



The Thistle

Journal of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

Volume 41

Summer 2022

Foreword

Brigadier GE Lowder MBE

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



In the cemetery at Mont Benanchon.
l to r: Maj Christopher Delacombe, Brig George Lowder,
Lt Col David Jack, Piper Greig McLean

As I finish writing this foreword, we are in the midst of the events marking the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It is a deeply sad time. For the last 6 years, I have had the privilege of coordinating the City of Edinburgh's planning for this. For 6 days since last Thursday, 8 September 2022, I had the honour of being at the heart of delivering the City's part in the plans. As a result, I can confirm that Royal Scots were fully involved, as you would expect, given our connection with our Capital City. Royal Scot Members of the Royal Company of Archers, managers, drivers, employees, a Deputy Lord Lieutenant, and Volunteers of the 127 organisations involved, all played their part in ensuring that Her Majesty was given the send-off so deserved of her unwavering and inspirational service to our Nation.

More broadly, against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine, local elections, soaring energy and fuel prices, industrial action resulting in travel disruption and rubbish piling up in Edinburgh during the Festivals, a cost-of-living crisis, the Conservative Party leadership contest generating a fourth Prime Minister in 6 years, and recession concerns, The Royal Scots have weathered the storm and continue to face into the various headwinds that we are currently encountering. Our annual cycle of events has continued and have generally been well supported throughout the Summer. There have been numerous activities across a number of themes; reports are included in this edition, but I wish to highlight a few of them.

On Saturday 21 May 2022 a Royal Scots contingent gathered at

Rosebank Cemetery to mark the Gretna Rail disaster. Unfortunately, a rail strike and clashes with other major events resulted in a smaller than usual turnout. That said, we still had a Standard Party and Piper, and our numbers were bolstered by more Leith Community Groups being represented, which was great to see. I am most grateful to David Jack, our Regimental Secretary, and Robert Watson for encouraging them to attend. We should continue this engagement with them in future. The service is simple, poignant, moving and beautifully conducted by the Association Padre, Rev Iain May. The birdsong during the silence this year was particularly special. Please do consider attending this commemoration in future.

From Friday 27 to Monday 30 May 2022 Shirley and I joined a large Royal Scots contingent to mark the postponed 80th Anniversary of the 1940 action at Le Paradis. We were last there in 1990, for the 50th Anniversary, with the 1st Battalion Pipes and Drums, a Guard and the then Commanding Officer, Iain Johnstone and Verity. I also recall the recce the previous year, 1989, with Davey Henderson and a much smaller group. Huge thanks to Iain Laird for his impeccable organisation of the weekend, tireless preparations and liaison, historic background and battlefield tour. The weather on Saturday was bright and sunny for the commemorations at the barn, the march from the barn to the church, the service outside the church and in the cemetery behind the church. After great efforts by David Dickson to arrange the construction of The Royal Scots commemorative bench, it was successfully delivered to Le Paradis the week before the event and installed at the front of the church for the weekend. The final location is still to be confirmed by the equivalent of the Le Paradis Parish Council. Following the services the Lestrem Commune, hosted a splendid reception and lunch in the Le Paradis School. It was a great delight for Shirley and me to catch up with the Mayor who hosted us in 1990. Following the civic reception Iain Laird led a battlefield tour. A new addition this year was a visit to Mont Bernanchon Cemetery the following morning, where a short service was conducted. This was a very moving event on a grey morning. A full report on the postponed 80th Anniversary (the 82nd Anniversary) is included in this edition.

It is with huge sadness that we note that Major John Errington died, aged 104, on 29 August 2022. John was our last known survivor of the battle of Le Paradis. John was kept abreast of planning for the postponed 80th Le Paradis commemorations and to mark the occasion he received a special bottle of brandy from the Martell family. The Regimental Secretary represented the Regiment at a memorial service for John on 24 September 2022.

Marking the centenary of the occupation of the Club in 1922, a Reception, Beating Retreat and Supper was held on Saturday 4 June 2022, during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend. The new Lord Provost, the Right Honourable Robert Aldridge, took the salute. This was his first formal engagement with us. He and his

partner clearly enjoyed the evening and Robert made a point of speaking to every table spread over two floors of the Club.

On Armed Forces Day, Saturday 25 June, a good size Royal Scots contingent marched from Charlotte Square to Saint Andrew’s Square for speeches, refreshments and catching up. This is a great opportunity to remind the City of our connection to it and I would urge all those who are able to march to do so next year. Of course, if you are not able to march there is nothing to stop you joining the gathering in Saint Andrew’s Square.

The Club has weathered the storm, but still faces into strong headwinds caused by rising costs, especially for energy, staff, and food. This will get even more challenging this winter. The COVID loan has been repaid, but we must all do everything we can to support the Club. I am hugely grateful to Norman Soutar and his Board of Directors and of course to Adrian and his team for steering us to this point and achieving better results than we expected.

We have now received formal confirmation that our application to establish The Royal Scots Regimental Trust SCIO has been approved by OSCR. We will be operating as a SCIO from 1 January 2023. I am hugely grateful to all those who have helped to achieve this important governance step.

We continue to work with The Royal Regiment of Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, and other Stakeholders and Partners regarding the future of our Museum in the Castle. More to follow on this in due course.

Following the initial meeting of our new SCIO, David Nisbet will hand over to Nick Edwardson as Trustee responsible for Communications. We have some work to do to refresh our internal and external communications and Nick has agreed to take this forward, for which I am very grateful. I am also very grateful to Roger Walker who has agreed to take over as Thistle Editor. This edition is being pulled together by the Regimental Secretary and Roger. Roger will fly solo for the next edition.

There is of course much more on all of this in this edition, which I hope you enjoy. I look forward to the next time our paths cross.

Yours Aye,
George Lowder
Brigadier George Lowder MBE



96-gun salute at Edinburgh Castle

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

It was with great sadness that the nation learned on the afternoon of 8 September 2022 of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The following notice was posted on the Regimental website and other Regimental social media platforms:

“It is with deepest sorrow that The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) marks the death of our Sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The Regiment is proud to have served her and it is an enduring honour and privilege to have done so. She was, and will continue to be, held in the highest esteem in the Regiment. Her unwavering commitment is the finest example for us all to follow. Our thoughts and prayers are with The Princess Royal, Royal Patron of the Regimental Association, and all members of The Royal Family and we share their grief as they mourn.”



Mr George Higgins and Ms Sheila Purvis wait to enter St Giles



The Lord Lyon proclaims King Charles III as Monarch

A letter was sent to Buckingham Palace to convey our condolences to Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal:

“The President and all members of The Regimental Association of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) wish to convey their deepest condolences to Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal on the death of her mother, Her Majesty The Queen. The Regiment is proud to have served her and it is an enduring honour and privilege to have done so. She was, and will continue to be, held in the highest esteem in the Regiment. Our thoughts and prayers are with The Princess Royal and all members of The Royal Family and we share their grief as they mourn.”

The Queen had died peacefully at Balmoral and consequently the people of Scotland had the opportunity to pay their respects to Her Majesty. Brig Graeme Wearmouth and Col Charlie Wallace were on parade with The Royal Company of Archers for the proclamation of King Charles III as Monarch, and to escort the coffin from The Palace of Holyroodhouse to St Giles Cathedral and to mount a vigil. Mr George Higgins was at the front of the queue for St Giles to pay his respects to The Queen and attract much media interest.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



HRH The Princess Royal wore the Regimental Brooch on the day she escorted the Queen from Edinburgh to London

Benevolence

The Royal Scots Regimental Trust continues to provide funds for benevolence to support those in need of financial assistance. The new system has been operating for a year and is working well. In the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 £10,340 was disbursed to 32 cases; with additional funds from other charities, this provided much needed help for those in difficulty. If you are seeking assistance or know someone in the Regimental Family who needs assistance, you should contact SSAFA or Poppyscotland and a caseworker will conduct an assessment and process an application.

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**

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

Museum and Heritage

I am delighted to report that the Museum finally opened in April. Whilst the numbers allowed into the Castle have been limited by Historic Environment Scotland (HES), with timed slots for the visitors, the numbers visiting the Museum have risen steadily to over 1,700 per day during the month of August. Mr Tom Gordon, our Museum Assistant has moved on to a new post. We are therefore in the process of recruiting a Museum Curator to replace him.

The Colours of the 4th/5th Bn The Royal Scots have been lent to the Royal Artillery on long loan. The Battalion became a Search Light Regiment and later an Anti-Aircraft Regiment in the Royal Artillery during WW2. The Colours will now go to a conservationist first before being mounted for display in the Headquarter building of 105 Regt RA (V) in Colinton next to Redford Barracks. A separate report will appear in a future edition.

For those who visited the National Memorial Arboretum last year they may not realise that at the small chapel at the site there are 12 wooden pillars that support the roof. Each one is named after one of the Apostles. Each is carved with a figure and the one depicting St Andrew has a caricature of St Andrew wearing a TOS (see photo).

The problem with water ingress into the Museum is still unresolved as HES have yet to locate the area of the problem before they can carry out a permanent repair. Whilst this has not stopped us opening to the public, we will have to remove a number of display boards to allow HES access to the wall to investigate the source of the problem. This will involve closing off a part of the Museum for the inspection but we will not have to close the Museum for this phase of the project. Once they find the area of fault they will repair it and then the floor can be fixed. In the meantime a workaround has been agreed.

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 (MGS) via the Arts Council England accreditation portal. All plans and supporting documents, some 14 in all, were submitted on 20 February 2022. The next MGS board meeting to discuss our accreditation status is due to meet in September when we hope to hear of their decision.

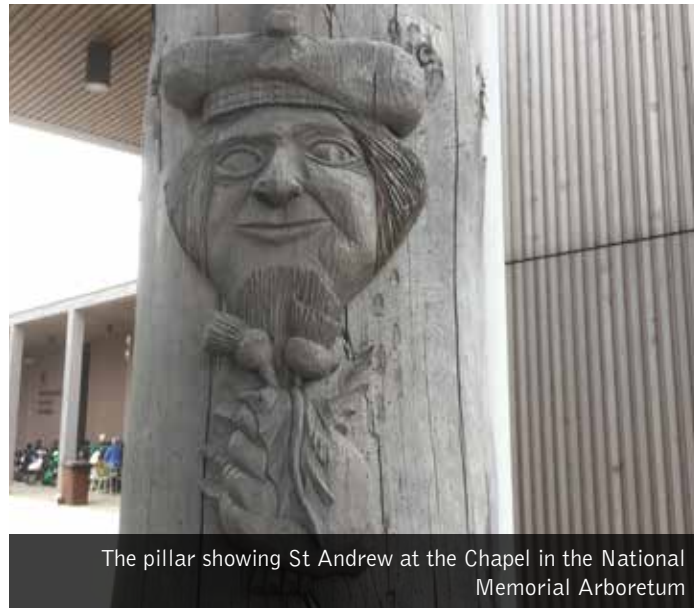
The ongoing project of post-1945 is nearing completion. The interactive screen for the post-1945 area has now been installed and is up and

Association News

Southern Branch

The branch is delighted to welcome three new in-pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea to its strength. WO2 Danny Dempsey, CSgt Andy Kay and WO1 Victor Lucas, to give them in their order of arrival, are now decked out in their scarlet tunics. Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell, Capt James Milne and their respective wives attended the Founder's Day on 9 June, and then on 10 August Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell paid the Royal Hospital a less formal visit, met up with our three in-pensioners and had lunch with them. We now look forward to having all three march with the Regimental contingent on the Cenotaph Parade on 13 November, Remembrance Sunday. The contingent this year will be twenty seven strong, including the President of the Association which is an impressive turn out.

Maj Christopher Delacombe



The pillar showing St Andrew at the Chapel in the National Memorial Arboretum

running. The second screen covering WW2 will be installed very soon beside the French diorama at the beginning of the WW2 Section. The content has been completed and all that is left to do is to install it which will require routing of extra electrical wiring.

The Regimental magazine, The Thistle covering the period from 1892 to 2006 will be installed on the web site by Christmas. The Colour Belts and the Drum Major's Baldrick (sash) of the 9th Battalion (Highlanders) The Royal Scots will be installed in the Museum by January 2023. The backing boards have been designed and only now need to be manufactured.

Whilst the new shelves in the Library have been completed a new index now has to be created. This is being hampered by a lack of Volunteers. Whilst much has been achieved, there is always more to do. We are always looking for Volunteers who have any 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 Lt Col David Jack by e-mail at RegtSec@theroyalscots.co.uk

Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Rae

RS 373

There are two parts to Museum and Heritage: the Museum is the Collection and its physical presentation to visitors to Edinburgh Castle, whereas Heritage, expressed through RS373, is the wider story of the Regiment being communicated across the world through film, Rolls of Honour, presentations and engagement.

Over the last six months Team RS373 has continued to drive forward initiatives to further capture and promote The Royal Scots' story of our 373 years of unbroken service: our unique Heritage.

Whenever possible best use is made of modern technology, including virtualising, to enable the goal of enabling global access in as meaningful and forward looking way as be possible.

Effective communication, engagement and outreach underpin Team RS373's innovative, creative and bold approach to make a difference for the better. Our Regimental Heritage is all about people, with the focus continuing to be on capturing feelings and experiences, eg. the World War 2 Royal Scots veterans memories film; the Post 1945 Regimental Family's experiences film, plus the WW1, WW2, and between the Wars and post 1945 interactive Rolls of Honour.

To allow more planning and coordination time, The Royal Scots at Dalkeith Palace Remembrance event, which will reach out into Midlothian, which is central to our former recruiting area, has been rescheduled to take place in November 2023. This pop-up museum initiative, which has been warmly welcomed locally, will take our story to the people and support ongoing consideration of the shaping of how we preserve our very important Regimental Heritage in the future and the commitment to that.

Volunteers from both our wide Regimental Family and those with a belief in the sustainability of our Regimental Heritage to support both our Regimental Museum and Team RS373 as development continues are required. Further details are available through the Regimental Secretary. Thank you to the Association Members, Regimental Golfers and several from the wider Regimental Family who stepped forward for the Dalkeith Palace Remembrance event; please keep 8 – 10 November 2023 clear in your diaries!

Finally, as always financial donations to our Regimental Museum and Heritage are always welcome. External grant-making organisations, both charity and public, are to be approached in the next four months to support RS373 initiatives over the next three years.

Colonel Matin Gibson OBE DL
Leader Team RS373



The team. l to r: Mr T Logan, Mr R Conquer, Mr T Douglas, Mr G Stryker, Mr H Wright, Mr W Hutchison, Mr Colin Small, Mr M Doig, Mr J Friend, Mr G Higgins, Mr G Sinclair, Mr J Keenan, Mr M McCann, Mr J Stewart, Mr J Wren, Mr J Colquhoun, Mr J Reidy, Mr D Meechan, Mr G Gaff

Association Weekend

23 personnel attend this year's trip to Rothiemurchus Lodge over the weekend 8 to 10 April. The weekend started on Friday evening with an inter-members games night. A day trip to Inverness for some sightseeing was arranged for Saturday, followed on return to the lodge by dinner and a Race and Karaoke evening. Sunday morning was a casual start with a leisurely brunch before departing for home.

We would like to thank George and Julia Gaff for hosting us at the Lodge, John (Jock) Stewart and Les Wren for supply and

preparation of meals, Tam Douglas for the arranging the use of the Legion Scotland minibus, Gerry Stryker for arranging the use of the Police Scotland minibus, and John Hardy for keeping us entertained all weekend with music and banter.

We have booked the Lodge for next year's Association Weekend for the period Fri 14 – Sun 16 April 2023. The date is included in the Forecast of Events and further details will be issue nearer the time.

Mr Tam Logan

Royal Scots items in the stewardship of 1 RANGER

“The further back you look, the better you see the future” Winston Churchill.

Readers may be interested to learn that I was asked to join Lt Col Gordon Vevers (RHQ SCOTS Heritage) and Mr Tom Gordon (RS Museum) in conducting a check of RS Silver, Pictures and Property in the 1 RANGER Officers’, Warrant Officers’ and Sergeants’, and Corporals’ Messes in the period 24 – 26 May 2022.

We were very well received by 1 RANGER. In particular the CO, Old Royal Lt Col Frank Reeves, is particularly keen to demonstrate 1 RANGER heritage via 1 SCOTS and going back to both antecedents, in order to demonstrate to visitors that the new 1 RANGER unit stands on the shoulders of giants, including readers of this who served in RS.

You will probably know that a quantity of silver has already been backloaded to the RS Museum and there is an intention to display some of this 1RS silver in the RS Club, alongside the silver already on display there, mainly having come from our Territorial and Volunteer battalions. The reason for the silver being backloaded is that messes are now contractualised right across the Army and unit establishments no longer provide for Regimental Mess Staff, so only a limited amount can be managed realistically.

Pictures are a different story. Provided that frames are in good repair, pictures can be hung on the walls to look after themselves, as long as light levels are not so high as to risk fading.

RS pictures are generally in good order and certainly much better than on my last visit pre-COVID. Both the Officers’, and the Warrant Officers’ and Sergeants’ Messes are well appointed with pictures charting RS history from 1633 to 2006. I have suggested that some should be hung more prominently, and that some scenes with no Regimental connections might be considered for backloading.

So, the picture situation is stable, at least for the present and the foreseeable future. There had been the possibility of a move to another station with much reduced wall space for hanging pictures. This would have introduced the question of what to do with them, the answer to which is that many would join those already hanging in the RS Club, where there is already a wealth of RS heritage, as those who use the Club will know.



Maj Alan Falconer, QM 1 RANFER, with the restored Alva Bell



Lt Col Jim Blythe and Mr Tom Gordon at the Bessbrook Memorial Stone in the Palace Barracks Memorial Garden



Lt Col Jim Blythe and Mr Tom Gordon at The royal Scots Memorial Stone in the Palace Barracks Memorial Garden

We also checked property that spans a multitude of Regimental items: furniture, crockery, pipe banners, drums and all else that doesn’t fall neatly under either silver or pictures. The final item to be checked was the Alva Bell, cast in 1633 and presented in 1983 during the RS 350 year that used to be on the guardroom veranda. The original frame on which it had hung suffered weather damage over the years and the bell had dropped resulting in a crack. This has been repaired and a stout new frame constructed. The bell is now in the dining hall where it is not only sheltered from the elements but where it can be seen by those going in and out daily.

All in all, that part of our heritage that is in the stewardship of 1 RANGER is being respected, celebrated, maintained and displayed to good effect, with the RS Museum paying close attention to its present and future condition.

Before departing, we visited the Memorial Garden and remembered those who are commemorated there.

Lieutenant Colonel Jim Blythe MBE

Regimental Annual Reunion

The Regimental Annual Reunion returned this year on Saturday 30 April 2022 after a break of two years due the restrictions of the pandemic. 143 members of the Regimental Family attend this year’s event, which was held at the Bainfield Bowling Club. Entertainment was provided by former Royal Scot John Reidy, Discotek Claudia Toner, and the Association Pipe Band. The Regimental Association Honorary Secretary would like to thank The Bainfield Club Staff and catering staff for all their support and a well prepared buffet.

Mr Tam Logan



Mr Tam Logan and Mr Tam Douglas



Mr G Higgins, Mr G Thomson, Mr T Douglas, Mr T Logan, Mr J Friend, Mr S Colquhoun, Mr G Guthrie, Mr W Hutchison



I to r: Mrs S Wright, Mrs J Walker, Mrs Y Douglas, Miss W Gray, Miss P Elliott



I to r: Mr H Wright, Mr G Thompson, Mr T Douglas, Mr T Logan, Mr G Sinclair, Mr S Aitkin, Mr R Myles



Association mini Pipe Band. I to r: Sean Pieres on bass drum, Danny Sweeney, Billy Rutherford, Martin Rennie, Al McNeill, Vicky McLean, Torquill Corkerton

Gretna Commemoration

We gathered at Rosebank Cemetery on Saturday 21 May for the 107th commemoration of the rail diaster that occurred near Gretna on 22 May 1915. We were joined by descendants of those involved in the incident and representatives from local community groups including Leith and Newhaven Community Council, The Queen's Edinburgh Rifles Lodge, Leith Sea Cadets, Leith Civic Trust, and the Rotary Club of Leith. The event returned to the normal format of marching behind the Association Standards from the Pilrig Street entrance to the Memorial. The service was led by Rev Iain May, our Association Padre, and a Regimental wreath was laid by Brig George Lowder.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



The Association Standard Party at the Gretna Memorial in Rosebank Cemetery. I to r: Mr Tam Logan, Mr Paul Robertson, Rev Iain May, Mr David Milne, Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mr Stuart Aitken

Le Paradis

Service at Norwich Cathedral

Major David Dickson and his wife Lizzie were amongst 300 guests who attended a Service of Thanksgiving for the new Paradis Memorial at Norwich Cathedral in April. The Memorial Stone records the massacre of 97 members of 2nd Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment, 1st Battalion The Royal Scots, and other soldiers on 27 May 1940 at Le Paradis. The stone had initially been unveiled by The Princess Royal in 2021.



Maj David Dickson beside the Le Paradis Memorial at Norwich Cathedral



Maj David Dickson, Mrs Lizzie Dickson, Mrs Robina Nicholson and Mr Alec Nicholson in front of Norwich Cathedral

Also present at the Service was Mrs Robina Nicholson and her husband Alec. Robina's Stepfather was Maj Rodney "Bosun" Watson DSO MC who was the Acting CO on 27 May 1940 when he was killed in action outside Battalion Headquarters at Boulon Farm. Mr David Maclean, a Royal Scot, was also present. It was a well organised and moving occasion and The Royal Scots representation was appreciated.

Major David Dickson

Commemoration at le Paradis

In 2018 it was decided that the last formal visit by The Royal Scots should be the 80th Anniversary in 2020. Then COVID-19 arrived and the RS373 Team organised a Virtual Commemoration on line. COVID caused postponement again in 2021 and we were able finally to go ahead at the end of May this year with the largest number in attendance for a number of years, a party of thirty led by Brigadier George Lowder, complimented by a similar number of Royal Norfolks relatives and supporters. We wanted to put on a good show to thank our friends in Le Paradis and Lestrem Commune for their many years of friendship and devotion to the memories of 1940 and hospitality for us since. This was done to great effect by being led in the parade by the Regimental Association Standard Party whose smart turnout and drill really caught everyone's attention.



With the commemorative bench outside the church in Le Paradis. I to r: Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Stuart Aitken, Mr Paul Robertson, Mr Tam Logan, Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Piper Greig McLean.



With the commemorative bench outside the church in Le Paradis. I to r: Mr Andrew Charteris, Maj Christopher Roads, Mrs Cheryl Cran, Mrs Anoinette Charteris, Mrs Elizabeth Roads, Mr Harry Gore-Browne, Col Edward Cowan, M Thierry Martell, Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell, Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Thomas Dickson, Mr Paul Robertson, Mr Stuart Aitken, Maj Mike Cran, Maj Christopher Delacombe, Lt Col John Charteris, Lt Iain Laird, Mr Tam Logan, Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mrs Annabel Laird, Maj David Dickson, Piper Greig McLean, Mrs Janet Cowan, Brig George Lowder, Lt Col David Jack.



In the cemetery at Mont Bernanchon. Iain Laird talks about the events in 1940.



In the cemetery at Mont Bernanchon I to r: Brig George Lowder, Mr Paul Robertson, Maj Christopher Delacombe.



Lt Iain Laird briefs a group outside the location of Bn HQ during the battlefield tour.



Outside the farmhouse, I to r: Piper Greig McLean, Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mr Paul Robertson, Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Stuart Aitken, Mr Tam Logan.



In the cemetery at Mont Bernanchon I to r: Mr Stuart Aitken, Maj Mike Cran, Mr Tam Douglas.

Friendship with the people of Le Paradis began in the days after the Battle when they returned and buried our dead who they found in and around their shattered homes. In 1940 Pipe Major Allan and his platoon died in defence of Battalion Headquarters in Rue de Derrière outside the home of the Delassus family. The Delassus family on return buried The Royal Scots fallen and defied the Germans by guarding the graves whenever they passed; a picture taken in 1941 showed they had

British Rifles at the graves, a high risk during occupation. Grandson Christian Delassus is a member of the Harmonie de Lestrem which played during Saturday's Commemorations. Friendship continued in Le Paradis when the Commemorations began and among the first to attend was Maj Jimmy Howe, a Bandsman with The Royal Scots in 1940, later a Director of Music. The Harmonie de Lestrem plays arrangements composed by Major Howe including "Pentland Hills". Jimmy attended into his '80s and played The Last Post beautifully on his Cornet until shortly before his death.

The French Army Liaison Officer with The Royal Scots in 1939 and 1940 and a Prisoner of War with them until 1945 was Captain Michel Martell of the famous Cognac family. His grandson Thierry Firino Martell joined us at lunchtime on Saturday. He arranged for a special bottle of Martell to be delivered to our one surviving veteran, Major John Errington, who was greatly cheered to be reminded of his WWII comrade.



On the Sunday The Royal Scots party and the Royal Norfolks families and supporters reassembled at Mont-Bernachon, where the first to fall in the Battle are buried, to hold a further Act of Remembrance. Twenty three are named there and the names of a further thirty three are unknown. Among ten fallen from WWI are five Royal Scots of the 1/8th Battalion who fell there in 1918.

We remember Le Paradis for the success of the action by The Royal Scots and Royal Norfolks in 4 Brigade. The Order "Stand and Fight to the Last Round and the Last Man" was given only twice in WWII, in May 1940, to delay the German Advance into the corridor that was to be held for the Dunkirk Evacuation, and again at Kohima in India

in 1944 to stop the Japanese Advance. On both occasions the Regiments given that order did just that. The reformed 1st Battalion The Royal Scots and the 2nd Battalion The Royal Norfolks served again together in 4 Brigade at Kohima relieving the defending force and continuing and winning the battle.

Of course individuals will still visit Le Paradis and its memorials. Anyone looking for further information should get in touch with the Regimental Secretary who will maintain accumulated knowledge and communication with key parties.

Lieutenant Iain Laird



RS Commemorative Bench at Le Paradis

Early in 2020 a decision was made to present a Royal Scots memorial bench to the people of Le Paradis and the Commune of Lestrem. It was to mark the 80 years of Commemoration that they had given and to thank them for their support to Royal Scots veterans and their families who continue to visit Le Paradis every May.

David Ogilvie Engineering in Kilmarnock was approached as they produce memorial benches and send them all over the world. A design was discussed and then put in draft with Robert Watson and Iain Laird giving helpful advice. Col Andy McDowall and Valerie provided an appropriate inscription in French.

The bench is a unique design. It is made of solid steel and from right to left shows in silhouette, a piper, a cross, red poppies, blue cornflowers,

soldiers in steel helmets and a Tam O'Shanter, and the Regimental motto. The inscription plaque has an original soldiers cap badge. The bench has a sky blue and muddy coloured background to show up the silhouettes.

The bench was completed by April 2022. By that time the price of steel had trebled and, due to Brexit, it was very tricky to import it to France. The difficulties were overcome and the bench was in position outside the Church on Le Paradis in time for Commemoration Day on 28 May. It is hoped that the bench will be permanently positioned next to the small History Room.

Our thanks go to all those involved with this presentation, including the Regimental Trust, The Bryson Corbett Charitable Trust, and The Cray Trust for their generous donations.

Major David Dickson





The assembled group prior to the start

RSGC Centenary Golf Match

On the 29 April, 32 of our members and 16 guests took to the greens to celebrate the 100th anniversary of formation of The Royal Scots Golf Club. The match was played on the same golf course where it all started in 1922, Glencorse Golf Course, near Penicuik. Glencorse is a friendly, picturesque inland parkland course where the Glencorse Burn runs through 10 of the 18 holes. The 5,217 yards may have eight par threes (five from the red tees) but it certainly cannot be described as an easy course...only one par three is under 200 yards. With views of the Pentland Hills and the lush green surroundings, Glencorse provides a warm welcome to all golfers. The course was in splendid conditions, and the weather was unbelievably warm and sunny for late April. The greens were running fast and true.

The format for the day’s golf was decided as three-man teams playing a Texas Scramble. For the non-golfers, the Texas Scramble is one of the most popular team games in golf. It is very straightforward. Each player in a group tees off as normal; the best of these shots is then chosen to be used for the next shot; each member of the team hits his or her shot from that spot; this process continues until the hole is played out. Each team returns one score for each hole and the team with the lowest score for the round wins. It is a good format when matching handicaps to teams and makes the game more enjoyable for the less experienced players because the pressure is off. It was also a shotgun start meaning all teams were allocated a starting hole and when the claxon sounded, they all hit off. That type of start ensures we all start and finish at the same time, allowing the members of the Glencorse Golf Club to have their course back for their members in the afternoon.

At the reception, which was ably staffed by Liz Kyle (the wife of a member), all the RSGC members were issued with a few commemorative items, including a sleeve of RSGC logoed golf balls, a ball marker, a pitch mark repair tool, a Tote bag (to hold tees etc) and a new silver bag tag, with the club logo on the front and their name engraved on the reverse. The guests also received the logoed golf balls, pitch repairer and marker. After the bacon rolls and coffee came the welcome from our captain Jim McConnell, thanking the committee from Glencorse Golf Club for the complete use of their excellent facilities. The briefing on the rules for the day was given by the match and handicap convenor Douglas Ogilvie, then outside for the photograph. The Times newspaper sent a photographer to cover the competition for a piece they were going to write. The photographer had a good sense of humour and had everyone laughing and smiling for the photos. Everyone then set off to their allocated tee boxes awaiting the signal to start.

We had a few last-minute call-offs for various reasons which caused a rejig making two of the 3-man teams into 4s. I obviously couldn’t see how all the other teams were playing, but my team consisted of Eric Taylor and Tony Reid; Eric kept us in the game is all I will say about our team. Although, a 4-ball team was seen deliberating over what was to be their chosen drive, not only was it from the rough with trees between them and the green, but it was also on the wrong fairway. Anyway, a short time later they were seen on the correct green, so it ended well.

Everyone returned to the clubhouse nearly at the same time, put their equipment into their cars and returned for a well-earned refreshment, as it was very hot out on the course. Lunch was a simple soup and sandwich affair. You just can’t beat a bowl of golf club lentil soup.

After lunch we had a short speech from our Club Captain, Jimmy McConnell, thanking the Glencorse staff for all the help they had given, the excellent state of the course and thanking our guests for their participation in our centenary golf match. He then handed over to the club Secretary David Morris and our President Walter Hutchinson for the prize giving.

The winners of the medals and cups were from 15 teams of 4 and 3 balls.

1st place team: with 54 points.

Paul McAllister	RSGC
Dougie Audsley	Glencorse Golf Club
Eric Yule	RSGC

2nd Place team: with 55 points.

Cliff McAulay	RSGC
Stu Simpson	RSGC
Rev Iain May	RSGC
Gordon Sinclair	RSGC

Most use of the course (last place) with 65 points.

Larry Gilbert	RSGC
David Gilroy	8:30 Golf Club
David Jack	Guest

The longest drive winner was Zander Russel RSGC

Nearest the Pin Winner was Sandy Wann Glencorse Golf Club

After the prize-giving Brig George Lowder, President of the Regimental Association, gave a short speech where he also spoke about what it is to belong to the Regimental Association. I think the real winner on the day was The Royal Scots Golf Club as it starts another century of golf, stronger than it has been over many years. The membership is now at its maximum allowed by the constitution with a few on the waiting list. The club will look to alter the constitution, possibly increasing the membership numbers next year.

The next centennial event will be the AGM and the Celebration Dinner to be held at the Royal Scots Club on Friday 18 November 2022. A report, with photographs, will be published in the next edition of the Thistle.

Mr Andy Stewart,
Centennial Celebration Coordinator



Some of the participants l to r: Zander Russell, Steven Gibson, David Goodacre, Sandy Aitchison, Eck Wind, Guy Richardson, Bob Welsh, Billy Young, Robert Snedden, Bob Bruce, Stuart Simpson, Gordon Vevers, Jeeb Hogg, Dickie Donovan, Gordon Snedden

Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf Match

On the 27 May the 2nd annual Stewart Snedden Memorial golf meeting was held at Liberton golf course in Edinburgh. Like the first one in 2021, it was very well attended by serving and retired Royal Scots, along with a few members of the Snedden family.

The weather was as spectacular as Stu Simpson’s golf attire, and in good Royals fashion many attendees dressed appropriately in the loudest and traditional golf clothing hoping to win the new prize of the best dressed.

After the initial welcome briefing, the toast to Sneds was given by Stu Simpson, a fitting story which had everyone in stitches accompanied by raising a glass of port to Sneds, and, of course, absent friends. This was then followed by the traditional group photograph which seems to get bigger every year; its either the swelling numbers attending, or the need for wide angle lenses for the swelling belly sizes as we all descend into middle aged spread. This was not helped by the delicious bacon and sausage rolls that followed the group picture.

The golf course was in outstanding condition and the golf competition was started after the current champion Kenny Dow was piped from the clubhouse to the first tee box, and in true champion style the first hit was straight down the middle, and we were off.

The competition was played in the true spirit of the day; light hearted, plenty of stories about Sneds, and a few very dubious scorecards.

Following that, Liberton laid on a spectacular rolling lunch as players finished their rounds, their hospitality package was first class, and a huge thank you was delivered to them for the hosting of our event, the food, the course, and the staff who made the day work so well.

The prize winners were:

1st Iain Horribine 2nd Mark Renton, 3rd Stu Simpson
Longest Drive: Zander Russell
Nearest the pin: Paul McAllister
Best Dressed: Guy Richardson
Most golf played: Michael Grady (again)
Most handsome golfer: Jimmy Gunn

A huge thank you to everyone who attended and made the day what it was, and also to the guys who organise this in their spare time, tireless work by Jimmy Gunn and especially Spike Mulligan made the day what it is, and a special thanks to Charlie McVicar, the best M.O.C. and charity organiser who ran the raffle for the Chest, Heart and Stroke Foundation, well done.

Onto next year: 19 May 2023, location Liberton GC. If you’ve never been to this event I highly recommend getting your name in early as limited places are available, but it is always a great day remembering the legend Stewart Snedden.

Major Eck Wind



Some of the participants

Fallen Comrades Golf Trophy

This year’s Fallen Comrades Trophy was held at Shawpark Golf Club, Alloa on the 24 April 2022. We had a field of 20 players, some of them traveling early in the morning to get to the venue on time. We had the usual bacon roll and coffee before we headed out to play for the Trophy. The winner this year was George D

Grant. A special mention goes to Liz Kyle who yet again met us at the halfway mark with her cooler box of snacks and our toast to absent friends. UTR.

Mr David Milne

Association Golf Match vs 1 RANGER

The Association was asked to field a team of golfers to play a friendly match with the 1st Battalion The Ranger Regiment to maintain the golden thread. We were welcomed at the Merchants Golf Club in Edinburgh on the 24 June 2022 by all those playing for 1 RANGER. The format selected was Stableford match play. By the accounts of the near misses and stories in the club house after the matches it sounded like everyone had a fantastic day.

Those representing the Association were: David Milne, Brian McGeachie, Noel Martin, George D Grant, and Mark Renton. Unfortunately Rab W Johnstone had to pull out due to ill health, and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

The Royal Scots Association was then presented with a little momento , which was presented by CSgtt Gibb to David Milne, for display in The Royal Scots Club.

Mr David Milne



CSgt Steven Gibb makes a presentation to David Milne

The Royal Hospital

Founder's Day

This year saw the first full Founder's Day Parade held at the Hospital for three years, although last year there was a scaled down event to comply with COVID regulations. Founder's Day this year was commemorated on 9 June, and as reported in the last edition of The Thistle the Reviewing Officer was due to be King Philippe of the Belgians; however his duties meant that he could not be present, so we were delighted to have Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence KCV0, CB, ADC who, as you all know, is the husband of our Patron, HRH The Princess Royal.

Founder's Day is the one day of the year that all In-Pensioners (IPs) are required to be within the Hospital grounds. On the morning of the parade sprigs of oak leaves are distributed and worn by all ranks to commemorate Charles II hiding in an oak tree. The format of the parade is very simple; at 1045 the IPs get on parade by Company with those unable to march sitting round the periphery. Some IPs are in wheelchairs and yet more drive past on their motobility scooters. The parade is inspected by the Reviewing Officer. The Companies then March Past and salute the Reviewing Officer, all IPs saluting as they pass.



Mr Andy Kay and Mr Ian Fair

Those in Nos 1 and 2 Companies salute with their left hand, a quirk going back to a decree by Queen Victoria that she wished to see the faces of her soldiers as they saluted therefore the companies that pass with the Reviewing Officer on their right salute with their left hand. This, for people who had been trained and spent their career using the other hand, can be confusing! After the March Past the parade forms up in front of the Reviewing Officer who then says a few words.

Admiral Laurence's speech was light-hearted and quite funny which struck just the right note. He almost caused a mutiny amongst the ranks though when he admitted to supporting Tottenham Hotspur rather than Chelsea FC! The reply for the Hospital was given by Brigadier A Finn, Senior Health Advisor to the Army Board and ex-officio Commissioner of the Hospital, as the Governor, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL, was showing COVID symptoms. Following speeches the IPs give three cheers for the Monarch, The Hospital and the Reviewing Officer. IPs are then dismissed and join their guests for a day of entertainment and fun.

This year there were two Royal Scots on parade, IP Danny Dempsey and IP Andy Kay. Danny is not so mobile these days so was one of the IPs selected to parade in a wheelchair. Andy was a member of No2 Company and thus one of the left-handed salute IPs! There was a third Royal Scot present, IP Vic Lucas, who having only arrived a couple of days before the parade and had not been kitted out with his scarlet coat, so watched from the sidelines.

Following the parade IPs meet their guests and repair to the marquees for a picnic lunch (fancy haverbag ration). One guest who had made the journey south from Edinburgh was Lt Col Jim Blythe MBE, who was Andy's guest. It was great to have contact with the Regiment from Edinburgh and his presence was much appreciated by Andy and Danny. Two members of the Southern Branch also attended – Colonel Peter Fraser Hopewell CMG MBE and Captain James Milne, but in the melee following the parade we missed each other. Both have made arrangements to visit us in the Hospital over the following months. Colonel Peter visited in August and James in September.

All three of us, Danny, Vic and Andy would be delighted to meet any Royal who is passing and drops in to the Hospital; just ask at the gates and one of us should be around to meet and greet.

Background

IN SUBSIDIUM ET LEVAMEN EMERITORUM SENIO
BELLOQUE FRACTORUM CONDIDIT CAROLUS SECUNDUS
AUXIT JACOBUS SECUNDUS PERFECERE GULIEMUS ET
MARIA REX ET REGINA ANNO DOMINI MDCXII

*For The Succour And Relief Of Veterans Broken By Age And War,
Founded By Charles II, Enlarged By James II And Completed By
King William And Queen Mary In The Year Of Our Lord 1692.*

The purpose of the Hospital is set out in Latin above the Colonnade in front of the Great Hall and Chapel and although called a 'Hospital' this should be seen in the old way as a place of hospitality. It is open to all who have served in the Army whether Regular, TA or National Service, have reached state pension age and in receipt of a State Pension plus have no spouse or dependent children. Commissioned Officers are accepted, but only if they have 12 years of service in the ranks. There is an application process for those thinking of entering the RHC which includes a four day stay at the Hospital where you can see what the place is like, and the hospital can have a look at you. If you get through the application and four day stay processes, then you may be offered a place after which you will be given a few months to make up your mind on whether this is for you or not.



Mr Andy Kay, Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell, Mr Danny Dempsey



Mr Andy Kay and Col (now Brig) Graeme Wearmouth



Mr Andy Kay and Lt Col Jim Blythe



Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence chats to Mr Andy Kay during the inspection on Founder's Day.

For many this can be a complete change of lifestyle and although one has a berth of their own, the life is such that we live very closely together in the long wards. For Royal Scots the distance from home is also a factor that must be taken into account, but with excellent travel links from London this should not be that much of an issue. The Hospital is a retirement home for veteran soldiers, not a care home, although as people get older and need more care it is there for you. While encouraged by the staff to take part in the many activities and events that the Hospital arranges or are invited to attend, In-Pensioners are free to do as much or as little as they wish.

If this gets you thinking, then more information can be found on the Hospital website: <https://www.chelsea-pensioners.co.uk/>

Mr Andy Kay

The Royal Company of Archers

RS and the Archers: Celebrating 200 years as the Sovereign’s Body Guard for Scotland

On 30 June 2022 The Queen’s Bodyguard for Scotland, The Royal Company of Archers celebrated its 200th year as the Sovereign’s Bodyguard for Scotland with a big parade before Her Majesty and the Duke of Rothesay in the Gardens of the Palace of Holyroodhouse. By coincidence, it tied in with Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee year which made the event all the more special. 321 Archers were on the parade – the largest gathering of Archers in its 200 years. It has been said, although not confirmed, that there were more Archers on parade in Edinburgh than there were Guardsmen on Horse Guards Parade for the Queen’s Birthday parade in June 2022.

The Parade served as an opportunity for Her Majesty’s personal Bodyguard for Scotland to re-affirm its allegiance to Her with a resounding Three Cheers that was reputedly heard from over a mile away after bouncing off the Salisbury Crags.

The Royal Scots contribution to the Royal Company has been strong throughout its history and that was no less evident on this very special day when seven Royals were on parade.

Colonel Charlie Wallace



RS Archers outside the Palace of Holyrood House during Royal Week. l to r: Lt Col James Anderson, Col Piers Strudwick, Col (now Brig) Graeme Wearmouth, Brig Robbie Scott-Bowden, Col Charlie Wallace, Maj Derek Bathgate, Maj David Dickson



The Queen and Prince of Wales at the Palace of Holyrood House during the Archers parade



Ian Fair and David Wallace at in the garden at Buckingham Palace.

Buckingham Palace Garden Party

Ian Fair and David Wallace attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 12 May 2022. Ticket was provided by Haig Housing as Ian is a resident in one of the Saughton houses. It had been scheduled for 2020 but delayed due to the pandemic. The event was hosted by HRH The Princess Royal, there was Beating Retreat by the Band of The Royal Marines and glorious weather made for a magnificent occasion. Both Ian and David met some interesting people from various walks of life, and both thoroughly enjoyed the experience. There was also the opportunity to do a bit of sightseeing around London and to visit Andy Kay in the Royal Hospital.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Lt Col John Sands, Maj Steve Simson, Mr Rab Dickson

Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day celebrations returned to Edinburgh on Saturday 25 Jun 2022 after a break of two years due to pandemic restrictions. The event was organised by Legion Scotland and consisted of a parade followed by some entertainment, offering the opportunity for veterans to meet old comrades and connect with the local community. The parade formed up in Charlotte Square outside Bute House and set of at 1015 in two groups, the first led by the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, and the second led by the Royal Air Force Central Scotland Pipes and Drums. The Royal Scots contingent, numbering approximately 30 veterans, marched directly behind the Pipe Band. The parade proceeded along the south side of George Street, past a saluting dias outside the Assembly Rooms, where the Deputy Lord Provost took the salute, and then onto St Andrew Square. Speeches by Lezley Marion Cameron, the Deputy Lord Provost and Maj Gen Bill Wright, Military Secretary and General Officer Scotland signalled the start of the festivities.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Maj John Dent, Maj Steve Simson and Mrs Christel Simson enjoy music by the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland.



Lt Col John Sands, Mr David Nelson



Mr Archie McDonald, Mr Andy Gilmour, Mr Shug Crawford

Visit to the Somme



Some of the Royal Scots with two members of Legion Scotland staff in front of the McCrae’s Battalion Cairn at Contalmaison. l to r: Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mr Sonny Walker, Mr Tony Hooman, Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Stuart Aitken, Mr Elliot Thomson, Mr Tam Logan

Ten members of The Royal Scots Association joined four members of Legion Scotland and twenty-five other pilgrims of McCrae’s Battalion Trust for the annual visit to the Somme. The party assembled in Waterloo Place early on 29 June and departed by coach on what would turn out to be a very memorable and poignant five days of remembrance, comradeship, education, and a new understanding of what it meant to take part in the Great War of 1914 – 1918. Before we knew it, we had arrived in Hull and boarded the ferry to Rotterdam on what turned out to be a very calm crossing.

We rose at 0600 on 30 June – just like being back in the Army! – ready for breakfast at 0700 before disembarking to clear customs then continue our journey down to Arras where we would be based for the next 4 days. Along the way we stopped for a short while at the Vimy Ridge Canadian War Memorial. At first sight, it takes your breath away. The architect was Walter Allward and the inspiration for his design came to him in a dream. His plans were selected from 160 other submissions and the project took eleven years to complete. It was inaugurated on 26 July 1936 by King Edward VIII.

The story of Allward, the competition, the construction, and of Canada’s sacrifice in the Great War is told in the superb Visitor Centre on site. It really brings home the horrors of war to see so many graves in War Cemeteries all across Northern France and Belgium. It is even more of a shock when you find out there are twice as many names on Memorial Tablets with no known grave.

We arrived at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Arras in the evening, and check-in was followed by a free evening in the town. For those of you who haven’t visited Arras before, you will find a multitude of excellent bars, restaurants, and shops. Arras is built on 10th Century limestone quarries and it is possible to circumnavigate the honeycomb of cellars in a popular guided tour. You can climb to the top of the Beffroi (the belfry of the Town Hall) for a panoramic view of the town and the surrounding area. The Arras Memorial, fifteen minutes’ walk from our hotel, commemorates 35,000 soldiers from the United Kingdom, South Africa and New Zealand who have no known grave. Among the men whose names are inscribed here is Walter Tull, the first black professional footballer and one of the first black officers in the British Army. You’ll find him on the panel dedicated to the Middlesex Regiment. Hearts players John Allan and David Philip are not far away – John in the Royal Scots panel and David in the Northumberland Fusiliers panel.

On 1 July we attended a ceremony in Contalmaison to commemorate 16th Battalion The Royal Scots (McCrae’s Battalion). The ceremony commenced at 0900, followed by laying of wreaths at the Contalmaison Village Memorial Cairn, including a wreath on behalf of The Royal Scots by Sonny Walker, Jack Wilson and Alan McLelland, and on behalf of Legion Scotland by Elliot Thomson and Tony Hooman, the Unforgotten Forces Co-ordinators for Glasgow, Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, and Edinburgh and the Lothians. They were accompanied by our two service users Sid Munro and John Cathcart – John is also an Unforgotten Forces Community Support Volunteers. In the afternoon the Royal Scots Association, along with the Legion Scotland party, took the coach to Beaumont Hamel to attend the Canadian Commemorations honouring the war dead of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who are affiliated to The Royal Scots. At the end of a very hectic day we boarded our coach and returned to Arras for a free evening.

On 2 July we had a leisurely day exploring the Somme, followed by a visit to the beautiful town of Albert, where we had a spot of lunch in glorious weather and then headed back to the Canadian Memorial Site at Beaumont Hamel so the rest of our party could visit and talk to the Canadian School Children who act as guides for a 3-month period before being replaced by another group of school children.

We departed Arras on 3 July to head back to Rotterdam via Ypres. The cloth-producing city of Ypres was almost destroyed during the Great War. Its sensitive reconstruction remains one of the wonders of modern Europe. In many places it’s hard to believe you’re not looking at a



A bronze cast of the Menin Gate behind the Menin Gate in Ypres.



Legion Scotland and Royal Scots; L to r: Mr John Cathcart, Mr Sonny Walker, Mr Elliot Thomson, Mr Alan McLelland, Mr Tony Hooman, Mr Jack Wilson, Mr Sid Munro.

genuine medieval townscape. Pubs, restaurants, and cafés are found in abundance, along with its numerous chocolate and confectionery shops. Cheap tobacco is available in a couple of establishments in the Grote Markt, opposite the Cloth Hall. The famous In Flanders Fields Museum in the Cloth Hall has recently undergone a major refurbishment in time for the centenaries. Most of the galleries have been substantially redesigned and it is well worth seeing. We could not come to Ypres without a visit to the Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing, which commemorates nearly 55,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers who died in the Salient between 1914 and 1917.

We finally returned to Edinburgh on 4 July. It is a fantastic trip for anyone looking to be educated on the Great War and it is highly recommended.

Mr Tam Douglas

Scottish Veterans’ Residences



Danny Sutherland with Scottish Veterans Residences head of external relations Susie Hamilton at a SVR event to mark the Platinum Jubilee

Promotion



Brig Graeme Wearmouth

We wish to congratulate Graeme Wearmouth for his promotion to Brigadier on 5 September 2022. Graeme was commissioned from RMAS in 1995 and joined 1 RS in Fort George, Inverness. He later commanded 2 SCOTS based at Glencorse. He will assume his next appointment as a Defence Attaché in 2023.

Kohima Commemoration

On 7 July the annual commemoration service for the battle of Kohima and Imphal, in which the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots fought with distinction, was held at the York Minster. The service is organised each year by the Kohima Educational Trust whose purpose is to provide educational assistance to the young people of Nagaland as a debt of honour to the Naga people who supported the allied troops throughout the campaign.

Lt Col Brian de la Haye represented the Regiment at the Service and subsequent luncheon attended by other Regimental representatives, representatives from Nagaland, and relatives and friends of veterans who served at Kohima.

The address was inspired by the immortalised Kohima epitaph:

**WHEN YOU GO HOME TELL THEM OF US AND SAY,
FOR YOUR TOMORROW WE GAVE OUR TODAY.**

Lt Col Brian de la Haye OBE



Lt Col Brian de la Haye by the Kohima memorial at York Minster



The Kohima Memorial at York Minster, displaying the Kohima Epitaph

VJ Day Commemoration

A small commemoration took place on 15 August at The Royal Scots Memorial Garden at Lauriston Castle to mark VJ Day. Lt Col Jim Blythe and Lt Col David Jack were joined by Malcolm Warrack, son of Lt Col Moran Warrack, who had been instrumental in creating the Memorial Garden, and family members, Clair Bunch, a member of Friends of Lauriston Castle, who maintain the wonderful garden, and members of Lauriston Castle staff. Contrary to the beautiful summer weather this year, it was a dull day, but the rain held off long enough for us to conduct the ceremony before retiring to the café for a cup of coffee.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Lt Col Jim Blythe, Mr Malcolm Warrack, Ms Maureen Middleton, Molly Tyrrell, Lt Col David Jack, Ms Clair Bunch, Mr Colin Woodburn, Ms Tracy Robertson



Capt Rab Burns presents the Scholl Pipe Major with the pipe banner, showing the school crest.



The Royal Scots cap-badge of the other side of the banner

Stewart’s Melville CCF

Capt Rab Burns has retired after a total of 50 years of service. Rab commenced training with Junior Leaders in 1972 before joining IRS in 1975 on its return from Cyprus. He was Pipe Major in Werl 1986 – 90 and left regular service in 1993 after 21 years. He then joined the staff at Daniel Stewart’s and Melville College as Head of Piping in the Music department, and he was also commissioned into the CCF. After 29 years at the school he retired at the end of the summer term. On leaving the school he presented a pipe banner, featuring the school crest on one side and the Regimental cap-badge on the other side, to be carried by the school Pipe Major.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

Winter Edition of the Thistle

The Winter 2022/23 edition of the Thistle (vol 42) will cover events during the period 1 September 2022 – 31 January 2023. We aim to publish this edition by 28 February 2023. All items for inclusion should be submitted to the Regimental Office via admin@theroyalscots.co.uk no later than 3 February 2023, although it would be appreciated if contributions are submitted as soon as possible after events have occurred rather than leaving it to the last minute. All photographs should be high resolution where possible and should be accompanied by a caption which includes names of all people in the photograph.

Obituaries

Major Charles John Richard Errington

12 August 1918 to 29 August 2022



Major John Errington, who has died aged 104, was a pre-War Regular who evaded a German massacre in 1940, survived five years as a Prisoner of War (PoW) and narrowly avoided the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1946.

Major Charles John Errington, always known as John was the oldest surviving veteran of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment). Along with that achievement he was probably also the last surviving officer to have been commissioned into the British Army before the Second World War. He was the last survivor of the epic stand by the Regiment's 1st Battalion (1RS), along with 2nd Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment at Le Paradis holding part of the outer perimeter of the Dunkirk bridgehead. Their action, delaying the main German thrust over the three critical days of 27-30 May 1940, and fighting until the last round, assisted the bulk of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) to slip behind them to escape from the harbour and beaches back to England. Over 100 of those who survived the Battle, including many wounded, were subsequently massacred by troops of the German SS Division Totenkopf – a fact which only emerged towards the end of the War and has never been fully investigated.

After surviving the war as a PoW, John Errington re-joined the Regiment before being posted to the Middle East Centre for Arab Studies (MECAS) in Jerusalem to improve the Arabic he had learnt in the PoW camp from a Palestinian civilian member of the Pioneer Corps. On 22 July 1946 their Arabic tutor kept them later than usual into their lunch hour. They would normally have lunched in the King David Hotel. At 12.26 that day the Hotel was virtually destroyed by a bomb planted by the Zionist insurgent group, the Irgun, killing 91 in and around the hotel and wounding many more. John Errington always believed that their tutor knew what was about to happen and deliberately held them back that day.

John Errington was born on 12 August (The Glorious Twelfth!) 1918 at the family home, Beeslack, which was, quite literally, over the wall from the Regiment's Depot at Glencorse Barracks, just east of Penicuik. He was the second of two sons and two daughters. His father and maternal grandfather had both been Royals. He was educated at Wellington College. Keen to fly, he first joined the RAF and went to Cranwell. When his elder brother, Lancelot (Lance) elected to join the Civil Service, John, having qualified as a pilot, transferred to Sandhurst from where he commissioned, in July of 1938, being the third direct generation of the family to join the Regiment. An earlier maternal forbear had fought with the Regiment at Waterloo. (Lance went to Trinity College, Cambridge, achieving a double first, served in the RN during the War, and retired in 1976 having been Permanent Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Security. On retirement he was knighted for his services. He died in 2001.)

John Errington deployed to France with 1RS as part of the BEF in 1939 in the appointment of Regimental Signals Officer. As such he was issued with a motorcycle which delighted him. On 10 May 1940 the Germans launched their attack on Belgium and the Battalion moved forward to positions on the River Wavre. The German blitzkrieg forced them back into France and to a defensive position in the area around Le Paradis where he worked with Battalion Headquarters in a farmhouse. When it was set on fire they moved to a building across the road from where they successfully beat off German attacks. John Errington positioned himself at the upstairs windows from where, and much to his delight, he knocked out some enemy light armoured vehicles with a Boyes anti-tank rifle. Under cover of darkness on the night of 27 May, and led by Major Bruce the Adjutant, and, by then the acting Commanding Officer, the survivors took shelter hiding in a barn a little distance away. Two mornings later a local knocked on the door and asked for a cigarette; they had been surrounded by German troops and were captured. During that final battle he had sent two of his signallers on his motorcycle to try and locate Brigade Headquarters, but they never returned. He always feared that they had been killed or massacred as had many of the wounded soldiers left behind. It was seventy years later that he learnt the good news that they had been captured and survived.

After a very long march across Northern France and into Germany he spent five years as a PoW. He remembered that he was never bored. He kept himself busy learning Arabic, as mentioned above, reading books sent from home. He had learnt to sail as a young boy and thus studied sailing manuals to further his knowledge, which prepared him for a lifetime of sailing post-War. His sister who lived on Mull arranged for food parcels to be sent to him from Edinburgh's best shops, including cigars which he used as currency. He was respected by his German guards as he was able to turn his hand to many practical repairs in the camp. At one point he was in Oflog VIIC with officers of the 51st Highland Division and remembers practising the newly invented Reel of the 51st Highland Division.

Post-War, and after attending MECAS, he was posted to the Combined Intelligence Centre at RAF Habbaniya in Iraq. Whilst there he met Brenda Reeves who worked at the British Embassy in Jerusalem. Apart from meeting his future wife, who he married at Habbaniya in June 1948, he enjoyed visiting the Embassy as he could get good whisky there at a reasonable price! At the end of his Iraq posting, he bought a car and, with a Sergeant, drove home to the UK, passing through France and visiting Le Paradis en route. This was the last time he visited the town.

He attended The Staff College in 1950 before being promoted to Major and posted to Military Intelligence in the War Office in 1952 and, subsequently, Malaya during the Emergency from 1953-1956 for which he was Mentioned in Despatches 'for distinguished service'. After returning to the Regimental Depot at Glencorse, his final posting was to Libya in May 1958, again in Intelligence, before taking

redundancy in March 1959. The first of their three daughters had been born whilst they were in Libya.

In retirement he farmed family farms in Kincardineshire and on Mull. A noted sportsman in many fields, he became a very enthusiastic dinghy and offshore sailor, sailing his cruising yacht, Prince Vreckan, well into his 90s; having taught all his family to sail, a grandson became a Master Mariner. He enjoyed swimming and, aged over 100, still swam in the public baths in Kirkcudbright.

His wife Brenda died in 2018 and one daughter, Jane, pre-deceased him in 2020. He is survived by his other two daughters, Leila and Anne, 6 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

Lieutenant Colonel John Colin Caverhill

10 March 1943 to 27 March 2022



Colin Caverhill, who has died aged 79, was born on 10 March 1943 in Rawalpindi, India (later Pakistan), where his father was serving with the Indian Medical Service. Returning to England after Partition, they lived in the South West where Colin attended Sherborne School before entering the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in August 1961. Commissioned into the Regiment in August 1963, he joined C Company in Tidworth. He went with them on arctic warfare training at Fort Churchill on the Hudson Bay in January 1964 before going from one extreme to the other when, in May, the Battalion deployed to Aden and the Radfan. On one of the early tours to the latter he was commanding an ambush that shot and killed a camel, mistaking the noise for a party of terrorists. Pretty unfairly he was fined a month's pay to provide compensation to the owner! After considerable leg-pulling, many of his contemporaries did ask what the camel, and probably its owner, were doing in a proscribed area at night?

In 1966 he was posted to the Lowland Brigade Depot at Glencorse and, whilst there, married Elizabeth Haig (always known as "Ratty" because of her rat-tail hair as a little girl). In 1968 he trained as a helicopter pilot before moving to Penang to fly with the 10GR Air Platoon. He returned to 1RS as Adjutant to Nigel Stisted in 1971

before a posting to HQ Scotland in 1974, followed by command of C Company in Munster in 1977.

In 1979 Colin returned to the AAC on the staff at Middle Wallop until July 1981 when he went to Ballykinler as Mike Ashmore's second-in-command, including over the Regiment's 350th commemorations. He was an outstanding sportsman, particularly on the hockey field where he captained the Battalion team, at golf where he won the 350th Regimental Golf Match, and on the tennis court.

He went on to serve at HQ The Scottish Division followed by a third flying tour – this time as second-in-command of 3 Regiment AAC, before promotion in May 1988 to command 2nd Battalion 52nd Lowland Volunteers.

In late 1990 the family, with their daughters, moved down to Kent to Ratty's family home just outside Canterbury, from where he served his final tour of duty at the Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment (RARDE). Taking redundancy in 1991, he worked for several years as a Retired Office in Folkestone and Shornecliffe Garrison.

On final retirement he served his local community, particularly his Church and Riding for the Disabled, in many roles, continuing after Ratty's tragic early death in 2004. His final contact with the Regiment was when, despite his failing health, he achieved a personal ambition by marching on the 2021 Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph. He died on 27 March 2022.

Lieutenant John Barnetson

12 September 1923 to 8 July 2022



Jack Barnetson, who has died aged 98, was one of the four Royal Scots veterans who featured in the 2018 Scottish Soldiers World War 2 Regimental Memories film.

From an Edinburgh family and educated at the Royal High School, he was called up in 1942 and served until the end of World War 2. After basic and officer training he was posted to join the 2nd Battalion The Royal Scots (2RS) in Gibraltar on garrison duties. In the film he said he was very patriotic and had to fight for his country.

In summer 1944 2RS landed in Naples and advanced north, passing Rome, and in the autumn the Battalion was heavily committed in the

very hilly terrain between Florence and Bologna. In the Monte Grande sector Jack led a three man reconnaissance patrol in Ca di Co to establish if the Germans were occupying a prominent tower. The patrol came under sustained machine gun fire, which resulted in Jack being wounded twice and the other two Royal Scots also being wounded.

Jack was captured on the 24 October and was given first aid by his captors; after further medical attention he was transported to Oflag 79 in Braunschweig, Germany where he remained a PoW until the camp was liberated by the Americans on the 12 April 1945.

Describing his fighting experience Jack said: “War is a surreal experience, but sometimes it is necessary”. Jack’s elder brother Alec was an officer in the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots (1RS). He was killed in the fighting in the Arakan Peninsula, but Jack found it very hard to bear that his body was never found, and that he never had a Christian burial.

After the War he studied at Edinburgh University, and then pursued a successful career in teaching, the majority of this at Daniel Stewart’s Junior School. He married his wife, Jean, in 1970, and their home was in Colinton until she died in 2013. Jack took a keen interest in his family including his late sister Christian, his grand-nephew Louis and his wife and children, and his niece Paulette. A service of Thanksgiving for Jack’s life, attended by several Royal Scots, took place at Colinton Parish Church on the 21 July.



Deaths

- Mr Jack Hall – 10 March 2021 7/9RS – belated entry
- Mr Douglas McGregor – 1 May 2022 1RS
- Mr Robert Shaw – 18 May 2022 1RS
- Lord Roger Swinfen – 4 Jun 2022 1RS
- Mr Gary Prior – 6 Jun 2022 1RS
- Maj Alasdair McVittie – 24 Jun 2022 7/9RS
- Lt Jack Barnetson – 8 Jul 2022 2RS
- Mr Chris Gillespie – 29 Jul 2022 1RS
- Mr Alan George Englefield – 2 Aug 2022 1RS
- Mr Alexander Lindsay Waters – 5 Aug 2022 1RS
- Mr Gary Drummond – 17 Aug 2022 1RS
- Maj John Errington – 29 Aug 2022 1RS

Royal Scots Golf Club Details

President: Walter Hutchison
Captain Jimmy McConnell
Secretary David Morris

Contact: bampops1@gmail.com

Association Branch Details

EDINBURGH

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
Tel: 0131 557 0405
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.

2022

Day	Date	Event	Time	Remarks
Sun	Oct 9	Gladdy Murray Golf Trophy		Grangemouth Golf Club
Tue	Oct 11	Museum and Heritage Committee Meeting	1030	RS Museum
Thu	Oct 13	Rededication of Peebles War Memorial	1800	Peebles
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
Thu	Nov 10	Opening of the Field of Remembrance Westminster	1030	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
Sat	Nov 12	Regimental planting of crosses at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster, followed by a Remembrance Service in the Abbey Cloisters	1800	Southern Branch
Sun	Nov 13	Remembrance Day Cenotaph City Chambers Canongate Kirk The Royal Scots Club Haymarket Peebles Whitburn	1030 1045 1045 1200 1045 1045 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	Col of Regt SCOTS update to Association Presidents of antecedent regiments.	1030	The Castle
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		

2023

Day	Date	Event	Time	Remarks
Tue	Jan 3	Regimental Office reopens		
Tue	Jan 3	Regimental Museum reopens		
Fri	Jan 20	East of Scotland Branch Burn’s Night Supper	TBC	TBC
Tue	Feb 21	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club

Forecast of Events

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2023

Day	Date	Event	Time	Remarks
	Feb TBC	Association General Committee Meeting	TBC	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Feb 24	Association AGM	1900	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Mar 24	The Royal Regiment of Scotland Black Hackle Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Sat	Mar 25	Col of Regt SCOTS update to Association Presidents of antecedent regiments	1030	The Castle
Sat	Mar 25	Association Regimental Day Dinner	TBC	TBC
Tue	Mar 28	The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) Regimental Day		390th anniversary
Tue	Mar 28	The Royal Regiment of Scotland Formation Day		
Fri - Sun	Apr 14-16	Association Weekend		Rothiemurchus
Sat	Apr 29	Regimental Reunion		Royal Scots Club
Tue	May 2	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	May 19	Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf Match	0800	Liberton Golf Club
Sat	May 20	107th Gretna Memorial Service	1045	Rosebank Cemetery
Fri	May 26	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Thu	Jun 8	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founder's Day	1000	RH Chelsea
	Jun TBC	Armed Forces Day Edinburgh	1030	Form up Charlotte Square
	Jun TBC	McCrae's Bn Trust visit to the Somme		Contalmaison, France
	Jul TBC	Kohima Commemoration		York Minster
Sat	Sep 9 (TBC)	NI Veterans' Association Service of Remembrance	1130	National Memorial Arboretum
Tue	Sep 19	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Oct 27	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	TBC	Officers' Golf Outing		TBC
Fri	TBC	Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
	Nov TBC	Remembrance Service Heart of Midlothian	TBC	Tynecastle
	Nov TBC	Association General Committee Meeting		Royal Scots Club
Tue - Fri	Nov 7-10	RS Remembrance 2022 Event		Dalkeith Palace
	Nov TBC	Opening of the Field of Remembrance Westminster	1030	Southern Branch
	Nov TBC	Remembrance Service at the Scottish National War Memorial	1045	The Castle
Sat	Nov 11	Remembrance Service at Glencorse Gates	1045	Glencorse Barracks
Sat	Nov 11	Regimental planting of crosses at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster, followed by a Remembrance Service in the Abbey Cloisters	1800	Southern Branch
Tue	Nov 21	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
	Dec TBC	Volunteers' Christmas Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri	Dec 22	Regimental Office closes for the Festive Season		
Fri	Dec 22	Regimental Museum closes for the Festive Season		