



# The Thistle

Journal of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

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## Foreword

**Brigadier GE Lowder MBE**

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

I hope that this edition of the Thistle finds you well, enjoying the Spring after a wet, grey and particularly cold Winter. Although we continue to face into a number of post-pandemic headwinds, mostly related to the cost of living and the cost of doing business, I can report that the four pillars of our Regiment are in good shape.



*At the Memorial Gates, Glencorse; l to r: Maj Guy Richardson (also wearing his father's medals), Brig George Lowder, Lt Col David Jack*

**Association and Commemoration.** The Winter edition of the Thistle rightly captures our involvement in the previous year's commemorative and remembrance events. Last year we again covered all the bases and I am most grateful to all those who represented us at the 13 formal events where we parade and lay a wreath and of course the many other events across the land. Last November, after attending the service at the Glencorse Gates on Saturday morning, I headed to London to join the Southern Branch of the Association. I have previously attended the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey, but I had never attended the service on the eve of the Remembrance Sunday march at the Cenotaph. I can recommend both, especially to those who have, like me, never marched at the Cenotaph. The short service in the Field of Remembrance at 6pm on the Saturday, followed by the Act of Remembrance in the South Cloister of Westminster Abbey at 6.30pm, both conducted by the Canon in Residence, are very moving, both for their setting and the peaceful atmosphere inside the Abbey. We are most grateful to Christopher Delacombe for nurturing our relationship with the Abbey, for arranging the Southern Branch services, the Cenotaph

marching contingent, the lunch and all the other arrangements for Remembrance Sunday in London.

After 10 years as Chairman of the Southern Branch, Christopher has decided to stand aside and is in the process of handing over to Brian de la Haye. I am hugely grateful to Christopher for leading the Southern Branch of the Association, maintaining strong communications with a disparate group right across England and not just in the South-East. He has ensured that we are well represented south of the border at a multitude of events, and I well know just how much time and effort this takes. Thank you for your exemplary service to the Association Christopher and sincere thanks to Brian for agreeing to step into the Chair's shoes.

Another particularly poignant moment last year was the short service conducted at our Monument in West Princes Street Gardens by the Association Padre, the Reverend Iain May. This follows the opening of the Garden of Remembrance at the Scott Monument and for the last couple of years the Lord Provost has joined us at our Monument. It was Jim Anderson who reminded us that we really ought to do something at our Monument each year and so this new "tradition" has evolved. We remembered Jim who sadly died unexpectedly just 3 weeks earlier.

I would also like to pay tribute to Tam Douglas and Tam Logan, who are stepping down as Vice Chair and Secretary respectively of the Association after 8 years in post, although they were involved in other roles before these ones and will continue to be involved in the future. The health and vibrancy of the Association is due in no small part to their commitment and dedication. In particular, it has been as a result of their vision and unstinting efforts that we have Association Standard Parties that are conspicuous by their smartness.

The reports from the various Branches of the Association clearly demonstrate that they are thriving. That said, they would all welcome more members and anyone who was a Royal Scot will be made most welcome. I am also very grateful to The Association Standard Parties who have turned out at a raft of events and services at home and abroad. I also recognise and welcome that there is a great deal of Royal Scots associating that is conducted outwith the formal Association meetings, events and gatherings. If you are getting together, do let us know and send photographs to the Regimental Secretary.

**The Club.** I am pleased to report that the Club has weathered the stormy waters of the last few years and is in a reasonable position financially and physically. Membership has held up but is lower than pre-pandemic and we continue to experience considerable cost pressures of doing business. We cannot afford to be complacent. I am deeply grateful to all those who give their valuable time, expertise, experience and energy to support the successful operation of the Club, which includes the War Memorial Fund Trustees, the Directors of The Royal Scots Club Management (RSCM) Ltd and the Club Committee, many of whom are not Royal Scots but gladly support our living war memorial. There have been some new appointments to refresh these components of our governance and we have a healthy turnover of well qualified supporters with the skills and competencies we need. Of course, we remain extremely grateful to Adrian and all the staff for the excellent service that they provide.

You may be aware that the Chair of the Club Committee, Clinton Hicks, has informed me of his intention to stand down by the next Club AGM on Wednesday 5 April 2023. This comes after 6 outstanding years of service as Chair. We are most grateful to Clinton for his superb commitment and leadership.

Clinton standing down and the current landscape present an opportunity to review the role of the Club Committee. The Constitution of the Club is not explicit on this and it strikes me, my fellow Trustees and the Directors of RSCM Ltd that in the interest of sound governance now would be a good time to seek the views of the current Club Committee on their role. How could the Club Committee even better help grow the Club membership, represent Members, review the programme of events and encourage even greater attendance at events? While we conduct this engagement we will not rush to elect a new Chair of the Club Committee. I sense that the refreshed role of the Club Committee will shape the selection of the next Chair.

And finally on the Club, we are taking advice on charitable status. If the Club is to be secure as one of our surviving pillars, we must put it on the firmest of foundations for the future.

**Museum and Heritage.** The Museum has re-opened to the public and we now have a full-time professional Curator, Ms Sophie Lenihan. Welcome to the Royal Scot family Sophie. The Museum Committee continue to oversee and deliver a number of projects which are reported in this edition. I am very grateful to them for time and commitment.

## Trustees



Capt Nick Edwardson has joined the Board of Trustees of the Regimental Trust, replacing Mr David Nisbet as the Trustee responsible for communications. Nick graduated from the University of Exeter gaining a BA Hons in Russian before being commissioned into The Royal Scots in 1992 and joining the Battalion in Fort George, Inverness. He served in Northern Ireland and Scotland before being posted to the Army Training Regiment, Glencorse from where he left the Army at the end of his

Short Service Commission. His subsequent career has been spent mainly in financial markets in London and Edinburgh, primarily trading derivatives and equities before his current role leading commercial activity for the global multi-asset group of a large Anglo Dutch investment house. He and his wife, Sonya, live in the Scottish Borders where he enjoys fishing, shooting and maintaining the Scottish National Collection of apple cultivars.

## Regimental Cypher

Following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II the Regimental Trustees reviewed the design of the Regimental Cypher. In doing so, relevant heraldic advice was sought. As the Regiment is no longer in the Order of Battle it was considered inappropriate to amend the Cypher to that of King Charles III, and the current Cypher will be retained in perpetuity as Queen Elizabeth II was the last monarch the Regiment served. The Regimental Trustees confirmed this decision at their meeting on 28 October 2022.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



**The Regimental Trust.** The work to bring the Association, Museum Trust and Regimental Trust under the one umbrella of a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) continues, with authority from the Office of The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) for the initial steps.

Nick Edwardson has taken over from David Nisbet as the Trustee responsible for Communications. Sincere thanks to David for all his support and wise counsel over the last 10 years. We continue to keep our succession plans for all the Boards, Limited Company and Committees under review. Please don't hesitate to shout if you would like to volunteer some of your time to assist. Most pressing at the moment are volunteers to assist the Regimental Secretary with our communications across all channels and someone to help write, submit and track bids for external funding.

I look forward to the next time our paths cross and hope to see you at one or more of the many events and gatherings that are on offer. I would be very pleased to see as many of you as possible marching behind our Standards on Armed Forces Day 2023 on Saturday 24 June.

Yours Aye,

*George Lowder*

Brigadier George Lowder MBE

## Museum Curator

We wish to extend a warm welcome our new Museum Curator, Ms Sophie Lenihan, who assumed the position in November 2022. Sophie studied for a BA in Archaeology at the University of Exeter. Having an interest in museums, from there she went on to achieve a Masters in Museum and Gallery Studies at the University of St Andrews. After graduating she spent three years at the Museums of the University of St Andrews, including stints as a digitation officer and a hazards management officer. Sophie is no stranger to the military, having spent her childhood hopping from country to country with her RAF parents. She has spent her first few months in post getting to grips with the long history of The Royal Scots and replacing all thoughts of Squadrons with Battalions.



## Regimental Tweed

After a gap of a number of years we are planning to order some Regimental Tweed. The previous run was negotiated with Lovat Mill, Hawick by Lt Col Jim Blythe when he was Regimental Secretary. This provider has been approached and confirmed that the relevant details are held and has produced a sample that meets the requirement. The tweed is widely admired and there is balance between exclusivity and using it to promote the Regiment and its heritage. It is proposed to make the tweed available only to members of the Club as well as members of the Regiment for tailoring. Additionally, a number of items including the tweed will be made and these will be sold unrestricted by the Club. These items could include hip-flasks, waterproof-backed picnic rugs, cushions, and bags, and will assist in the promotion of The Royal Scots brand. The amount of tweed initially ordered will depend partially on the predicted demand, so it will be helpful if anyone interested in ordering some material could notify the Regimental Secretary of their intention.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



## Association News

Like all good Thistle notes I must begin with it seems like yesterday when I last typed some notes!

Firstly, I must thank the "Twa Tams" for their good guidance and assistance over the last year and now that they are standing down from Vice-Chair and Secretary respectively it would be absolutely remiss of us not to thank them for their drive, commitment and energy to all things "Royals", however they are not leaving the Association and will still play a large part in the Standard Party and their respective branches.

This year has seen the events calendar filled and plenty of socialising conducted. Throughout this edition you will see the articles from the many organised events and functions. Do not sit in the house when you can get out and attend some functions....even one a year will keep you up to speed with all things Royals.. I must thank those members who have organised functions throughout the year as these things take time and effort. There have been many Remembrance events attended by the Standard Party and Association members and plenty notes to read.

## Branches

### NI Branch

On 29 August 2022 Mr Ian Laurie and Mr Glen (Big Shug) Wilson laid a wreath at the memorial of the three RHF soldiers killed during the troubles. We held our Branch AGM on 10 September 2022 and had a welcome visit from Mr Tam Douglas and Mr Tam Logan, who were each presented with a small gift as a token of our appreciation for the work they have done for us as a Branch and the Association as a whole. During the evening we moved outside as a Branch to the RBL Newtownards cenotaph where we laid a wreath and toasted the memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. Remembrance Day was very well attended and wreaths were laid at the cenotaph by the Branch members. A further wreath was placed at Palace Barracks Garden of



*NI Branch AGM; Front l to r: Mr Maxi MacDonald, Mr Stevie Brown, Mr Ian Laurie, Mr Tam Logan, Mr Tam Douglas, Mr Jocky Scott, Mr Graham Highet  
Rear l to r: Mr Billy Brown, Mr Kenny Boyle, Mrs Deborah Boyle, Mr Bob Dempster, Mrs Kim MacDonald, Mr Eric Wilson, Mr Derek Millar, Mr Ben Taylor*

Unfortunately, the RS soldier membership for the RS Club has been stopped due to lack of take up and I will say again it is not an officer's club; it is The Royal Scots living war memorial. It is your Club – please use it. There are plenty of functions to be attended this year with the Forecast of Events on the Regimental Website; have a look and attend at least 1 function or gathering and say hello. You do not have to be a member to attend your first event but it is only £10 a year after the first event. Use the events to tell us how we can take our Association Branches forward and say what you want from your Association.

Just recently we received a request and agreed to form an eighth branch of the Association, so would like to welcome the 'Fijian Branch of The Royal Scots Association' to our fold. They currently meet monthly with an average attendance of 16. *"Kidavaki mai ki na qelenisipi"*

If we all come to something then we can grow and have bigger parties and gatherings; let's do it and keep meeting up with former colleagues for a blether and a beer.

### Major Stu Marshall

Remembrance by Mr Dick Seve, while Mr Davey McKendrick attended the Belfast Garden of Remembrance and laid a wooden cross on behalf of the Branch. Davey has recently completed a walk to raise funds for the ABF The Soldiers' Charity, and is presently involved in a further fund-raising event, The Christmas dinner night and dance was a major success as always; the entertainment was provided by a band called DNR of which Mr Brian (Beed the Drummie) Mercer is the drummer, and what a very good group they are. We look forward to our next meeting 1 February 2023 where we have a presentation from a member of Veteran Support NI. We would like to welcome the following new members to our Branch: Colin and Dorothy Timms (RS / GORDONS), Graham and Sheila Highet (RS / 1 SCOTS), and Bill Kama (RS / 1 SCOTS / 1 RANGER).

### Mr Colin (Maxi) MacDonald

## RS 373

Team RS 363 is a small and committed group of volunteers working closely with the Museum Committee to promote Royal Scots heritage, including the virtualisation of the Collection so that it is accessible worldwide. The main focus for 2023 will be the organisation of a Remembrance event that will take place at Dalkeith Palace during the period 4 – 8 November 2023. The purpose of the event is to promote the continuing relevance of Remembrance in the contemporary world by sharing the unique connection between The Royal Scots and Dalkeith Palace over the years, connecting other museums, historical groups, schools and the wider community in Midlothian. Additional projects include commemoration events to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of actions in which Royal Scots were involved in the Far East and Italy in 1943, and updating the Rolls of Honour, both the books and the lists on the website, as additional information becomes available about those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

**Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL**  
**Leader Team RS373**

## Museum & Heritage

I am delighted to report that the Museum has been granted full accreditation by Arts Council England via Museums Galleries Scotland. We can now relax as we have 5 years before we have to go through the process again. There has been a change of personalities within the Museum. Mr Tom Gordon, our Museum Assistant, has left for pastures new. In his place we have recruited a Museum Curator, Ms Sophie Lenihan. She has been recruited from the University of St Andrews Museums and we extend a warm welcome to her.

As ever the Museum does not stand still. The post-1945 project has now been completed and covers the period of Operations and Family admirably. In addition a TV screen showing a stream of pictures on a loop covering WW2 in both Europe and Kohima has also been installed. This new screen is located at the start of the WW2 display cases. The Colour Belts project has also completed. The project aim was to display the Colour Belts and Drum Major's Baldrick (Sash) presented to the 7/9RS in 1929 by Mr Small in memory of his son who was killed in action on 23 April 1915 at the second battle of Ypres. At the presentation Mr Small said 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 display is on the left immediately after passing through the Memorial Plaque ('Dead Man's Penny') Arch. The new shelves in the Library have given us much more room to tidy the library and the process of indexing the book collection is well under way.



*Damage to the letter box that has now been repaired*



*The letter box after restoration*



*The restored bookcase, now in The Royal Scots Club*

During the reporting period more property belonging to 1RS has been returned from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Ranger Regiment. This has included much silver, pictures and crockery from the Officers' Mess and pictures from the WO's & Sgts' Mess. The crockery has been given to the Club, although two of each item will be held by the Museum. The remainder of the items have been, or will be, accessioned into the Museum and it is hoped that much will work its way down to the Club so that it can be displayed rather than gather dust in the storeroom – it is work in progress.

Restoration is a major factor in maintaining the Collection for the future. Two items recently restored have been the small post box that used to sit in the entrance hall of the Officers' Mess and a small bookcase featuring carved cap badges and battle honours. The pictures show the post box before and after restoration. I am sure that you will all agree that the restorer has made an excellent job in bringing it back to its original condition. A home to display it is yet to be decided. The bookcase was presented by Miss Davidson to 1RS in 1899 for the friendship existing between the Regiment and the Glasgow Soldiers Home. The photograph of the bookcase shows it on display in the Club.

Funding has now been secured for the construction of two silver display cases in the Douglas Room in the Club to display some of the silver returned from 1 SCOTS, now 1 RANGER. The cabinet maker has already started on the purchase of the special glass required, to take the weight of the silver, for the cases and intends to install them in the Spring.

### Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Rae



### The last RS WW2 Veteran

It is with mixed emotions that we write this article about Mr George Edmondson, who was to the best of our knowledge the last surviving Royal Scots WW2 veteran. He reached the remarkable milestone of 100 years of age in January, but sadly passed away just ten days later. He was born on 18 January 1923 in Hawick and enlisted into the Army on 23 March 1941 at the Army Recruiting Centre in Galashiels. After completing training at Redford Barracks he spent a couple of months with the 70<sup>th</sup> Youth Battalion and 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion before being assigned to the D Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion. He served with 1RS in India and Burma until the end of the war. He then had an assignment to work in the kitchens at Buchanan Castle near Drymen, which was a military hospital and then The Army School of Education, before leaving the Army in 1947. He settled in Whitburn, working in the Polkemmet Pit and the British Motor Corporation plant at Bathgate, and enjoyed touring the Borders in his camper van. George married Jean on Hogmanay 1945 and they had 8 children; the family now extends to 17 grandchildren, 31 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great-grandchildren. We salute him for his service to the Regiment and Country, and his long and prosperous life.

**Mr Paul Robertson**





## The Road to Kobe House

### Diary of Lance Corporal Harold Downing 2RS

In November 2022 *The Road to Kobe House*, a memoir and archive of LCpl Harold Downing's experiences from enlistment to liberation, was donated by Mr Paul Homer on behalf of his late wife Anthea, LCpl Downing's daughter.

Harold Downing sets the scene in Manchester, recounting a childhood in post WWI Britain where a family of three were able to get by on the small pension provided following the death of his father in the War. From an early age, following enlistment as a chorister at St James School, Birch-in-Rusholme, Harold Downing gained an interest in music. Aged 21, he looked to make a break from his family. All working and pooling resources, they were able to live a comfortable life, however he took issue with the fact that wherever his sister and mother went, he went too!

An advert appeared in the Manchester Evening News for an opening for a pianist in 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots. He wrote to the Bandmaster, Lieutenant S Rhodes, who suggested he go down to the recruitment centre in Manchester. He signed up for seven years with the Colours, then a further five years with the Reserve. He admits he was not fired up to fight for King and Country, he was just excited at the opportunity to become a good musician.

He joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion at The Citadel for training both in the Army and in the band. On arrival he was asked which instrument he would like to play. He asked for a saxophone, but was given a clarinet. In 1936 he was sent with the Battalion to India. We get to see and hear the passage from a man who had never travelled as far as London before he joined the Army, let alone India. The time here is full of train rides, evocative descriptions of scenery and interesting characters. Of note is his time spent in the foothills of Simla, passing through the village of Dagshat where, despite the remote location, you could still purchase your favourite Cadbury's chocolate or Gillette razor.

LCpl Downing left India in 1938 for Hong Kong. Much like India, Hong Kong was enjoyable apart from the climate and bugs. He describes how the humidity was so intense, you would clean your steel bayonet, and within two days it would be covered with rust. He spent his time here playing with the Band for various colourful characters, including at a millionaire's twin daughters' weddings, in a house modelled brick for brick after Edinburgh Castle. It is in this passage we are also introduced to Janada, a Mexican contortionist who LCpl Downing met and wrote to up until the fall of Hong Kong. Despite the outbreak of the war, life went on as usual here, with a small amount of money taken from each engagement to go towards the bomber fund. However, when news broke of the attack on Pearl Harbour, the Royal Scots knew their time was limited and that they would have their own battle against the incoming Japanese.

The Japanese arrived quickly, as did the instinct for survival. The Royal Scots were ordered to a nearby hospital, and soon realised this would be where the Japanese would start bringing in their injured soldiers. As such, they ensured any Japanese soldier was treated with the best medical equipment available. When one soldier died they wrapped him in a Japanese flag. When the rest arrived and saw how the Japanese patients had been cared for, they treated the Royal Scots more reasonably than they may have done otherwise.



*Kobe House*

Following the fall of Hong Kong LCpl Downing describes the long march to Shamshui PoW Camp, formerly the barracks of the Middlesex Regiment. Some prioritised food and carried as many tins as they could manage, some chose to layer with warm clothes in case they were still there come winter. The Engineers brought tools such that when they arrived at Shamshui they could get sinks and water systems running. Life was hard here, although they were determined to enjoy themselves as much as possible to show that their spirit was not broken and continued to hold concerts every Sunday. Eventually, they were told by their captors they were being moved. They were not told where but were informed they were going to 'a very beautiful country'. You can make the leap to guess where they were headed.

What follows is a first-hand account of the sinking of the LISBON MARU. This chapter, which we can infer is rooted in a truly traumatic experience, is approached with a sense of calm, veneration, and at some points humour by LCpl Downing. He reflects that it is hard to believe that he, a man who could not swim and at one point was trapped in the lower decks under a hatch sealed by the Japanese, made it through the ordeal, but he does. He is rescued from the water by the Japanese navy (who he seems to speak of much more favourably than the army) and is ferried to mainland Japan.

On arrival in Japan he was taken to Kobe House. He makes a point early in his book that, unlike many who have written of their experiences, he would not have a focus on the many atrocities which he witnessed there. Whilst we get fleeting references to some events, he focuses more on the personal relationships, good or bad, with Japanese soldiers and civilians encountered, the work they did throughout their time at Kobe House and their tactics for survival. As such, whilst there is an understanding that this was not a pleasant place to be, the chapters are brimmed full of stories of the British scoundrels not so much testing the line with the Japanese but instead using it as a long jump start line. They have funny nicknames for their captors, including the recurring character Uma San (Horse Face). They give grief to their captors about the superiority of the British Military and how Japan would lose the war, and, most crucially, they use their work assignments as an opportunity to steal resources. The small number of yen they had held no value. Instead, they would trade bowls of sugar, tobacco, peanuts, or soap. Nothing had special value, it was a bowl for a bowl. All in all, by the end of the book you have the impression it was the PoWs in charge at the camp, not the Japanese.

Towards the end of the war the attacks on Japan become more frequent. Kobe House is hit by napalm, and LCpl Downing recalls he and his camp mates escaping down a burning flight of stairs. As many of the homes in this region were made of paper and wood, the carpet bombing brought about total, unsalvageable destruction for them.



*A sketch of Harold Downing, 1945*



*Harold and Pete*

It is strange to read about the 6 and 9 August 1945, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, from the point of view of someone with no ready access to the news. LCpl Downing recalls on these days an odd feeling in camp. The guards are subdued and whispering urgently to each other, the staff don't take notice of the PoWs and all they could find out from their old Hancho (with whom they had a fairly good relationship) was that there was a big boom in a big city. LCpl Downing and his camp mates were thrilled and used it as more fodder for taunts – they had no clue at this point what an atom-bomb was, nor the total devastation or fallout from it.



A few days before surrender some men decide to break out of camp to go and get food. Far from being punished on discovery, the Japanese guards tell the men to go to the guard room, where they took a cut of the stolen food then let the PoWs return to their quarters. LCpl Downing recalls the camp was filled with campfires that night and invokes the smells of sausages being cooked in butter. Not being used to such fatty food in such quantity, he was sick for three days.

After surrender on 15 August 1945, the Americans arrived in Japan and liberated the PoWs. Much to the prisoners' annoyance, a supply package of clothes, sweets and food was dropped into Kobe, straight through the kitchen ceiling - the one decent roof they had. However, LCpl Downing does concede that the green padded jacket he received at this time lasted 30 years.

The homeward journey for LCpl Downing, following years of scraping by and focusing on survival, is filled with plenty of food, quality entertainment and pampering by the Americans. They were given kit bags which, wherever he went, were filled with cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, peanuts, chocolate bars and the like. They journeyed through Japan, sailed across to America, landing in San Francisco, before boarding a train which took them across the continent and up through Canada. He

always believed he would get out of Japan, but never imagined such a homeward journey.

After one last boat ride, the PoWs arrived in Southampton to board a train to Piccadilly. He notes that it was good they had friends and family, for there was no fanfare on their arrival. They returned home to a good meal of Lancashire hot pot, and all vows taken to never again throw away a bit of bread were soon forgotten when they were back in plenty.

Throughout the book LCpl Downing notes he had one wish for when he returned home. That was to get married and have a daughter. Luckily for him, his wish came true. His daughter grew up, and encouraged him to write of his experiences, which ultimately resulted in this book, along with original photographs, prints and postcards. It was her wish for her father's story to be memorialised and remembered which led to this copy being donated by her husband, Mr Homer. This section of *The Thistle* is not enough to properly capture his story, and if anyone wishes to read it in full it is available through appointment at The Royal Scots Museum and Archive.

**Ms Sophie Lenihan**  
Museum Curator

## Remembrance

### General

The Regimental Standard Party joined other veterans at the Northern Ireland Veterans' Association Service of Remembrance on 8 September 2022 at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. The main period of national Remembrance commenced with the opening of the Garden of Remembrance in Princes Street Gardens East by the Scott Monument on 24 October 2022, where the Standard of the Edinburgh Branch of the Association was on parade. This was followed by a short service at The Royal Scots Monument in Princes Street Gardens West, during which Col Robert Watson planted a cross to remember Mr Jim Anderson, who had been the main instigator of this particular ceremony. The main Regimental Remembrance event was conducted at the Glencorse Memorial on Saturday 12 November 2022 with an attendance of approximately 60, and was followed by the customary curry lunch in the barracks. Although 2 SCOTS was deployed on a training exercise in Oman the rear operation group hosted us magnificently. There were the normal range of events on Remembrance Sunday, but the main one was the annual National Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph in London, followed by the Veterans' Parade; there was a good Royal Scots contingent, including our three In-Pensioners at the Royal Hospital in Chelsea.



*The Regimental Standard Party at the National Memorial Arboretum;  
I to r: Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Mr Stuart Aitken, Mr Harry Wright*



*At The Royal Scots Monument; I to r: Lt Col David Jack,  
Brig George Lowder, Lord Provost Robert Aldridge, Mr Andy Kyle,  
Rev Iain May, Mr Harry Wright, Mr Tam Logan*



*Opening of the Garden of Remembrance in Edinburgh  
(Photo by John Preece, Edinburgh Reporter)*



*The Royal Scots party at by the Scott Monument after the opening of the  
Garden of Remembrance; I to r: Mr Andy Gilmour, Maj Stu Marshall, Mr Tam  
Logan, Mr Eddie Welsh, Mr Andy Kyle, Mr Colin Smail, Brig George Lowder, Mr  
Jack Wilson, Mr Bill Bennett, Mr Andy Boyd, Mr JP Jones, Mr Harry Wright,  
Mr Tam Douglas, Rev Iain May, Lt Col David Jack*



*The Regimental Remembrance Service at Glencorse*

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



## Cenotaph

Remembrance Weekend in London took place from 10 to 13 November 2022. This is the major Regimental event held in England during the year and, although a Regimental event, it is organised and largely funded by the Southern Branch but with considerable financial help from central funds.

The first event is the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. Tam Millar acted as Front Man (he tells me for the last time) and, after considerable negotiation, our allocation of tickets was increased from two to ten.



*HM the Queen Consort and Mr Tam Millar*



*Field of Remembrance with The Royal Scots plot on the right*

On the Saturday we once again held our two acts of remembrance at Westminster Abbey, the first at our regimental plot with a short service led by Dr James Hawkey, Canon in Residence, followed by a further act of remembrance in the South Cloister at the memorial to those who have died on active service since 1945 which was originally unveiled by our Patron, HRH The Princess Royal. At these two services we remember those of the regimental family who have died in the past year and those who have died on active service since 1945. We are greatly indebted to the team at the Abbey for their support over the years.



*At Westminster Abbey; I to r: Mrs Fiona Barnetson, Mr Vic Lucas, Maj Simon Barnetson, Brig Robbie Scott-Bowden*



*In the Cloisters; I to r: Mrs Fiona Barnetson, Maj Simon Barnetson, Mr Any Kay, Brig Robbie Scott-Bowden, Mrs Clare Frasse-Hopewell, Maj Christopher Delacombe, Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell, Dr James Hawkey (Canon in Residence), Col Edward Cowan*

On the Sunday twenty two Royals paraded on Horse Guards for the Cenotaph ceremony and parade. We had the great pleasure of being joined by our three new In-Pensioners at The Royal Hospital Chelsea and also by our Association President, Brig George Lowder.



*Andy Kay, Danny Dempsey and Vic Lucas*



*The Royal Scots contingent on Horse Guards Parade*

In the meantime the ladies had gathered at the East India Club to watch the proceedings on TV and were then joined by the well-exercised marchers for the post parade lunch. We were delighted to welcome our three In-Pensioners to the lunch as our guests and sat down thirty two strong. Once again we are most grateful to James Milne at whose invitation we are able to use his club.

It was a most successful weekend and I can only stress again how important it is that all members of the regimental family feel that they can, and indeed, should, join this annual Regimental gathering at least once.

**Major Christopher Delacombe**



## Nederweert

The cemetery at Nederweert in The Netherlands contains the last resting place of 20 members of The Royal Scots, one of whom is Private Douglas Alexander Langham, a signaller in the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion, whose grave has been adopted by one of the local residents, Jan Winkelmolten. Research into the background of some of the fallen buried at the cemetery has been carried out by another local, Jurgen Beekers, on a voluntary basis, and as the result of his research relatives of Douglas were contacted in early 2021. Since this initial contact regular correspondence between Jurgen and the nephew of Douglas, who was named after his uncle, has been maintained. This culminated in a visit by some family members to the cemetery in November 2022 in order to pay respects to Douglas, John Lamarra (who died with Doug and is buried next to him) and other members of The Royal Scots.

The Regimental Secretary of The Royal Scots provided a wreath to Les and Doug Langham who were given the privilege of placing it on the cenotaph on behalf of the Regiment and in honour of all the members of The Royal Scots buried there. Those who were fortunate enough to attend the ceremony on behalf of the Langham family, including Doug's sister Vera Doak nee Langham (now aged 94), were: his nephews Les and Doug, the latter's sons Scott and Gary, and Scott's son Bradley. We were all honoured to represent the family, The Royal Scots and the RAF Reserves. We were also humbled by the dedication and friendship shown by the locals, and especially Jurgen and his wife, Karin, and Jan and his wife Riek - they are special people indeed and we were only too pleased to be able to thank them in person for what they do for our fallen heroes.

On our arrival on the afternoon of 11 November, the Langham family representatives met Jurgen, Karin, Jan and Riek at a cafe in Meijel. During the introductions Jurgen and Jan were presented with a Royal Scots plaque each and their wives received a "Forever in our Hearts" poppy plaque. In return the Langhams received enhanced photos of Doug from Jurgen and a wooden plaque from Jan. Jurgen then took the whole party on a very detailed and educational tour of the battlefield, moving from Meijel to Neerkant and then on various side roads to the area where The Royal Scots were forming up prior to continuing their assault towards Moostdijk.

The main commemoration took place on 12 November and the family



**Douglas A Langham**



**John Lamarra**



**Les and Doug Langham with the wreath**

paraded at the Nederweert Town Hall where we were met by the organiser of the whole event Niek Hendrix and provided with coffee and sandwiches before proceeding to the cemetery. The family also took the opportunity to specifically honour Doug and John, who lived, fought, died and now lie together at rest in the cemetery. Crosses in their memory were placed below the grave stones and Sgt Scott Langham (RAF Reserve) and his father (Capt Int Corps ret'd) Douglas A Langham saluted the graves of Doug and John.

An except taken from a local newspaper: *Under a beautiful autumn sun, the annual traditional commemoration was held on Saturday afternoon, November 1, the Saturday closest to November 11, Remembrance Day in Holland. The organization was this year for the first time at the Foundation Adoption Graves Nederweert in collaboration with the municipality and support of the Brothers in Arms department Ospel. Ceremony leader this year was Peter William Schreuders, board member of the foundation. Traditionally, the Banner Guard of the Brothers in Arms were present, with this year the standard bearer of the Royal British Legion, the bagpipers of Pipers Society Castle D'Aldenghoor from Haelen, Vocal group Milagri and Fanfare Concordia from Leveroy, Scouting Nederweert. Special guests this year were relatives of the soldiers buried here, the family of Claude Mosley, Douglas Alexander Langham, John Redford and Andrew Hyde. Wreathes were laid by Mr Doug and Mr Les Langham on behalf of The Royal Scots Regiment and Sergeant Scott Langham on behalf of the Royal Air Force Reserve.*

### Mr Doug Langham



**Doug and Les Langham pay their respects**

### Roll of Honour

25 Oct 1944 Capt Francis Michael Walker Edie	2 Nov 1944 Pte Arthur Hope Pte John Lamarra Pte Douglas Alexander Langham Pte Peter Morna Pte Cecil Charles Francis Potter
31 Oct 1944 LCpl Samuel Anderson Pte Michael Pendrell Attwood Pte Robert Browne Pte Arthur Chetham Pte Ernest William Dadswell Pte Thomas Gamsby Pte Andrew Baxter Harkness Pte James William Hodkin Pte Sidney Alfred Lines Pte Richardson Ridley Pte William Stewart	4 Nov 1944 Pte Charles Prescott Claydon  22 Dec 1944 Pte Arthur Stanley Smith  30 Jan 1945 Lt Terence James Hugo



**The Langhams beside Doug's grave; l to r: Scott, Les, Bradley, Doug, Gary**



## Background to the battle near Nederweert

There are 20 members of The Royal Scots buried at the cemetery, most of whom were from the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion and 11 of whom were killed during an artillery barrage on their location on the night of 31 October 1944. Details of the activities of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion are shown below and were obtained through the research carried out by Jurgen Beekers from official records and the War Diary of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

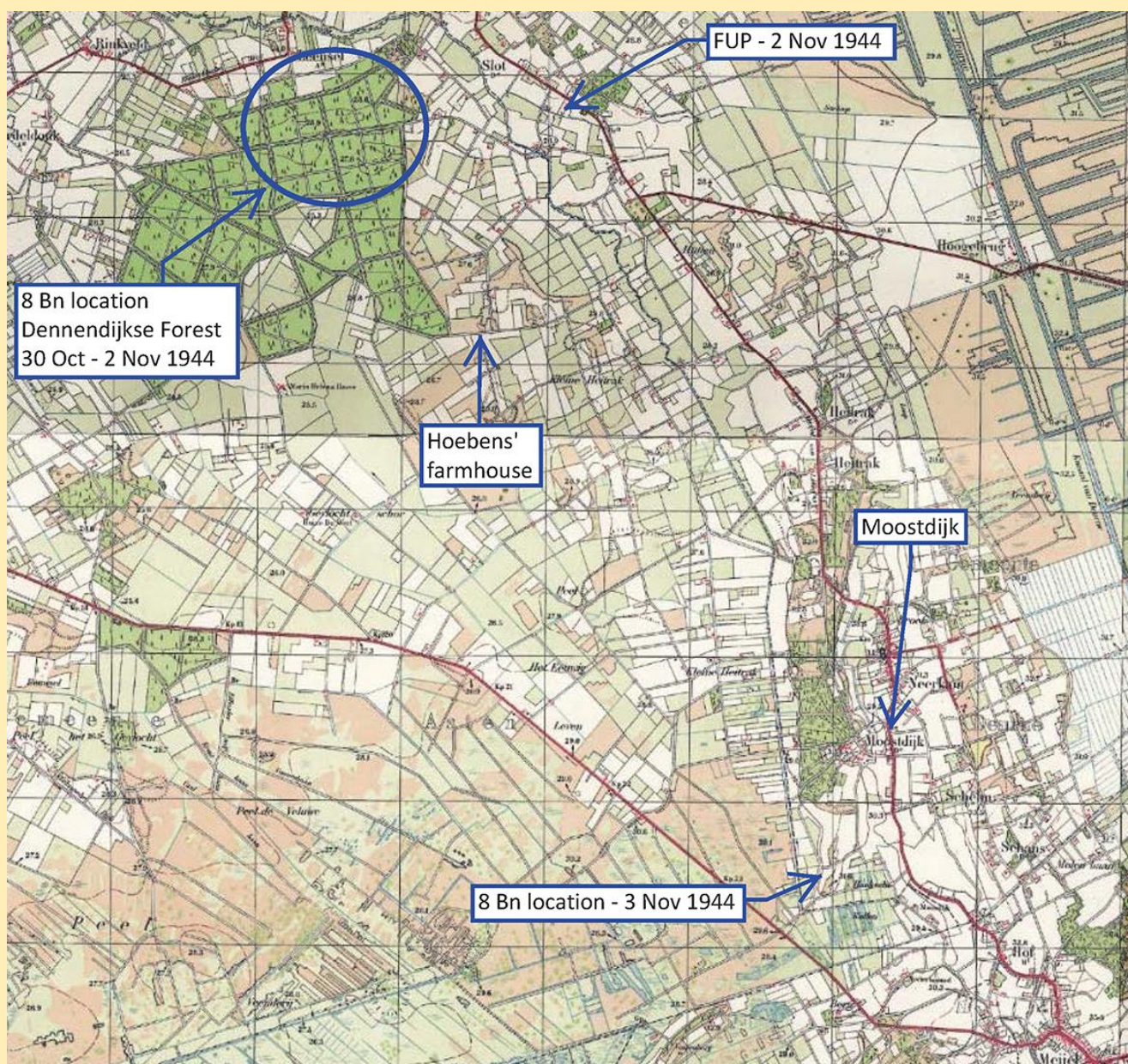
From October 20, 1944, the battalion took part in "Operation Pheasant" where Tilburg was liberated on 27 October 1944. During the festivities in Tilburg on 28 October, however, the battalion was ordered to urgently prepare to leave for the Peel-area (a region in the Netherlands that includes Liessel, Neerkant and Meijel). Here the Germans had launched a counter-attack at Ospel, Meijel, Neerkant and Liessel on 27 October 1944.

The front at Ospel, Meijel, Neerkant and Liessel was at that time defended by the American 7th Armoured Division. This division was positioned in this part of the front after their attack on Overloon, which was repulsed by the Germans with heavy American casualties. For the necessary rest and refitting the Americans were positioned in this then quiet front sector. However, the sector they were in was much too large to be able to offer good resistance in the event of a German counter-attack. The troops were deployed far too widely.

In the early morning of 27 October 1944, the Germans launched their counter-attack with the aim of capturing Asten and, if all went according to plan, the capture of Helmond. The main objective, however, was to lure Allied troops away from West and Central Brabant (Brabant is the province in the Netherlands to which Liessel and Neerkant belongs) in order to give the German troops in West Brabant and Zeeland the opportunity to withdraw in an orderly manner beyond the major rivers (the rivers Maas and Waal). The counter-attack was mainly carried out by units of the 9<sup>th</sup> Panzer Division, 15<sup>th</sup> Panzer Grenadier Division and Fallschirmjäger Regiment 24 (part of Fallschirmjäger-Division Erdmann).

The Americans were slowly but surely pushed back at Meijel, Neerkant and Liessel by the German attack towards Deurne and Asten, but due to heavy American resistance the Germans could not advance further than the villages Asten-Heusden and the Dennendijkse bossen (forests) between Asten and Liessel. To reinforce the 7<sup>th</sup> US Armoured Division, the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Infantry Division and the 6<sup>th</sup> Guards Tank Brigade were sent from Tilburg in the direction of Deurne and Asten to relieve the Americans here.

8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots left Tilburg at 0215 on 29 October in the direction of Deurne, arriving at here at 0730. At 0900 the Battalion was positioned near the hamlet of Vrekwijk (near Deurne). At 1400, however, the Battalion was ordered to leave for the hamlet of Rinkveld (near Asten) to take up positions here at 1700. These positions were at the edge of the Dennendijkse bossen (forests). On 30 October A and B Companies of 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots carried out some patrols into the Dennendijkse bossen (forests). Contact was made with the Germans in these forests, but not much else happened. However, both companies were under light artillery fire.





On 31 October 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots was ordered to recapture the Dennendijkse bossen (forests) from the Germans. At 1445 the attack started with the support of 1 squadron of tanks (approximately 18 tanks) of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Grenadier Guards. However, the Germans had already withdrawn from the forest, so no resistance was encountered. The battalion then came under heavy artillery, mortar and Nebelwerfer fire, causing heavy casualties. 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots lost 4 officers and 48 men on this day in the Dennendijkse bossen (forests). On this day, most of Liessel was eventually liberated by other parts of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Infantry Division.

A page from the War Diary of the 8th Battalion is shown below noting that "...during the operation there is intense fire from enemy arty, mortars, and Nebelwerfers. This cost the Bn in casualties 4 ofrs and 48 ORs killed and wounded".

On 1 November 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots maintained their positions in the Dennendijkse bossen (forests) and prepared to advance to Neerkant the following day. Other parts of the 15<sup>th</sup> (Scottish) Infantry Division were advancing to the hamlet of Sloot (located between Liessel and Neerkant).

The attack on Neerkant started on 2 November. In the morning while moving from the Dennendijkse bossen (forests) to the Forming Up Point located between the Soeloop and the Garst in Liessel) a Universal Carrier of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots drove over a Riegel mine (anti-tank mine) where 2 signallers (Douglas Alexander Langham and John Lamarra) were killed and 4 other soldiers were injured.

Information from a local farmer regarding the death of Sig 3066630 DA Langham, and Sig John Lamarra, 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots, on 2 November 1944.

Below is the translation of the eyewitness account of the incident in which Douglas died. This is described on page 199 of the book "Liessel Brandt

#### Translation "Liessel Brandt" page 199:

*The family had been ordered to evacuate by the British the previous day (1 November 1944).*

*The story below is told by Frits Hoeben, the son of Frans Hoeben.*

#### **2 November.**

Father had heard an explosion that night, but hadn't bothered to go and see what it was. When we came out of the cellar in the morning, there was a vehicle on the dirt road to the Staatsbos (State forest or Dennendijkse bossen/ Dennendijkse forests), which later turned out to be a carrier.

Our horse stood injured in the stable, we had to look for another horse. In itself this was not a problem because there were many horses running loose. We got hold of one. It was, we thought, an unrigged animal of Sjang Janssen. Carefully we harnessed the horse and after some steps back and forth the horse was positioned between the barrows. Everything worked out wonderfully. The remaining belongings were carefully loaded onto the cart.

It was not yet decided which route we would follow. Meanwhile, a few soldiers were walking around the carrier. Father (Frans Hoeben) would ask the soldiers if we could go to Asten via the Leemdijk.

When he arrived at the carrier he saw that it was badly damaged. Beside the carrier lay a badly mutilated body of a soldier. The other soldiers were very depressed. Father tried to ask if we could drive past it with a horse and cart. He did not understand English and the English soldiers did not understand Dutch. Therefore nothing was understood from either side. Father deduced from the gestures that we could pass.

I would gently hold the horse by the head and start the ride to Asten. Father would come later by bike. When I was driving halfway the Staatsbos (State forest or Dennendijkse bossen/ Dennendijkse forests) with a horse and cart, something suddenly happened. I heard a soft, dull sound and at the same time the horse and I were pushed to the left. I ended up in a ditch next to the road. The horse walked on for a few more meters and also fell into the ditch and stayed lying there. In a panic, I stayed flat lying in the ditch, thinking we had been shot at. It remained silent. I looked over the edge of the ditch and to my great astonishment saw nothing but pieces of wood and all kinds of rubbish lying around me.

I came out of the ditch and in the distance I saw father coming running across the field in panic. His relieved reaction was understandable. We first went to see what was wrong with the horse. The horse lay on its back in the ditch with its legs tangled in the harness and barrows. When we had helped the horse out of the ditch, the horse ran away for a short distance and then stayed after which it willingly let itself be taken. When we returned to the scene of the accident it became clear what had happened. I had hit a mine with the right cart wheel. The cart had been dismembered into thousands of pieces.

The fragments of the axle were scattered over a adjacent field over a distance of a hundred meters. It turned out that the carrier had also hit a mine. Later it turned out that there were more mines at that location. When jumping away after the explosion, the horse had just passed two other mines. Father had seen the explosion from our house. He heard a loud bang and saw a large cloud of smoke from which all kinds of pieces of material were thrown and from which the horse jumped out. After the horse fell into the ditch, he couldn't see anything from afar and thought I was dead. He then ran to the accident site and saw me emerge from the ditch. After this incident, we gathered what was left of the cargo. Everything could be loaded on a bicycle!

Because we were afraid of more mines, we cycled through the hamlets Hutten, Sloot and village Liessel to Asten. In the meantime mother in Asten had already heard that we had been involved in an accident. One can imagine her reaction and joy when mother saw us appear healthy and well at Uncle Johan's.



Soldiers of The Royal Scots and Universal Carriers advance to Neerkant (November 2, 1944).



## Memorial for Private Thomas Garry MM 9RS

A memorial service was held on 15 September 2022 in Uphall Cemetery for Private Thomas Garry MM, 9RS. Tom was born in Leith in 1894 and was living in Uphall at the outbreak of The Great War in August 1914. He enlisted in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Highlanders), The Royal Scots, and served on the Western Front. He was awarded the Military Medal for gallantry in 1918. At the end of the war he was demobilised and returned to Uphall. He died in 1968 but lay in an unmarked grave. Local historian and researcher Meg Stenhouse became aware of this fact and was determined that he should be afforded a marked resting place. Her efforts, assisted by the local community council, culminated in the construction of a wooden cross and plaque planted on his grave, and the service to dedicate it. Meg was assisted by Mr Paul Robertson who ensured that The Royal Scots were involved in the ceremony.



*RS Association members, with Association Standards joined the local community at the dedication service*

The service was conducted by local Minister Rev Bob Craig and attended by Tom's great nephew, Garry Marr, the Lord Lieutenant of West Lothian, Moira Niven, members of the Regimental Association with Standards, and members of the local community. Piper Jocky Johnstone, formerly of the Association Pipe Band, played during the service. We would like to thank Meg for her efforts, ensuring that this Royal Scots veteran now rests in an appropriately marked grave.



*The cross and plaque*



*Mr Jamie Colquhoun, Piper Jocky Johnstone and Mr Paul Robertson*

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

## Rededication of Peebles War Memorial

The Regiment was represented at a service in Peebles on 13 October 2022 to mark the 100th anniversary of the county war memorial. Funded by public subscription, the memorial takes the form of a marble cross set within an elaborate copper-roofed stone canopy and was unveiled on 5 October 1922 by Field Marshal the Earl Haig, commander-in chief of the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders. Bronze panels within the memorial record the names of the 567 men from the towns and villages across the county of Peeblesshire who fell in the First World War, many of whom had served in The Royal Scots.



*Field Marshal The Earl Haig right of centre and Lieutenant John Buchan at Peebles War memorial in 1922*

In rededicating the war memorial, Reverend Father Lappin of St Joseph's Parish Church in Peebles said, "We dedicate this ground to the glory of God, to be set apart from common uses, to be God's acre within this town to the remembrance of those who have died in war". Sir Hew Strachan, Lord Lieutenant of Tweeddale then addressed the congregation regarding the loss suffered by the county, the memorial and its construction. To complete the rededication a single wreath was laid by Lord Astor of Hever, grandson of Earl Haig, who had himself served in the Life Guards and subsequently as a Defence Minister.



*Rededication assembly*

The memorial occupies a central location in Peebles and remains an important feature of life in the town. Across the quadrangle from the memorial lies the town library where the colours of 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots are on permanent display, a further reminder of the town's proud service and of the Regiment's close association with one of its five freedom burghs.

Footage of the original unveiling by the Earl Haig is available at the link: <https://scotlandonscreen.org.uk/browse-films/007-000-002-197-c>



*Peebles War Memorial on the evening of Thursday 13 October 2022*



*Lord Astor of Hever lays the wreath*

Captain Nick Edwardson

Photos by Mark Davey/Peeblesshire News.



## Rededication for Lance Corporal Brunton Smith 8RS

LCpl Brunton Smith was born on 13 July 1882 and lived in Roslin, Midlothian. In his 20s he spent a few years in New Zealand, but returned to Scotland and married Helen Webster Anderson in Roslin on 31 December 1913; they had two daughters, born in August 1914 and December 1915. He had planned to return to New Zealand with his family, but joined 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots in 1915, and subsequently deployed with the Battalion to the Western Front. He was wounded, but after recovering he returned to the Battalion in France. He was killed in action on 24 March 1918 and had lain unidentified in a grave in Bancourt British Military Cemetery near Arras, France.

Research conducted over the last few years identified the body in the grave as that of LCpl Smith. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission replaced the headstone with one with his name on it and the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Cell arrange a rededication service which, after delays due to pandemic restrictions, took place on 17 November 2022. The service was conducted by Rev Timothy Clarke-Wood, Padre 4 SCOTS, with 4 SCOTS also providing a small party including a piper and bugler. Colonel Howard Wilkinson, Military Attaché, and Colonel David Hannah, Chief of Staff, attended from the British Embassy in Paris. Three generations of the family attended the service: grandsons Mr Brunton Smith Hunter and Mr Malcolm Clague with their wives Mrs Angela Hunter and Mrs Sandra Clague, great-granddaughters Angela Hunter and Mrs Kerrie Johnston with her husband Ian Johnston, and their children, great-great-granddaughter Emilee Johnston and great-great-grandson Jacob Johnston.



*Rev Timothy Clarke-Wood conducts the rededication service*

Bancourt Cemetery, like all those maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, was in immaculate condition. It was a blustery day but fortunately the rain held off during the ceremony, and it provided the setting for a moving service to honour the life and service of LCpl Brunton Smith and rededicate his resting place, where he is now appropriately recognised for posterity. After the service the party moved to a reception in The Old Blighty Tearooms in Ovillers-la-Boisselle where there was an opportunity to learn a little more about LCpl Brunton Smith and his descendants.



*Mr Ian Johnston, Jacob Johnston (great-great-grandson), Mrs Kerrie Johnston (great-granddaughter), Emilee Johnston (great-great-granddaughter), Dmr Faulds 4 SCOTS (Bugler), Mrs Sandra Clague, 2Lt Christian Clayden-Spence 4 SCOTS, Mr Malcolm Clague (grandson), Rev Timothy Clarke-Wood, Padre 4 SCOTS, Mr Brunton Hunter (grandson), WO2 Lee Smith 4 SCOTS, Mrs Angela Hunter, LCpl Foley 4 SCOTS (Piper), Lt Col David Jack, Miss Angela Hunter (great-granddaughter)*



*Colonel Howard Wilkinson presents the Union Flag to Mr Malcolm Clague*



*LCpl Brunton Smith*

*Lieutenant Colonel David Jack*

## East of Scotland Branch Burn's Night

The East of Scotland Branch of the Association hosted 2023 Burns night for the Regimental Association, which was held at the Royal British Legion Prestonpans on Saturday 28 January 2023. A total of 73 attended the event the Regimental family was joined by members of the Prestonpans Branch of the Royal British Legion and other guests. An excellent evening was had by all. We would like to thank the Prestonpans Branch of the Royal British Legion for hosting us and all those who entertained us.



*Danny McIntosh*

*Mr Tam Logan*



*l to r: Mr Stu Aitken, Mr Stuart Colquhoun, Mr Tam Douglas, Maj Zander Russell, Mr Paul Roberson, Mr Eric Yule, Mr Andy Kyle, Mr Tom Logan, Mr Adam Aitchison.*



## Officers' Golf and Dinner

### Golf

On a glorious 4 November, officers playing in the annual golf match designed to coincide with the Regimental Dinner, gathered at Gullane No 3 links to do battle. With a range of abilities represented, competitors were vying for the trophy as well as other prizes for longest drive, nearest the pin and the Endeavour prize. Honours this year went to Lt Col Brian de la Haye, hotly pursued by Maj Zander Russell in second place and Maj Arthur Frame in third.



*A happy band on completion of the match; l to r: Maj Guy Richardson, Maj Zander Russell, Capt Richard Stark, Lt Col David Goodacre, Lt Col Brian de la Haye. Brig George Lowder, Maj Gen Bob Bruce, Maj Arthur Frame, Capt Ross Hunter*

### Lieutenant Colonel Brian de la Haye OBE



*Mr Paddy Cuthbert receives the Regimental Prize from Brig George Lowder*



*Brig George Lowder presents the Golf Trophy to Lt Col Brian de la Haye*

### Dinner

Attendance at the Officers' Regimental Dinner increased to 63 in 2022 from 53 in 2021. It was good to see so many familiar faces, and some who had not attended this event for a number of years. The Chairman of the Regimental Trustees made his customary report, thanking those who have been involved in various aspects of Regimental business, updating us on events over the last year, changes to governance, and plans for the coming year. At the end of his address he presented the Regimental Prize to Mr Paddy Cuthbert of Littlehouse Media for all his work on Regimental communications, ensuring a wide circulation of press releases of Regimental activity. In this capacity he has been of great assistance to David Nisbet, the Trustee responsible for communications, and has gained the Regiment some excellent media coverage. George also presented the Golf Trophy to this year's winner, Lt Col Brian de la Haye. We were extremely fortunate again to be entertained throughout dinner by an ensemble from The Lowland Band, and some excellent piping by Cpl Euan Jardine, now with SCOTS DG, but formerly 1RS and 1SCOTS pipe bands. We would like to thank Maj Guy Richardson who instigated a committee for this event and has led it for the last six years. His vision and tireless efforts have maintained the high standards expected, while reducing the formality of the event, thus ensuring that it is enjoyable for all. He has indicated that he wishes to step aside to let someone else take the reins, so we are looking for a new PMC for 2023.



*Col Martin Gibson, Col Mike Ashmore and Col Robert Watson relaxing before the Dinner. A total of 238 years of age and 93 years of service*

### Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



## The Royal Scots Golf Club 100 Years on

After a very successful Centennial Golf Match at the beginning of our Centennial Year, as reported in the last edition of The Thistle, the RSGC have gone on to become stronger with a full complement of members from across a broad spectrum of our Regimental Family both serving, retired and civilian alike.

2022 saw a total of 6 outings and 2 matches played at various venues around Edinburgh and Fife. All outings were very well attended with a lot of good golf being played in a variety of links, parkland and heathland courses. One highlight was the course at St Michaels in Fife where the wind, coupled with what could only be described as interesting greens, along with dry sunny weather made for a very challenging days golf. It was, however, remarked by those who played that day that it was a very enjoyable outing and one that the members might like to repeat. As the time of the outing was shortly after the sad occasion of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, a toast to her memory by all who played was given prior to teeing off.

Our annual hard fought matches with the Corstorphine 8:30 Club took place at Musselburgh and Craigielaw Golf Clubs. This match has been taking place since 1986 with the RSGC putting up The Pikeman Trophy and the 8:30 Club putting up The Train Trophy, which is a replica of a Pullman that came into service in 1922. I am pleased to report that the RSGC won back The Pikeman Trophy this year with a winning score of 4.5 points to 1.5 points. Unfortunately the 8:30 Club retained The Train Trophy by

the same winning margin. Hopefully 2023 will see both trophies in the new RSGC trophy cabinet in The Royal Scots Club.

Our Centennial year was finished off in grand style with a superb Centennial Dinner on the 18 November 2022 in The Royal Scots Club. This was attended by 45 members and guests. After the AGM every member moved to the bar in the Hepburn Suite to meet up with the guests for a Champagne reception where old acquaintances and mutual friends again met. After a welcome speech by the RSGC Captain, everyone moved to be seated for what turned out to be a really superb and well organised evening. The banter and the wine flowed in equal quantities and everyone agreed it was a most enjoyable experience. Prize-giving took place after the main event where those lucky enough, or if you like, well earned players received their trophies. Very well done to all of them. The President of the 8:30 Club very kindly presented the RSGC with a replica of The Train Trophy which was gratefully accepted by our President Walter Hutchison. After the loyal toasts all persons were then invited to remain at the tables or move to the bar for further refreshment.

Lastly, a very big thank you should go to Andy Stewart who along with some help from the RSGC committee ensured the RSGC Centennial year was one of great fun and one of which our founders would have been proud.

Here's to the 2023 golfing season.

**Mr Jim McConnell**



*Members and guests assemble prior to the Centenary Dinner*



*Mr John Hope of the 8:30 Club receives the Pikeman Trophy from Mr Jim McConnell*



*Mr David Gilroy, Mr Walter Hutchison and Mr Neil Harrison (8:30 Club) with the Train Trophy*

## Scottish Veterans' Residences

There is a healthy cohort of Royals resident in Whiteford House on The Royal Mile in Edinburgh. Mark Doig, Derek Ferguson, Karl Owers and Danny Sutherland have been joined this year by Scott Clements and Alan Reid, while Derek McDonald and Mark McLaughlin have departed for pastures new.

**Lieutenant Colonel David Jack**



*Mr Scott Clements, Lt Col David Jack, Mr Mark Doig, Mr Derek Ferguson, Mr Tam Douglas*



## Despatches from The Royal Hospital Chelsea

This is my third note from the Royal Hospital Chelsea and I left off the previous missive by saying that I would be up in Edinburgh as part of the RHC contingent to the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Well that was killed off by the rail strikes which meant there was no certainty on trains to get In-Pensioners (IPs) back to Chelsea. A disappointment but hopefully this year will see me up for the 2023 event.

I am starting to write this on 11 January, which is the first anniversary of my arriving at Chelsea. A very full year with much to do, if one wanted to do so. I covered the types of outing fully in my last letter so will keep this a bit shorter and concentrate on the major events such as the funeral of HM The Queen, Remembrance and Christmas. This leaves one major factor which is so important to us here at the Hospital, and that is visits from members of the Regimental Family; more of which later.

The first major event following Founder's Day was the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. There was a feeling of shock and sadness in the Hospital, especially as many IPs had been members the Household or had served Her Majesty directly in various ways. Events were followed very closely by IPs on the TV and when The Queen was laid In State in Westminster Hall, arrangements were made for about 130 IPs and Staff to go to the Hall and pay their respects. Victor Lucas and I were very pleased to be part of that party and proud to represent the RHC and through that, all Veterans. It was very moving. The Hospital was then used as a drop-off and pick up point for VIPs and Dignitaries attending the funeral so was very busy and probably one of the best protected parts of the UK that day. Eight IPs were selected to attend the funeral on behalf of all of us. A Drumhead Service was held at the Hospital which again was quite moving and very strange singing the National Anthem to the King.

The period of the funeral and mourning curtailed many of the Hospital activities but once over we were soon back to normal running. One of the functions I attended was to the Pickwick Gentlemen's Bicycle Club Garden Party, which they hold in winter – their Christmas Party is held in Summer. From this you can see that this is a somewhat eccentric Club. It was an excellent afternoon and lunch but the main reason for Chelsea Pensioners being there is that the Club follow the characters in the book Pickwick Papers and the book mentions Pickwick meeting two Chelsea Pensioners as he crossed Chelsea Bridge. Our role is to take the punchbowl to the President and 'take wine' with him. We are then required to state our Regimental number, name, rank, Regiment/Corps and our age! Great fun with a couple of hundred English eccentrics thoroughly enjoying themselves.

The next major event for the Hospital is of course Remembrance in which we participate fully. IPs went off to Bahrain, Paris, Jersey and Guernsey to commemorate this event. Back home Victor and I volunteered to help sell poppies on Kensington High Street, very generous people there, and also outside MoD Main Building where a lot of time is spent explaining to tourists the meaning of Remembrance. On my day at the MoD one of our first 'customers' was the Chief of Defence Staff Admiral Sir Tony Radakin KCB ADC, who spent some time chatting with me and my colleague. Victor was meant to attend the Festival of Remembrance but circumstances intervened and he was not able to do so. This meant though, that he could join the Regimental Family at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey, which has been covered elsewhere in this edition. It was very nice to be able to take part in this with others from the Regiment. The following day Victor Lucas, Danny Dempsey and I presented ourselves at Horse Guards, with The Royal Scots Regimental contingent for the march past at the Cenotaph. This year unfortunately the Army was in last place, so we had a lot of standing around and waiting but eventually stepped off and it was good to see The Royal Scots contingent with Scarlet Coats in their midst.

Remembrance over, the Hospital had a bit of a breather before December and the onset of Christmas festivities. Many carol services were held, and I attended one at Lords Cricket Ground, in the famous Long Room. The President is Stephen Fry who made a beeline to the Scarlet Coats and spent quite a while chatting with us until dragged away for a photoshoot with the Mayor. The hospital was decorated with trees and garlands in strategic places and all Long Wards put up their own decorations. Christmas Lunch was excellent with plenty of food, wine, beer and a miniature of whisky for all IPs. The Governor, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw, KCB OBE DL, informed us that the Reviewing Officer at the 2023 Founders Day Parade will be HM King Philippe, King of the Belgians, who had to call off in 2022 but will be here in 2023. Following a full lunch and after a post prandial snooze and then the King's Speech, most Long Wards got together and held ward parties, which is what this Hospital is all about, comradeship.

New Year was a bit quieter than I am used to. There was a function in the Pensioners' Club with buffet and entertainment which was well attended, but the remainder of the Hospital was very quiet and peaceful. And this brings us to 2023, a look ahead. Early January is quiet as people return from their holidays, but events are picking up from there. There is much to do here at the Hospital but there is no pressure to do anything. If one wants to take part, then we submit our names and hope to be selected but if one just wishes to relax and behave as retired gentlemen (I use that word advisedly!) then that is absolutely fine. One of the major trips in 2023 is a battlefield tour of Monte Cassino – I did not get chosen!

Now, finally to the main feature I mentioned in my opening paragraph and that is visits by members of the Regimental Family to us here in the Hospital. These are very welcome and especially as it keeps us in touch with life in the Regiment. Since Founder's Day we have welcomed, Col Peter MacIntyre, Col (now Brig) Graeme Wearmonth, who was here on another event but took time to chat having spied an RS stable belt – mine, Col Peter Fraser Hopewell, Capt James Milne, who took the three RS IPs to lunch at Bucks Club, Maj David Dickson and then as part of the Hospital Christmas festivities, Lt Col David Jack who attended to give cards and a gift from the Regiment to the three RS IPs. The Card and Gift were very welcome but not so much as the chat and update on the Regiment which we all found very interesting and informative. I wrote our thanks to the Regimental Secretary but let's use this magazine to reiterate our thanks to the Regiment for taking part in this.

My final visitor for the year was Tom Gordon, who up until recently was our Museum Assistant. Now the administrator with 4 Para he was mobilised to Heathrow Airport to cover the strike by Border Force staff. On his day off, Boxing Day, he came down to the hospital for a visit and had lunch in the Great Hall. A very welcome visit and congratulations to Tom for his recent promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2.

I could fill pages of life here at the Royal Hospital as there is so much to do, if one wishes, but I will leave this here. If anyone wants more information then contact the Regimental Office and get my contact details, as I am happy to talk to anyone about the Hospital. This year we all hope will be just as busy, but I intend taking more time to explore London. I look forward to updating all in the next edition of The Thistle.

### Mr Andy Kay



*Vic Lucas, Maj David Dickson and Andy Kay*



*Danny Dempsey and Andy Kay in their Christmas rig*



*Andy Kay and Col Peter MacIntyre*

## Notes on serving Royals

Nearly 17 years after The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) left the Order of Battle as a regular regiment there are still a number of officers and soldiers serving who started their military career with the First of Foot. Recently promoted as announced in the last edition, Brig Graeme Wearmouth has completed a year at the Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS) and has now embarked on a period of training prior to assuming the position of Defence Attaché in Baghdad. Col Piers Strudwick moved to The Hague in July 2022 as Defence Attaché, while Col Nick Wight-Boycott has followed Graeme, maintaining a Royal Scots presence at RCDS until summer 2023. Lt Col Frank Reeves has had a busy tour in command taking 1 SCOTS through the redesignation to 1 RANGER and forging a new role for the Battalion, and has now moved to PJHQ. There is a strong team at ITC Catterick, although Maj Stu Cochrane leaves the Army in February, while Lt Col Al Cuthbertson is also coming to the end of his regular career and will relinquish his post at Brecon in the early part of the year. There is still good representation in 1 RANGER, mainly in HQ Company.

Brig Graeme Wearmouth	DA Training
Col Piers Strudwick	DA Netherlands
Col Nick Wight-Boycott	RCDS
Lt Col Frank Reeves	PJHQ
Lt Col Ross Brookfield	CO 1 ITB, ITC Catterick
Lt Col Jeremy Giles	Army HQ
Lt Col Al Cuthbertson	Senior QM, ITC Brecon
Lt Col Andy Lumley	BLO, Leipzig, Germany
Maj Cliff McAuley	ITC Catterick
Maj Zander Russell	ITC Catterick

Maj Stu Cochrane	ITC Catterick
Maj Sean Semple RAPTC	JSMTC Wales
Capt Billy Young RAPTC	HQ 1Div
Capt Stephen Dawson	QM Tech 1 RANGER
WO2 Steven Paterson	RQMS 2 SCOTS
WO2 David Williams	D Coy CSM 1 RANGER
CSgt Steven Gibb	QM Dept, 1 RANGER
CSgt Gus MacIver	PSI 2 R IRISH
SSgt Ray Baselala INT CORPS	PSI Int Coy, Dundee
Sgt Barry McIntosh	PSI Dumfries, 6 SCOTS
Sgt Peter Paterson	PSI Galashiels, 6 SCOTS
Sgt Jone Leweni AGC(MPS)	MPS Lisburn, NI
Cpl Joeli Raduva	NIGSU NI
Cpl Euan Jardine	Pipe Sgt, SCOTS DG
Cpl Peni Ravutia AGC (SPS)	HQ 51 Bde
Cpl Steven Thomas	QM Dept 1 RANGER
Cpl Viliame Kama	HQ COY 1 RANGER
Cpl Thomas Shute RAF	BFSAI Falkland Islands
LCpl Mosese Makasali	HQ Coy 1 RANGER

We have endeavoured to ensure that we have recorded all those currently serving in the Regular Army, but we are keen to know if there is anyone who has been missed.

We wish to congratulate WO2 Steven Paterson on selection for promotion to WO1, and Lt Col Jeremy Giles and Maj Cliff McAuley for their appointment as Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE), announced in the King's first New Year's Honours List. All are serving with The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

### Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

## ABF The Soldiers' Charity – Wheels on the Western Front 2022 – Ride to Arnhem

After two postponements over the last couple of years the ABF The Soldiers' Charity Wheels on the Western Front 2022: Ride to Arnhem took place on 4 – 9 September 2022, raising over £118,000 for Army families and veterans in need.

I, along with 44 other riders (retired, serving and a few civilians), cycled the 331-mile route from Folkestone, through France, Belgium and The Netherlands to Arnhem, where we commemorated the Second World War Battle for the Bridges, which took place in September 1944 (Operation Market Garden). The route covered the battlefields of the US 101<sup>st</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Divisions landings at Eindhoven and Nijmegen respectively, and the British 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division landing at Arnhem.



*In front of the bridge at Arnhem, l to r:  
Lt Col (Ret'd) Richard Hackett, Brig  
(Ret'd) Robbie Scott-Bowden,  
Roy Collins*

It was a cracking and fascinating challenge for all the cyclists, averaging 65 miles a day through hills and hot weather. On the final day our team laid wreaths around the Arnhem battlefield, including at the Oosterbeek Commonwealth War Grave and the Polish Memorial in Driel, and paid their respects to all Allied soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the campaign. All the hard work in fundraising was rewarding and the

organising team did us proud. As always, the riders, with their enthusiasm, drive, comradeship and cracking banter made the ride so special. We all felt lucky to have taken part.

Our Regimental Benevolence is strongly supported by ABF The Soldiers' Charity, contributing approximately a third of every grant that is made. Readers may enjoy watching a short Youtube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMITnsiki3A>



*At the DZ near Ginkelse Heide*

### Brigadier Robbie Scott-Bowden MBE

**Editor's note:** 7/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots was scheduled to conduct an air-landing operation at Arnhem but the failure to secure landing sites resulted in the cancellation of the operation.

## Donations and Legacies

Until 2006 the Regiment received a relatively healthy income, mainly from the One Day's Pay Scheme, to which the majority of officers and soldiers contributed, and had limited expenses as the Regimental Headquarters was funded by the MoD. Since then the balance has shifted; income is greatly reduced and there is additional expenditure in maintaining a Regimental Office and this will increase further in 2030 when MoD ceases the provision of funding for the Museum Curator. While sufficient funds exist to support Benevolence and Association activity in the short to medium term, and this activity is expected to diminish over time, securing the display of the Regimental Collection as part of The Royal Scots enduring legacy will require funds that currently exceed those held by the Regiment. Donations to the Regimental Trust to support Benevolence, Heritage or Association activities are always greatly appreciated. Donations can be made monthly or annually by standing order or as single donations. Legacies from Wills will also be greatly appreciated. Further details can be obtained from the Regimental Office on 0131 557 0405 or [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk)



### 58 Years Ago with The Beatles

In May 1965, while 1RS was based at Tidworth, members of A Company participated as extras in the shooting of *Help*, a British musical comedy-adventure film featuring The Beatles. Much of the filming was conducted on Salisbury Plain, using Larkhill as a base. There is a short article about this event in the November 1965 edition of *The Thistle*, but no photographs were included, although the photograph is included in Pontius Pilate's *Bodyguard* volume 2. The Tam O' Shanter sported by Ringo Starr has a Lowland Brigade cap-badge, which was worn by the Regiment from 1959 to 1969. Many of the Jocks managed to get The Beatles to sign their Tam O' Shanters but unfortunately it is not known if any still exist.



*Ringo Starr on Salisbury Plain during filming of Help*

### 36 Years Ago in Berlin

B Company 1RS deployed from Werl to Berlin on Exercise HELPFUL BEAR for the period 30 October to 7 November 1986. The purpose of the exercise was to allow a company of 1RHF to participate in training outside Berlin. The primary task was to be prepared to deploy to defensive positions at 2 hours' notice to move, but it also provided an opportunity to take advantage of the excellent training facilities available in Berlin and to visit East Berlin. An article was included in *The Thistle* published in May 1987, but the photographs here were not included in that edition.



*Officers and SNCOs in a restaurant in East Berlin, l to r: Sgt Tam Butler. WO2 (CSM) Billy Thomson, Capt Andrew Barr-Sim, Sgt Rab Simpson, two German civilians, Sgt Harry Pitchforth, Sgt Budgie Greene, Sgt Bob Wallace, 2Lt George Lowder, CSgt Rab Johnstone, 2Lt David Jack.*



*B Coy in front of the Brandenburg Gate, Berlin Nov 1986*



*On the train to Berlin; l to r: Cpl Nolts Notman, LCpl Scottie Scott, Cpl Halfchat Thomson, Sgt Rab Simpson, Cpl Rab Watters and LCpl Stu Simpson.*

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack

### Volunteers Required

The activities of the Regiment rely heavily on volunteers, whether organising and running the Association, assisting with the administration of the Regimental Trust, or helping at the Museum either routinely or for specific projects. We are seeking more volunteers; tasks will be matched to skills and experience but we are particularly seeking assistance with communications managing social media platforms and the website, photography, compiling *The Thistle*, historical research in the Museum archives and assisting with Museum events and projects. Anyone interested is requested to get in touch with the Regimental Office on 0131 557 0405 or [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk)

### Summer Edition of The Thistle

The Summer 2023 edition of *The Thistle* (vol 43) will cover events during the period 1 February – 31 August 2023. We aim to publish this edition by 30 September 2023. All items for inclusion should be submitted to the Regimental Office via [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk) no later than 6 September 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. Photographs are an important part of the publication and for clarity it is requested that these are submitted in the highest possible resolution; if file size caused a problem for transmission please use WeTransfer, which does not incur any charges if used on a limited basis. Also all photographs should be accompanied by a caption which includes names of all people in the photograph.

### 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 period 1 April to 31 December 2022 £7,515 was disbursed to 24 cases; with additional funds from other charities, this provided much needed help for those in need of financial assistance. 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



### Lieutenant Colonel Paul Robin Millen Whittington

14 August 1945 to 7 January 2023

Lieutenant Colonel Robin Whittington died at home aged 77 on 7 January 2023. He was born into a military family and at the time of his birth in Bournemouth in August 1945 his father Dick was serving in the Indian Army in India. His mother and two elder brothers, Christopher and Patrick had returned to England with their mother Meg in time for Robin's birth.



Subsequently his father managed to make a brief visit to England to see his new son and then returned to take over his regiment (thought to be 2/15 Punjab Regiment) in Poona.

Shortly after the birth Meg, Patrick and Robin travelled back out to India, leaving Christopher in England to attend prep school in Devon. The three of them embarked at Tilbury Docks for Bombay and then travelled overland to join their father in Poona, where conditions were very different to life in England. On one occasion Robin and Patrick were saved from a threatening cobra by their quick thinking butler who saw what was about to happen and decapitated the snake with a hockey stick. On completion of Dick's command tour the family planned to take a protracted break on one of the smaller Seychelles Islands and moved into a remote beach-side wooden hut. They had no radio or newspapers and travelled by boat to the main island to buy provisions. Despite their isolation the Indian Army managed to recall Dick back to duty in India to help deal with the civil unrest that followed Partition in August 1947.

The small family group of Robin, Patrick and their mother Meg were left to make their own way back to England. After a six month wait for a boat during which the two boys both contracted whooping cough, they climbed up a ladder onto a boat carrying a cargo of copra and set sail for Genoa - a six week journey. Meg was the only woman on board and managed to get some penicillin from the skipper which helped the two boys with their whooping cough. Whilst in Genoa the ship's cargo caught fire requiring them to evacuate the boat during the night. Although the boys were still not well their shipping company arranged for the three of them to travel by train to Dover via Paris. They were delighted to be met at Victoria station by Dick, who by this time had returned from India. After staging at different addresses in England they settled in Kent in 1951 where they bought Bere Lodge and remained there for the next fifteen years. His unconventional and eventful early childhood seemed to have been instrumental in Robin developing into an unusually self-reliant individual well used to coping with the unexpected.

He enjoyed all aspects of his schooling at St Edmund's, Canterbury. His friends remember him being excellent company and the source of much joy and laughter. He entered Sandhurst in 1964 where his fellow cadets quickly realised that they had a leader in their midst and they instinctively followed his lead. His potential was also recognised by the Academy directing staff. He graduated near the top of the order of merit in late 1965 as an under officer. On commissioning Robin joined 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) which was in the mechanised infantry role equipped with FV432 armoured personnel carriers in Osnabruck, West Germany. He joined Major Neil McCance in A Company with Francis Gibb as the second-in-command and Peter MacIntyre and John Rhind his fellow platoon commanders.

His early career took him from the Battalion to The Lowland Brigade Depot at Penicuik followed by a tour with The Junior Infantry Battalion, Shorncliffe. In 1970 he rejoined 1RS in Tidworth as OC Reconnaissance Platoon. The Battalion role was the British battalion in Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) the (AMF(L)). The AMF(L) was a multinational, brigade sized force whose role was to be ready to deploy at short notice to the North and South flanks of NATO to build confidence, display solidarity and, if required, to fight alongside the single National forces normally deployed on the flanks of NATO. The Battalion's priority was to master the skills required to operate in the Arctic areas of northern Norway as well as the Southern Flank in Italy, Greece and Turkey. In this role the Battalion deployed regularly on major training exercises to southern Europe and to the snow and mountains of Norway where they manoeuvred cross country on skis occasionally accompanied by Volvo BV202 tracked over-snow vehicles. During their time in Tidworth the Battalion also undertook

three short-notice emergency deployments to Northern Ireland. In all, Robin served six tours in Northern Ireland in the ranks of lieutenant through to lieutenant colonel. His appointments in the Battalion over this period included OC Recce Pl, Battalion Operations Officer in South Armagh and Company Commander again in South Armagh. His final appointment there was CO of 3rd Battalion The Ulster Defence Regiment in County Down. He was Mentioned in Dispatches for his service in that appointment.

Throughout these challenging appointments Robin demonstrated his customary coolness under extreme provocation and frustrations. He also earned the unqualified respect of those who worked for, and with, him. Other than his operational and regimental duties much of the remainder of his service was split between instructional appointments and staff training. As a young officer he served at the School of Infantry, Warminster (1974-1975) and was later Chief Instructor, Victory College RMA Sandhurst (1982-1984). He attended Staff College at Camberley in 1978 and then the US Armed Forces Staff College at the National Defense University at Norfolk, Virginia, USA in 1984-1985. The Commanding General there wrote to the Chief of the General Staff in London that he had been "a superb asset to the Staff College and has exhibited all the desirable attributes of a great leader". In spite of his many talents and clear suitability for a long and successful career in the Army, he retired aged 45 to take up a training and development role with Abbott Laboratories International Division based in Kent. He transitioned into civilian life with apparent ease and flourished within the company until 2003 when he had to decide whether to take up the option of relocating to the USA. He opted to remain at the family home in Fordwich, Kent and he set up a successful training and development consultancy which he ran from 2003 - 2015. Over the same period he was School Governor at St Edmund's School, Canterbury.

Robin was a talented and enthusiastic sportsman. Although he played a wide range of sports well, until he discovered golf his later in life his long term sporting passion was hockey - a game he played with distinction throughout his life. He played representative hockey at school, at Sandhurst, at Regimental, Divisional, BAOR and Army level, and at county level for Kent. Having always thought of golf as a game for "older people" until reaching the age of 40, he then mastered the game, became a member of Royal St George's Golf Club in Sandwich and became a regular player and competitor until illness prevented him playing. As a committee member at St George's he became responsible, along with many other agencies, for course security throughout the 2011 Open Golf Championships which attracted tens of thousands of spectators daily. His background made him the ideal person to assume this role and he much enjoyed liaising with all the agencies involved. He particularly enjoyed representing his club in matches and was an enthusiastic club and team member.

Regardless of the occasion, his congenial personality, his enthusiasm, his capabilities, his genuine interest in other people and his delightful sense of humour made him a popular individual. He liked people and he treated everyone in exactly the same way and they reacted positively to him. Throughout his working life and also in a private capacity he enjoyed helping others and was always happy to assist in any way he could. He set high standards for himself and also for those working with him, using encouragement rather than criticism to achieve the levels for which he was striving.

Robin married Penny, whose parents were fruit farmers in Boughton, Kent, in August 1970. Unusually they were married twice at the same ceremony because the officiating vicar forgot to turn the page of his prayerbook and so invited the bride and groom to make their vows and exchange rings twice. Penny and Robin together were a most engaging couple both prone to laugh whenever absurd things happened to them. He leaves two sons, Charlie and Nick; Charlie is married to Tory and they have two daughters, Rosie and Lily. Robin always took enormous pride in his family and they were a source of joy and much laughter throughout his married life.

Robin had been unwell for many months over a challenging time for the medical profession. He coped with the ups and downs that he faced with great fortitude. The unfailing support he received from his wife and family was one of the reasons he managed to stay so positive throughout his illness. Together they proved a powerful team and the manner in which they dealt with events as they unfolded latterly was truly remarkable. Robin died on 7th January 2023. He will be sorely missed by his family, his many friends and his colleagues.



## Corporal Jim Anderson

1 October 1954 to 16 October 2022

Jim Anderson enlisted in 1972, joining The Royal Scots, and was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion after initial training. Much of his 12 years of service was spent in the Signals Platoon. On leaving the Army Jim took a series of jobs and became an operations manager for DHL and a security manager at Edinburgh University.



In retirement Jim did a great deal of voluntary work for the Regiment, mainly in setting up the computers when the Regimental Office was established in the Club and creating and maintaining the Regimental website. Jim was an active member of the Association and it was at his suggestion that we established the Remembrance Service at The Royals Scots Monument in Princes Street Gardens that now takes place directly after the opening of the Garden of Remembrance next to The Scott Monument.

## Flight Lieutenant Alexander Daniel (Lex) Brown MBE AFC RAF

Died 11 February 2022

Those Royal Scots who were part of the 1RS tour in South Armagh in 1975-76 will remember Lex Brown both for his remarkable Puma helicopter flying abilities and his warm personality. Lex died earlier this year after a courageous fight against cancer supported by his wife Frances and daughters Jessie and Flora.



On 23 September 2022 Jim and Mhairi Blythe and Edward Cowan were lucky enough to attend a wonderful memorial service at St Clement Danes, the RAF church in London, for Lex. A large congregation from the RAF, Special Forces joined family members for the service. The main tribute was given by Major General John Holmes who covered Lex's life from his birth in 1948 to the start of his remarkable flying career when he joined the RAF in 1970 followed by an early tour in Belize where he was selected to fly in 'stay behind parties' landing in thick jungle clipping the foliage and his subsequent posting to Northern Ireland. It was there The Royal Scots first met him as a figure standing on a crossroads near to Bessbrook wearing a TOS to welcome us at the start of our tour. A natural affinity began with Lex and his crew doing everything in their power to fly with terrifying low level precision to deploy us in our overt and covert operations.

Although Lex covered many tours with South Armagh infantry battalions it was with 1RS that he felt the closest connection as mentioned by John

Holmes to the extent that on returning to their base at Aldergrove his crew continued wearing their TOSs. Warned by the base adjutant that RAF headgear was the correct form of dress, Lex flew off to Bessbrook where he and his crew took up permanent residence for the remainder of the Battalion's tour. It says much for the RAF that this incident was not held against him, Lex being awarded the Air Force Cross in 1978.

In 1981 Lex joined the Commonwealth Support Squadron in Zimbabwe, followed from 1982 to 1987 by over three thousand hours of flying in the Special Forces flight, a record recognized by his appointment as MBE. After retiring from the RAF Lex married Frances in 2003 and together they bought a castle with stiff competition taking place between Lex's formidable character in the pursuit of modernisation and Historic Scotland. Frances, asked to sum up what had attracted her to Lex, simply said that 'there was nothing routine or boring about Lex. He was so much larger than life', a sentiment with which all Royal Scots who knew him will surely agree.

## Captain Thomas (Toga) Wilson

Died 5 January 2023

Thomas "Toga" Wilson joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion in Munster, serving in C Coy and the Anti-Tank Platoon, before leaving the Battalion in Redford Barracks. He then studied for a degree and trained as a Clinical Psychologist; while working with the NHS he was commissioned into the Royal Army Medical Corps attaining the rank of Captain.



## Deaths

Mr William Middler – 5 Apr 2022 1RS – belated entry  
Mr Hamish Brumby – Jun 2022 1RS – belated entry  
Mr Mick Durkin BEM – 5 Sep 2022 1RS  
Mr Meechan – Oct 2022 1RS  
Mr Jim Anderson – 16 Oct 2022 1RS  
Mr Bruce Tait – 26 Oct 2022 1RS  
Mr Peter "Paddy" Kane – 29 Oct 2022 1RS  
Lt Alastair Ritchie – 20 Nov 2022 1RS  
Lt David Gallyer – 24 Nov 2022 1RS  
Maj David Henderson – 5 Dec 2022 1RS  
Mr Thomas "Toga" Wilson – 5 Jan 2023 1RS  
Lt Col Robin Whittington – 7 Jan 2023 1RS  
Col Francis Gibb CBE – 11 Jan 2023 1RS  
Lt Pat Maclagan – 15 Jan 2023 1RS  
Mr John (Ian) Bell-Jack – 22 Jan 2023 1RS  
Mr Gordon Nicholls – 26 Jan 2023 1RS  
Mr George Edmondson – 28 Jan 2023 1RS

## Association Details

President: Brig George Lowder MBE  
Chairman: Maj Stu Marshall  
Vice Chairman: Mr Paul Robertson  
Secretary: Mr David Milne  
Treasurer: Mr Jaime Colquhoun

### Highland

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

### Edinburgh

Last Friday of the month at The Royal Navy Club, 1 Broughton Road, Edinburgh  
Contact: Mick McCann  
mikemccann4130@hotmail.co.uk

### Fijian

Contact: Peni Ravutia  
bogiravutia0506@gmail.com

### East of Scotland

Last Saturday of the month at 7.30pm at RBL Prestonpans  
Contact: Jamie Colquhoun  
jamie\_colquhoun@hotmail.co.uk

### 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: David Stuart-Monteith  
monty@shawsequestrian.com

### Central Scotland

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

## Royal Scots Golf Club Details

President	Walter Hutchison
Captain	Jimmy McConnell
Secretary	David Morris
Contact	bampops1@gmail.com



## Forecast of Events

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

Day	Event	Time	Remarks
Fri 3 Mar 23	Association AGM	1900	Royal Scots Club
Tue 21 Mar 23	RSCM Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 24 Mar 23	RS Club WMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 24 Mar 23	The Royal Regiment of Scotland Black Hackle Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Sat 25 Mar 23	Col of Regt SCOTS update to Association Presidents of antecedent regiments	1030	The Castle
Sat 25 Mar 23	Regimental Day Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Tue 28 Mar 23	The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) Regimental Day		390 <sup>th</sup> anniversary
Tue 28 Mar 23	The Royal Regiment of Scotland Formation Day		
Wed 5 Apr 23	Royal Scots Club AGM	1830	Royal Scots Club
Fri 21 Apr 23	RSGC Opening Meet	1430	Longniddry Golf Club
Fri 21 – Sun 23 Apr 23	Regimental Weekend		Rothiemurchus
Sat 29	Regimental Reunion	1900	Royal Scots Club
Tue 2 May 23	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Sun 7 May 23	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1100	Royal Scots Club
Tue 16 May 23	Museum Committee meeting	1030	OPMH
Fri 19 May 23	Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf Match	0800	Liberton Golf Club
Sat 20 May 23	108 <sup>th</sup> Gretna Memorial Service	1045	Rosebank Cemetery
Tue 23 May 23	RSCM Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 26 May 23	RSGC Spring Meet	1030	Harburn Golf Club
Fri 26 May 23	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Thu 8 Jun 23	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founder's Day	1000	RH Chelsea
Sat 24 Jun 23	Armed Forces Day Edinburgh	1030	Form up Charlotte Square
Sun 25 Jun 23	RSGC Extra Meet	1300	St Michaels Golf Club, Leuchars
Thu 29 Jun – Tue 4 Jul 23	McCrae's Bn Trust visit to the Somme		Contalmaison, France
Fri 7 Jul 23	RSGC Summer Meet	1100	Pumpherston Golf Club
TBC Jul 23	Kohima Commemoration		York Minster
Fri 21 Jul 23	RSGC Pikeman Trophy	1100	Pumpherston Golf Club
Tue 25 Jul 23	RSCM Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 27 Jul 23	RS Club WMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Sun 13 Aug 23	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1100	Royal Scots Club
Sat 26 Aug 23	RSGC Autumn Meet	1220	Kinross Golf Club
Sat 9 (TBC) Sep 23	NI Veterans' Association Service of Remembrance	1130	National Memorial Arboretum
Sun 10 Sep 23	RSGC Away Day Meet	TBC	Kilspindie Golf Club
Tue 19 Sep 23	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
TBC Sep 23	RSGC Train Trophy Match vs 8.30 Club	TBC	Craigielaw Golf Club
Mon 23 Oct 23	Opening of the Garden of Remembrance, Princes Street Gardens	1030	Princes Street Gardens
Mon 23 Oct 23	Remembrance Service at Royal Scots Monument	1200	RS Monument
Tue 24 Oct 23	RSCM Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 27 Oct 23	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 31 Oct 23	RS Club WMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 3 Nov 23	Officers' Golf Match		TBC
Fri 3 Nov 23	Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
TBC Nov 23	Remembrance Service Heart of Midlothian	TBC	Tynecastle
Sat 4 – Wed 8 Nov 23	RS Remembrance 2023 Event		Dalkeith Palace
Sun 5 Nov 23	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1100	Royal Scots Club
TBC Nov 23	Opening of the Field of Remembrance Westminster	1030	Southern Branch
TBC Nov 23	Remembrance Service at the Scottish National War Memorial	1045	The Castle
Sat 11 Nov 23	Remembrance Service at Glencorse Gates	1045	Glencorse Barracks
Sat 11 Nov 23	Regimental planting of crosses at the Field of Remembrance , Westminster, followed by a Remembrance Service in the Abbey Cloisters	1800	Southern Branch
Sun 12 Nov 23	Remembrance Day		
	Cenotaph	1030	
	City Chambers	1045	
	Canongate Kirk	1045	
	The Royal Scots Club	1200	
	Haymarket	1045	
	Peebles	1045	
	Whitburn	1045	
	Prestonpans	1045	
Tue 21 Nov 23	RSRT Executive Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Wed 6 Dec 23	RS Club WMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 12 Dec 23	Volunteers' Christmas Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Thu 14 Dec 23	RSCM Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 14 Dec 23	Club Trustees, Directors and Committee Christmas Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 22 Dec 23	Regimental Office and Regimental Museum closes for the Festive Season		