal Scots: Scottish Soldiers Regimental Memories 1945-2006" has now had the additional material added to it, Gulf War 1 and Bosnia, and is now complete on the website. The Regimental magazine "The Thistle" covering the period from 1892 to 2006 has now been digitised and is proving extremely useful for research purposes. The next phase is to prepare it for uploading onto the website for all to view.

The Colour Belts and Drum Majors Baldric¹ (Sash) display cases (3 in all) have now been completed. They have been designed to house the Colour Belts and Drum Major's Baldric (Sash) that were presented to the 9th Bn (Highlanders) The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) in 1929. They were presented by Mr Small in memory of his son who was killed in action during the second battle of Ypres on 23 April 1915 whilst serving with the Battalion. Mr Small said during the presentation that, "although the gifts were intended primarily as a memorial to his dead son, he also wished them to be regarded as a tribute to all members of the Battalion who had made the supreme



sacrifice". The next phase is to redesign the back wall board for them to be mounted on. This will be beside the Memorial Plaques Arch in the WW1 section. The new shelving in the library has now been installed. This has created much extra space to display the books and reference material for the researchers to use.

Whilst much has been achieved, there is always more to do. We are always looking for volunteers who have time on their hands who wish to get involved in the Museum. You do not have to commit to turning up every week; just let us know how much time you can spare and we will find a project to fit your availability and interests. Anyone interested should contact Mr Tom Gordon, our Museum Assistant, based in the Old Provost Marshal House in the Castle on: 0131 226 2688.

Note:

1. A baldric is a belt worn over one shoulder that is typically used to carry a weapon or other implement such as a bugle or drum. The word is archaic but in modern contexts, a military Drum Major wears a baldric.

Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Rae

RS 373 Update

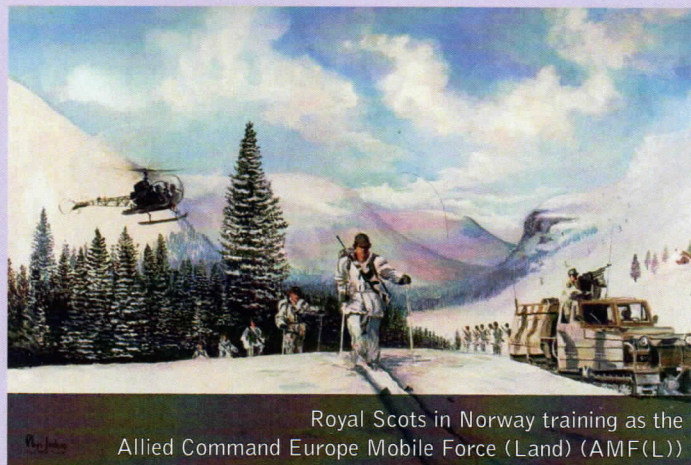
The Ukraine war has raised interest in the Regiment's involvement in the Cold War, which is part of the recently expanded post-1945 Regimental Memories film which includes more on deterrence activity in West Germany and recollections of Bosnia, life in Berlin, the important mechanized infantry role with Inner German Border patrols, SOXMIS and Exercise Active Edge, the Allied Mobile Force Land deployments to the flanks of NATO, the specialised Nuclear Convoy Escort role in Munster, HM The Queen's Silver Jubilee at Sennelager on 7 Jul 1977, Exercise Iron Hammer, the last divisional-level exercise in 1988, and Northern Ireland tours are very much memories of so many of our wide Regimental Family. Over the last few months the Museum Committee has upgraded the post-1945 displays, funded by £50k raised by the Museum.

The major 373 projects to develop three virtual Rolls of Honour: WW1, WW2 and between the WWs and after 1945 are now complete. Visits to these from across the world continue, with additional details obtained enhancing the overall visitor experience.

On St Andrew's Day two significant events took place with an informal visit to the Museum by the Earl of Dalkeith to view items in the Regimental Collection with Buccleuch and Dalkeith Palace



Royal Scots arriving in Berlin in 1958



Royal Scots in Norway training as the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) (AMF(L))

connections. That evening there was a Gathering at the Club to mark the re-designation of 1 SCOTS to 1 RANGER; a short film was made to record this significant part of our heritage.

Communication and engagement in the outreach context, far beyond our own Regimental Family, has steered Team RS373 to explore how to achieve global public access to our unique Regimental Heritage and our Museum Collection in the future. A first step will be to trial a short duration Remembrance 2022 'pop up' display at Dalkeith Palace in our former recruiting area, to create a visitor experience insight into The Royal Scots people and wider societal experiences, as well as viewing Collection objects, that attracts the local community including schools and clubs.

Team RS373 now seeks volunteer members of the Regimental Family to support the Museum team in preparing for and hosting the 'pop up' initiative. Further details of this 'friends' or maybe 'bodyguards' role are available from archive@theroyalscots.co.uk. Why not play your part in telling The Royal Scots' "His Story", in a modern forward-looking way?

Films: all available on www.theroyalscots.co.uk

Colonel Matin Gibson OBE DL
Leader Team RS373



Private Paddy Miller exits an AFV 432 during a training exercise in Germany

Re-designation Parade – 1 SCOTS to 1 RANGER



1 SCOTS on re-designation to 1 RANGER with members of RS, KOSB and SCOTS Associations

A significant day for the Regiment, on 30 November 2021 a number of RS Association members ranging from Private soldier to Brigadier were invited to a re-designation event at Palace Barracks, Northern Ireland; 1 SCOTS, The Royal Scots Borderers, had been told that they were to become part of a restructure within the Army and were being assigned to a new Army Special Operations Brigade consisting of four battalions of The Ranger Regiment. While this will affect the golden thread from The Royal Scots to its successor regiment, some details are still emerging and are yet to be clarified. SCOTS ceremonial uniform will be worn for the immediate future.

The day started with a welcome from the RSM and then a walk up to the football field for a final parade with the Battalion Colours. It was a fairly small parade consisting of two companies with a Colour Party because one company was deployed on and one was on leave having just returned from a deployment. During the parade the Colonel of the Regiment presented medals and other awards. After the march off we were invited to parade with the Battalion up to the church for a small service and a Battalion photograph. We also took the opportunity to get a group photo at the Garden of Remembrance with our memorial stones.

After the parade we attend three very well presented regimental history lectures (RS, KOSB and 1 SCOTS), in the Officers' and Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Messes. These lectures covered all the prestigious events which had taken place in each Regiment's history, and there was a display of RS, KOSB and SCOTS silver, property and pictures. Lunch in the Officers' Mess provided an opportunity to renew old acquaintances, reflect on the past and look forward to the future.



Mr Tam Logan, Mr Tam Douglas and Mr Maxi MacDonald march with members of 1 SCOTS



The Colours of 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland parade on re-designation to 1st Battalion The Ranger Regiment

A break in the afternoon gave us enough time to get changed into our evening attire and capture the Commanding Officer in the Officers' Mess. Lt Col Frank Reeves joined 1 RS in 2002 and will be the first Commanding Officer of 1 RANGER. Many years previously Col Robert Watson had completed the US Ranger course and at his request Brig George Lowder presented Col Watson's US Ranger course certificate and insignia to Lt Col Reeves, who seemed visibly moved by the gesture. Beating Retreat was scheduled for the evening, but unfortunately the weather had forced Plan B, which was a rendition of Regimental Marches and Company Marches by the Pipe Band in a dimly lit marquee.

The evening entertainment consisted of drinks in the NAAFI with all ranks and then a move to the cookhouse for evening meal, during which there were Regimental history presentations given by serving members of 1 SCOTS, including former Royal Scot Captain Stevie Dawson, followed by speeches by the Colonel of the Regiment and the Commanding Officer. At a minute past midnight the Commanding Officer, having finished his speech, rang the Alva Bell and 1 SCOTS was gone and 1 RANGER was born; it was a very sombre moment, however all ranks to whom we spoke throughout the day were keen to maintain the golden thread to keep the roots alive. We wish them a safe and illustrious journey ahead.

Mr Colin "Maxi" MacDonald

Royal Scots Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

After nearly two years of planning, the project to install a Royal Scots Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire has come to fruition. A group of 70 members of the Regimental Family from all parts of the UK converged on Derby on Saturday 2 October 2021 where there was an opportunity to renew old acquaintances in the bar and regale each other over dinner with tales that grew taller with the telling. The main events took place on Sunday at the National Memorial Arboretum near Lichfield. The first event was the dedication of the recently installed Royal Scots Memorial, honouring all those who served in the Regiment during its 373 years of unbroken service. The Royal Scots Memorial is located by a line of Scots Pine trees near the Armed Forces Memorial at the heart of the Arboretum. A crisp autumn day with blue sky and sunshine provided the perfect conditions to hold the service in such a tranquil setting. The parade formed up near the Visitor Centre and marched the short distance to the Memorial, led by pipers and the Regimental Association Standards. The Rev Iain May, Association Padre, conducted a moving service with readings by Col James Finlay and Mrs Fiona Drysdale. The Memorial, initially covered by a Regimental Flag was unveiled by Brig George Lowder, Maj Christopher Delacombe laid a wreath, and there was an opportunity



Royal Marine Buglers sound Reveille at the Lisbon Maru Memorial

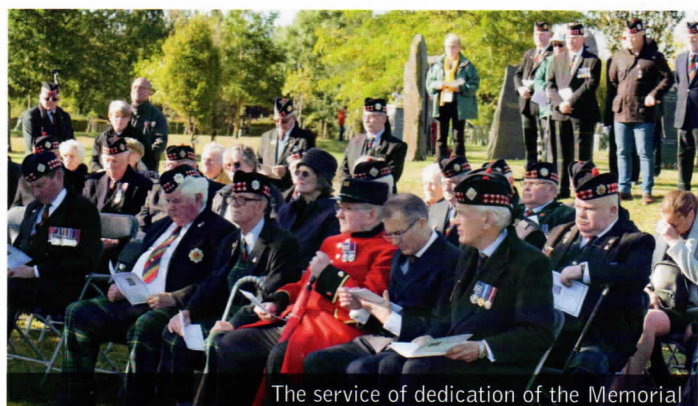
to reflect on all those who have served the Regiment during its 373 years. The second event was the service to dedicate a memorial to all those who had been involved in the LISBON MARU. The LISBON MARU was a Japanese freighter that sank on 2 October 1942 after it had been torpedoed the previous day. Although it was transporting prisoners of war to Japan there were no markings to denote this, and thus it was identified as a legitimate target. Of the 373 members of 2nd Battalion The Royal Scots, 144 lost their lives. There were many other prisoners of war, from other regiments and corps, who also lost their lives. Following the dedication of the Royal Scots Memorial we moved the short distance to the location of the LISBON MARU Memorial, where we joined families of both survivors and victims, and representatives of regiments and corps involved in the tragedy for a poignant service of remembrance.

Our thanks must go to Lt Col Gordon Vever for organising the manufacture and installation of the Memorial, Capt David Stuart-Monteith for his coordination with NMA staff, supervision of the installation and organisation of the dinner on Saturday evening, and Maj Christopher Delacombe for his coordinating with team arranging the LISBON MARU event.

Along with all the other Royal Scots memorials around the country, and indeed the world, it is a fitting tribute to the Regiment and all who served in it.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

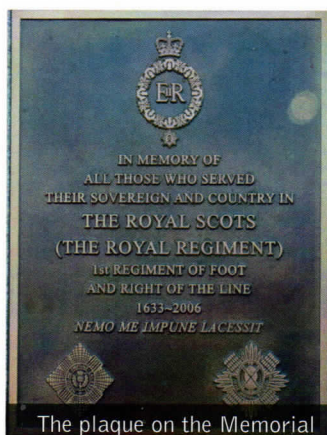
Photographs by Mr Malcolm Ross



The service of dedication of the Memorial



l to r: Mr John Proctor, Mr Mike Pretsell, Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Paul Robertson, Mr David Milne, Mr Stuart Aitken, Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mr Tam Logan, Mr Adam Aitchison



The plaque on the Memorial



Mr Danny Dempsey reviews the order of service



Pipers lead the Standards and parade to the Memorial



left to right: Mr Gavin Duncan (in wheelchair), Paul Robertson, and Mr Wellwood McCall

Korean War Memorial

Veterans gathered on Saturday 25 September 2021 at the Korean War Memorial at Witch Craig between Bathgate and Linlithgow to honour the service of those who gave their lives during that conflict. Although there are no Royal Scots commemorated on the memorial, two soldiers of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, who were attached to the Royal Scots, Private JW Logan and Private I McI Stewart are listed on the memorial. A moving service was conducted by the Rev Peter Craig and the address was given by Major Allan Cameron KOSB, President of the



Mr Gavin Duncan at the Memorial

Scottish Korean Veterans Club. Association members Paul Robertson and Malcom Ross attended and met two Royal Scots veterans, Gavin Duncan and Wellwood McCall. Due to diminishing numbers in the club, it is likely that this will be the last formal commemoration held by the Scottish Koreans Veterans Club.

Mr Paul Robertson

Photographs by Mr Malcolm Ross

Remembrance

Some normality was restored as Remembrance events were conducted in November 2021 in all the normal locations without significant restrictions. Amongst other events, Royal Scots attended the opening of the Gardens of Remembrance in Westminster and in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, and a contingent of Royal Scots participated in the parade at the Cenotaph. Wreaths were laid at the Royal Scots Monument in Princes Street Gardens, the Scottish National War Memorial, the Canongate Kirk, Glencorse, the Royal Scots Club, the City Chambers, Heart of Midlothian Football Club, Peebles and Whitburn.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Rev Iain May conducts the Remembrance service at Glencorse



Mr Ben Gilchrist, Capt Nick Edwardson and Capt Alex Dockar at the War Memorial in Peebles



Gathering at the Memorial at Glencorse



Mr Sonny Walker (front left) and Lt Col David Jack (second left) with relatives of Pte Buglass and members of the Cupar Branch RBLs at the rededication of the Cupar War Memorial

Rededication of the War Memorial in Cupar

A small service was held on Saturday 20 November 2021 to rededicate the War Memorial in Cupar after the addition of a name. Private George Buglass lost his life in 1941 serving with 2nd Battalion The Royal Scots in Hong Kong. His niece, Margaret Letang, realised that his name was not commemorated on any war memorial in the UK and, with the assistance of the Council in Cupar, has finally achieved her wish to have his name formally recorded on a war memorial. George joins two other Royal Scots on the Cupar War Memorial – R White and GG Pullar. Lt Col David Jack and Mr Sonny Walker joined members of the Cupar Branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland to commemorate George Buglass and honour his service to his Regiment and Country.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

Nagpore Dinner

Finally we managed to hold an event back in The Royal Scots Club, the Nagpore Dinner took place on Saturday 25 September 2021 with 30 members of the Regimental Family in attendance. The event was used to bid farewell to our outgoing Regimental Administrator, Capt Jimmy Springthorpe. Jimmy had been in post since early 2015 overseeing many changes to the Regimental Office and also updating structures of all pillars of the Regiment. For his efforts Jimmy was presented with a Regimental Pipe Banner, which took a fair bit of unwrapping before all was revealed!

The evening was a great success and it was comforting to be back in the company of the Regimental Family. As usual we were well looked after by the Club staff and also the chefs who served up a fantastic mealroll on to the time where events like this can be back to normal.

Mr Tam Douglas

Photographs by Mr Malcom Ross



Mr Mick McCann, Mrs Shirley McCann and Mr James Welsh



Mr Tom Logan and Mr Jamie Colquhoun chat to Lt Col Jim Blythe and Mrs Mhairi Blythe



Mr Tam Douglas presents Capt Jimmy Springthorpe with a drone for his pipe banner

Regimental Gathering St Andrew's Day 2021

Team RS373, ably supported by The Royal Scots Club, led on the unavoidable short notice organisation of an informal yet poignant Regimental Gathering held at the Club, and virtually on Zoom, on the evening of the 30 November 2021.

The purpose of the event was to reach out to our wide Regimental Family to ensure they were aware of the very recent announcement that, as part of ongoing Army restructuring, The Royal Scots Borderers (1 SCOTS) was to be re-designated into a Ranger Battalion from the 1 December 2021. One Royal Scots Korean veteran, living in Kent, welcomed the opportunity to mark the occasion, albeit remotely, commenting "Adieu Right of the Line, First of Foot and Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard; a time to chew the fat".

An Association piper played a selection of Regimental tunes to assemble the Gathering in front of the Club's War Memorial where Maj Gen Bob Bruce, who as Commanding Officer in Iraq on 28 March 2006 saw the 1RS Regimental Flag lowered for the last time and being replaced by the Flag of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, explained the context of the formation of the Ranger Battalion, and the higher level of professionalism that it evidenced. This was followed by a toast in solemn silence to our patron saint, St Andrew. Thereafter, a relaxed curry supper, provided by the Club, was enjoyed by all.

Everyone was very clear that The Royal Scots Family must continue to give every support possible to the Royal Regiment of Scotland, Scotland's Infantry of today. As Lt Gen Sir Robert Richardson said on the 28 March 2006, when The Royal Scots 373 years of unbroken service to the Sovereign and our country came to an end:

"Treasure the past, draw strength from it, but do not live in it. The old days are gone, never to return. Embrace the future."

To mark this important part of our Regimental Heritage the Gathering was captured in a short 7 minute film which is available on YouTube at RS St Andrews Day 2021

Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL



St Andrew's Night Gathering left to right Mr Andy Kay, Lt Col Jim Blythe, Mr Andy Stewart



St Andrew's Night Gathering left to right Mrs Morag Watson, Mrs Mhairi Blythe, Col Robert Watson, Mr Allan Carswell, Mrs Maggie Paterson, Lt Col John Donovan, Lt Col John Sands, Maj John Dent



Brig George Lowder presents Maj John Dent with a framed Regimental Flag

Volunteers' Christmas Lunch

The Volunteers' Lunch had been delayed from 14 December 2021 due to additional COVID restrictions imposed at that time; as restrictions were eased it was re-scheduled for 18 February 2022 and was held in the Douglas Room in the Club with fifteen members attending. We took the opportunity to thank John Dent and Jimmy Springthorpe for their service to the Regiment as both have recently relinquished their positions. John Dent joined The Royal Scots in 1956, was commissioned in 1958 and retired from the Army in 1985 to embark on a civilian career. After leaving the Army he continued to support the Regiment, serving as a Director on the board of the Royal Scots Club Management Ltd, and as secretary to the Regimental Trustees. Throughout this period he has provided much sage advice and wise counsel and his contribution has been greatly appreciated. George Lowder presented John with a framed Regimental Flag which had been flown in Shaibah Operating Base, Iraq during the 1st Battalion's last operational tour in 2006.

Jimmy Springthorpe joined The Royal Scots in 1963, was commissioned in 1988 and retired from the Army in 1993. After a variety of other jobs he became the Regimental Administrator in 2015, leading the establishment of a Regimental Office in the Club and ensuring a smooth transfer of regimental business from the previous Home Headquarters and RHQ SCOTS (East). We are extremely grateful to Jimmy for contribution to the Regiment, both as Regimental Administrator and Chairman of the Association. He had been presented with a pipe banner at the an earlier event.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Brig George Lowder and Capt Jimmy Springthorpe with a pipe banner to mark his retirement

Association Regimental Day Dinner

The Regimental Day Dinner in The Royal Scots Club was the first one we have been able to hold for 3 years. We had 39 in attendance and for the first time since the Dinner was held in 2001 we were dining in the Hepburn Suite instead of the Douglas Room. This was greatly appreciated by all those attending and the change of location was commented on by quite a few. Our Guests for the evening were Mr Brian Ward, Events Manager of Royal British Legion Scotland & Mr Tony Hooman, National Parade Marshall of RBLs. Both were well hosted

during the evening writing a letter of appreciation afterwards to Tam Douglas, Vice-Chairman of our Association and also the Event Organiser. Sadly there were a few cancellations due to illness which otherwise would have boosted the numbers further and took the attendance over the magical 40! We wish those who never made it a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing them again in the near future.

Mr Tam Douglas



Gathering on the stairs prior to dinner

Notes from the Royal Hospital Chelsea

Well, here we go with the first 'bulletin' from deepest London. This first despatch will be a bit staid so that people can understand what the Hospital is, does and what it stands for.

Currently as Royal Scot In-Pensioners (IP) we have Danny Dempsey and Andy Kay. Danny arrived here in May 2021, 43 years after the previous RS IP former CSM Robert Christie Dobson who, from Hospital records, left the army in 1964, entered the RHC in April 1977 and died here in November 1978. It is good to have an RS presence in the Hospital designed for the whole army after such a long time. Andy Kay, encouraged by Danny, applied and entered the RHC in January of this year, doubling our numbers!

What is the Royal Hospital Chelsea? Well, it is a home for retired soldiers, originally set up by King Charles II in 1682 for soldiers "broken by age or war". Although it is known as a hospital this is in the old sense of the word as a hospice or alms-house; it is not a care home although there are care facilities for those pensioners who need those services. Residents must be able to look after themselves, keep their berth clean and tidy and generally live a normal life in wonderful surroundings. The residents are known as In-Pensioners and part of the agreement for entering RHC is that you must give up your army pension. Payments to the hospital are means tested so if you do not have much of an income then a lower rate of charge will be worked out. State Pensions are left with the IP. More information on the Hospital and entry details can be found here: <https://www.chelsea-pensioners.co.uk>. The hospital is for soldiers of the Regular Army and Army Reserve (formerly TA). Officers commissioned from the ranks can apply and indeed there are a few retired Lt Cols in the ranks.

Danny arrived in a gap in the Covid restrictions so once here was more or less closed down with the rest of the hospital although he was able to get to the unveiling of the Regimental Stone at the National Memorial Arboretum last year. Danny thoroughly enjoyed that trip out and was very grateful to Lt Col David Jack for picking him up and driving him to and from the event. Restrictions are easing now, and Pensioners are being invited to more and more external events which are very varied: from a trip to Corps Boxing Night and being put up in the WO's & Sgts' Mess to a day trip to Crufts! There are quite a few events and Pensioners are encouraged to take part and become ambassadors for the Hospital, resplendent in Scarlets.

I arrived in January of this year just as the Covid restrictions were being lifted. I have my name down for a few events and waiting to see if I am lucky to be selected. Settling in was easy and the Long Ward I am in is a very good one with a mix of personalities both male and female. We each have a "Berth" which comprised of a study area, wet room with shower and WC, and a bedroom. They are known as Berths because the original rooms were built using wood from old naval ships. These berths become your home and, provided you are sensible and don't disturb the ward, you are free to use it as you please. The Hospital supplies TV services with Sky and BT Sports channels included. You supply your own TV, but again, the Hospital can help, should you wish. The point the Hospital makes is this is not a home-from-home, this is now one's home. Each Long Ward has 20 or so berths and are known as Long Wards as they are approximately 80 yards long.

The food here is very good and plenty of it. Meals are served in the Great Hall which is a stunning background. There is waiter service as many pensioners would have difficulty in carrying plates with hot food around. The staff are wonderful and look after us very well. The staff in all parts of the Hospital are incredible, welcoming and it seems they are picked for their ability to remember people and their names; I was pleasantly surprised to be addressed by my first name, even in passing and immediately on arrival.

Visits by family and friends are encouraged and accommodation is available for those who wish to make it more than a one day visit. This is especially useful for those of us whose main base is several hundred miles north.

That's about it for this time and as I said, is more about that the Hospital than about Danny Dempsey and myself – that will come in future bulletins. The next major event is Founder's Day in June when the salute will be taken by HRH King Philippe, King of the Belgians. The Regiment's In-Pensioners will be supported that day by Association members from Southern Branch but again more of that in the next edition. If anyone wishes more information, or wants a general chat, then get in touch with me – my phone number is held by the Regimental Office. Up The Royals.

**Mr Andy Kay
In-Pensioner 067**



In-Pensioners Danny Dempsey and Andy Kay



Lt Col Gordon Rae, Maj David Dickson, Maj Mike Cran and Lt Col Brian de la Haye

Curling

After a three-year break, 40 members of the Highland and Lowland Brigade Club met at Perth for their Bonspiel in March 2022. The Royal Scots team consisted of Lt Col Brian de la Haye (Skip), Maj Mike Cran, Lt Col Gordon Rae and Maj David Dickson. The team played against the Black Watch, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and finally the Kings Own Scottish Borderers. It was an all-day event that was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

Major David Dickson

70 Years Ago

The Queen's 70 Glorious Years, a programme broadcast on BBC 1 at 6pm on Sunday 6 February 2022, included a photograph of a Royal Scots guard of honour in Edinburgh. The Depot notes in the November 1952 edition of the Thistle included the following paragraph: "On 11 June a guard of honour of forty men, commanded by Lieutenant C.J.S. Thornton, was present at the Mercat Cross, where a proclamation was read by the Lord Lyon King of Arms, announcing the date of the Coronation of Her Majesty The Queen." Uniform aficionados may be interested in the officer's dress with pistol holster and ammunition pouch on his 1937 pattern web belt.



Veterans Awards

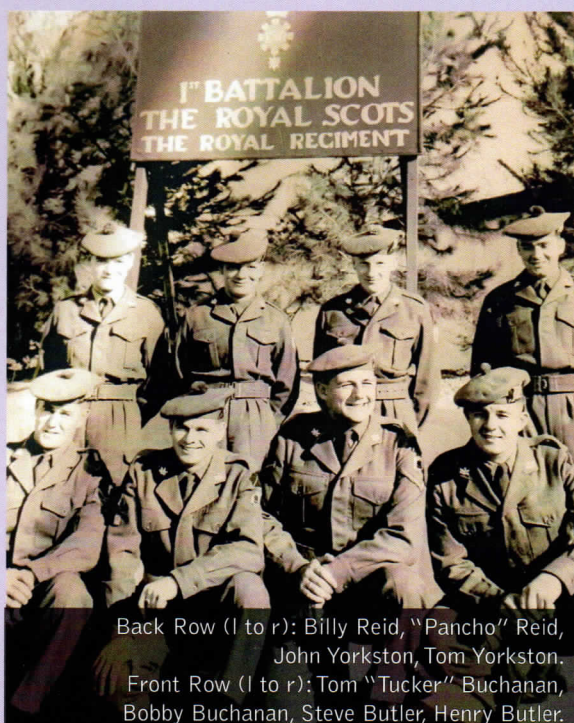


Col Charlie Wallace presents a Veterans' Award to Mr Paul Carlisle and Ms Sarah Boyd of Lothian Buses.

After an absence due to the pandemic the Veterans' Awards returned in 2021. The Royal Scots were well represented with Mr Paul Carlisle receiving an award for his work with Lothian Buses, and the awards being presented by Col Charlie Wallace, the Scottish Veterans' Commissioner.

60 Years Ago

There were numerous sets of brothers who have served in the Regiment. This picture was taken in Medenine Barracks Tripoli in 1962 and shows four sets of brothers from Prestonpans who were serving in the 1st Battalion at the time.

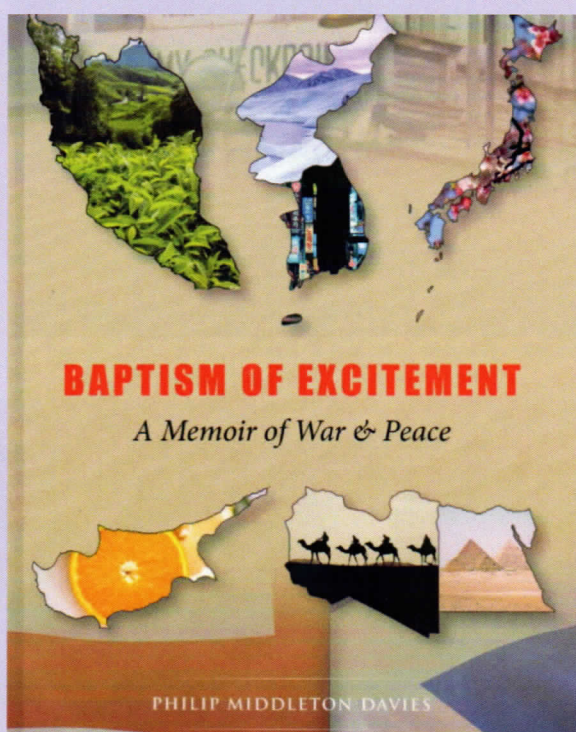


Back Row (l to r): Billy Reid, "Pancho" Reid, John Yorkston, Tom Yorkston.
Front Row (l to r): Tom "Tucker" Buchanan, Bobby Buchanan, Steve Butler, Henry Butler.

Books

Baptism of Excitement by Philip Middleton Davies

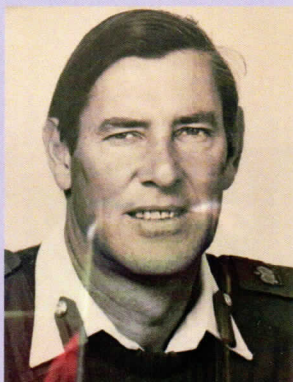
This is not the usual memoirs of a retired Major General but more a look at what a full career in the Army is like and how families are affected. Maj Gen Davies takes us from his days in WW2 as a schoolboy into gaining a place at Sandhurst followed by commissioning into The Royal Scots. Little of the book is dedicated to actual events in the Army but he does start with Korea and his arrival there as a young officer. Following on from that is a list of chapters dealing with each move he and his family were required to make over the many years of service. Maj Gen Davies commanded the 1st Battalion from 1974 to 1976 and he does cover the events in Cyprus and Northern Ireland, but in no detail. We then have more moves and who he was required to 'bunk up' with as he waited for a quarter or hiring, then he is posted as Commander Land Forces Cyprus (CLFC), but this chapter is almost purely about the small yacht he bought and the sailing he did.



As I said, not the usual memoirs of a Major General as we don't hear how he became to be chosen as CO of the 1st Battalion, a remarkable feat in itself, nor how he was selected to become CLFC nor indeed onward promotion to Major General and GOC North West District. I realise that this is a very personal account by Maj Gen Davies but for the reader there is so much missing. The love and respect for his family comes over very well and the trials and tribulations they went through 'following the drum', but this is not for the military historian or even enthusiast for all things Royal Scots.

PM Davies served for 36 years from National Serviceman to Major General, commanded 1RS, Cyprus Land Forces and North West District yet they get but a passing mention compared to other memoirs.

Mr Andy Kay



Maj Gen Mark Strudwick

Obituary

Major General Mark Strudwick CBE KStJ

Major General Mark Strudwick, who died on 26 September 2021 aged 76, saw service around the world, was the last holder of the appointment of General Officer Commanding the Army in Scotland and went on to support many charities, most notably the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust and the Priory of Scotland of the Order of St John.

The son of book publisher and artist Ronald Strudwick and his wife Mary, he was born in Kent on 19 April 1945 and educated at St Edmund's School, Canterbury before attending the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He was commissioned into The Royal Scots in July 1966 and his early days in the Regiment saw him as a platoon commander in the 1st Battalion and at the Depot at Glencorse, signals officer and Adjutant; he commanded B Company in the early 1980s. He served in the United Kingdom, Germany, Cyprus, Canada and completed several tours of duty in Northern Ireland, for which he was twice mentioned in despatches.

He commanded 1st Battalion The Royal Scots from November 1984 to June 1987, during which time the Battalion moved to Germany in the mechanised infantry role. He set high standards and through his leadership and determination the Battalion established a reputation as an efficient and effective infantry unit. After a spell instructing at the Army Staff College he returned to Northern Ireland, firstly as Assistant Chief of Staff G1/G4 at Headquarters Northern Ireland, during which time he attend the Higher Command and Staff Course at Camberley, and then as Commander 3 Infantry Brigade based in Armagh. During this latter period he oversaw the creation of permanent observation posts in South Armagh which greatly contributed to surveillance and information gathering. After attending the National Defence College in New Delhi he became Deputy

Military Secretary at the Ministry of Defence. He was then Director of Infantry before assuming the appointment of General Officer Commanding the Army in Scotland and Governor of Edinburgh Castle. He was Aide-de-Camp General to Her Majesty The Queen from 1996 to 1997, Colonel of the Regiment from 1995 to 2005 and Colonel Commandant of the Scottish Division from 1997 to 2000.

After leaving the Army he was chief executive of the Prince's Scottish Youth Business Trust and for the next 12 years he led a team supporting youngsters to start and grow their own business, providing advice, professional support and mentoring; the charity funded more than 650 companies with loans and grants during this period. He expanded the scope of the Trust by setting up the charity's Growth Fund for those who wanted to take their business to the next level. In 2015 he was appointed Prior of the Priory of Scotland of the Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem, a position he held for six years, leading the organisation through a period of significant change, refocusing its efforts on building charitable services run by St John volunteers to benefit Scottish communities. He was also enthusiastic about St John Scotland's international work, visiting the St John's Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and St John Malawi on several occasions.

He was also an officer of the Royal Company of Archers (the Queen's bodyguard for Scotland), Her Majesty's Commissioner, Queen Victoria School, Dunblane, governor of Gordonstoun, governor of the Royal School, Bath; chairman of Scottish Veterans' Residences, a trustee of Historic Scotland Foundation, a trustee of the Scottish National War Memorial, and Chairman of the Trustees of the Royal Scots Club

He was appointed CBE in 1990 for his leadership in Northern Ireland and was awarded the Pro Merito Melitensi by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in 2021 for his work with St John Scotland, although he died two days before the investiture.

Mark's first wife, Jan died in 2013 and he is survived by his second wife, Sue, his children Piers and Sara, step-children Jeremy, Robin and Sacha, four grandchildren and 11 step-grandchildren.

Deaths

Mr Tom Yorkston - 9 September 2021 1RS
Mr James Galloway - 20 September 2021 1RS
Major General Mark Strudwick CBE - 26 September 2021 1RS
Mr Albert (Bert) Sheehan - 27 September 2021 1RS
Mr John Galloway - 28 September 2021 1RS
Mr Kevin Fitzsimmons - 16 October 2021 1RS
Mr George Simpson - 2021 1RS (exact date not recorded)
Mr Willie Innes - 24 October 2021 1RS
Mr James Skirving - Carrick - 19 November 2021 1RS
Mr William Thomas Francis - 27 November 2021 8RS
Mr William Brockie - 14 December 2021 1RS
Mr John Smith BEM - 25 December 2021 1RS
Mr Robert Milne - 1 January 2022 1RS
Mr Bill Hunter - 1 February 2022 1RS
Lt Col Colin Caverhill - 27 March 2022 1RS
Mr William Adams - 31 March 2022 1RS
Mr David Springthorpe - 7 April 2022 1RS
Mr Matthew Hoggan - 29 April 2022 Association Pipe Band

Association Branch Details

EDINBURGH

The RN Club
1 Broughton Road, Edinburgh EH7 4EW
Contact: Mick McCann
mikemccann4130@hotmail.co.uk

CENTRAL SCOTLAND

First Sunday of the month at 2.00pm at
Hillcroft Hotel, Whitburn, West Lothian
Contact: David Milne
david.milne3343@live.co.uk

EAST OF SCOTLAND

Last Saturday of the month at 7.30pm at
RBL Prestonpans
Contact: Peter Blackie
peterblackie@yahoo.co.uk

HIGHLAND

First Sunday of the month at 6.00pm at
Raigmore Recreation Rooms, Inverness
Contact: Tam McFadyen
tamrosie@btinternet.com

NORTHERN IRELAND

First Tuesday of the month at RBL Ards
Contact: David McKendrick
davidsmck1@sky.com

SOUTHERN

No regular branch meetings,
but events organised throughout the year.
Contact: Tam Millar
weetam0671@sky.co.uk

PIPE BAND

Contact: Torquil Corkerton
torquil@corkerton.com

For more information contact:

THE ROYAL SCOTS REGIMENTAL OFFICE

The Royal Scots Club
29 – 31 Abercromby Place
Edinburgh EH3 6QE
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Email: admin@theroyalscots.co.uk

Forecast of Events

The Forecast of Events is published on the website and updated at the beginning of every month.

Day	Date	Event	Time	Remarks
Sun	Aug 14	Association General Committee Meeting		Royal Scots Club
Fri	Aug 19	Royal Scots Golf Club Autumn Meet		Kilspindie Golf Club
Fri	Sep 2	Royal Scots Golf Club Train Trophy		Craigielaw Golf Club
Sat	Sep 10	NI Veterans' Association Service of Remembrance	1130	National Memorial Arboretum
Fri	Sep 16	Royal Scots Golf Club Away Day Meet		St Michael's Golf Club, Leuchars
Sat	Sep 24	Association Nagpore Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
	Sep TBC	Gladdy Murray Golf Trophy		TBC
Mon	Oct 24	Opening of Garden of Remembrance Edinburgh	1045	East Princes Street Gardens
Mon	Oct 24	Royal Scots Service of Remembrance Royal Scots Monument	1200	West Princes St Gardens
Fri	Oct 28	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Nov 4	Officers' Golf Outing		TBC
Fri	Nov 4	Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Sat	Nov 5	Remembrance Service Heart of Midlothian	TBC	Tynecastle
Sun	Nov 6	Association General Committee Meeting		Royal Scots Club
	Nov TBC	Opening of the Garden of Remembrance Westminster	1100	Southern Branch
Fri	Nov 11	Remembrance Service at the Scottish National War Memorial	1045	The Castle
Sat	Nov 12	Remembrance Service at Glencorse Gates	1045	Glencorse Barracks
Sun	Nov 13	REMEMBRANCE DAY		
		Cenotaph	1030	
		City Chambers	1045	
		Canongate Kirk	1045	
		The Royal Scots Club	1200	
		Haymarket	1045	
		Peebles	1045	
		Whitburn	1045	
Fri	Nov 18	Royal Scots Golf Club Centenary Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Tue	Nov 22	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Nov 25	Association East of Scotland Branch & Breakfast Club St Andrew's Night		TBC
Tue	Dec 13	Volunteers' Christmas Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Dec 23	Regimental Office closes for the Festive Season		
Fri	Dec 23	Regimental Museum closes for the Festive Season		