



The Journal *of the* Royal Highland Fusiliers

(Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment)

2009 Edition

Presentation of Colours to 2 SCOTS by HRH The Duke of York KG



The Battalion before the Parade.

2 SCOTS Homecoming Parades



CO 2 SCOTS leading the Battalion in Ayr.



HRH Duke of York KG and Lt Col N R M Borton, CO 2 SCOTS arriving at the Parade.



“Welcome home, son.” Fus Allison and his father in Ayr.



HRH Duke of York KG addresses the Battalion.



Maj Gen W E B Loudon CBE and Lord Provost Glasgow, Mr Bob Winter taking the salute in Glasgow.



CO, Adjt and RSM with the Colour Party.



The Battalion in Penicuik.



The Journal of The Royal Highland Fusiliers



2009 Edition

Editor:

Maj A L Mack

Assistant Editor:

Capt K Gurung MBE

Home Headquarters

The Royal Highland Fusiliers

518 Sauchiehall Street

Glasgow G2 3LW

Telephone: 0141 332 5639 / 0961

Fax: 0141 353 1493

Email: journal@rhf.org.uk

Regimental Website: www.rhf.org.uk

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Royal Colonel

HRH Prince Andrew, Duke of York KG

Representative Colonel

Major General W E B Loudon CBE

Regular Units

Home Headquarters RHF

518 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3LW

The Royal Highland Fusiliers

2nd Battalion The Royal

Regiment of Scotland

Glencorse Barracks, Milton Bridge,

Penicuik, EH26 0NP

Territorial Army Units

The Lowland Regiment

6th Battalion, The Royal

Regiment of Scotland

Walcheren Barracks, 122 Hotspur Street, Glasgow G20 8LQ

Allied Regiments

Prince Alfred's Guard (CF)

PO Box 463, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

The Royal Highland

Fusiliers of Canada

Cambridge, Ontario

11th Bn The Baloch Regiment

Malir Cantonment, Karachi 9, Pakistan

1st Bn The Royal New Zealand

Infantry Regiment

Wellington Lines, Linton Camp, New Zealand



Foreword

Since we published the last Journal, serving and retired Royal Highland Fusiliers have been busy both at home and overseas. Once again the loyal staff at Home Headquarters are to be commended for their efforts in support of the regimental family and their support to the Council and the Benevolent Committee. The serving men, as I intimated last year, both in the regular and reserve battalions have been busy training for and executing operations and morale, despite what one might read amongst the doom-mongers, remains buoyant and focussed on carrying our high standards and traditions forward in their day and generation. Recruiting in general remains a concern. It is now organized on a one Army basis and although since 2004 we may have been through what some might describe as 'a perfect storm' in the Scottish recruiting environment, I believe that circumstances may now beginning to work in our favour. The man in charge – Brigadier David Allfrey at Headquarters 51 Brigade – is focussed on delivering in year improvements and on building interest and raising awareness for the medium to longer term. People need to accept the contemporary role and character of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and, where we can, we must assist in that effort and thus protect that centre of gravity. The 2nd Battalion has been affected in just the same way as the other battalions by all of this but it is very encouraging indeed to see their impressive retention statistics; they are clearly a happy and well-led battalion.

You can read of their exploits in Afghanistan elsewhere in the Journal but their Operation HERRICK tour of duty was extraordinary. There cannot have been many occasions in recent times when the commanding officer has had to move 'in theatre' to take over command of another Scottish battalion, leaving his second-in-command to step up and command the 2nd Battalion for the remaining five months of the tour. This is, however, exactly what happened to Nicholas Borton and Sandy Fitzpatrick when David Richmond, commanding the 5th Battalion, was wounded on operations and flown back to UK for medical treatment. David's recovery has been slow but we are glad to know that he is back in

command in Canterbury and we hope his wounds continue to heal and strengthen. The courage and determination of our Jocks in demanding and dangerous circumstances has been second to none and although we always try to think of operational awards in terms of collective effort, there will not be anyone in the regimental family who would not wish to pass on our admiration and congratulations to the Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Borton for the award of his DSO, to Major Sandy Fitzpatrick for his MBE, Captain Brian O'Neill for his QCVS and Corporal McMenamin for his Mention in Dispatches. So honour and strong leadership under fire characterized the summer of 2008 but there was also an interesting historical twist when our Royal Colonel visited the battalion on operations and presented – for posterity's sake – the last stand of RHF Colours. These will be carried by the 2nd Battalion until such times as they are presented with their first stand of Royal Regiment of Scotland Colours. We think this momentous event – the presentation of Colours in an overseas operational theatre – took place for the first time since the mid 1800s which, in addition to the Duke of York's visit, only added to the sense of occasion. These tours of duty are rarely without fatalities. Many of us gathered in Penicuik in the middle of last year to support Bill and Anne Mathews whose son Sergeant Jonathan Mathews was killed in a Taliban ambush whilst he was attached to the Royal Irish Regiment Battlegroup. And our thoughts also went out to Mrs Shelly Dempsey when her husband Corporal Barry Dempsey was killed in August 2008 in the Gereshk area of Southern Afghanistan. It was brave of the Dempsey family to turn out for the Ayr welcome home parade and we are grateful to them for their emotional support in such difficult times.

The Battalion marched through Ayr, Glasgow and Penicuik with Colours flying and drums beating on 27, 29 and 30 October and we were all thrilled to see the level of civic support given to our people and the large crowds which turned out in all three places to welcome our young men and women home. After the parades the Battalion took some well deserved post-operational tour leave and it is now training in KENYA on Exercise GRAND PRIX.



Our reserve battalion, 52 Lowland, continues to support the Regular Army on operations and their most challenging activity in 2008 was the mobilization and training of the Force Protection Platoon which accompanied a squadron from 151 Transport Regt on a 6-month tour in Kabul. The Platoon developed an enviable reputation for hard work in a trying and occasionally dangerous situation. They appear to have been adopted by the 4-star American Force Commander, one Dan McNeil who visited them on a regular basis and even managed to grace their dry platoon Burns Supper with his presence. They returned via Cyprus and received their campaign medals from the Lord Provost of the City of Glasgow. The Battalion, as always, plays a critical role in the annual service of remembrance in George Square and the veterans branches are grateful to the team at Hotspur Street for the assistance they gave to us on what turned out to be a very rainy day.

Our RHF Veterans' Association Branches are now all up and running in Glasgow, East of Scotland, Inverness and Ayrshire. They all have a new Standard to carry on parade as a rallying point and an active bunch of Chairmen who help to organize events at various times of year. The Inverness Branch Standard was blessed at Ness Bank Church in October 2007 and the Glasgow Branch had a similar service and march past at the Cathedral in Glasgow on 4 May 2008. The HLI, GH and RHF reunions continue at Home Headquarters and the IRSF Malaya tour reunion was very well supported in Ayr with the indefatigable Tony Gordon once again making the trip from RSA to be present. An article appears elsewhere

but there is no doubt that the highlight for veterans thus far in 2009 was the Service at Glasgow Cathedral on 1 February and the civic Reception thereafter to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the formation of The Royal Highland Fusiliers. Over 800 turned out and I know that many, many people helped the team at Home Headquarters to pull everything together. A former Deacon Convenor of the City in his thank you letter commented on the "special atmosphere in the Cathedral that day" and although much of the thanks for that must go to the Reverend Lawrence Whitley for a memorable sermon and service, it was also a reflection of what happens when so many members of a family get together to rejoice rightly in the proud history and traditions of the RHF and its antecedents.

Finally, those with longer memories will remember the indomitable Terry Wilder of the RHF of Canada from former exchange visits either in Scotland or in Ontario. Colonel Bobby Steele went over to The Armoury last November for their St Andrew's Feast when Terry handed over the reins as Honorary Colonel – for the second time I think – to Lieutenant Colonel Owen Lackenbauer. Terry had a farewell dinner from the Regimental Council in mid January 2009 and you will be glad to learn that messages of goodwill were sent from me, the 2nd Battalion and from Home Headquarters. Terry has been a loyal friend and supporter for many years and we wish him well in his second retirement.

Major General W E B Loudon CBE

Honours and Awards

OPERATIONAL AWARDS

The following Operational Awards were announced on 6th March 2009 for service in Afghanistan and Iraq:

Afghanistan

DSO
Lieutenant Colonel N R M Borton MBE – CO 2 SCOTS

MBE
Major A J Fitzpatrick – 2IC 2 SCOTS

MiD
Corporal D S McMenamin – 2 SCOTS

QCVS
Captain B A O'Neill – 2 SCOTS

Iraq

OBE
Lieutenant Colonel C L G Herbert – CO 1 SCOTS

AWARDS

The following awards were announced in 2008/2009:

MSM
Captain J K Law – 2 SCOTS
Captain W G A Hunter – 2 SCOTS
CSgt W S McDougall – AFCO Glasgow

Commander in Chief Land Forces Commendation
Captain J K Law – 2 SCOTS



Presentation of New Colours to 2 SCOTS by HRH The Duke of York KG, Royal Colonel

AFGHANISTAN – SUNDAY 8th JUNE 2008

This morning in Lashkar Gah, Afghanistan HRH The Duke of York KG presented the last stand of Royal Highland Fusiliers Colours to the Battalion. This is the first time since 1856 that Colours have been presented in the 'field'; the last occasion having been in India.

In a very simple but poignant ceremony conducted on the disused HLS (Helicopter Landing Site), the old Colours were marched on with pipes and drums playing in the presence of HRH The Duke of York, Brigadier M P S Carleton-Smith OBE, Commander 16 Air Assault Brigade and 300 other members of the Battalion, Battle Group and base troops.

The Colour party were received by the Deputy Chaplain General, The Revd J Woodhouse QHC CF, The Revd N Cook, Task Force Senior Padre and Padre Abeledo, Padre to the Battalion. Under the Quartermaster the new Colours were marched on to parade and after the consecration ceremony was conducted by the Deputy Chaplain General, HRH The Duke of York made a short speech to those assembled. Shortly afterwards the new Colours were handed over to the Ensigns and following the Royal Salute were marched off parade to take pride of place in Battle Group Headquarters.

HRH The Duke of York then spent the morning with the Battalion being briefed on the Battle Group area of operations and meeting the Jocks. Lunch with members of the Battalion followed before HRH The Duke of York left Lashkar Gah for further theatre visits.

I have attached a message from Major General W E B Loudon CBE, Representative Colonel, which was read to the Battalion. Some photos and footage of the parade will be forwarded to Home Headquarters in the next few days and will be available on the Battalion website, but it is hoped that you will see some of the photos in the national press first.

Captain D D J Mackinnon, Adjt 2SCOTS – 8th June 2008

**ADDRESS BY MAJOR GENERAL W E B LOUDON CBE
REPRESENTATIVE COLONEL OF THE ROYAL
HIGHLAND FUSILIERS – 8th JUNE 2008**

Between 150 and 200 years ago our forefathers were involved in difficult and dangerous operations in this region of the world. They always fought with distinction and, as one generation passed on to another, they were determined to uphold the legacy of heroism and sacrifice that had been handed down to them. In those days men rallied round their Colours, telling friend and foe alike who they were and what they stood for.

Today you all find yourselves the contemporary custodians of that proud heritage which stretches back to the seventeenth century. Since the old colours were presented to the battalion by our Colonel in Chief at Redford Barracks, the Royal Highland Fusiliers have seen operational service in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, the Balkans, and here in Afghanistan. Nowhere in this recent fine record of service have the pressures on commanders, and on the men, been greater than are here and now. And I want you all to know that your professionalism and courage is respected and appreciated on the home front.

I was at the Tercentenary when the old colours were presented. I cannot be with you today in person but I want you to know that all old Royal Highland Fusiliers, be they members of one of the branches of the association in Glasgow, Ayrshire, the East of Scotland, Inverness, or in the wider RHF community, as well as and in the Home Headquarters, are thinking of you on this historic day. We are immensely proud of your commitment to current operations and I want you all to know that you will always enjoy our unswerving support.

God speed and return safely.

Major General W E B Loudon CBE

(Editor's Notes: More photos of this event on the front-cover and its inside page in this edition of the Journal.)



*HRH Duke of York
addressing the Battalion.*



The 50th Anniversary of the Formation The Royal Highland Fusiliers

It seems only right to start these notes of this historic event with the words of Colonel Blair Agnew, one of the founder members of the Royal Highland Fusiliers, when he spoke at the Service in Glasgow Cathedral, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Royal Highland Fusiliers on Sunday 1 February 2009:

“On 20th January 1959 when the Royal Highland Fusiliers mustered at Redford Barracks, the first Commanding Officer was Lt Col Mike Evetts MC and the Adjutant was Major, later Major General, Stuart Green. The success, the ethos and the outstanding reputation of our Regiment owes everything to the work done by these two officers and the values that they imbued into all ranks of the Battalion. They ensured that the Proud Heritage of our Regimental forefathers was passed on to the generations of all ranks who have followed in their footsteps.

We had hoped that both Col Mike’s widow, The Honourable Mrs Susan Evetts, and General Stuart could have been here today to share in these celebrations but Susan, although very cheerful, is now very frail and her family were adamant that such a journey could not be attempted and General Stuart sadly is ill and also could not travel. They have asked me to speak on their behalf and to pass on their warmest good wishes to all those present today, members of the Regiment both present and past.

Susan, who did so much for the wives and families of the Regiment, recalls the pride with which Col Mike watched the progress, the professionalism and the dedication to duty that the succeeding generations of the Royal Highland Fusiliers have displayed, and were he still alive today she knows that he would have been delighted that all he had striven to instil in all ranks of his beloved regiment had been more than achieved by those who followed him. Susan wishes especially to pay tribute to the wives and families who have so loyally supported their menfolk and perhaps most importantly to the wives and families of those currently serving with whose anxiety in these uncertain times she profoundly sympathises.

All of us wish that Col Mike might have lived to see this day, but those of us who were privileged to serve under him are in little doubt that he will be watching with maintained pride. He it was who made it plain from that amalgamation day that the Royal Highland Fusiliers would embody all that was best from our illustrious antecedents: The Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment); and, as both Susan and General Stuart have said, his hopes, aspirations and even his commands have been amply achieved. He would have been proudest of all in that of the five regular battalions of the Royal Regiment of Scotland no less than four are commanded by former Royal Highland Fusiliers.

Col Mike was the most modest of men and would have been astonished to hear the Pipe Major who played at his and Susan’s Golden Wedding celebration say that it was a privilege to play

for and meet the Officer who was a legend in the Regiment. On Mike’s death his funeral instructions called for a bearer party, a piper and a bugler and these were provided – for the man who was and always will be seen as the Father of the Regiment.

It is appropriate that in these surroundings of Glasgow Cathedral we should remember that it was Col Mike, who at a Dinner Night in Aden in 1960, recognised that the tune Rhu Vaternish could be adapted as a hymn tune and who instructed Bandmaster Ray Mitchell to write the tune and Padre James Morrison to write the hymn which he did, based upon the Regimental Collect which he had himself written for the Amalgamation.

Those who went before acknowledge with pride that the Proud Heritage has been guarded faithfully”.

And those who are still with us paraded in *massive* strength (over 700 people – veterans, serving personnel, cadets and families attended the event) outside Glasgow Cathedral on the 1st of February to march to the City Chambers where we were entertained at a grand Civic Reception by the Lord Provost himself. It was sometimes hard to hear the “Eyes Right” as we marched past the Lord Provost and Col N T Campbell, Deputy Representative Colonel who were both on the saluting dais at the Cenotaph, but we managed to keep in step. The Colour Party and Pipes & Drums Band of 2 SCOTS, and the very long procession of veterans with their respective Branch Standards and also our affiliated cadets marching proudly, created a spectacular ambience of colour, pomp and pageantry. Bugler/Drummer Christopher Crawford was SMITING his Base Drum, and the resonant sound percolated to even the *tail-end* of the huge column. (The nearest of us could also hear Pipe Major Roderick Weir’s experts blasting away on their pipes!). Any way, we got there at George Square and then Glasgow City Chambers – and we were not only *fed!* We were *fortified!*

At 1500 hrs Phase 2 of the event kicked off – we moved to Hilton Hotel for more celebration, catching up and reminiscing with old friends. A presentation consisting of a slide-show of photographs



RSM John Hamilton, the Parade Commander leading the procession.



(with Scottish music playing in the background) of past and present personalities (including some well-known “characters”) of the Regiment and also of our fallen comrades from 1959 to the present, and a two-minute silence to pay our respect to the latter – which were all conducted excellently by Steff Stevenson. It was a nostalgic and moving presentation. This was followed by a speech by the Deputy Representative Colonel, Colonel N T Campbell – he thanked 2 SCOTS for the Colour Party and Pipes & Drums, and all those who were involved in the organising this unforgettable event which was a huge success.

By 1800 hrs, all of us dispersed from Hilton Hotel, however it was learnt later (from the photographs posted in the RHF Veterans Forum website), that some partied on in the Piper (a pub in Cochrane Street).

All in all it was a memorable day when many old friendships were re-kindled and war stories re-told. Here’s to the next fifty years!

(Afternote: Sadly, General Stuart Green died on Wednesday 8th April 2009.)



Ian Cameron giving the word of command, “Eyes Right” as they approach the Saluting Dais at George Square.

Location of Serving Officers

Representative Colonel: Major General W E B Loudon CBE

Deputy Representative Colonel: Colonel N T Campbell

1. General Staff List

- Colonel N T Campbell – Asst Director Plans HQ
APHCS
- Colonel P A S Cartwright OBE – Asst Director Cbt Eqpt, Eqpt
Div, HQ LAND
- Colonel P K Harkness MBE – Asst Div Director ICSC(L),
Defence Academy
Shrivenham

2. Former RHF Officers in Other Appointments

- Colonel J M Castle OBE – Col Msn Sp Gp, Op Sp Gp
- Colonel A L Reid OBE – Inf Pers Strategic Review,
MS Sen Offrs,
APC Glasgow

3. Regimental List

Direct Entry Officers

LIEUTENANT COLONELS:

- A D Johnston MBE – SO1 Info Ops HQ ARRC
- A C B Whitelaw – Regtl Lt Col
- W A Common – Dep Garrison Comd HQ
Warminster Garrison
- N H De R Channer – SO1 G7 Ex Planning Staff HQ
ARRC
- D C Richmond – CO 5 SCOTS
- J Garven MBE – SO1 COS Jt Stf Div J3 HQBF
Cyprus
- A D Middleton MBE – BLO GE FD BLO Germany
(Cologne)
- D N M Mack – CO Sp Bn HQ ARRC
- N R M Borton DSO MBE – CO 2 SCOTS
- C L G Herbert OBE – CO 1 SCOTS
- S J Cartwright – CO 3 SCOTS



D G Steel – CO MCTC
 E A Fenton – SO1 FRES IPT, DE&S

MAJORS:
 N B V Campbell – SO2 G2/G3 HQ Catterick Garrison
 P Hutt – SO2 JF READINESS, J7 PJHQ
 A J Fitzpatrick MBE – 2IC 2 SCOTS
 M P S Luckyn-Malone – OC FSp Coy 2 SCOTS
 T J Cave-Gibbs – OC C Coy 2 SCOTS
 A S J Douglas (Late KOSB) – SO2 G1 51(Scottish) Bde
 N D E Abram – OC B Coy 2 SCOTS
 S R Feaver – OC F Sp Coy 5 SCOTS (OP HERRICK)
 J D Loudoun (Late KOSB) – OC A Coy 2 SCOTS
 T H C De R Channer – SO2 Liability Ops DGS MOD
 N G Jordan-Barber – SO2 Change Mgt HQ ARTD
 P A Joyce – Requirements Manager JBTSE IPT Abbey Wood
 T A Winfield – SO2 Pers Prog, Comd Plans HQ LAND Upavon
 F A L Luckyn-Malone – SO2 STAR (GROUND) 6th (UK) Div York
 N J L Brown – SO2 G1/G4 Plans/EPS HQ 102 Log Bde & Sig Sqn Gutersloh

CAPTAINS:
 R R Keating – Int Offr 2 SCOTS
 D D J Mackinnon (Late HLDERS) – Adj 2 SCOTS
 N P Bridle – SO3 DGS, MOD
 J A Reid – SO3 G2 52 Bde
 R R D McClure – SO3 G3 O&D/CTS HQ 2 Div
 M J Munnich – RHQ SCOTS
 L A M J Velasco (Late KOSB) – RSO 2 SCOTS
 B O'Neill – Instr PSBC Infantry Battle School Brecon
 R S Montgomery – Instr Recce Div, LWC
 J R L Savage – OC Mortars 2 SCOTS
 L Curson – Trg Offr 2 SCOTS
 V T Gilmour – Instr PCD Infantry Battle School Brecon
 A M Sweet – 2IC A Coy 2 SCOTS
 J A French – SO2 BEO S3 Air Army Exch Post BDS(W)
 M J Rodger – SO3 O&D, HQ Inf
 M D Kerr – 2 SCOTS
 E D Aitken – 2 SCOTS (PVR Mar 09)
 I D Brember – ATR Pirbright
 G W Muir – ADC to Comd Fd Army HQLF

LIEUTENANTS
 A G Lipowski – OC ATK 2 SCOTS
 A R Gill – Instr PCD, Inf Battle School, Brecon
 J B McVey – Pl Comd 1 ITB ITC Catterick
 D J W Morgan – Pl Comd 1 ITB ITC Catterick
 D E Reed – 2IC C Coy 2 SCOTS
 O W Bridle – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 O T G Bowen – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 A N Lassoued – Tp Comd ATR Pirbright
 C K Law – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS

2nd LIEUTENANTS
 B S E Davey – Pl Comd 1 ITB ITC Catterick
 M A Dobson (Late AGC) – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 G C MacGregor – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 M D Oladjins – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 J D House – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 J M Collinge – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 M C Dowds – Pl Comd 2 SCOTS
 J T Philips – PCBC / Pl Comd 2 SCOTS

Late Entry Officers

MAJORS:
 J E B Kerr MBE – OC HQ COY 2 SCOTS
 S WEMYSS (Late HLDERS) – QM 2 SCOTS
 G A McGown MBE – COS GSV IPT, DG LE, DE&S, Abbey Wood

CAPTAINS:
 A T Grant – Coy Capt SCOTS Coy ITC Catterick
 R C Welsh (Late RS) – QM(T) 2 SCOTS
 J K Law – MTO 2 SCOTS
 W G A Hunter – UWO 2 SCOTS
 D McCutcheon – RCMO 2 SCOTS

Location of Serving Volunteer Officers

Honorary Colonel: Colonel J P Wright QVRM TD

BRIGADIER:
 J G d'Inverno TD ADC WS – Asst Div Comd HQ 2 Div

COLONEL:
 J L Kelly MBE – Cadet Colonel 51 (Scottish) Bde

LIEUTENANT COLONELS:
 S W Burns TD – Unposted List
 H Grant TD – CO Tayforth UOTC
 R Doyle – Unposted List

MAJORS:
 J M T Allen – Glasgow & Strathclyde UOTC
 S J R Bollen TD – OC BRAT 51 (Scottish) Bde

CAPTAINS:
 P C MacDonald BEM – RTC(S)
 A Blair – PSAO C Coy 6 SCOTS
 H M McAulay – PSAO B Coy 6 SCOTS
 D McNally – OC HQ Coy 6 SCOTS
 D H Coulter – PSAO 52 Sig Sqn, 32 Sig Regt(V)
 J Donald – OC B Coy 6 SCOTS
 J Coombes – Unposted List
 A I Campbell – 2IC C Coy 6 SCOTS

SUBALTERNs
 A P Wickman – LONDONS



Letters to the Editor

From: Lieutenant Colonel N H De R Channer
Oxford University Officers Training Corps
Falklands House, Opens Road, Oxford OX1 1RX
3rd June 2008

From: Mr Kenneth J West
348 Humberstone Lane
Leicester LE4 9JP
Tel No: 0116 2742991

Dear Sir,

I was sorry to read in Donald Mack's Obituary that you had no copy of his cartoon and story of Ronald whose blood was the normal colour. I hope that this copy will help to fill in this important piece of early RHF history.

Yours aye, Nick

[**Editor:** *The "story of Ronald whose blood was the normal colour" or "The Balmoral Highlanders" is in Regimental Miscellany in this edition of the Journal.*]

From: Major G McG Dallas
8 Stanley Court, Stanley Road
Sutton, Surrey SM2 6SF
8th May 2008

Dear Alistair,

It was a pleasure to receive the latest Journal and I congratulate you on your excellent contribution that continues to bring together past, present and future and encourages even the likes of me to set pen to paper.

I was saddened to learn of the death of WO2 Bradford and part of the text of Willie Erskine's obituary brought back some very happy memories. I was fortunate to have both as Corporals during my time at SID Glencorse albeit at different times. Both were excellent and supplied many a good produce to the seven Scottish Regiments. We had a successful Clyde Week both on the water and on land. It was not "dry". In regimental blazers and ties with shoes highly polished both "Brad" and Willie were a credit to the Regiment and I doubt if there were any of the other boats now aware of the Royal Highland Fusiliers. This includes the Royal Navy but that is a story for another time unless Willie Erskine decides to go to press! For the record I was fortunate to be successful in 1966 and 1967 in the British Schools Keelboat Sailing Championship and not U16 champion.

Next, Peter Haldane's photograph (RHF Journal 2008, page7, letter by Lieutenant Colonel P J Haldane refers)

1. WHO: On the left in Patrick Fox then 2IC A Company and on the left is Willie Shaw then CSM A Company.
2. WHAT: Not sure.
3. WHERE: I think it is Dunmore Park, Belfast then the Headquarters of the North Irish Horse. A Coy had initially been deployed in Flax Street Mill in the Old Ardoyne before moving to Dunmore Park following Brigade boundary reorganisation.
4. WHEN: April/May 1971

Yours aye, Rab

(**Editor:** *Willie Shaw says that Answers 1, 3 and 4 are correct – and that Answer 2 is "Preparing to deal with a riot at Gallagher's Cigarette Factory".*)

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the 2008 edition of the RHF Journal in its new format which was so full of interesting items, including the wonderful tribute to the late Major Leslie Rowell DSO by WDD, (presumably ex Lt W D Douglas MC)

During the past 20 years I had been corresponding with Leslie and had the pleasure of meeting him to chat over old times. In recent years he had moved from Bristol to be nearer his daughter and family at Dunton Basset and so I was able to attend his funeral. As the only representative from the Battalion, I was made so welcome by Anne and family and the friends he had quickly made within the village community who packed the church for his service.

I first met Leslie on the 2nd day of the battle of Fontenay – le – Pesnil as one of a motley crew of replacements for 11 RSF. As Adjutant he made us feel so welcome, as indeed we were after losing some 200 men in the previous day's battle. Although all 36 were specialists, we would be deployed as riflemen with "D" Coy and he wished us good luck.

At Chepstow in 1942, Major McKay was given the task of forming "D" Coy in preparation for the forthcoming invasion and gathered four of the most able Sgts in the Battalion to form the nucleus. It is to Leslie's credit that he always maintained that it was to Major McKay that the praise should go for the achievements by "D" Coy in the Normandy – Holland campaigns. A DSO, 2 MCs, 1 DCM, 3 MMs, 2 Min D and a Croix de Guerre bear witness to this.

In my book, I had incorrectly named Leslie as OC "D" Coy instead of Major McKay who sadly was killed at Frenouville two days after I was wounded; however, he was eventually promoted to Major at Turnhout. I apologised for my precipitate appointment and he graciously declined to claim any back pay.

On my return to the Battalion in December 1944, I was deployed as signaller at "A" Coy with Major (Jock) Weir DSO. On the night of the river assault landing, we were the forward company and so were on full alert, monitoring the action throughout the night. I was greatly interested in their progress as I still had many friends in "D" Coy, one of whom was killed in the withdrawal, but it was a great success and a great fillip to the whole Battalion. The DSO was a just reward for such an able leader who cared passionately for his men who he led by example – a real gentleman.

In the words of our good friend Willie Shaw, we ex-11th RSF are now a "Rare old Breed", so through your good offices, I would be grateful if you could put me in touch with W D Douglas, to enable to thank him for his personal tribute to a mutual friend.

Yours sincerely,
Kenneth J West



Obituaries

MAJOR J D H WHITCOMBE HLI RHF

John was born in Scotland of a Scottish mother and New Zealand father in 1917. Later he was sent to a boarding preparatory school, where he excelled at games, being a successful wicket keeper and captain of football. Winchester College followed, a school well known for its high academic entry requirements. Although among his contemporaries were Willie Whitelaw and Keith Joseph, John became Head of his House. As he always said, his five years there were among the happiest in his life.



After leaving school, he went to The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and in 1937 was commissioned into the HLI, then at Fort George. Here he became *inter alia* a member of the Battalion hockey and cricket teams and also Master of the Fort George Beagles. But possibly his greatest accolade in those early days was a report that he was “the most personable young officer in the Battalion”!

1 HLI went to France in October 39 as part of the BEF, John commanding the Carrier Platoon with its nine (very lightly armoured) Bren Gun Carriers. At the end of May 1940 the Battalion took part in the retreat to Calais. Eventually John had to abandon the Carriers and march his Platoon into Calais. There they waded into the sea, the water up to their necks, and swam out to small boats which conveyed them to a Destroyer. John wrote, “My men were taken care of, [and] I was deposited on the floor of the Officers’ Mess cabin, where I promptly slept all the way to Dover.”

(The latter quotation comes from the “HLI OCA Record of Service Form” which John completed ten years ago – after he had been persuaded by Heather, Mrs Whitcombe, to fill it in. It doesn’t mention that he was also “Mentioned in Dispatches”.)

Next, in June 1944, John was sent to Italy to reinforce 2 HLI, which he joined at Bari in October. The Battalion was then sent to Greece to counter the Communist partisans. John was not only commanding a company but was for a time “Town Major of Athens”.

In 1947 John became the Adjutant of 5/6 HLI but in 1949 was posted to 1 A&SH – and was off with them to Hong Kong. Then, in 1950, he was in Kuala Lumpur, as Garrison Adjutant, and in 1952 John was back with 1 HLI, as OC A Coy in Tel-el-Kebir. From there John went back to the Fort, not this time with 1 HLI but to command the Highland Brigade Depot Training Coy (1954-56).

But John’s fighting career was not yet over. In 1956 1 HLI was sent to Cyprus to counter EOKA. When his friend Brian Carson, OC Sp Coy, was badly wounded there John was sent out to succeed him – and was again mentioned in dispatches. John served on with 1 HLI, took his Company “home” to Luneberg and then to Edinburgh, where 1 HLI amalgamated with 1 RSF to become 1 RHF.

That was the end of John’s Regimental Service. From 1959 to 1962 he was at HQ Scottish Command as DAAG Recruiting, then from 1962 to 1964 as 2IC Infantry Records Perth. Next was “Infantry and GSC Records, York”, then in charge of “Scottish Infantry Division Records”. Of his final year, 1969, John wrote in his “Record of Service” “Retired”.

But earlier, back in 1943, John had found time to marry, at Catterick, a very pretty Wren, Miss Heather Sherston, in November 1943. Their five children, Rosie, Jonathan, James, Mark and Nick, were born respectively in Yorkshire, Hong Kong, Malaya, Egypt and Edinburgh. Very sadly for John, Rosie died aged 21 in 1968 from cancer. John also suffered when his younger brother Hugh was killed in 1946 fighting Indonesian insurgents.

After his retirement John and Heather settled in Yorkshire to enjoy country life – in a house big enough to house their large family. Money was always scarce, but this did not stop them entertaining very generously. To supplement his pension, he took a self-employed post. In this he continued until he was 72, but it also gave him time to pursue his many hobbies such as shooting, dog walking, tending his vegetable garden and playing bridge.

As well as being Church Warden for 22 years and supporting army charities, he also built a boat – with the help of his sons. He named it Miracle because he said it would be one if it floats! It did and still does!

Although John and Heather later moved south, to Brent Eleigh, to be nearer to their sons and grandchildren, he had to spend his last few years in a nursing home. But John, supported by Heather, ever strove to do the best for his family. He was very fond of his three daughters-in-law, Sarah, Rebekah and Sophie and he was immensely proud of his grandchildren, Tom, Anna, Charlie, Isobel, Rosie, George and Andrew.

John Whitcombe’s life was one of hard work and devotion to duty as a soldier, husband and father. He also lived up to Winchester’s motto, “Manners Makyth Man”. He was a kind, gentle and courteous man commanding great respect from all who met him. He was above all a truly Christian soldier and gentleman.

But one last word: this “most personable young officer” was equally “personable” more than twenty years later. There is a famous photograph of him *handsomely* performing an energetic Petronella (in Luneberg in 1958) with his Colonel-In-Chief! (But neither had to wear a white arm-band; John’s partner was HRH The Princess Margaret).

JRW



MAJOR WILLIAM BOWIE MBE MC HLI

Willie Bowie, who has died aged 97, was a Dunkirk veteran who went on to crown his distinguished war service by being awarded a Military Cross. In civilian life he was a business man who went on to become one of the foremost authorities on the Scottish Colourists.



An early education at Glasgow Academy and Warriston School was followed by Sedbergh School in Cumbria, where he proved to be an all-round sportsman, and Glasgow University, where he gained a degree in philosophy. Entering the family laundry business, Bowie-Castlebank, he was soon supporting his elder brother John, in taking the business forward. (After the war, traditional domestic laundries faltered and the introduction of garment rental and launderettes were critical to the firm's continuing success.)

However, when war broke out in 1939 Willie had immediately enlisted and in November was sent to OCTU in Dunbar. From it he emerged as a Lieutenant and was posted to 1 HLI in France in March 1940. Dunkirk followed and Willie and most of the Battalion made it back to UK.

There he soon rose to command D Coy and in 1944 took it to fight in Normandy, through the Low Countries and into Germany. Recorded is his famed "walk of death" technique, advancing only yards behind the line of exploding British shells. "Observers claim he seemed to know the moment the artillery would move their line of fire forward another 100 yards. As the shells exploded, Major Bowie and his men would be almost immediately behind."

Not one to draw attention to himself, his assertion was readily accepted that, "It did seem unusual to people at the time that my company suffered far fewer casualties than others well behind the line". (Willie always made sure, as did his CO, Torquil MacLeod, that his men's lives would not be thrown away.) Not long afterwards this "War-time soldier" became 2IC of 1 HLI. Both Torquil MacLeod and Dick Kindersley, Torquil's successor as CO, had great faith in him.

His tactical awareness and personal courage were marked in particular by his award of the Military Cross in February 1945, after the battles at Host and Rottum. The citation includes the words "Fierce resistance from Spandau posts in the village [Host] was only subdued after a considerable period, during which time Major Bowie controlled the battle with the greatest coolness and skill, from exposed positions and under continuous mortar and machine gun fire..... [He set] a fine example of coolness and disregard for his own safety ... [and] the Bn was able to gain the final objective [Rottum] without undue delay."

At the War's end, with 1 HLI about to be dispatched to fight the Japanese – but sent instead to Palestine – Willie was posted

to 5 HLI and took part in their temporary disbandment. (5/6 HLI reappeared in 1957 and continued as an HLI battalion for twenty years more)

A strong Christian faith permeated his life and found expression in his role as a Church Elder at Kelvinside Hillhead Parish Church, where he was an Elder for more than 50 years, in his commitment to the Boys' Brigade's Glasgow Battalion, of which he was president from 1965 to 1972, and as a director of the Bible Institute of Scotland. He was made an MBE in 1986.

As a nonagenarian, Bowie continued to nurture old friendships and gather new ones. Partly this was due to his interest in people and their activities but, more than that, he brought to every occasion a beguiling mix of the proper and the mischievous. His infectious gaiety of spirit won him an enduring circle of friends. Many of these were, from the post-war start, members of the HLI OCA. They worshipped him.

Bowie died in Erskine Hospital's Glasgow home. He had been appointed to the executive committee of the hospital in 1952 and was a lifelong supporter. His commitment to Erskine, and other ex-service organisations, had been forged during his distinguished service.

Loyalty to family, friends and wartime comrades was a constant thread throughout his long and fulfilling life. With no direct family of his own, he was a greatly loved uncle to his brother John's children, Patricia, John, Diana, and Gale.

AOR

MAJOR R H DUNCAN RSF RHF

Robert Henry Duncan was born in Edinburgh on 1st June 1934 and educated at George Watson's. He was destined for the Regular Army and prior to going to the RMA Sandhurst, he served the obligatory 4 months in the ranks (in the Black Watch).



Bob was commissioned into the Royal Scots Fusiliers on 12th February 1954

and after completing the School of Infantry courses at Hythe and Warminster, he joined 1 RSF in Malaya, serving there until he returned home with the Battalion in 1957. He then attended the 3-inch Mortar Course at Netheravon and became the Battalion's Mortar Officer. Bob went to Cyprus with 1 RSF in 1958 and was then a founder member of the amalgamated Royal Highland Fusiliers when they mustered in Edinburgh in January 1959.

Service with 1 RHF in Aden and Malta in 1960 and 1961 was followed by a posting to the Jungle Warfare School as an instructor. It was whilst serving at Kota Tinggi that Bob developed his admiration and love for the Gurkhas. After Kota Tinggi, Bob served for two years with 1st Cameronians and then



for fifteen months at the Army Apprentices School at Carlisle before achieving his ambition and transferring to 1/6th QEO Gurkha Rifles which became 6th Gurkha Rifles in 1969. Bob served with 6 GR in Hong Kong, Singapore and Brunei where he was 2IC 6 GR. He retired from the Army in May 1989 and moved to Warminster.

Bob married Anne on 7th February 1959 and their first child, Andrew was born in June 1960. Anne and Andrew joined Bob in Aden in July 1960 but to their great sorrow Andrew died in Aden and was buried in the Military Cemetery there. Happily they were to have two further children, Catriona and Robin.

Bob was a keen Military Historian and perhaps an even keener enthusiast for all things that exploded or could be fired. Explosions could be heard from the back garden in Warminster and visitors could be encouraged to assist in the manufacture of lead bullets for his muzzle loader. (Bob had, one of us remembers, an 1850ish Enfield Rifle – which he got completely refurbished with *some* of the Hythe Museum's contents in 1954. We would stand on the shore of the Forth, empty powder into its smoking maw – and pray that the bloody thing would not react. It never did. Bob used to say, "Don't worry. When it shoots, it's good at a good three hundred yards. You're too close.")

Bob was a good soldier, a popular officer and a good companion. He loved his whisky and his cigarettes and the abiding memory for many of us will be the grin on his face which told of his great sense of humour and his totally unique reveille chorus!

Whilst Bob loved the Army and his two Regiments, his major love was for Anne and his family and it is them that our sympathies are directed. We who remain are grateful that our paths crossed and that our lives were touched by him.

BAND SERGEANT MAJOR E (EDDIE) DUFFY RSF RHF

In order to pay tribute to Eddie Duffy it is necessary for me to explain how first we met. We both came from slightly different directions due to the amalgamation of the Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Highland Light Infantry.

This happened at Redford Cavalry Barracks, Edinburgh, in January 1959. In the rather fine 19th-century purpose-built band block at the rear of the main barracks area, the members of the bands of the Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Highland Light Infantry assembled to become the Regimental Band of the Royal Highland Fusiliers, Bandmaster Ray Mitchell was appointed, and Mr W Allan Bandmaster of RSF departed for a musical position with the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers.



It was at this time I met Eddie Duffy, late RSF. I had been appointed Band Sergeant of the new organisation. My opposite number in the RSF – Sgt Barry Langton – had departed for a Bandmasters' course at Kneller Hall. Eddie, an excellent performer on the French horn, proved himself to be a good organiser and impressively immaculate in both manner and attire.

During those early days he was a great asset. His calm and thoughtful approach to problems was immediately most reassuring. He had great charm and had the welfare of others at heart, particularly in the teaching and training of the younger bandmen. Other notable RSF persons and friends of Eddie were Sgts Peter Ravencroft and Ian Knight, solo clarinetist and percussionist respectively.

Prior to the Amalgamation there had been an amount of uncertainty when the Regiments had been threatened with merger, and it was with some trepidation that the two groups of musicians gathered together. The task of forming a creditable musical combination from the very outset was not easy. Some sections were musically imbalanced, due to us being quite over strength. However, the Bandmaster – Mr Ron Mitchell, with his extraordinary musical expertise, together with the senior NCOs, soon "ironed out" problems, thus establishing a fine musical ensemble to cover the enormous amount of ceremonial work ahead. We were well aware that with the Regiment providing the Royal Guard at Ballater and the Beating of Retreat for Her Majesty the Queen our musical worth would be sorely tried.

Our first aim was to make ourselves known, musically, to the "Jocks" themselves. Lunch-time concerts held in the main dining hall were most popular – particularly when the programme included such items as Sgt John McTomney playing Koenig's "Post Horn Gallop" on a .303 Lee Enfield rifle – following his final cadenza he replaced the bolt and fired off a blank!! Also, the Provost Sergeant "Wully" McCrimmon standing rigidly to attention, pace-stick under his arm giving his rendition, in his inimitable Glasgow brogue of "Tae be an Auld Maid in a Garret", to which all and sundry would shout back "wi a parrot" was guaranteed to "bring the cookhouse down"!

Eddie was an excellent sportsman, his particular game being hockey. He loved all aspects of military life and was extremely proud of his father who had completed full-time service and had been a Sergeant in the RSF. As a member of the band, Eddie had travelled widely: Malaya, Germany, Spain, France, Aden, Somaliland, Kenya, Cyprus, Malta, and the United States of America. He was awarded the General Service Medal – with clasp Arabian Peninsula, the United Peace Force Medal (Cyprus) and the coveted Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Following postings to Aden and Malta GC, in 1967 I left the Band, who were then stationed at Fort George, for the Lowland Brigade Depot at Glencorse and subsequently the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall. Eddie succeeded me as Band Sergeant under Mr Gordon T F Cooke and later Mr John Brush. Sometime later I heard that he had attained the rank of Band Sergeant Major. Sadly, as our ways parted I lost touch with him for about thirty nine years!



In June 2006, through Eddie's kindness I received an invitation for my partner Honour and I to attend "Founder's Day" at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Eddie greeted us resplendent in his scarlet coat and wearing his wonderful tricorne hat and medals. It was on this occasion that we met the Regimental Secretary – Colonel Bobby Steele. What convivial company with Eddie organising everything with great style and panache!

At his passing, this is my tribute to a dedicated professional soldier and musician who was devoted to his regiment. I salute his memory.

Lt Col Bryan Briggs-Watson late HLI/RHF – 1947-1971

EDWARD TRAYNOR MBE HLI

Eddie joined the 10th in April 1940. With it he served in various capacities, ending the War as the QM Stores Corporal – and remaining there until demobilisation. Although offered promotion (in 1945) to become the CSgt/CQMS of one of the Battalion's Rifle Coys, he turned this down. The Battalion had just acquired not only a new QM but a new RQMS, and so he felt that he should stay where he was – and help the new masters to sort things out. He did so, thereby helping 10th HLI to disband (in May 1946) without too many deficiencies. He was also awarded a certificate from the GOC 21st Army.



Before the War, Eddie first worked, at an early age, with Glasgow Tramways. He was initially the "Points-Boy" at Bridgeton Cross. When the points were iced-up, Eddie would apply a kettleful of boiling water to re-open them to traffic. However, as 'below ground' was somewhat warmer, Eddie transferred (when of age) to the Underground and soon became one of its drivers.

The War then intervened, but after its end Eddie returned 'under ground' and soon was a Station Master. Eventually, after his 'Station Staff' had been reduced to a level beyond his liking, he left the Underground and became the Tool Buyer for an eminent engineering company.

He married, however, before the War. In 1938 Miss Mary Gahagen became his wife. Their child, Edward, was born in 1939.

Long after the War, Eddie was more than recognised. He'd been an active member of his church, his housing association and much else (including The 10th HLI Continuation Club). The Queen summoned him to Holyrood Palace and bestowed on him an MBE for "Services to the Community".

Mary predeceased Eddie, but he is survived by his son and his two grandchildren. Edward, Stuart and Heather remember Eddie with love.

ALISTAIR (ALEXANDER) CAMERON HLI

Born in 1934 Alistair, or Alec as he was called by his Army contemporaries, was called up to do his National Service in 1955 – after completing his apprenticeship as a plumber. After Basic Training at Maryhill Barracks he joined 1 HLI in Bulford and became a Regimental Signaller – and soon a Lance Corporal. In 1956 he was off with the Battalion to Cyprus – and the Emergency.



There, after working at Komi Kebir and then Dhavlos with Bn HQ (and patrolling with B Coy), he was posted to two detached Companies in turn, first to C Coy at Kantara and later to A Coy at Mersinniki. Of the latter he wrote, "A Coy always considered themselves the best Company in the Battalion and I must admit the longer I was with them the more brainwashed I became."

Alec's service with the Battalion is wonderfully described in his two-part Article, 'The Fight Against Eoka', which was published in the 2007 and 2008 Editions of *The Journal*. The Article has been much admired; it makes very good reading. In it he tells of the famous Willie Furey of C Coy (thereafter known as "Hawkeye") who shot and killed a terrorist ("freedom fighter") unwise enough to hurl a bomb at his truck. Its explosion had cost Willie McConologue to lose an arm. He also tells of another bomber who lobbed a bomb *into* a truck. Luckily its occupants got out before the bomb exploded. They then captured the "freedom fighter", who was by then hiding in a church – no doubt hoping for help from its Greek Orthodox practitioners. Sad 'though is Alec's next report. A Church of Scotland Visitor, an old man who'd give out biscuits and comfort but refuse escorts between his ports of call was gunned down by yet more "freedom fighters". There were also unsuccessful attempts to injure or kill A Coy swimming parties, but eventually the "freedom fighters" succeeded.

A Coy, when not over-deployed on patrolling, would launch two football teams to play on a school pitch in Lefconico. The locals would turn out and watch, but one day, as usual a Sunday afternoon, there were no locals there. At the end of the game the teams congregated round the drinking fountain. It then exploded, its IED (Improvised Explosives Device – usually a 25-pounder shell with an inserted detonator) being controlled by wires from a nearby house. Private Neely died immediately and two of his friends, both of 1 Pl, were mortally wounded, Privates Beatty and Doherty.

Alec (Alistair) returned from these "incidents" and was soon out of the Army after he had sailed back with the Battalion. He avoided his statutory TA service. He went back to plumbing and soon found himself a Project Manager with William Press, an Off-Shore engineering company.

He also got married in 1964, to Miss Ruth Bryans, and they had three children, James, Julie and Alistair.

He was also an active member of the HLI OCA. He didn't just sit on its Committee; he delved into the Internet to produce a



host of information on Waterloo, the subject of the next OCA meeting (9 May 09). We shall remember him that day. We proffer our sympathies to Ruth, to his children, James, Julie and Alistair and also to his three grandchildren.

CORPORAL BARRY DEMPSEY RHF 2 SCOTS

Corporal Barry Dempsey was 29 and from Ayrshire. He lived with his wife Shelly, a son, Charlie, aged two, and daughter Andie, aged four, at the Battalion's base in Penicuik near Edinburgh.



Corporal Barry Dempsey and his wife Shelly.

Cpl Barry Dempsey joined The Royal Highland Fusiliers in 1998, and spent the majority of his career as a medic in the Regimental Aid Post. Barry was a dedicated medic, who had found his real vocation in life. He successfully worked his way up through the RAP and was promoted to Corporal in 2007. Recently he successfully completed the Regimental Combat Medical Technician 1 course, and was a highly respected and competent medic.

His wife, Shelly, made the following tribute to her husband: "Barry was a devoted husband and father. He has died doing a job he loved. His family and the Army was his life. He will be forever missed by his wife, children and family. He will never be forgotten. He died a hero."

The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Nick Borton, paid this tribute:

"Barry Dempsey loved his Regiment, but he was above all a dedicated family man, who devoted most of his spare time to Shelly and the children, Andie and Charlie. He was a private man, who enjoyed spending time with his young children. He had a wry sense of humour, didn't take life too seriously, and always had a ready smile for everybody. He will leave a tremendous gap in the 2 SCOTS medical team.

Barry was tragically killed while on patrol attached to 1 R IRISH, part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, in the Gereshk Valley on 18 August 2008. He was in Afghanistan to provide aid to his comrades, and served with bravery and dedication, doing what he was best at. A thorough professional and a loving family man, we have lost a great friend and fellow soldier. While we mourn the loss of a regimental comrade, all our hearts go out to Shelly and the rest of Barry's family, for it is they who have borne the real burden of his absence, and they who have now sustained the real loss. They are ever in our thoughts and prayers."

Cpl Stephen Quinn, The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland, said:

"I first met Barry when my wife and I moved next door to him and Shelly in Cyprus. Even though he was a diehard Rangers fan

and I was a Celtic fan we became good friends and Shelly was a great support to my wife during her pregnancy.

Barry loved his job in the medical centre and talked of becoming a paramedic when he left the Army.

He loved to socialise with his friends and had built a makeshift bar in his garage where we would watch the football and have a few beers. Even though our football loyalties were different, we used to watch Old Firm games together and no matter what the outcome, we remained friends – although he was first to rub it in when Celtic were beaten!

Everyone who knew Barry will miss him and his sense of humour. My thoughts and prayers are with Shelly, Andie and Charlie."

Major Kryssy Lithgow Smith and Sergeant John Taylor, of the 2 SCOTS Regimental Aid Post said:

"He would be the first to volunteer to pick up the medical Bergen to cover sporting events for the Battalion, but in addition to these fun taskings, he would also voluntarily stay late to ensure work was completed. He was instrumental in motivating those around him to get the job in hand done, and had repeatedly proven himself to be thoroughly professional. His absence from the MRS, when he was away successfully completing his Class One training, was noticeable.

On a personal level, Barry was always a pleasure to have around. Although a fairly private person, he had a cheery nature and was always up for a bit of banter. He was one of the characters in the MRS in Redford Barracks, well-liked by staff and patients, military and civilian alike. He was also well-liked throughout the Battalion and the married quarters, being a dedicated family man. Indeed, his face lit up whenever he talked about his family, and his world revolved around his two children. Monday mornings were not complete without a story from Barry as to what he'd been up to that weekend, usually taking his kids to the zoo!

Barry was keen to undertake further medical training to improve his skills, and had seriously considered pursuing a career within the medical field, specifically assisting anaesthetists in operating theatres. His skills and professionalism here would have been greatly appreciated. Indeed, whatever he had decided to turn his hand to and wherever he had ended up, he would have been a valued member of the team."

DEATHS REPORTED FROM ERSKINE (AND ELSEWHERE)

- 3323206 Mr Alexander McIntosh (HLI 16 May 40 to 15 Aug 46) died on 09 Jan 09.
- 3326978 Mr Alexander Harris (6 HLI 1940-46, with some RAF service between those dates) (RAF 655248) died on 26 Jun 08.
- GRF18360 Mr Hugh McKeeman (HLI 1946-48) died on 08 Jul 08.
- 19068155 Mr George Marshall Scott (1 HLI, 12 Sep 46 to 10 Nov 48) died on 05 May 08.
- 22011408 Mr Joseph McConnell (1 RSF, 4 Mar 48 to 30 Dec 49).
- 22929963 Lance Corporal Mr George Boyes (1 RSF 15 Oct 53 to 15 Oct 55) died on 14 Nov 08.
- 23909269 Lance Corporal Samuel (Sammy) Diffin (1 RHF) died on 09 Feb 09.
- Mr William (Willie) McClung (1 RHF) died on 30 Jan 09.



Regimental Miscellany

FUSILIER AND FLIER

Flight Lieutenant P G Traynor

On the top floor at 518 Sauchiehall Street is a Museum dedicated to 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force. Why is it under the same roof as the RHF Museum? The answer hangs in the Dining Room – the portrait of Lord Trenchard.

Hugh Montague Trenchard was born in 1873 in Taunton, Somerset. At the age of 20 he was gazetted into the RSF as a 2nd Lieutenant. At the outbreak of the Second Boer War he volunteered for service in South Africa. He was critically wounded, being shot through the lung and partially paralysed. Although he lost the lung he recovered from the paralysis and eventually returned to Africa and joined the Southern Nigerian Regiment. He rose to command this and was awarded the DSO. Unfortunately ill health forced his return to England.

When recovered he rejoined the RSF in Londonderry. Life there was not to his liking and his CO, Colonel Stuart, declared “This town is not big enough for both of us!”

Colonel Stuart was persuaded to allow him three months paid leave – *to learn to fly*.

He obtained his Aviator’s Certificate in two and a half weeks (at the age of 39) and got a place on the first course at the newly-formed Central Flying School (CFS) at Upavon. When he had completed the course he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), which was in effect an Army unit, and became an Instructor at Upavon. He had been assessed as a ‘poor pilot’, so his duties were more pertinent to the immediate CFS demands, administration and the organising of training.

His excellent organisational and leadership qualities had long been noted, and it is not surprising that he was soon appointed Deputy Commandant of CFS and in the summer of 1914 given command of the RFC on Home Soil. By November he had assumed command of No.1 Wing on the Western Front. He was soon promoted to Major General and became GOC RFC in France.

Air raids on London by Zeppelins and Gotha aircraft caused an outcry for retaliation. Lloyd George insisted that Trenchard should bomb Mannheim. Trenchard considered this to be a token gesture. He was a believer in *strategic* bombing. An *Independent* Air Force was set up in France, under his command, to carry out intensive bombing of rail and industrial centres and airfields.

Lloyd George charged General Jan Smuts to report on Britain’s Air Policy in view of the rapidly changing face of air power. Smuts had seconded to him Lieutenant General Sir David Henderson, a Glaswegian originally commissioned into the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders but now General Officer Commanding The Royal Flying Corps.

Henderson advocated the creation of an air force which would operate with the Royal Navy and the Army and also had the

capability of independent action. His argument carried the day. On 29 November 1917 the Air Force Act received Royal Assent. The Air Council met for the first time in January 1918 and the Royal Air Force came into being on 1st. April 1918.

(Lieutenant General Sir David Henderson is correctly recognised as the ‘Father of the Royal Air Force’ but this ‘title’ is often attributed to Trenchard – despite protests from Trenchard himself.)

Trenchard, meanwhile, was offered the post of Chief of the Air Staff, which he accepted, only to resign within the month due to disagreement with Lord Rothermere, the Air Minister, who regarded the creation of the RAF as a temporary measure for the duration of the War and not as a third force in the Armed Services.

After the War, Winston Churchill was appointed Minister for War and Air and he brought Trenchard back as Chief of the Air Staff. Trenchard immediately set forth to ensure the continued independence of the Royal Air Force. This was no mean feat; the Armed Forces were rapidly being reduced in strength. He faced constant battles with the Army and Navy who opposed his ideas but his determination was acknowledged by Churchill. His many foundations included the RAF College Cranwell, the RAF Apprentice Scheme and the RAF Staff College at Andover.

Trenchard also considered the need for a reserve force to support the RAF. His vision was of ‘elite’ units raised near centres of population and industry which would be capable of immediate embodiment into the RAF in times of national emergency. Each unit would consist of a core of Regular Staff working with, and training, locally recruited part-time volunteers.

This concept came to fruition as the Auxiliary Air Force. Thus Trenchard is properly identified as the ‘Father of the Auxiliary Air Force’. His vision became reality with the formation of 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron as its first unit.

Trenchard stepped down as Chief of the Air Staff in 1930 and his last public engagement was to come to Glasgow and present a trophy, The Esher Trophy, to his senior Auxiliary Air Force Squadron.

The value of the Auxiliary Air Force was clearly demonstrated in World War II. It was embodied into the Royal Air Force in 1939 and played its part – as Trenchard had envisaged. His determination to develop and expand the RAF as he did was well justified.

His leadership and organisational skills were evident again when Trenchard was appointed Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. He set up the Police College at Hendon with the objective of raising the professionalism of the Force, a quality that is still evident today.

Trenchard died in 1956 at the age of 83 and was buried with the honours due to Baron Trenchard of Wolfeton. He is interred in the Battle of Britain Chapel in Westminster Abbey.



ANOTHER WHITCOMBE VICTORY

During the last year of John Whitcombe's last tour with 1 HLI (1958 in Lüneberg) he commanded the Bn Shooting Team in the Brigade Wavell Trophy Shoot that year (which was the only time the Battalion had participated in a Wavell Trophy Shoot).

Our opponents were the First Battalions of The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment and The Wiltshire Regiment. This was considerable opposition. The Beds and Herts were one of the best shooting battalions in BAOR and the Wilts were probably up to the same standard (they certainly had a *full-time* shooting team, the latter disguised as their D Coy). The Beds and Herts won the Rifle Shoot and the Wilts won the LMG (Bren Gun) shoot. We came bottom in both.

But then came the Revolver Shoot. That day (mid-May 1958) John was shooting in it and said to the Subaltern shooting alongside him, "Do your Bloody Best – and don't miss!"

But we also had Fortune on our side. The Beds and Herts Officers, each a notable Shot (one at least was a member of the BAOR Revolver 'Top Twenty') had been staying with us – and the night before had been one of our Dinner-nights. This didn't assist their accuracy. (It didn't assist ours either, but we found that firing fast meant that our wavering pistol-barrels had little time to wander far from the bull – a point noted by Major F J Hawley, who was an interested spectator.)

And better still, the Wilts, although *full-time*, hadn't read the rules! They appeared with 'double-action only' Enfields – and we could 'cock' our Smith and Wessons.

Let's not bother to explain. John Whitcombe and his fellow-shooter won the Revolver Shoot. (Alas, the Battalion 'War Diary' recorded that day's defeats but not the victory.)



Maj John Whitcombe receiving the Pistol Cup from Brig R C Macdonald after the Brigade Wavell Shoot in May 1958.

(Guess who is standing beside him?)

– replies to the Editor.)

THE BALMORAL HIGHLANDERS – or The Sad Story of Ronald (whose blood was the normal colour)

(This was written (and illustrated) by the late Major (then Captain) Donald Mack to tell something of the Royal Guard at Balmoral mounted by the Battalion in 1959. Its original was destroyed in a fire at RHQ, but Lt Col Nick Channer has sent us a copy of a surviving copy.)



A message came to Colonel Mike,
"We want some men to hedge and dyke
And clean the stables out for free
And guard Her Royal Majesty.



"The work is hard, the hours are long,
The soldiers must be fit and strong
And well-behaved and six feet tall
And be right-footers one and all.
I know they won't be hard to find.
I'm sure you've plenty of that kind.



"The Officers of this noble band
Must be the finest in the land,
With well-cut suits and Purdey guns.
(This doesn't mean rich grocers' sons.)
They must be of good ancestry
And prove it on their Family Tree!



"We know they're difficult to get
But you must find the perfect set!
And if they are not nobly bred,
You soon will wish that you were dead.



"We'll send your regiment away
To Tripoli or Botany Bay
And bring it back just once a year
To run the Edinburgh Festival here."



The Colonel fell upon the floor
And tore the graphs in shreds and swore
And said, "Now how the Bloody Hell
Do I do this
And train as well?"



And then he mused a bit, and thought
Of all the officers he'd got.
"Now that one's much too cynical.
I'm sure he wouldn't do at all.
And this one's face fills me with fear,
And that one's car is much too queer.



"Blank stays in bed till twelve o'clock
And always wears an issue sock
And this one here is far too fat.
But stay – things ain't as bad as that.



"Uncle Brian just has to go.
He's done just everything, I know.
I'm sure he's in with Royalty
And has them visit him for tea!
And everything that's ever been
He's helped to found or done or seen.





“Now Craigie-Halkett’s so well-bred
He’ll do it standing on his head.
He’ll ‘Um’ and ‘Er’ while with the Queen
And say, ‘Well, you know what I mean.’



– And if dame [sic] Fortune hasn’t frowned,
The Duke may shoot that bloody hound.



“And Charles B-K has got to go.
He’s just that sort of chap, you know.
He’ll dance the life-dance ’neath the stars.
What’s more he’s got a brace of cars.



“One more place does now remain.
We’ll send that chap who lives in Spain!
Don Fulque Ernesto Quentin Quags
Is sure to shine at stalking stags!”



“But, sir, you know,” the major said,
“The soldiers must be washed and fed.
And when you lead the Royal Guard
Commanding troops is very hard.”



So now poor Ronald is the man
Who cleans the kitchen frying-pan
And clears the blocked and smelly drain
And winds the Prince of Wales’s train.
And while the others fish for trout
He mounts the guard



And turns it out.

The named Participants (with their *then* ranks etc):

‘Colonel Mike’: Lt Col M J Evetts MC, CO 1 RHF

‘Uncle Brian’: Major B A Stewart, Guard Commander

‘Craigie-Halkett’: Captain C D Craigie-Halkett, Captain of the Guard

‘Charles B-K’: Lieutenant G H C Balfour-Kinnear, Ensign

‘Don Fulque [etc]’: Second-Lieutenant F Q E Agnew, Subaltern

‘Ronald’: Second-Lieutenant R H De R Channer, Winder of the Royal Train.

Associations and Clubs

THE ROYAL HIGHLAND FUSILIERS REGIMENTAL BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

1. Annual Report:

In the year 2008, the Benevolent Association awarded Grants-in-Aid totalling £46,300. We provided help for a wide range of needs. By far the principal want was household goods – furnishings and floor coverings, beds and bedding, and an assortment of white goods. Help with home improvements and funeral costs and the alleviation of debt also figured prominently as usual, as did help with a wide variety of miscellaneous items. Sadly, the loss of the soldiers’ day’s pay to the Royal Regiment of Scotland in 2006, has curtailed our ability to annually support Charitable Institutions and Hospitals.

At Christmas, monetary gifts (£20) totalling £805 were distributed to pensioners/ex-soldiers in hospitals and after-care establishments. The Regimental Secretary, Colonel Steele and Major Kenyon visited Erskine Hospital on 15 December 2008, to hand out Christmas gifts to ex-members of the Regiment in the care of the Hospital.

The Association is indebted to The Army Benevolent Fund and Poppyscotland (Earl Haig Fund) for their continued support. In the year under review, each provided top-up grants in excess of £20,000. The ABF also gave Annuities totalling £6,435 to eight pensioners. Each annuitant received £65 per month.

None of our work would be possible without the dedication and voluntary contribution of SSAFA Forces Help who investigate and validate the majority of cases presented by our members nor without those who help with the fortnightly Grants Committees. We are fully aware and greatly appreciate the selfless contribution they make to our work.

2. How to apply for Assistance:

All requests for Grants-in-Aid should first be addressed to the SSAFA – Forces Help Branch/Division nearest to your home. If in difficulty the nearest Royal British Legion Office or DSS office will assist. All will be explained.

BLESSING OF THE STANDARD – GLASGOW BRANCH OF THE RHF VETERANS ASSOCIATION

On Sunday the 4th of May 2008 the Standard of The Glasgow Branch of The RHF Veterans’ Association was paraded outside Glasgow Cathedral before being blessed in the Cathedral itself. There was a good turn-out. At least half of the Highland Branch had come down by coach, the East of Scotland Branch was there too, and there was not only a good turn-out from Ayr but some from Glasgow! (The Standard was borne by Steff Stevenson.) Present too was a host of ‘Stewards’ furnished by the Recruiting Team, which was commanded by Cpl Ritchie. (They were very smartly turned-out in Royal Regiment of Scotland No 2 Dress Kilt Order (A&SH Tartan kilts, Black Watch hose-tops and Gordons’ gaiters), but where on earth did they get the idea of *long* garter-flashes worn almost down the *side* of the leg? The *correct* length and positioning of flashes are clearly shown by CSgts Trousdale and McIndo in their covering off the Victoria Cross Memorial outside Glasgow Cathedral on 1 July 08.) (*Journal* 2008, p 45)

We also had music! With us were The Pipes and Drums of 2 SCOTS, headed by Pipe Major Roderick Weir. (The Pipes and Drums were missing out on Afghanistan but are using their CO-given respite to build up not only their strength (eight Pipers and five or six Novices) but also their excellence – and to perform at various Tattoos.)

Their presence here on Sunday was particularly useful for us.



Before the Service we formed up just below the Necropolis and *marched* to the Cathedral. Not only were we led by *three* Standards and their Escorts (the Standards of The Glasgow Branch, The East of Scotland Branch and The Highland Branch) but we got there *without* getting out of step. Major Shaw was, of course, assisting us by means of his stentorian shouts of ‘Left, Right’ but these may have been unnecessary. It was the very regular beat of the Drums and the equally-regular music of the Pipes that kept us in step. So it didn’t matter that the volume of both almost drowned Major Shaw’s commands.

The Service, which was conducted by The Reverend Dr Laurence Whitley, the Cathedral’s Minister (and who also concocted the superb Service last year to commemorate the Somme Battle) began with the March-in and the Stacking of the Standards but was otherwise a conventional Sunday Service – with some extras. In addition to four very tuneful hymns, various prayers, Readings from the Scriptures (by General Loudon and the Lord Provost’s Representative, Bailie Gerald Leonard), a most amusing Children’s Address and superb singing from the Cathedral Choir, there was not only the Sermon (a very stirring one) but also the Blessing of The Standard. There were also recitals of the Apostles’ Creed *AND* The Regimental Collect, and the *ensemble* ended with a mightily-sung National Anthem (and, as Lt Col Colin Winter will be pleased to hear, *NO* ‘Flower of Scotland’).

After it we formed up again outside and then marched past the Bailie, who stood at the Victoria Cross Monument. Again the Pipes and Drums and the three Standards headed us, but this time we had General Loudon in front too, and this time we *needed* Major Shaw. *Someone* had to shout the ‘Eyes Left’ and the ‘Eyes Front’. (Rumour has it – or did someone somewhere in front of the long procession admit it? – that he thought the ‘Eyes Front’ was a ‘Parade, Halt!’. If so, did he *do* so?) (We don’t think so. The column didn’t collapse on top of him.)

Then it was off to HHQ for a wonderful buffet lunch. This was spread out in two locations, The Colonel’s Room *AND* Building 3. (What was *also* good about the lunch was that, although plates and cutlery were available, many of the goodies could be held in one hand, leaving the other free to hold a glass. So one could bite, chew, swallow, drink and continually continue that sequence *without* having to find somewhere to balance a plate or a glass.) (But we used *plates* at the HLI Reunion in May!) (See over.)

All in all it was a most worthwhile day – and it didn’t rain either. We did inquire of someone as to whose idea the whole had been. ‘It was Colonel Steele’s, of course!’ he said. But when we continued with ‘Who *organised* it?’ our audience looked at us as if



Maj Gen WEB Loudon CBE addressing the veterans.



The Standard Bearer Party. (Left to right) Rab Crossan, Steff Stevenson (holding the Glasgow Branch Standard) and Willie McKechnie of the Glasgow Branch RHF Veterans Association in front of the HLI Memorial in Glasgow Cathedral. Steff Stevenson is now the Chairman of Glasgow Branch.



Glasgow veterans mustering at the Bridge of Sigh before the march to Glasgow Cathedral.



The Representative Colonel, Regimental Secretary with the Standard Bearers, back row (left to right); Jim McLeish (Highland Branch), Steff Stevenson (Glasgow Branch) and Toby Sweeney (East of Scotland Branch) all proudly holding their brand-new Standards.

we were more round the bend than usual. ‘Colonel Steele again,’ he said, ‘– except for the dry weather. That was laid on by a Senior Service!’ (And, although Sandy Leishman was there too, the speaker didn’t mean The Royal Navy.)

THE ROYAL HIGHLAND FUSILIERS VETERANS ASSOCIATION BATTLEFIELD TOUR 2008 (14th TO 23rd MAY 2009)

This, although it had been cancelled, took place! Major Shaw had got a bit miffed and searched around. He secured, from Russell Drummond (a former Fusilier), the *cost-price* use of a mini-bus! Then he recruited enough of us to fill it.

Wednesday the 14th

The ’bus, driven by David Jack and accommodating not only Mae (Mrs Jack) but also (with difficulty) the *Führer*, arrived at HHQ at an early hour. We soon set off south – now bearing not only the writer but also Annie McNeil, Jimmy Carrigan, Annabel Murphy (with Jimmy Gibson in tow) and Stewart Ferguson.

We halted at Hamilton to pick up Arthur and Marilyn Mooney, then stopped at Bob Douglas’s house for a *FREE* lunch. (It was *FREE!* Neither Bob nor his friends and relations, who included not only Trevor Pickering and his mother but also Tom* and Anne Dowling, would accept even an out-dated Mark from the *Führer!*) We could also spend a long time lunching there. David had already driven the ’bus rather faster than a multi-seater coach is allowed to go, and after Hebburn (Bob’s place) Jimmy Carrigan took over with equal verve. . (*Tom had excused himself from this year’s Tour on the grounds of 1. a bad knee and 2. a lost Passport, but we rather think he was *either* influenced by Anne *or* feels that *catering* is his true bent.)

Further south (at Ferrybridge Services) we collected Les Womack and finally got to Hull, where we picked up our last (UK) member, Peter Bocock. We were now fourteen strong!

We then embarked on *The Pride of Hull* (or whatever), occupied the *Irish Bar*, later occupied our cabins (the writer and the

Führer clambering on to the *top* berths in theirs) and sank asleep (without sinking).

Thursday the 15th

We didn’t stop to shop in Amsterdam. We just drove at speed, paused at Hardt for lunch and got to Cassels House remarkably early.

That night we met again Ken McKinney (and his pipes) and also Fraulein Helga Scheuss – but had *NO* singing! We would have liked some (*from the latter!*) ... but piping (from Les and Ken) reigned.

Friday the 16th

Louis Wouters joined us today (and an *extra* seat had been screwed into the ’bus), and we set off for Valkenberg.

Ken wasn’t there tonight (which meant no Helga!) so the piping was solely that of Les – and we couldn’t persuade the *Führer* to launch into *Coulter’s Candy*.

Saturday the 17th

This was our usual Liessel day. We paraded at the Memorial, Les piped, Bob spoke the words in Remembrance, the children presented their writings to the *Führer* (who replied in fluent *Ayrsherich*), Bob and Arthur had flanked the Memorial in their gleaming leather – and we got to the nearest pub (in Asten). This was very enjoyable. Not only did the *Führer* pay the lunch bill but the *whiskies* were poured with no regard to measuring devices (as they are every year when we come to Asten). Lies and Heine were also there, and some of us accompanied Lies and Heine to the Old Folks’ Home where they now live.

That night we had *dual* piping. Les and Ken were at their best – and there was another bonus. Helga was there!

Sunday the 18th

Today we drove (eventually) to the Möhne Dam. (The writer didn’t mind the ‘eventually’. For most of the time *he* was sharing the back seat of Ken’s Mercedes with Helga.) But first the *Führer* conducted us round what had been the Iserlöhn barracks. It hasn’t been pulled down and is expanded. The barrack blocks are now flats and what *was* the Square is filled with other blocks of flats.

The Dam was even more fun – particularly because the ‘lunch’ before it wasn’t. Served in some kind of sports school, the said ‘lunch’ was not only alcohol-free but *vegetarian* too.

We not only got happily home but after Dinner retired to the usual. Les and Ken were even more at their best – and Helga was there too!

Monday the 19th

Today was back to Rüdersheim and the 1871 Unification of Germany Monument on the hill above it. David even drove us to the top end (where the cable car stops), and we *all* got out to admire the Monument. Then it was back down by cable car, back home, another drink or two (after Dinner!) and more piping (Helga was there too!)

Tuesday the 20th

This was our best day yet! We were among *soldiers*, having been invited to visit the Support Battalion of the Allied Rapid Reaction



Corps HQ. The Battalion was variously deployed: a hundred and forty of its members were halfway through a four-month stint of 'Public Duties' in London (which included furnishing the Guard at Buckingham Palace), others were on exercises and some in Afghanistan, but there was a fair number still in station and we were gloriously entertained.

The CO, Lt Col D N M Mack (of The Royal Highland Fusiliers) briefed us on the day's events, and then we set off under the guidance of Major G Stoker, Royal Signals, and WO2 J Cash, Royal Welsh.

We started on a 'Simulation Range'. Our weapons there were SA80s which didn't fire bullets but instead delivered something like electrical impulses at the targets – with *computerised* accuracy. The targets were a series of rapidly appearing (and disappearing) enemy snipers on a televised screen and the said snipers would even tumble over when hit. Each detail was four of us but nevertheless we would get *individual* scores at the end of each shoot, scores which even distinguished between 'hits' and 'kills'. Tumble over too would the occasional 'civilian' but we weren't supposed to have engaged the latter. Despite this, a fair number of 'civilians' perished. (Some of us were rather trigger-happy and didn't pause to distinguish between 'enemy' and 'civilian'.) (Shooting down a 'civilian' didn't add to one's score but didn't, as far as we know, penalise the errant firer – nor even have him (or her) hailed in front of a Board of Inquiry.)

(We have also been told (by the *Führer* – which means it may be *far* from true) that David Jack didn't hit a soul but that Mae dispatched at least three of the Queen's enemies.)

A very interesting thing about these 'bulletless' SA80s was that they not only had a kick but needed a magazine change after every twenty rounds. Some of us rattled off (empty) magazine after magazine but one of us at least was rather slow and hardly got through one. (Nor did the latter realise, until at least halfway through his shoot, that his SA80 had a back sight in *addition* to its foresight!)

Next (the Support Battalion must somehow have known our favourite pastime) we were conducted to the PRI Shop. How well equipped it was! We have no record of the purchases, but we did note that Jimmie Carrigan invested enough to delight *all* of his four grandchildren.

By now we were of course thirsty. The Battalion's RSM, WO1 (RSM) S J Williamson, Royal Artillery, had anticipated this. Not only did he invite us to lunch at his Mess but he had also pre-delivered a *Führer*-like *Diktat*. The Bar, which is usually *not* open at lunchtime on a working day) was open (for us)! (The RSM had invited the CO too but we can't remember if the latter had anything other than a *soft* drink.)

After lunch we were taken to the Battalion's LAD (Light Aid Detachment). This was fascinating. There laid out for us were examples of the Battalion's small arms. They even included an SA80 *carbine*, a shortened version of the standard SA80. 'Gosh,' we thought, 'it was just over a hundred years ago that the Army *abandoned* the "carbine".'

(The Long Lee-Enfield and the Lee-Enfield Carbine, the first an Infantry rifle, the other for Gunners and Cavalry, were replaced in

the early 1900s by the SMLE, the Short Magazine Lee-Enfield, an All-Arms rifle. This, at first the Mark 3 and next the No. 4, was in use for more than fifty years and was later cast aside in favour of the SLR (Self-loading Rifle), which was also an All-Arms rifle – and had a better 'kills-to-contacts' ratio. The SA80 later replaced it – and now we see the wheel has gone full circle! We're back to the *carbine*!)

We then saw (at least some of) the LAD at work. There was mobile generator after mobile generator being serviced (in the field ARRC HQ needs about a small town's supply of electricity) and massive wagons being repaired. The Craftsmen we observed displayed an air of unflagging competence. They were a very impressive bunch of experts.

So was the Signals Troop. The Bowman set-up, which is half-a-century beyond most of us, was fascinating in itself, and its perpetrators (or operators) were very knowledgeable.

In all, it was a wonderful day. We very much look forward to our next visit to the Support Battalion, which may be on 18 May 09. (We'll try to avoid slaughtering '*civilians*' on the Simulation Range.)

Ken was with us that day, and Helga arrived not very long after we got back (or after we'd eaten). She arrived on her motorcycle, a 1.2 litre monster – and she was *black-leather-clad*! (The *Führer's* eyes gleamed!)

Wednesday the 21st

We drove to Roermond, just over the Border – where we lunched off *haversack rations*! However, after we'd consumed them, we drove to a new waterside site. Here there was a ferry. Its task was to transport people (and their bicycles) over the Maas, but Ken managed to persuade its Captain to take us on a cruise! There was, of course, no in-board bar but the trip was great fun.

We then went shopping (and drinking) and eventually drove home. Then Helga reappeared. This time she was *encased* in a long skirt (which was far too long)! The *Führer* gleamed again – but soon he went off to bed. Rumour has it that Ken and Helga stayed to the bitter end (till after midnight). Alas, the writer can't remember doing so.

Thursday the 22nd

Up early we were, but so were Ken and Helga. The latter was encased in yesterday's *long* skirt but this time 'topped' by an off-the-shoulders (and occasionally revealing) jersey.

We gazed, said our goodbyes and then were off. We stopped at Volendam. There we devoured our unexpired portions of the day's rations, visited the nearest bar or two, and then drove on.

The port, Europoort, was soon reached and, after our passports had been *double-checked*, we were allowed on board. After we'd dined we found the *Irish Bar* a little too noisy and so escaped to the *Piano Bar* on Deck Twelve. Next was, for some of us, clambering into the *top* bunks and, for *all* of us, another sound night's sleep.

Friday the 23rd

This started at the usual Christless hour, but it was well worth getting up for breakfast – the usual very extensive meal. (One or



two of the *Führer's* acolytes were there to tell him, 'Sir, any more than six fried eggs and half a haunch of bacon are a *little* fattening' – but this had *NO* effect.)

We lunched again at Bob Douglas's house (wine and all!) and then zoomed north. HHQ was, of course, battened down by the time we arrived, so we just got off, waved farewell to the *Führer* and got home. Some took taxis but WE didn't. Jimmy Carrigan's son insisted on driving *US* home. We got there – and started writing this.

In simple terms, this year's 'RHF Veterans Battlefield Tour' was a superb event. Next year's will be even better – and, if we spread the word around the *entire* RHF OCA, there will be *battles* to secure a place on it.

HIGHLAND BRANCH OF THE RHF VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Well, here we are in 2009 already. Happy New Year to everyone. Up here in the Highlands we've gone from strength to strength and have now gone past our second anniversary. What a great year 2008 was for us!

In February 2008 I handed over the reins of Chairman to Ian (Cammy) Cameron, and Jim (Tags) McTaggart was elected Vice-Chairman. What a great job they have both done for the Association. By the time we've gone to print, we'll have elected two members to fill these posts for 2009.

2008 has seen us move back to Wimberley Way just behind Cameron Barracks and we have our meetings on the first Monday of every month. We must thank 3 SCOTS, The Black Watch for having us. We must also thank young Colin Hamilton 3 SCOTS but ex RHF for all his support and running the bar. Last but not least our thanks to the TA Centre, Gordonville Road, Inverness for their hospitality.

We're very high profile in Inverness and are much sought after to march in parades, assist with the Tattoo and are regularly in the local press. This has much to do with the way we parade in Trews, Blazer with Badge, Glengarry and Regimental Tie.

The 4th of May saw us all move down to Glasgow to support the Blessing of their Standard. This was followed by a buffet and



The Highland Branch in Glasgow getting ready for the Blessing of Standard of Glasgow Branch.



The winner of "Who has the most medals?" Tom Paton!!!!

drinks in HHQ, a great day was had by all who attended. Well done Steph.

June saw our last function held in Gordonville Road. This was a games night and a buffet, which was cooked and donated by one of our cooks, Cam Henderson. Many thanks, Cam. Most of the prizes were won by Willie Erskine. (Just goes to show what they do once they get commissioned). A big thank-you also goes to Tam Paton as Master of Ceremonies.

In August we took on the duties of stewards at the Inverness Tattoo. This was a request made by the director Major(Retd) Roddy Woods (also Tattoo Honorary Colonel). It was quite an honour considering he belongs to the Highlanders. They also want us again this year. (I wonder what the *Courier* will have to say about that.)

October saw yet another games night organised once again by Tam Paton, this time against Major Chris Kerr's motley crew in the Armed Forces Careers Staff. I think they should spend more time recruiting, they obviously spend too much time playing darts, dominoes, cards, etc. We were like lambs to the slaughter; they took every prize.

Our 2nd Anniversary was in November, which we celebrated with a church parade at Ness Bank church. We then went back to Wimberly Way for a buffet lunch and drinks with our families and guests, which included CO 3 SCOTS Lt Colonel Stephen Cartwright and his family, Colonel and Mrs Steele and Captain Campbell FAO 3 SCOTS, who gives us lots of support. Colonel Cartwright spent a good deal of his time taking notes of who was who to pass on to his mother and father. Another great day to be repeated.

All in all as you can see we've had a very busy year. Also attended were two Parades of Remembrance. We are so high profile in Inverness we appear in the local press on a regular basis. We now have, on paper, 49 members.

A big thank-you must go to Ian Cameron, Jim McTaggart and Tam Paton for giving up so much of their time. As we write these notes our bad news is the big Harry Adams was taken into hospital having suffered a major stroke.

On a happier note the 50th Anniversary Celebration and we look forward to 2009.

Yours aye, John Hamilton



THE HLI REUNIONS

1. 10th May 2008

We can't of course swear to it but we probably touched the forty-mark! There was no Quiz this year (which omission led to the odd complaint) but we had instead Major Alan Robertson addressing us on the subject of 'Continuity' and also Major Willie Shaw trying to bend us to be a part of The Royal Highland Fusiliers Old Comrades (or Veterans) Association (and saying, no doubt, much more which we've forgotten).

Amalgamation *per se* is somewhat unlikely. We think that all of us should enlist in the RHF Association but just *enlist*, not *transfer*. WE are going to continue – especially as we've now got a Committee. This is composed of not only the writer but also Ronnie Johnstone, Jim Devine and Andy Anderson. It's a bit far for Andy to travel up just for Committee work but the others (we hope) will help with the awful fatigue of putting 100+ + Reunion letters into envelopes.

At the Reunion we did enjoy ourselves and are very grateful not only to Colonel Bobby Steele for letting us have fun in HHQ but also to Sandy Leishman, Stewart Ferguson and David McMaster for running the place during our occupation. And Sandy didn't only run the Bar; he also fed us quite wonderfully – so wonderfully that some of us even put our glasses down so that we could accompany the meat pies with the beans AND stovies that Sandy had supplied.. The paper plates and plastic forks that Sandy **also** supplied were *very* useful.

We also remembered Robert (The Lord) Borwick, Pat Steptoe and Willie Bowie of 1 HLI, and John Ross of the Tenth.

We were also interested to discover that four or five of us have copies of *Proud Heritage* – and that almost the same number *take the Journal!* (The *Journal's* 2008 price (£10 a copy) was a bit stiff, but anyone wanting to buy *Proud Heritage* may need a bank loan. Major Alan Robertson informed us that copies can fetch £100 per volume!) (But it is very possible, to judge from their selling-rate, that copies of the 2007 and 2008 *Journals* might be *priceless* in twenty years time.) (No promises!)

2. 6th September 2008

When the newly-founded Committee first met it decided on *two* Reunions each year, the second to be somewhere near Assaye Day. This was planned for the 6th of September and arranged, with the blessing of Colonel Steele, to take place then. The next *Committee* function was, of course, the sending out of the letters – and Ronnie Johnstone turned out for this. (However, as the envelopes had already been addressed by Sandy Leishman and as Mrs Liz Torrance saw to the sticking on of the postage stamps later, it wasn't too much of a fatigue.)

The turn-out at the Reunion was a little less than thirty – which meant that Building 3 wasn't overcrowded, that Sandy Leishman and/or his two very attractive young helpers, Samantha Leishman and Megan Halliday, could easily cope with orders at the bar and that David McMaster, especially as he was being assisted by Arthur Mooney, could book people in without delays – and extract from a few their entry money. (But: 'less than thirty'; a very recent *RSF* Reunion was over two hundred strong!)

Not long after we had started the meeting was called to order, the first requirement being that everyone got their free drink – which was made possible because of a very generous subscription made by Danny Macrae on behalf of Wylie and Lochhead (which he rules). (We were also grateful to David Pithie for his subscribing a lot more than the 'entry money' – although he didn't, as we had hoped, make the Reunion – and to three more of us that were unable to come, Andy Anderson, Ernie Earnshaw and Major Bill Stobie.) (All three subscribed very generously.) Then Colonel Steele addressed us and was followed by Major Alan Robertson, who circulated a number of photographs of post-war HLI times. (Major Alan also reminded us that not only was he the last newly-commissioned Officer to serve with 1 HLI but also that we had among us the very last Officer to be *commissioned* into the HLI, Major A A (Bunny) Fisher. We think that Bunny blushed.)

Then came Absent Friends. Named were Sonny Martin (Glasgow Highlanders), Major A C R (Andy) Stewart (HLI and RHF), Sergeant Jonathan Mathews (Royal Scots and the son of Bill Mathews) and Corporal Barry Dempsey (RHF), the last two killed in Afghanistan. However, as usual, we didn't do our job properly. We forgot to mention WO2 A G (Alec) Brodie (HLI and RHF).

Lunch followed. Supplied by Sandy Leishman, it was as good as ever. More than one person spoke to us to remark upon the excellence of Sandy's stovies.

When the serving tables were cleared we got on with Ronnie Johnstone's pet project, the Battle of Assaye. This he described – and some of what he said was illustrated on a screen *via* the computer of Jim Devine. We wish that we had planned something to follow this; we rather think that the company wanted more.

Some of us, however, were hailed off to the Colonel of the Regiment Room and interviewed by a very attractive pair of very young ladies about some of our military experiences. We probably told them about some of the *publishable* bits.

After that we asked for future suggestions. Perhaps something will come of this – especially from the ladies amongst us. We had with us Annie McNeil, Marilyn Mooney and Flo Williamson, and they, especially Annie, don't regard drink as the 'be all and end all'. There too were Jimmy Carrigan's sisters, Margaret McLeod from Barra and Elizabeth Cornyn from Ayr. (So was Jimmy himself.)

We think that in May 2009 we'll have (the *71st* version of) Waterloo – AND a quiz (or two). By the way, we also had with us the late Alistair Cameron (of *The Fight Against EOKA* fame), John Lamont of the 6th Battalion, John Deuchars, James (McNeilly) Fury, Willie Miller, Robert Nixon and Tom Williamson – as well as not only James Smith (who joined 1 HLI *before* the War) escorted by Roland Leaf but also all three of the extant members of the 10th HLI Continuation Club, Bobby McLachlan, Willie Nixon and Eddie Traynor. *AND*, although he *said* he hadn't been invited, Major Willie Shaw was also there. Perhaps we'll get *him* to do a star-turn in May.

The next HLI Reunion will be on the 9th of May 2009.



2 SCOTS Regimental Support Team

During the reporting period the Regimental Support Team has joined forces with the Army Recruiting Team, in order to maximise its foot on the ground, and strengthen its logistical resources.

On a daily basis the 2 SCOTS recruiters deploy on the streets of Glasgow and Ayrshire to find and fix potential soldiers to the Battalion, and the Regiment as a whole. This however is easier said than done as more and more people in today's climate are somewhat reluctant to trying a career in the armed forces due to the extent of current world operations and bad media coverage. We do however continue to think of new and exciting ways of selling career opportunities and provide a chance to come and try before you buy method sampling Army life.

We have three well established SNCOs in the Glasgow and Irvine Army Careers Offices, who receive the potential soldiers we bring to them, and steer them through their application and selection process with a bright outlook on the Royal Regiment of Scotland, in particular, life within the 2nd Battalion and what Glencorse Barracks has to offer. Our team thanks CSgt McDougall, Sgt Shaw and Sgt Stirling for their assistance.

Currently we are running 5-day residential packages as a taster in to what we have to offer. The course has been named Ex Scottish Soldier, and has proved to be very successful. Mainly

run from Redford Cavalry Barracks, the course includes showing the potential soldiers the barracks and allowing them the chance to try assault courses, the climbing wall, command tasks, indoor shooting range, paintball CQB, field craft (which culminates with spending the night outside on the training area) and finally a trip down to ITC Catterick to see the current recruits in action.

Finding that the fitness levels of potential soldiers are 'diminishing', we have started a military fitness club run on a weekly basis in order to address the problem and help to increase the pass levels at the selection centre. Assisting us in this venture is South Lanarkshire Leisure who provides us with gym facilities, personal programmes and health and nutrition consultations, all free of charge. Cpl Ritchie from the team then directs them on military fitness circuits, and sends them home to nurse their aches and pains. We have seen a successful change in the number of applicants passing the physical selection tests at ADSC since starting this programme.

We say our thanks and goodbyes to Sgt Parker and Fusiliers Douglas, Grant and Dalzell, to the latter also congratulations on the birth of his baby boy. We welcome the arrival of CSgt Trousdale and Cpl McMenamin, and hope they both enjoy their tour with the team in the West of Scotland.



A Potential Soldier for 2 SCOTS leaves Glasgow Queen Street Railway Station to start training at ITC Catterick.



The Royal Highland Fusiliers, Second Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland



BATTALION UPDATE

CO: Lt Col N R M Borton DSO MBE

2IC: Maj A J Fitzpatrick MBE

Adj: Capt D D J Mackinon

RSM: WO1(RSM) W Barrie

Following the historic presentation of new colours to the Battalion by HRH The Duke of York in Lashkah Ghar, the second half of the tour was, if possible, even busier than the first half. The essential lay down of the Battalion remained, with A Company deployed all over Afghanistan training Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers, B and Fire Support Companies in Musa Qal'eh with their MASTIFF vehicles, and C Company based in Kabul as the Kabul Patrols Company (although all the platoons managed to rotate down to Helmand for a stint). Battlegroup Headquarters had an especially busy time, commanding operations in the Garmsir area, and planning to take over from the USMC Battlegroup in the area (although a greater challenge was to lie ahead).

In mid June the Battalion chain of command had to react to a major development; the commanding officer of 5 SCOTS (which formed the nucleus of Battlegroup Northwest in Musa Qale'eh) was shot and wounded in action and was evacuated to UK. The Brigade Commander decided to move CO 2 SCOTS from his own HQ in Battlegroup South to take over Battlegroup Northwest, and the Battalion Second-in-Command, Major Fitzpatrick, was given acting rank and elevated to command the 2 SCOTS Battlegroup for the remaining four months of the tour. This was a fantastic opportunity for him, and he rose admirably to the task. This also meant that the CO now had the MASTIFF group under his command in Musa Qal'eh, and was therefore able to command all elements of 2 SCOTS at some stage of the tour.

Up in Musa Qal'eh, the MASTIFF group under Major Nick Abram continued to be in the thick of the fight, participating in numerous Battlegroup operations. In the late summer, the Taliban mounted a concerted attack against the District Centre, requiring the Battlegroup to conduct vigorous operations at company and battlegroup level to push them back. The MASTIFFs, with their unparalleled protection, played a key part in this, and there were some excellent displays of outstanding heroism under fire by the Jocks. On one occasion, four vehicles were disabled by mines simultaneously, requiring some very cool work to extract them while under enemy fire. It is a tribute to the vehicle and the skill and expertise of the soldiers that the Company did not sustain any serious casualties during the tour.

Sadly, the Battalion's luck could not last. On the 18th of August, Corporal Barry Dempsey was tragically killed in action. He was a medic, serving with the Royal Irish mentoring teams in

the Gereshk Valley. He was providing covering fire for an ANA attack on an enemy position, when he stepped on an Improvised Explosive Device, and died of his injuries shortly afterwards. He was buried with full military honours in Ayrshire. His wife Shelley and their two small children are still living on the quarters patch; they are coping very well and are well supported by many friends in the Battalion.

In Lashkah Ghar, meanwhile, Acting Lieutenant Colonel Fitzpatrick was very busy with the 2 SCOTS Headquarters running Battlegroup South. Towards the end of the tour the Taliban started to infiltrate forces into the areas surrounding the Provincial capital, a previously quiet area. The team had to rapidly adapt to this changing and dangerous situation, with limited forces. They deployed a company forward into the area to occupy a base and patrol the ground; this led to some intense fighting, and the company (B Company 5 SCOTS) sustained a number of casualties. The Headquarters did a superb job of co-ordinating this running battle over the closing weeks of the tour.

The Battalion started to recover at the end of September and, after decompression in Cyprus, everyone was back in Glencorse Barracks by mid October. Looking back, the tour has been a huge success. The Battalion was given a diverse range of tasks which placed it at the heart of everything 16 Air Assault Brigade achieved. All of those tasks were completed with professionalism and dash, and the Battalion's stock is high as a result. It was not achieved without sacrifice; we were deeply saddened to lose Corporal Dempsey, a very popular figure in the Battalion. However, we also know we were fortunate to have come away so lightly compared to other Battalions. Overall, it has been a hugely rewarding professional experience that has allowed the Battalion to renew its operational credentials and gain invaluable combat experience. All the soldiers have relished the opportunity.

The tour was concluded by a series of homecoming parades through Ayr, Glasgow and Penicuik, followed by receptions and medal presentations at each location with the relevant dignitaries. In all three places, the Battalion received a fantastic welcome, with hundreds of local people turning out to cheer the Jocks on. The Jocks were overwhelmed by this tremendous reception, and it gave them all a great sense of achievement and pride. It was a fitting end to a terrific tour for the Battalion.

After the parades, the Battalion took its well-earned post-tour leave and is now back at work in the run up to Christmas. There is a great deal to do. The Battalion has reformed along its conventional orbat and is preparing for 2009; A Company have deployed to Sennybridge for 10 days' company exercise and career course preparation. Next year will be as full as this one; we immediately start the training cycle again, building



up to a battlegroup overseas exercise in Kenya in May. We then go straight into pre-deployment training to assume the role of Spearhead Battalion in the summer, at short notice to deploy anywhere in the world as the Army's immediate reserve. Towards the end of the year we will start the process of training and preparing for our next deployment to Afghanistan sometime in 2010.

A COMPANY

OC: Maj J D Loudoun
 2IC: Capt I D Brember
 CSM: WO2 G Stewart
 OC 1 Pl: Lt O W Bridle
 OC 2 Pl: 2Lt J D House
 OC 3 Pl: 2Lt G C MacGregor

Post Operational Re-Orbating

Op Herrick 2008 was a success across the board for 2 SCOTS. The first full Battalion deployment since 1999 saw a varied and difficult role for each of the three companies. Not least A Company, tasked with training and mentoring the development of the Afghan National Army. The road was far from smooth in the build up to the deployment and this was compounded by A Company's re-orbat to support the two other Companies' requirements.

The initial feeling for A Company and its impending re-orbat was met with mixed emotions. On the one hand after some months of switching tasks between either Iraq or Afghanistan it was a relief to be given a firm tasking and the chance to focus. On the other hand the team was a skeleton HQ element with nine attached Regular and TA personnel, not to mention the two KIWI's who met us out in Kabul.

The newly-formed company maintained the highest standards including the attached personnel. So the new-look A Company did as it always has done, performed to the best of its abilities and maintained both A Company's and 2 SCOTS' reputation



Fusilier and Afghan children giving the thumbs up.

with the wider army and ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) as a whole.

Six months later A Company prepared to again prove its solidarity by waving good bye to its various attached arms and welcome back the Jocks, along with a new OC, two new Pl Comds and a new Pl Sgt. A tough task by any standards is to draw people back from operational teams into a company and quickly install a sense of belonging and a strong company ethos. However, with an impending Bn focus in the form of Ex Grand Prix and the innate A Company spirit, the Company felt stronger than ever within days of reforming. Thanks must go to the other Companies to maintain the A Company cohesion throughout the tour. This included keeping the A Company Jocks in whole multiples rather than dispersing them throughout the attached company. This played a vital role in maintaining solidarity and, in turn smoothing the way for the full Company reformation.

A Company now looks forward to moving on with its broad wealth of Operation knowledge from across the deployment as a foundation to build upon, firm in the belief that A Company Fusiliers will embrace A Company's winning ethos and rise to the top in everything they do.

B COMPANY

Operating MASTIFF in Helmand – A Practitioner's Perspective (Op HERRICK 8)

Maj N D C Abram, OC B Coy

OC: Maj N D E Abram
 2IC: Capt G W Muir
 Pl Comd 4 Pl: 2Lt M D Oladjins
 Pl Comd 5 Pl: 2Lt B S E Davey
 Pl Comd 6 Pl: Lt A N Lassoued
 CSM: WO2 M J McNally

Since the introduction of MASTIFF less than two years ago, this Heavy PPV has proved a resounding success. It gives troops an unrivalled level of protection (from certain threats) and, with the recent delivery of over 170 more MASTIFFs into Afghanistan, it is fast becoming one of the pre-eminent platforms for British troops. However, I emphasise that our core infantry skills remain central to success; operating from any vehicle is merely the same soldiering but by different means.

To say 'operating' in the desert is very misleading. The Northern Helmand desert is better described as large patches of barren ground with a hard upper crust of earth over either relatively soft sand or rock. Once crossed by vehicles it cracks instantly and becomes rutted as well as producing huge dust trails. These result in a large signature, greatly reduce visibility and preclude recce by stealth. Moving a 26-ton wheeled vehicle across the numerous wadis (which do not appear on any map) is at best 'slow go' and a far cry from the designated manufacturer's top speed of 40 kph! In the open desert it is generally possible to achieve 'fresh tracks'; however, all crossing points must be considered vulnerable areas (VAs) or vulnerable points (VPs) and the Op BARMA drill (the procedure used at crossing points, road junctions, bridges and fords etc) carried out impeccably. Navigation is akin to navigation at sea rather than conventional land



2 SCOTS

A Coy



"...But they will never take our Freedom!!!" A (NCOTT – Non-Commissioned Officer Training Team) Coy victorious in World Super Team Challenge.



Back from patrol.



"No pressure but your time starts now . . ." Fus Buchanan concentrating.



Non-commissioned Officer Training Team (NCOTT) and Afghan head shed. (N.B. Full story in Articles, The Afghan Army, in this edition.)

B Coy



"The Mighty Titanium 40" (with Platoon Commander, Lt Alex Lassoued sporting some dodgy facial hair). (N.B. Full story in Articles, Garmisr – A Platoon Commander's Perspective, in this edition)



A short halt with Mount Musa Qal'eh (Mount Doom) in the background.



"Delivering humanitarian aid to the locals." (Left to right) LCpl McCluskey and 2Lt Ben Davey distributing rations to local children.



Cpl Armstrong conducting mine IED detection drill (Op BARMA) at vulnerable point.



C Coy



"Yes, two of us have been to Specsavers!" (Left to right) Sgt MacDonald, Cpl Docherty, Cpl Carr, LCpl Smith and Fus Donnachie.



Cpl Wiseman and Fus Jill in action.



Kabul Patrols Coy HQ.



"Winning hearts and minds." Fusiliers Whitelaw and McIlum with local children.

FSp Coy



USMC in support of police mentoring.



WO2 B Lynn talks to ANP in Garmsir.



"Are we there yet?" Afghan people-carrier.



"It's Miller time!" (Left to right) WO2 S Temple, Major M Luckyn-Malone and WO2 G Mooney in Sangin.



HQ Coy/Rear Party/Welfare Office



Girl Power with a little help from P&D boys. Rear Party personnel battling it out in tug-of-war.



Rear Party soldiers "pigging out" at BBQ/Sports Day.



"We're all set for Britain's Got Talent!" Children's dance troupe ready for action.



*"The 2 SCOTS Welfare Staff primed and ready to go – just give us a call."
Capt Walter Hunter, UWO and his team.*

6 SCOTS



"We are the Champions!" The victorious A Coy at the Bn SAAM.



B Coy on Remembrance Sunday at RSF Memorial.



TA100 Colour Party at Horse Guards.



Glasgow and Lanarkshire Bn ACF



E RHF Beardmore of B Coy, with winners of March & Shoot.



Cpl Michael Manley (2nd from right) A RHF Kings Park with his team members holding their trophies for shooting.

West Lowland Bn ACF



West Lowland Bn ACF annual visit to Belgium.



A cadet on skill-at-arms training during Annual Training Camp in Strensall, Yorkshire.

Montage



Sarah Morrison the 2008 winner of the RHF Cup for History (First World War) in Belmont Academy, Ayr being presented the Cup by Col R L Steele.



RSF Malaya Reunion at Ayr Town Hall on 04 Sep 08.



Maj A L Mack (centre) and Col R L Steele (first from left) attending the 200th Anniversary of the death of General Sir John Moore (Retreat to Corunna), held at George Square, Glasgow.



"Recruits for Pipes & Drums are getting younger." Fusilier Craig Cummings, Drummer of 2 SCOTS Pipes & Drums with two brothers trying on a bearskin hat at the 50th Anniversary of Formation of RHF, at George Square.



navigation. RVs tend to be general rather than specific points. It is impossible to plan a route by map and stick to it, and timings are very difficult to estimate given the difficulty of the terrain and the requirements of Op BARMA drills. Due to our current night vision systems movement at night is extremely precarious and is generally not recommended. Together, these navigation challenges would seem enough for any young commander, but further compounding the pressure is the inevitable enemy force action that makes even the simplest of tasks more demanding.

Despite the various challenges inherent in operating in this environment all vehicle commanders must be able to navigate and command with ease. Yet young and first-tour LCpls were able to be the lead 'Vanguard' vehicle on many patrols, navigating the dangers of enemy action, possible IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices), avoiding 'no go' ground, and commanding the vehicle (and possibly manning a turret-mounted weapon) – all whilst listening to two radio nets simultaneously. Very impressive indeed!

2 SCOTS MASTIFF Group's main body was based in Musa Qal'eh, on the edge of the district centre and nearby Green Zone (heavily-populated irrigated farming land). In summer the large wadis were passable but frequently mined; in winter they can become impassable, thus negating MASTIFF influence where it is needed most. 2 SCOTS MASTIFF, like our predecessors, would learn the hard way that irrigation channels cannot be easily crossed as suspensions would break. However, the simplicity of the vehicle structure meant that repairs were relatively straight forward and took only a few hours, often 'on site' or back at the Musa Qual'eh base.

Tasks for MASTIFF throughout HERRICK 8 were far and wide. Frequently working in tandem with a dismounted infantry company, MASTIFF was used to safely transport dismounts to a drop-off before providing subsequent tasks such as fire support, flank/depth security, casualty evacuation and re-supply. The ability of MASTIFF to create a forceful presence on the high ground protecting the ground troop advance was at times enough itself to deter enemy forces. The weight of fire of the MASTIFF weapons (the Grenade Machine Gun (GMG), Heavy Machine Gun (HMG), General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) and JAVELIN) brought an overwhelming force to bear against even the most determined enemy, combined with the embedded Tactical Air Control Party that called upon air support when required.

2 SCOTS MASTIFF group also operated as an independent manoeuvre sub-unit, involving patrolling as well as strike operations. However, offensive operations were not the only forte of MASTIFF; due to its size and carriage capability (five days of supply, three crew and five dismounts) the group was used to project out to villages far from the normal UK troop sphere of influence and to deliver key messages and aid to the local population, including medical support and clinics. This 'overt recce' posture was frequently used. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF; both police and Army) had equal belief in the vehicle as the UK troops did and it provided invaluable reassurance (as well as a source of free food) for their operations.

Most Jocks like to tune up their cars at home and the trait of wanting to get their hands dirty boded well when operating MASTIFF. Mechanically the vehicle was very reliable and when a part broke due to an explosion or mine-strike it was very simple to fix. Frequently the powerful engines were able to recover each other out of trouble and of the 14 mine strikes we encountered, the Jocks and REME soldiers lost only two of those to UK repair.

As mentioned at the outset, core infantry skills are key to all that we do. Knowledge of our communications and counter-measure systems is vital but more important was the ability to absorb, digest and impart information across a busy dual radio net. This was the steepest of learning curves for all, and time focusing on this aspect during pre-deployment training would be well spent. 2 SCOTS were the first grouping to formulate and use a 'battle book' for MASTIFF; again this was very good in training, and drills became almost instinctive as the deployment progressed. Another common drill that kept us right was no Fire without Movement (even if RPGs bounce off your vehicle like stones); Command and Control may have been slightly different from a turret of a vehicle but the NCO or young Officer still had to maintain balance of his forces and clearly communicate his intent. Finally the Principles of War held resolutely true with 2 SCOTS MASTIFF experiences; from concentrating our force with dismounted troops, to being eternally flexible to the fluid nature of ANSF/Afghan operations, to sustaining ourselves independently for over one month of deployment.

Finally, there are three simple principles which were key ingredients: Firstly Drills; put simply they work. Op BARMA discovered over 30 devices intended to destroy us. Secondly Orders and Rehearsals; keep orders simple, precise and in a language that all understand – and whenever possible back them up with rehearsals. Finally Trust: Operations in Afghanistan fit the model of Mission Command supremely well. Our NCOs and soldiers are extremely capable and are operating in an environment like no other. They frequently make life or death decisions and display the inexhaustible grit and determination that one comes to expect from such fine soldiers. With the right leadership they have an innate talent to get the job done. I am very proud of what they achieved on Op HERRICK 8.



Test firing weapons outside FOB Edinburgh.



C COMPANY

Kabul Patrols Company (KPC)

OC: Maj T J Cave-Gibbs
 2IC: Capt M D Kerr
 CSM: WO2 C McCormack
 CQMS: CSgt P Marshall
 Ops Sgt: Sgt D Ames
 Int Sgt: Sgt G MacDonald
 OC 7 Pl: Lt D E Reed
 Pl Sgt 7: Sgt S McCulloch
 OC 8 Pl: Lt C K Law
 Pl Sgt 8: Sgt T Lowe
 OC 9 Pl: Lt D J W Morgan/2Lt J M Collinge
 Pl Sgt 9: Sgt D Forrester

During HERRICK 8, C Coy and the majority of A Coy were employed as the Kabul Patrols Company (KPC). Kabul is a unique and complex operating environment and before we deployed we knew that all elements of our actions would have to be carried out with sensitivity under intense scrutiny from the chain of command, the local population and the plethora of media reporting from the capital.

The mission in Kabul was to 'build and stabilise a permissive environment to maintain UK freedom of movement' and, in addition, we had several tasks to support UK Special Forces and other discrete agencies that operate in the city. Our remit covered the entire city for certain tasks but in detail the Coy had responsibility for patrolling Police District 9, an area of around 26 sq Km with a population of 350,000 people, most living in the very basic of housing with scant access to fresh water or power. Our routine work was foot and mobile patrols within multiples to deter insurgents and statistically over the six months the Jocks patrolled around 5000km by vehicle and over 500 km on foot. The Coy conducted four major security operations with Regional Command – Capital (RC-C) and five Coy-level surge operations to deter insurgent activity. QRF (Quick Reaction Force) activity in support of specialist agencies was frequent as was our support to the



Fus Watson on the prowl.

British Embassy and its dependants. While not always as active as elsewhere, Kabul still saw a share of activity and we responded to a range of incidents including suicide-bomber attacks, rocket attacks and the attempted assassination of the President.

In addition to contributions to the security situation in conjunction with other CF(Coalition Forces) nations and the Afghan security forces, our other key activity was facilitating reconstruction and development projects to improve the quality of life for the people, who live in often squalid conditions, on or if not very close to, the poverty line. Patrols distributed aid bundles to 1,300 people, provided security to enable the medical treatment of 2,500 people and provided fresh water wells and electrical power to around 600 families. Infrastructure projects have included road and drainage projects and school equipment as part of longer term improvement programmes.

Not only were the KPC active in the capital but multiples deployed across Helmand with BG(S) (Battlegroup South) and BG(NW) in places often mentioned on the news such as Musa Qala and Gereshk. The KPC have done much more than merely patrol Kabul and have and won plaudits from many corners from, at the top, the British Ambassador and the Deputy Commander of ISAF right down to ordinary Afghans who live in our area of responsibility grateful for the security and reconstruction we have brought to our area of the city. While not always the most exciting period, arguably the KPC has experienced the widest variety of employment during Op HERRICK and return home confident that they have made a physical and visible improvement to the living conditions of the ordinary Afghans.

FIRE SUPPORT COMPANY

Afghan National Police – Personal Observations from OP HERRICK

Major Marcus Luckyn-Malone, OC JPCC

OC: Maj M P S Luckyn-Malone
 OC Mors: Capt B A O'Neill
 OC Recce: Capt V T Gilmour/Capt A M Sweet
 OC ATK: Capt E D Aitken
 CSM: WO2 K J Galloway/WO2 B Lynn

The ANP (Afghan National Police) are mandated to provide law enforcement, public safety and internal security throughout Afghanistan. Manning is a concern, not so much in the numbers, but the composition. There remains a large proportion of untrained policemen (Jihadis) and a diverse spectrum of individual capabilities, from those that have given consistent service over many years to the otherwise unemployable but with the right tribal connections. The ANP have only limited capabilities in Helmand, though these are starting to develop. However, there is a long way to go before they are capable of either community or intelligence-led policing there.

The ANP is a loose grouping of poorly-led and administered elements that have high levels of drug-taking, incompetence, extortion, corruption and disaffection. There are many reasons for this; most stem from the raw impact of the above on an ancient tribal society surviving in an austere environment. It is an easy target, often held up for derision and blame. Much of this is in comparison to the ANA (Afghan National Army).



The ANA have received substantial investment over a longer period. They operate to a military template, are in large groupings, are primarily focussed on military activity and tend to operate in rural areas. They are not recruited locally in Helmand and are therefore distinct from the local communities. The ANP by their nature must operate in smaller, more loosely-configured groups providing local security and community policing. The ANA have been the easier force for international militaries to train and operate with. The Warrior Ethos and common structures lend themselves to a more natural relationship during training etc. 34% more ANP died in Afghanistan than ANA in 2007. This would have been significantly less had the ANP enjoyed the degree of investment that the ANA have to date.

Operating Environment

The Pashtuns do not have a strong national identity. Communal identity is strongest at the sub-tribal level. They have an innate suspicion of external influences. There is instinctive resistance to the imposition of external authority on a tribal system that has held sway for thousands of years. The International Community must recognise this and focus on methods to integrate governmental systems with the Tribes.

The cult of the warrior is a key theme in Pashtun tribal society. It was very obvious, to those of us that dealt regularly with the ANP, that they were expected to be warriors. ANP and civilians alike have little understanding of what a police charter should consist of. This has led to armed militias operating without civilian consent or support. Coupled with systemic corruption, the results are a poorly-paid and badly-led organisation with low morale and poor discipline which recruits from the dregs of society. Afghan Police Forces have therefore oppressed, fed off and abused civilians.

For community policing to work, and for the local population to start to understand, and benefit from, the provision of a police force, there is much to be done. Realistic objectives must be set to enable the ANP to develop at a rate guaranteeing both professionalism and its acceptance in the communities. Police Mentoring Teams (PMTs) must be made available to guide, train, mentor and operate with the ANP. The ANP hierarchy is neither capable nor dependable.



The ANP in Sangin.

The OMLT (Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team) template has been extremely successful. The commitment of a POMLT (Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team) BG to ANP reform in Helmand would reap huge rewards and contribute significantly to stabilisation throughout Helmand.

Without coherent justice systems the Police are blamed when justice cannot be comprehensively and demonstratively applied. The few examples of justice institutions influencing Helmand are invariably corrupt, influenced by tribal politics, inept or absent. The local population looks, primarily, to tribal systems and local practitioners of Sharia Law to dispense justice. Justice departments that are well established elsewhere in Afghanistan, shy away from the Southern Provinces. Some state that they cannot count on the ANP to safeguard them, others that Helmand is irredeemably lawless and not worth investing in. It is a multifaceted Catch 22.

The local community must be willing to accept the authority of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), even if this is, at times, in direct competition with tribal politics and Pashtunwali (Pashtun speakers). These systems will only be accepted if they can be proved to improve the lives of the tribes.

HQs, stations and checkpoints are mostly dilapidated and overcrowded, but seen as vital due to the ANP's Fortress Mentality. CoPs (District Chiefs of Police) prefer to have their lieutenants in close proximity to better control their power-base and lessen the likelihood of being undermined or challenged. There have been restructuring attempts over the last seven years since Taliban rule but, due to the all-pervading tribal dynamic, these have been paid lip-service to and the core issues have not been addressed. Institutionalised corruption influences all.

Police Forces are ruled over much as the Tribes are. The Commander directs all activity and is supported by a staff picked for its tribal affiliation. Delegation and initiative are treated with suspicion by commanders.

Sustaining the Effort

Extensive and concrete reform can only be achieved through long-term external military and civilian commitment. The scale of the requirement has not yet been fully grasped by either the UK Military or by the FCO. It was only during our tour that the FCO was able to resource a Rule of Law team, having double-hatted the First Secretary for Counter-narcotics. In addition to more PMTs, Helmand needs more UK civilian police.

Recruitment is a key component in reforming the Police. There is no coherent recruitment policy or support measures in place at the provincial level. GIROA must be supported in persuading the parent communities that this is a worthy profession with prospects; a tall order currently, but one that must be addressed now. Similarly, very little work has yet been done provide effective ANP training. The establishment of provincial training centres, well resourced and manned, will more than help.

The Future

Police reform is embryonic in Helmand. Substantial investment and reinforcement are required if enduring and comprehensive police reform is to be realised in Helmand Province.



THE G1 ADMINISTRATION BATTLE IN HELMAND

Maj M Walsh, RAO 2 SCOTS

In many respects, our preparation for Op HERRICK 8 began two years earlier. Then, the AGC Field Detachment had prepared our “fast-move” documents, which were maintained up-to-date in order that we could deploy at very short notice. Wisely, we had decided to maintain that procedure and so most areas needed only a confidence check before deploying – which was just as well because the 2IC wanted us on the ranges and running up hills!

For the deployment, the Det was split over four locations; Glencorse Bks (Unit Rear Party), Camp Bastion, Lashkar Gah, and Kabul; and in various guises.

The RAO, A/WO2 McDowall, A/SSgt Young, Cpl Gilbert and A/Cpl Colvin (later LCpl Cardin) formed the nucleus of the Camp Bastion Joint Support Unit (JSU) J1 Cell; the Cell also included eight other clerks drawn from across the Bde. Their mission was to “enable troops into Helmand Province and thereafter effect such personnel administration, staff support and welfare provision as will maximise the combat effectiveness of all UK personnel and embedded nationals”. During the RiP(Relief in Place) period alone over 4700 personnel were “OPLOC’d” (Operationally Located) into BSN, with a similar number leaving for home at the end of Op HERRICK 7; over US \$2,000,000 passed through our hands by way of cheque encashment and payments; we dealt with 57 compassionate cases; and distributed over 950 items of welfare; and only 6 weeks of the tour had passed!

Throughout this period we continued to conduct admin runs to Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), as well as SANGAR and Op BRIDGER duties (guarding prisoners), until such time as the other unit Dets were able to relieve us of some of our burden. Our grateful goes thanks to RAO 5 SCOTS, in particular, for her support in personally conducting so many admin runs.

The MASTIFF group, which maintained a rear HQ in Camp Bastion, was administered by Cpl Fulton. Hers was a particularly demanding task due to the fact that the Coy was spread over various locations, causing periods of intense work whilst the multiples transited through. This challenging environment is something that this most capable clerk thrived on!

LCpl Duhaney, who served in Kabul, was primarily responsible for carrying out most of the aforementioned duties for her coy, the Kabuk Patrols Coy(KPC). In addition, she also conducted female search duties for medical and humanitarian aid activities; and provided top cover for the OC KPC Rover Group in the capital city. LCpl Duhaney clearly relished her additional duties, describing it (providing top cover) as her “most memorable moment in Afghanistan”.

Not to miss out on things, our new Det Comd, 2Lt Evans, deployed to Camp Bastion in May to check up on how the RAO was looking after “her” Det before returning to Glencorse for some heavy-duty auditing. Not content with that, she returned to theatre in August to gain experience of the HQ set-up in Lashkar Gah.

Sgt J Young and LCpl Cardin (later A/Cpl Colvin), based in Lashkar Gah, supported the joint Security Sector Reform and



J1 Cell Contingent, Camp Bastion. (Left to right); A/SSgt Young, LCpl Cardin, Maj Walsh, Cpl Gilbert & A/WO2 McDowall all escaping from the broken-down air conditioned J1 tent. (Check out the desert combat shorts.)

Battlegroup (South) HQ and, amongst many other tasks, regularly undertook watchkeeping duties. Sgt Young also managed to get out on the ground, conducting female search duties in Garmsir. She thoroughly enjoyed the whole of her tour, but did admit the highs were accompanied with some low points. However, she added that the “fantastic atmosphere and team spirit made even the lows better”.

Meanwhile, back in Glencorse the business of routine administration continued apace. After 22 years of sterling service (which included getting the Bn out of camp in good order) WO2 McGill turned to the right, saluted and marched off to her resettlement course; L/SSgt Black took on responsibility for any task which had a £ sign in front of it; and everyone from Cpl Barnes to LCpl McCurdie beavered away to ensure that the deployed element wasn’t troubled by too many “real-life” issues.

Flexibility and an open mind to welcoming all manner of challenges, were key to success in 2008. The Det has done a remarkable job, both in their core administrative functions and in other, less-practiced roles (the Det Comd is already expanding her training programme to include these different areas) and is now enjoying a welcome period of calm, before looking forward to the challenges of 2009, namely Ex GRAND PRIX, SLE and running up hills with the 2IC!

QUARTERMASTER’S DEPARTMENT

QM(M): Maj S G Wemyss QM(T): Maj R C Welsh
RQMS(M): WO2 M McNally RQMS(T): WO2 S McKenzie

When I wrote the last set of Journal notes it was well above 40C outside. Today Castlelaw sports a fresh covering of snow but variety is the spice of life.

The second half of our tour in Afghanistan was every bit as manic as the first half, relentless heat and dust and a new drama unfolding almost every hour. With accounts worth well in excess of £50m and demands averaging approx £1m arriving each week (with similar quantities of ammunition, and rations), both RQMSs earned their keep. What could have been major problems were now routine.



The population of Bastion is usually around 3,000 with a further 1,000 locals and contractors mixed in. Located in the middle of the desert and complete with a state-of-the-art hospital and a massive pile of ammunition and military equipment (ranging from socks to attack helicopters), it is a small town growing at an alarming rate. Its location causes difficulties and the stretched line of communication creates problems. To understand the scale and planning required to run such an operation imagine taking the Jock pie out from the UK to Afghanistan, getting it cooked and on to the hot plate. That would be difficult enough for one soldier. Now multiply the task by 4,000 and repeat the same exercise 3 times per day, and that is just to get a pie. Now consider all the other commodities that are required to mount the operation. Then to spice it up turn the temperature to 45C and add the Taliban – mad keen to spoil the plan. All this makes for “an interesting day at work”.

The G4 team worked tirelessly to ensure that our fighting soldiers never wanted for anything, anticipating what is coming next and sustaining our supported sub-units.

As the planning for the next RiP(Relief in Place) picked up pace and the logistics of fitting thousands of extra soldiers into Bastion whilst they conduct their in-theatre training before being launched into battle started to build, Sgt Sandy Healy and his gang, consisting mostly of English sailors and Afghan local labour, worked into the night in order to furnish the new accommodation blocks (1,000 bed spaces) ready for 3 Commando Brigade to occupy. Quite how they overcame the language barrier (and the MFI assembly instructions for the furniture) is still a mystery but to their credit the task was achieved early. The blocks were in use well before we handed over.

Packing our own ISO container (ie: freight) with the Bn Sign and sending it back to Glencorse was the first real indication the tour was rapidly drawing to a close. There was clearly a handover to conduct and an LSI (Logistic Support Inspection), so the team went into overdrive again.

To close the tour we saved the best for last and finished with the biggest test of all. The dreaded LSI team were invited to sift through all our records, and we conducted a very intense stock-take and audit of all our holdings. This was the first full Board of Officers conducted on the Bastion Support Group QMs (BSG) and its associated sub-units, a massive undertaking the scale of which has never been seen before in Afghanistan. Some units, who will remain nameless to save embarrassment, had proved to be shocking at their accounting and inquiries were launched to understand and learn from the write-off bills that were raised. One such example was a bill raised at the conclusion of a handover between units. It started life at £850,000 but in the end the RQMS and the team had managed to reduce it to around £250,000. This was not an isolated action and gives an indication of the scale of what we were faced with daily. In the end the accounts were given a clean bill of health, astonishing really when we look back at the level of activity and the quantities of ammunition, rations and battle-winning equipment that was handled, demanded and processed routinely.

The UNICOM Out of Barracks System is the main accounting tool; without it we would have struggled to stay on top. Before

deploying, Cpl Wyper trained as the System Administrator but with hindsight we should have trained at least two others. Cpl Wyper became an acting Sgt for the tour and was run ragged trying to maintain his day job as well as administer the system.

When the curtain fell on our Afghan experience the RAF had the last say. Our flights to Cyprus and 24 hours decompression on the beach slipped away due to delays and other complications, so we languished in Kandahar for a while before boarding a flight back to the UK. Following leave we returned to work to see the Bn all back and completed our welcome-home parades.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE PADRE

Rev Benjamin J A Abeledo

People sometimes think of chaplains in war as urging men into battle: “**Onward Christian soldiers, up-and-at-them**” sort of thing. During our recent tour in Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 8, my effort as the Battalion Padre was one of a supporting and friendly presence amongst our troops. Whilst we are not Welfare officers, much of what we do on operations as chaplains is welfare work. But of course, it is much more than that. Looking after the needs of any soldier in terms of support, encouragement, listening, sharing their experiences, advising and representing him/her within the chain of command is a vital and fundamental role.

All these roles are of course applicable to chaplains in peace as in a war conflict. He or she is, or can be, a go-between officers and other ranks, and vice-versa: a link between the church at home and the church in the Army: between families and colleagues, between God and man, heaven and earth. This last is important anywhere, but never more so than on active service. To gather a few people or a Battlegroup for a communion service or simple prayers is in one sense easy, especially if friends or colleagues have been killed. Our own sense of mortality is heightened in the midst of suffering and loss. The masks are torn away and all is revealed in the stress of operations. It is here where the role of the Padre becomes more crucial and where the link between soldier and chaplain do engage and through shared times together meaningful friendships are forged.

In scenes of violent death, chaos, fear, and pain the role of the Padre is one of a sign of values that most hold dear whether they have faith or none: home, family, love, peace, justice – a sign in fact of God’s presence, in an environment which is a total contradiction of it.

In the words of a former army chaplain, the Reverend Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC CF (1883-1929):

“Live with the men. Go everywhere they go. Make up your mind that you will share all their risks. And more if you can do any good. There is very little purely spiritual work, it is all muddled and mixed – but it is all spiritual. Take a box of fags in your haversack and a great deal of love in your heart, and go up to them, laugh with them, joke with them; you can pray with them sometimes, but pray for them always.”

For me Op HERRICK 8 gave me the opportunity to do that and to share the lives of a proud and hugely professional Battalion. A privilege indeed!



OC UNIT REAR PARTY (URP) PERSPECTIVE

Maj J E B Kerr MBE, OC HQ Coy

The specified tasks given to me as OC Unit Rear Party by the Commanding Officer (as he eagerly departed for operations in Afghanistan) were, “have a good command and look after our families’ welfare needs and provide the rear link support to the Battalion on Op HERRICK 8.” These tasks seemed rather straight forward; 29 years service under my belt, 9 years as a LE Officer, just completed my Officer Commanding Discipline Course, I’ll dust off the golf clubs, CSM gets the guards sorted and relax. Well, as you would imagine nothing ever works out the way you would expect it. As the coaches departed it became quite apparent that the tasks given to me by the Commanding Officer became very clear. Having experienced many deployments during my military career the uncertainty and anxiety begins to surface, the welfare of the families become more significant. Families wherever they are located must be well-informed and kept abreast of the current situation and have a POC(Point of Contact) to call regardless the hour. This is not just for operations, but any deployment and must be underpinned by proactivity and information passed promptly and correctly.

What has changed since “Yester Year” thus far? The welfare support to our families enduring a six-month separation whilst their husbands are involved on intense operations has changed significantly. The whole spectrum of IT equipment now available to the families and serving soldiers situated within the welfare organisation is immense. It ranges from the ability to send EBlueys, including the use of Web Cams and Skype “Voice over Line” and better still, it’s free. Also at hand is the Defence Information Infrastructure, more commonly known as DII (C), which is a military computer system that enables a world-wide secure passage of information. As I recall eight years ago as the Unit Welfare Officer in Fort George, Inverness, when the

Battalion were conducting operations in Northern Ireland, the only means of welfare support was a small welfare grant that did not stretch the imagination very far and a duty phone. Since then, the role and responsibilities of the UWO remain the same, it’s the tempo that has changed dramatically due to the focus and concerns of senior officers who want those in command to get welfare better for all in order to aide retention support recruiting and show that our people are the most important thing we have.

The URP settled down to Guards and Duties, coupled with mandatory training requirements (MATTs ie; Military Annual Training Tests), sports and leave. The focus quickly moved towards the preparation of the Cascade training package of a further 38 soldiers to deploy and join their companies in Afghanistan. These soldiers were either those who were back to full fitness after injury or new arrivals from training. As the weeks and months moved on and irrespective of our affiliation to 16 Air Assault Bde, we still had to maintain the link with 52 Inf Bde for all MS and G1 matters. As both Bde HQs wanted similar discipline, compassionate, logistical, and Sick At Home (SAH) monthly returns, the role as OC URP became rather busy. Every month 16 AA Bde would also hold a monthly conference, which gave all URP OCs the chance to up date on current issues and present a quick overview of the Battalion’s current operational deployment. This also gave me the opportunity to visit soldiers from 2 SCOTS in the Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC aka the ‘Glasshouse’). No change there, we always have a few residents!!

As the tour reached the halfway mark it became very evident that the families were more resourceful than we all actually give them credit. They came together under the careful guidance of the UWO, held ladies’ dinner nights and fun outings with the children and seemed to be coping very well under the circumstances. At the same point we had seen the start of soldiers return due to injury and family compassionate problems that



CSgt Smith (Drum Major) and Sgt McGhee (UWO SNCO) at the BBQ.



unavoidably happen on operations. The Joint Compassionate and Casualty Centre (JCCC) places the utmost importance on the way in which the service deals with casualties. The Casualty reporting of soldiers or families takes precedence and great importance is placed on the welfare of the soldiers who are injured and their families who may need support in adjusting to hospital visiting, looking after children and just coping while they also come to terms with the situation. The compassionate coordination now in place has evolved into a well-oiled machine, not saying the past compassionate cell was flawed but it required some restructuring in coping with current operations and volume of welfare cases. This ranged from more funding, more staff with the right qualifications, more vehicles and more education on welfare needs and explaining to civilian agencies what may make the military ever so slight different.

As the end of the operation tour was on the horizon, I received a call from the Commanding Officer nominating me as the Project Officer for the Homecoming Parades to be held in Glasgow, Ayr and Penicuik. This was a slightly daunting task; there was no past experience or instruction to give the initial guidance. Cap (and empty file) in hand, I headed towards Home Headquarters, to meet with Col (Retd) Bobby Steele and Capt (Retd) Kamal Gurung. Between us we prepared the outline tasks and started the Public Military Event (PME) planning process. The Commanding Officer's intent was to show off the Battalion to the public in our traditional Royal Highland Fusiliers recruiting areas. These parades also gave us the opportunity for 2 SCOTS to be shown at their best, whilst reinforcing the bond that already existed between the Battalion and the home recruiting areas. It also provided the opportunity to display the new RHF Queen's and Regimental Colours that were presented by HRH Prince Andrew in Afghanistan. The presentation of the Colours in Afghanistan was a poignant moment, as this was the last Colours ever to be presented to us as "The Royal Highland Fusiliers" – and that they were presented whilst on operations adds further credence to the Battalion's history. (The last time Regimental Colours were presented to us on operations was in 1856 during the Central India campaign.)

All three parades were extremely well supported by local communities, schools, councils and veterans. Each town council and Provost were excellent hosts and they provided a fantastic lunch and a few beverages. The Glasgow Parade was topped off with a Battalion Photograph at George Square.

As the Battalion headed off on their well-earned Post Operational Tour Leave the URP continued to run and maintain the link to both 16 AA Bde and 52 Inf Bde. As OC URP I can firmly confirm that running a URP is not for the faint-hearted and can be thoroughly testing at times – but equally rewarding. The officers and soldiers on the URP orbat must also be praised. Not only did they play a major part in support of the Battalion's deployment but in most cases they have completed ten months of Guard Duties. (Ten months of Guard Duties!)

As to "Yester Years" the equipment, operational procedures, welfare support, and realistic demanding training packages have all certainly evolved over the past 10 years. Past and present can be assured that our Regimental ethos, pride, determination, selfless commitment and courage which did us proud in "Yester Years" has been carried forward by all Officers and Soldiers in 2 SCOTS.

THE WELFARE OFFICE

Unit Welfare Officer:	Capt W G A Hunter
Assistant Unit Welfare Officer:	Sgt McGhee
Welfare NCOs:	Cpl Weir and LCpl Wilson
Welfare Clerk:	LCpl Barclay
Community Development Worker:	Mrs Dawn Muir
Unit Beat Officer:	PC Helen Rogan
HIVE:	Mrs Moira Tait

When the Battalion was deployed to Afghanistan the welfare staff were tasked with providing the best possible welfare service to the soldiers and families left behind in Scotland. The first event for the families would always be seen as the barometer for all future events so when over 200 wives and kids attended the first Sunday lunch I knew that we would be well supported over the next 6 months. The coffee pot would be open every day and the Friday family's night was as popular as ever with the notable exception of the husbands of course. The total number of activities and events organised during the tour is still not completely clear as there were many ad hoc last minute.com type days, but we managed to programme nearly 30 activities over the 6-month period and even managed to provide a BBQ/sports day for the rear party troops.

During the tour we have been lucky to have had some exceptional support from former members and friends of the Battalion. We were contacted in Mar 08 by Ali Sutherland who was in the process of setting up a support group called "Parcels For Troops"; the plan was that Ali would provide us with 200 parcels which we would send to the Battalion. However, Parcels for Troops has really taken off and Ali has provided more than 800 parcels and donated over £1200 to the families during the tour. Another fantastic source of support came from Mags and Ricky Roe; Ricky is an ex-member of the RHF signals platoon and they are regular contributors to the RHF Veterans Forum. Mags and Ricky have also provided over 200 parcels and have entertained the families on several occasions with their Karaoke/Disco. I would like to thank them all for their support and I hope we can all keep in touch in the future.



The UWO receives more parcels and toys from big Ali.



52nd Lowland, Sixth Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland



BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

CO: Lt Col C A Coull
 2IC: Maj A J Tomczyk
 Training Major: Maj G A Irvine-Fortescue
 Adj: Capt M J C Jeffrey
 RSM: WO1 (RSM) M James

COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

A full year for 6 SCOTS started with Bremen Pl deployed to Kabul. Named after one of the battle honours of 52nd Lowland Division, the Pl was drawn from across the Bn and was commanded by Lt Fisher with CSgt Todd as Pl Sgt. Tasked with force protection of the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) logistics base they carried out their role with quiet determination earning a commendation from the Commander of ISAFX General Dan McNeil. The Bn has also had individuals mobilised in a variety of roles and theatres and we go into the new year with soldiers on Op HERRICK, Op TOSCA and preparing to support the 3 SCOTS deployment. Our other major task of the year was to run Ex SUMMER CHALLENGE 2008 (SC 08). This involved providing Phase 1 and 2 training for TA recruits from all arms over a concentrated 7-week period. Supported by units from across the Bde and notably with regular staff from 3 SCOTS, the Sappers and a team from ITB (Infantry Training Battalion) Catterick, the exercise produced 110 trained soldiers. Notwithstanding the demands of these two significant tasks the Bn also managed to support the TA100 celebrations, carry out a very successful all ranks staff ride to Arras and even some adventurous training as well as an impressive degree of Coy level training. Next year holds the prospect of continuing support to operations and the opportunity for a number of the Bn to go to Gibraltar on Ex MARBLE TOR.

A COMPANY

OC: Maj D G Stimpson
 PSAO: Capt J W Reid
 CSM: WO2 (CSM) K F Irving
 SPSI A Coy: WO2 D McNab
 Javelin Pl PSI Gala: CSgt D Falconer
 MG Pl PSI: CSgt J Hanley

A Coy started 2008 with 16 personnel mobilised on Op HERRICK with the 6 SCOTS Force Protection Pl, Bremen Pl, at HQ ISAF in Kabul. Led by Lt Dougie Fisher (OC MG Pl, Bathgate) and CSgt Todd (2IC ATK Pl, Gala) both from A Coy the Pl was recognised as having a very successful tour. US General McNeil, Commander ISAF, got in touch with his Scottish roots, was adopted as a Jock and presented with his Tam O'Shanter (black hackle of course!). The OC, Major Stimpson was also mobilised for Op HERRICK 7, working with the Poppy Eradication Force, a joint US-Afghan police unit given the unenviable task of destroying the opium poppy crop in Helmand Province.

A Coy cleared up at the Battalion SAAM (Skill At Arms Meeting) in March, taking away most of the silverware. April

saw the 6 SCOTS Battlefield tour to the Somme, with a visit to Contalmaison to pay our respects at the recently erected memorial to the 16th Royal Scots (McCrae's) Bn.

Ex BORDER ADVENTURE in May, based in the Gala TA Centre (TAC), saw the Coy take part in mountain biking through Glentress Forest, hill walking over the Southern Upland Way and kayaking on St Mary's Loch. The result was some sore feet, bruised bones and tired muscles but overall a successful and enjoyable weekend.

Annual Camp was at Cameron Barracks, Inverness, where we set up, ran and administered the first 2 weeks of Ex SC 08, the Bde-level recruit training exercise, which saw over 100 TA recruits put through their full basic training. Alongside all the GDs (General Duties), guards and G4 tasks, we managed to squeeze in a tour of Culloden Battlefield, MATTs (Military Annual Training Tests) training and adventure training.

Remembrance Weekend saw detachments from A Coy take part in services at Canongate Kirk and Broughton Street Church in Edinburgh, as well as services and parades at Gala, Bathgate, Hawick and Peebles. The Coy also hosted the 7th/9th (Highlander) Bn Royal Scots Service of Remembrance in the Drill Hall in Edinburgh. This service is also attended by members of the RSTOA and former TA personnel from East Claremont Street TAC. Any ex-members reading this, who have not attended previously, are more than welcome to attend next year.

For us Territorials, with the added pressures of civilian careers alongside family and military commitments, 2008 has been a very busy year. Much has been asked of the A Coy personnel, whether it be operational tours, giving up their annual leave to do GDs at Ex SC 08 or spending their "free" time at weekends, evenings and increasingly during the working week, to help out with the myriad of tasks which we now find ourselves dealing with. 2009 will prove to be no less busy.



"Who nicked my paddle?" A Coy adventure training in the Scottish Borders.



B COMPANY

OC: Maj J C H Donald
 2IC: Capt K D Telfer
 PSAO: Capt H M McAulay
 CSM: WO2 R S M Hogg
 SPSI: WO2 A Turner
 RIT WO: WO2 D McFarlane
 PSI Mortar Pl: CSgt A G Sayers

The start of 2008 saw the return of members of the Coy from Op HERRICK. B Coy had 7 soldiers serving in Afghanistan since August 07 with Bremen Pl. Also worthy of mention is that Pte Barr AGC served in Kabul with the Civilian Labour Support Group for 11 months.

B Coy had the honour in the early summer of providing the majority of personnel for two Colour Parties. The first was at Horse Guards, London, to commemorate TA100. After a display of TA roles and equipment from the past 100 years, the Colours, Standards, and Guidons of the TA regiments were paraded for HRH The Prince of Wales and The Chief of General Staff during a march past of Buckingham Palace. The second parade was in Glasgow Cathedral as part of the finale of Ex PIPER'S TRAIL.

Annual Camp this year was held at Cameron Barracks, Inverness, where 6 SCOTS oversaw Ex SC 08. B Coy once again had a good turnout, with several members of the Coy able to commit to more than the two-week camp. Those who attended benefited from the opportunity to practise their teaching and training skills, as well as attaining their MATTs (Military Annual Training Tests). The exercise produced two Trained Soldiers for the Coy, Fus Hunter & Robertson, with another three due to complete their CIC (Combat Infantry Course) at Catterick in the near future. Coinciding with the Annual Camp was the departure of WO2 Andy Ross as PSI and the arrival of WO2 Ash Turner as his successor.

B and C Coys joined forces in mid-September and conducted a patrol skills weekend at Ardgarten Forest, Argyll. The 18 strong Pl patrolled across the peninsular stopping at a number of stands en-route to hone their navigation techniques, first aid, mortar fire missions, and Sect battle drills. The weekend finished on the Sunday with some more contact lessons before returning to Lochgoilhead.

Remembrance Day this year was marked by B Company in a number of locations. At Ayr a Guard was provided and a wreath laid by the OC. Wreaths were also laid in Dumfries by the Coy 2IC



B Coy recruits at Ex SC08 being instructed by 2Lt McCorkindale.

and in Prestwick by the CSM. A number of soldiers also took part in the Glasgow Parade in George Square as part of the Guard of Honour provided by the Bn.

The current recruiting campaign under WO2 Davie McFarlane is proving successful with a healthy number of recruits interested in joining 6 SCOTS and the Coy looks forward to the next training year and preparation for another Op HERRICK deployment.

C COMPANY

OC: Maj N Ord/Maj T Pounder
 2IC: Capt A I Campbell
 PSAO: Capt A Blair
 CSM: WO2 (CSM) E Stewart
 SPSI: WO2 P Leith

Annual camp this year took the form of C Coy taking a two-week slot as the Admin Coy in Cameron Barracks for Ex SC 08. While a large burden of this took the inevitable and unfortunate form of GDs, the Coy managed to get a number of MATTs under its belt. A considerable amount of time was spent on Fort George ranges and training area, brushing up on the essential skills of low level tactics and marksmanship. Additionally the Coy has participated in a variety of training exercises which will contribute to the preparation for Op HERRICK in 2010. Already a few members of the Coy have expressed the desire to take this opportunity of serving operationally. This will be the focus over the coming year.

On 30th August members of the Coy spent the day in Glencoe on Buachaille Etive Mor. This is an annual event for C Coy in remembrance of Fus Russell Beeston who gave his life on active service in the Al Amarah region on 27th August 2003 while part of the KOSB BG. Russell grew up in the shadow of the Buachaille, one of Scotland's most distinctive mountains, as his parents worked in the Kingshouse Hotel. After a walk up in dreich conditions, a happy toast was raised to Russell in front of the memorial plaque placed in his honour just below the summit cairn. Happy stories were exchanged about Russell's exuberance and entertaining life. The group then headed down to the Kingshouse Hotel where they had the honour of being joined by Russell's mother, Mari for lunch.

Personalities have changed within the Coy with soldiers joining and leaving. We congratulate 2Lt Weir on his Commissioning and temporary posting to B Coy, and we congratulate WO2 Stewart on the birth of his son Callum. We congratulate Maj Pounder on his promotion and wish him and his family all the best for a speedy return to good health.

HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

QM: Maj J R Stevenson
 OC: Capt A McInally
 RQMS: WO2 (RQMS) R Fraser
 CSM: WO2 (CSM) A Liddell

MT PI

The MT PI has been kept very busy with the introduction of the JAMES system for fleet management. The transition to this system was seemingly effortless due to the hard work in training of all the NRPS (Non-Regular Permanent Staff) CSgts and the continuing hard work by the MTWO and SSgt Simpson. Training



continues with the new system for the remainder of the Pl. The main focus of the year was Ex SC 08. The Pl was kept very busy providing an ever growing number of vehicles from Cameron Barracks to support the myriad of tasks thrown up by the exercise. Fortunately the Bn drivers continue their run of accident-free training and exercises, with only one incident at Ex SC 08, the blow-out of a minibus tyre. It has been a good training year and the Pl looks forward to preparing for operations in the coming year.

Catering Pl

The Catering Pl has had a busy year yet again. During Ex SC 08 they ran a joint Officers', WOs' & Sgts' Mess catering for between 80 and 100 mess members over the 7 weeks. Concurrently the Pl also supported Ex PIPER'S TRAIL whilst they were based at Forfar. The Pl continues to excel themselves at various Officers'

Mess and WOs' & Sgts' Mess functions with the thanks of the PMCs and Mess Members.

Signal Pl

The Pl remains busy providing support to Coy and Bn training. The PSI organised in conjunction with 7 SCOTS, a BOWMAN conversion course which was run over two weekends in April 08. This was well attended by personnel from C and HQ Coys. Sadly, having trained the Platoon on the new equipment they now need to revert back to Clansman training as the RQMS starts his back-loading programme!

The Signals Pl would like to welcome back Cpl 'Dusty' Burns from his recent tour in Bosnia and Pte Paul from his in Afghanistan. It also bids farewell to the RSO, Capt Corkerton, on his move to the Regional Training Centre. We wish him the very best in his new post.

Fifty Years Ago – The Formation of The Royal Highland Fusiliers in 1959



HRH Princess Margaret, Colonel-in-Chief with Officers of 1 RHF and the Depot at Churchill Barracks, Ayr.



The Old Colour Party March Off Parade – Old Anniesland, Glasgow.



The Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada

Captain Glen Meerburg, Adjutant

The past year has been another busy training year for the Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada (RHFC). Our focus for the year has been twofold, improving our basic soldiering skills and growing our community footprint.

The Regiment began the training year in 2008 by conducting winter exercises in Meaford, Ontario that consisted of a series of live fire exercises that started at the individual level and eventually culminated in a company live fire exercise. Throughout the winter and spring, the Regiment participated in several brigade and unit level exercises. During the summer months members of the Regiment went off to area or national training centres to improve their skills or to instruct on courses. In the fall, the Regiment continued to hone their weapon and other infantry skills through the completion of Individual Battle Task Standards (IBTS) via a series of confirmatory ranges that had soldiers firing their C7 rifles, 9mm Browning pistols, M203 rifle mounted Grenade Launcher, C6 & C9 machine guns, 60mm mortar, 84mm Carl Gustav recoilless rifle and hand grenades.

To support our goal of increasing our community footprint, the RHFC participated in a few parades and hosted some social events. The unit participated in the Warriors' Day Parade in Cambridge, Ontario, and this year for the Remembrance Day Parade the regiment was in Waterloo, Ontario. We also hosted an open house where members of the public were invited in to see not only some of our current equipment and soldiers but also our regimental museum that houses an excellent collection of regimental history. At the end of November, we hosted the Feast of St Andrew, which was attended by 200 guests, and our guest of honour was Col R L Steele TD, DL from the Royal Highland Fusiliers.



Fus Kremplin and Cpl House on the 60mm.

The RHFC also conducted the "Tinman" triathlon, which is a unit-run event in Cambridge, Ontario that consisted of a 5 km ruck march, a 7 km cycle followed by a 2.5 km run. Fusilier Wagner won the event with a final time of 55:45 minutes.

In addition to the busy training and social schedule of the Regiment, the RHFC had over 70 members self identify to deploy on overseas operations. From this group, 17 were eligible to be deployed and are currently serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan and in the Sudan. Even as these notes are written, we are in the process of interviewing the next round of individuals who are interested in deploying with the next Battle Group going over to Kandahar in 2010.

The Regimental strength has grown to 219 soldiers, and we are in the process of running a high school CO-OP Basic Military Qualification (BMQ) course that will add another 35 soldiers to



RHF of Canada on Remembrance Day Parade 2008.



the Regiment, which will help to offset the 23 members who have transferred to the Regular Force.

In January of 2009, we will be having a change of command parade for our outgoing Honorary Colonel, Colonel T A Wilder CJSt, CD who has served the Canadian Forces and the Regiment for more than 43 years. Lieutenant-Colonel O. Lackenbauer is currently serving as our Honorary Lt Col and is due to replace Hon Col Wilder.

PRINCE ALFRED'S GUARDS

WO1 (RSM) A J P Jansen MMM (Dries)

As the RSM of Prince Alfred's Guards, I would like to present a article for publication in your Journal, 2009 edition.

The unit has a campaign to encourage members to take part in fitness competition outside the Army environment, to upkeep their level of fitness.

This campaign was successful in that three members of the unit have taken the challenge of the Yearly Ironman Completion held in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

The members are Capt Barnadie, Lt Simon Hlanjeni and Rfn Fundiswa (Jennifer) Mbande. The result was that Rfn Mbande became the first and only African woman to complete the course, to date.

RFN FUNDISWA MBANDE – PRINCE ALFRED'S GUARD, PORT ELIZABETH

Rfn. Fundiswa Mbande is the first, and to date, the only African woman in the world to have finished an Ironman Triathlon. The 24-year-old Rifleman, who didn't know how to swim or cycle just two years ago, successfully competed in one of the world's most arduous races.

Ironman South Africa is an annual triathlon famous for its gruelling length and race conditions during which competitors have to run a full marathon of 42.2 kilometres, cycle for 180 kilometres and swim 3.8 kilometres in the open sea.

"The discipline I've learned from soldiering played a great part in helping me to reach such a state of physical and mental fitness," she said.

Currently Rfn Mbande is a member of Prince Alfred's Guard, ACR Unit in Port Elizabeth. She is also a driver (Samel 50, Caspir and Mamba), Battalion Signaller and one of the first women members to qualify as an Air Assault soldier.

But why join the SANDF?

"I was encouraged by a member of the South African Army and also a family friend to join the SANDF, because he knew I couldn't resist a challenge," said Rfn Mbande.

Her opportunity to join the Armed Services came in 2004 when SANDF members had a recruitment drive in Peddie, a small rural town in the Eastern Cape where she was living with her widowed mother. A few months later Rfn Mbande left for Port Elizabeth as

a Military Skills Development (MSD) volunteer. When she wasn't accepted as a recruit into the Permanent Force Mbande didn't give up her eagerness to join the military. She applied with Col G Lombard, the Officer Commanding Prince Alfred's Guard to become a Reserve Force member. After her acceptance into Prince Alfred's Guard in 2005 she completed her basic military training at Group 6 in Port Elizabeth. In 2006 Rfn Mbande made selection for the Air Assault Course in Grahamstown. A prerequisite for this course is that troops must be able to swim, which she and several other recruits couldn't do. The OC, Col Lombard involved the help of South African Ironman official Paul Wolf to improve the troops' swimming technique after their completion of the Basic Water Orientation Course. By the end of 2006 Rfn Mbande had successfully completed the Air Assault Course. She encountered Paul Wolf again at the unit later that year where he encouraged her and four other members of Prince Alfred's Guard to enter the MTN Corporate Triathlon in January 2007. The event consisted of a 380m swim, 4.2 km run and 18 km cycle. Rfn Mbande could by now swim but she didn't know how to ride a bike. But Paul got her a bike and she learned. Her determination and discipline saw her finish the challenge in the middle of her field and go on to compete in various minor triathlons and duathlons throughout 2007.

Fellow soldier and member of PAG, Rfn Simon Hlanjeni managed to complete his first Ironman in March 2007 after only training for 4 months. He became Rfn Mbande's inspiration and training partner. Her eyes were now set on the Ironman 2008 event.

"At the 2007 Ironman I noticed that most of the lady athletes that completed the event were much older than me. I decided if they could do it, so could I," Rfn Mbande remarked. On 13 January 2008, Rfn Mbande participated in the Spec-Savers Iron-Man 70.3 South Africa – a gruelling competition comprising a 1.9km swim, a 90km cycle and a 21 km run. Her finishing time earned her an entry into the Florida Ironman competition in the United States. But a R3000 entry fee and the costs of paying her own flight and accommodation were just too steep for the young sportswoman.

On the 13 April 2008 she completed her first Ironman event in 14 hour 55 minutes and became the first African woman in the World to have completed this event.

Rfn Mbande's hope's to better her time in the 2009 event for which she is currently training. Her philosophy – "Never say you can't do something. There is nothing that is too difficult. Just try hard and you will succeed."

(Article supplied by Unit Chaplain – Riaan Labuschagne)



Rfn Mbande at the finish line of the Ironman Triathlon, with her supporters from Prince Alfred's Guard.



Officer Training Corps

GLASGOW AND STRATHCLYDE UOTC

Lt Col S L E L Jackman TD RLC, Commanding Officer

I have the honour and privilege to now command the GSUOTC having taken over in August this year from Lt Col Bill Wood and on my arrival I was astounded at the numerous activities that the OCdts had been participating in during the year over and above the annual camps. Each different endeavour was embraced with as much enthusiasm and vigour as the last and their energy to accomplish the variety of challenges set before them was incessant. They demonstrated many of the personal qualities that are encouraged and aspired to in the British Army and were a credit to the staff and instructors at GSUOTC and to themselves. I believe that across the Bde many are unaware of what the OTCs actually get up to and so I thought to share something of what we do. This just gives a small flavour as to what one OTC has been up to.

Ex SNOW ENDEAVOUR 04-14 Jan 08

Every year GSUOTC has a Skiing trip and this year it was to Austria.

09 Feb 08 CORPS BURNS SUPPER

With only one guest artist, the remaining recitals were carried out with some aplomb by the OCdts.

Ex LIGHTNING STRIKE 08, 01-02 Mar 08

Ex LIGHTNING STRIKE is the Royal Corps of Signals premier special-to-arms competition, held on Salisbury Plain.

BSAAM 03-04 May 08

9 Medals won 4th out 19 UOTCs UK wide and TM Champion Shot.

TA CENTENARY PARADE, 21 Jun 08

GSUOTC were given permission to parade through the streets of Glasgow, followed by a Civic Reception in the City Chambers. This was a very fitting final event for Lt Col Bill Wood before he relinquished command.

Ex THE PIPERS' TRAIL – GLASGOW, 14-20 Jul 08

GSUOTC was the lead unit for the week-long event that took place in Glasgow. Event-packed musical workshops in The Glasgow Academy, parades and shows in George Square, a civic reception in the City Chambers and a church service in Glasgow Cathedral.

Ex BAILIFFS KNOCK, 24-30 Jul 08

Over the period 24-30 July, 34 OCdts deployed to Whinny Hill Urban Operations Complex.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING WEEK, 24-31 Aug 08

9 intrepid explorers (and the Adjutant) traded in hopes of foreign lands and journeyed up to Kingussie in the Cairngorm National Park.

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE, 02-03 Sep 08

13 OCdts plus RSM McGuffie left Glasgow to attempt the Three Peaks Challenge, a race against the clock to climb the three highest peaks of the UK (Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Ben Nevis) in under 24 hours.

PARA 10, 14 Sep 08

Two 4-man teams participated in the Para10 endurance race held at Catterick on Sunday 14 Sep. Both teams have donated their day's pay for the competition to Help For Heroes and the Airborne Forces charity.



The Lightning Strike team 2008 with SOinC(A), Brig E M Flint.



Army Cadet Force

B (RHF) CCOMPANY, GLASGOW AND LANARKSHIRE BATTALION

OC: Major John Robertson
 2IC: Capt Derek Coulter
 CAAs: Lt Alan Liddell, SMI Dinger Bell
 HC and BW: SSI Jimmy McConnell, SI John Galbraith and SI Alan Crawford

A Platoon RHF King's Park: OC: WSI Lisa Hay
 Instructor: SI Daniel Dunlop

B Platoon RHF Cambuslang: OC: AUO Jenny Lake
 Instructor: SI Paul Fagen

C Platoon RHF Easterhouse: OC: WSI Sarah Collinwood
 Instructor: SI Robert Black and SI Paul Humphreys

D Platoon RHF Pollockshaws: OC: Lt Bernie Sweeney
 Instructor: SI Robert Campbell and WSI Daisy Seymour

E Platoon RHF Beardmore: OC: AUO Billy Lannigen
 Instructor: SI John Swan

F Platoon RHF Maryhill: OC: SSI Raymond Bell
 Instructors: SI Ricky Thompson and WSI Jenny Noonan

2008 got off to a good start. The Company's shooting teams returned commendable performances in the Lean Cup Air Rifle Competition, being place runners up, 2nd A RHF Kings Park, 3rd E RHF Beardmore and 4th F RHF Maryhill.

During February the Company spent a cold but enjoyable Training Weekend at Garelohead Training Camp, where an assessment board at Basic and 1 Star levels was held. A good pass rate upped the Coy's statistics.

If we thought that Garelohead was cold, this was what greeted us at Warcop for Easter Camp. You can't make the weather, you make the best of it. All the Coy's cadets had a full and eventful programme of training. This included full-bore shooting on the 30 Metre range – which had to have the snow cast from the firing points before the first shoot could be fired. We were also lucky enough this year to host the Bi-Annual Canadian Exchange with the Seaforth Highlanders Cadet Corps, Vancouver while we were at Easter Camp. It was a welcome change to host our friends from Canada at a full Battalion Camp. The exchange visit between the Glasgow and Lanarkshire Battalion and The Seaforth Highlander Cadets has been up and running for approx 15 years now and proves to be a very worthwhile and exciting trip for those involved. At our own Battalion Easter Camp the Canadian cadets were split amongst the 4 Coys, which provided them with a first hand experience of the British APC Training, which proved interesting!! The Coy held our usual 5's and Tug of War comps during Easter. E RHF Beardmore winning the Boys 5's, F RHF Maryhill winning the

Girls 5's, The Tug of War Boys: 1st C RHF Easterhouse, Girls ARHF Kings Park.

Our Training Weekend in May was spent adventure training back at Garelohead, a challenging two days with the Cadets having a go at Canoeing, Kayaking, Climbing, Abseiling, Bouldering, Hiking and Mountain biking, the biggest challenge always being how to avoid the midges. The biggest surprise was a presentation to me to mark the 5th anniversary of my taking command of the Coy.

Annual Camp already, Altcar 2008. We were straight into the Inter-Detachment Military Skills Competition, E RHF Beardmore being this year's runners up. The next few days were spent at Halton Training Camp doing Adventure Training. Once back to Altcar we got into the nitty gritty, a lot of Fieldcraft leading up to our final exercise, the main event this year being a Company-strength Ambush. All the cadets basha-ed out for 48hrs, sending out recce patrols, staging stags and manning OPs. which all built up the tension. A bit of organising but in the end a worthwhile exercise. The DCCT and clay target shooting were also big attractions for the Cadets, as well the Assault Course. At the CQBR the Coy hosted a visit by the Hon Col Ricky Gray. Well done to SI Paul Humphreys C RHF Easterhouse, and SI Paul Fagen who successfully completed their ITC. Blackpool Pleasure beach was the destination for the day out, then all too soon the camp was over.



*"After the Spikey look, we have the Bird-nest".
 Hon Col Ricky Gray with the cadets.*

The Coy had another go at the Brigade Military Skills Competition during the September Weekend. The team put in another good performance especially at the falling plates, overall improving to 6th place this year.

A lot of the Detachments organised their own Training weekends this year, F RHF Maryhill doing exploration round the islands on Loch Lomond. C RHF Easterhouse and D RHF Pollockshaws going to Kirkcudbright Survival training.



Sgt Vickers enlisted some help from Amy Coulter.

Our Training Weekend in November was spent at Dechmont CTC, training and testing. We also competed for the Coy March and Shoot Shield. The Winners were E RHF Beardmore, the Runners-up A RHF King's Park. A belated Halloween party saw some toppers of costumes.

A RHF King's Park and F RHF Maryhill held a Xmas Camp at Dechmont CTC, a relaxed weekend. The highlight was the Xmas dinner and ceilidh on the Saturday evening.

B Coy Cadets continued 2008 with some impressive charity works, collecting for Click Sergeant, Cash For Kids, SAAFA, and Poppy Scotland. Other projects saw B Coy Cadets manning the water stations during the 5k and 10k fun runs in May and also later in the year at the Glasgow Half-Marathon. Cadets helped with the SLASH initiative in Easterhouse, aimed at getting the youth off the streets.

Sports in 2008 saw 17 sets of colours being presented to B Coy Cadets, who represented the Battalion at Swimming, Athletics, Tug-of-War and Hockey.

Shooting: well done to Cpl Michael Manley A RHF Kings Park, being part of the Battalion team who won the Scottish Meet at Barry Buddon, receiving a Cadet 100 Badge at the ISCM held at Bisley, and winning the B Coy Marksmanship Trophy.

Phew, another year done and dusted, thanks to everyone who has pitched in to make 2008 another memorable year for the Cadets in B Coy.

WEST LOWLAND BATTALION

A Happy New Year from the nine hundred cadets and nearly 200 adults from The West Lowland Battalion Army Cadet Force.

All change at the top

This last year has seen major changes in the chain of command of the Battalion, all with a distinct RHF flavour. Our new Commandant, CEO and RSM are now all well-known long-served RHF soldiers. In October 2008 Colonel Kevin Connor TD took over command from Colonel David K P Steele MBE. Col Steele served as Commandant of the Battalion for ten superb years



Maj Bill Mathews, CEO receives a memento from Col David Steele, Comdt, at his Dining-Out.

and will be missed. Many of you will know Col Kevin from his eighteen years RHF TA, latterly Second-in-Command of 52nd Lowland Regiment.

Concurrently the ever-popular Major Bill Mathews has retired as Cadet Executive Officer. Bill had spent around ten years in the RFCA role and is now replaced by Major Ian Mackenzie. Ian joined the RHF at Redford Barracks in 1974, being posted to A Coy. He left regular service in 1996 as TQMS, the last one before the role became RQMS (T). He was employed by RFCA as a Cadet Administrative Assistant with Glasgow & Lanarkshire ACF, latterly their QM, prior to moving to Ayr to the CEO role.

Finally back in May 2008, the posting of RSM in the West Lowland Battalion was handed over. RSM William Boyd, ex KOSB, and the CSM of Dumfries TA Coy handed over to RSM Ricky Ramage. Ricky is another well known RHF stalwart currently CQMS B Coy 6 Scots in Fusilier House Ayr.

Army Cadet Force to learn Archery

Archery is an army-recognised sport and we as a Battalion are now beginning to invest in the activity. It is clear our cadets are really enjoying this new challenge. We now had a further five Officers and Adult Instructors qualified to instruct and run ranges. The new instructors all spent two weekends at an archery school in the southern Highlands on an intensive course to achieve their valuable archery qualification.

Mobile Climbing Wall for Army Cadet Force

We have taken delivery of a brand new mobile climbing wall which promises not only to be a novel new challenge for our



"Next, the Everest!" Adult instructors training on the new Mobile Climbing Wall.



cadets but a main attraction to support our recruiting efforts. Over the last few weekends some of our Adult Instructors have been fully trained at headquarters on how to operate their brand new piece of kit both confidently and safely. All potential instructors will have some additional practice prior to passing their assessments and being authorised to use this Gucci equipment.

Invited guests attend Army Cadet Force Reception

In March the Battalion organised another successful evening reception at our training centre in Ayr. Our Cadets put on an excellent display to our VIP guests, showcasing what the ACF offers to young people today. We had stands for sports, skill-at-arms, fieldcraft, foot drill and first aid – plus a performance from our excellent Pipes and Drums.



Pipes & Drums performing at ACF Reception.

In July some two hundred and fifty cadets attended another successful Annual Camp at Strensall. The Battalion is as ever very busy and in this article we can only hint at all we have achieved. Our weekend training centre is in almost constant use. Many officers and adult instructors are receiving nationally recognised civilian qualifications. Over forty cadets visited Belgium for our ever popular tour of the First World War battle sites. A dozen cadets went on an expedition within the Finnish Arctic Circle. Three cadets were privileged to be selected for a six-week exchange course with the Canadian Cadet Force. We have had cadets on off-shore sailing expeditions and competing in the Commonwealth target shooting week, as well as re-launching the Duke of Edinburgh Award so that many more cadets move on with this externally recognised qualification.

West Lowland Battalion Army Cadet Force annual visit to Belgium

Each year the battalion Army Cadet Force sends a party to visit



Wreaths are laid at the Menin Gates.

‘Flanders Fields’, the ground over which most of World War One was fought. For all of these young Cadets, as well as their Adult Instructors, this is a very personal, poignant and very moving experience realising that many of the fallen of the Great War were not really much older than they are. We are limited to around 45 people per trip and this year’s tour is once again fully booked and proving as popular as ever.

Army Cadets gain their Competent Crew Certificate for Sailing

The West Lowland Battalion Army Cadet Force embarked on a pilot scheme with the Ocean Youth Trust Scotland in August 2007. The Ocean Youth Trust is an educational registered charity designed to deliver education through experimental learning, often under sail.



“Cadets cruising”. Cadets on deck of the Ocean Youth Trust 70 ft ketch.

Last year twelve of our cadets on each of the three trips run for the army cadets attended a five day residential sail on one of their 70ft ketches. This time Alba Explorer was used sailing from Braehead, via Rhu, Tarbert, the Isle of Arran, and Campbeltown before returning to Braehead on the Clyde.

Army Cadet Recruits introduced to the military life

We have found that young cadets aged 12 to 14 can find their first experience of going away with the Army for a two-week camp very difficult. We have now introduced a week-long Easter cadre based at our weekend training centre in Ayr. One of the benefits of the week-long course is to get these young people into the way of being away from mum and dad for longer periods of time. Last year’s course started with 54 cadets, ending with 48 passing out. (One youngster lasted only four hours, before deciding a military way of life was not for him) In general this has been a great success.

The Easter Cadre introduces all the young recruits to their basis military training ranging from marksmanship to first aid and fieldcraft, to the expected visits to the drill square. As well as the necessary instructions, there was plenty of rest and recreation, ranging from mountain biking to ten-pin bowling – and to the military precision attacks on McDonalds and KFC.

Local army cadets head to training camp in Yorkshire

The West Lowland Battalion Army Cadet Force held their Annual Camp at Queen Elizabeth Barracks at Strensall near York. Just short of two hundred and fifty cadets along with seventy officers and adult instructors were there for an action-filled camp, taking part in military exercises, sports ranging from archery to paint-balling, to challenging pursuits like climbing and an obstacle course.



Ayr Detachment won the Commandant Banner for being the best detachment 2007/2008.

The Commandant, Colonel David Steele MBE said; “Annual Camp for our army cadets is the cumulation of a year’s training.” Cadets get the opportunity to take part in activities that we are

unable to lay on as a weekend training event. Annual Camp went well, with good weather, good facilities as well as an excellent range of activities laid on for the cadets.

We are heading to Beckingham Training Camp in Lincolnshire in July 2009.

A final note

Our Commandant has a personal request to all readers of this Journal who have some spare time and possibly missing their ‘green kit’. We are always looking for adult instructors to assist the Army Cadet Force. Indeed we find that we are desperately short of Adult Instructors in some areas. If you are at all interested please get in touch with us at our HQ at Fusilier House, Seaforth Road, Ayr, KA8 9HX telephone 01292 264612 or have a look at our developing website at www.armycadets.com/county/west-lowland-battalion

Home Headquarters Notes

Regimental Secretary: Colonel(Retd) R L Steele TD DL
Assistant Regimental Secretary: Captain(Retd) K Gurung MBE
Editor: Major(Retd) A L Mack
Regimental Benevolent Association: Major(Retd) A D Kenyon

The pace of life here at Home Headquarters has remained at its usual frenetic level with lots of visitors and a variety of events to organise.

Once again I am indebted to my small team here at 518 – Captain Kamal Gurung, Liz Torrance, Sandy Leishman, Maureen Robertson and our team of dedicated volunteers, David McMaster, Stewart Ferguson, Ken Forsyth, Jim Carrigan and John McPhee and last but certainly not least the “ghost” of Major Willie Shaw who continues to haunt the building – his continuous support to the Home Headquarters and the Museum has been invaluable. In the other wing of the building Major Ken Kenyon who is the Secretary/Treasurer of the Regimental Benevolent Association has been busy dealing with hardship cases.

Special thanks are also due to Major Alastair Mack for his unstinting work in the Journal, to Alex McDivitt and Steff Stevenson for all their help over what has been a very busy year and to Ron Milne for his advice and “regular audit” of the accounts thus keeping me out of jail for another year.

4th May saw the Blessing of the Glasgow Standard at Glasgow Cathedral with an excellent turnout by our Veterans from all over the country and followed by a convivial party at Home Headquarters.

In the earlier part of the year the Battalion finalised their preparation for what turned out to be a highly successful 6 month tour of Afghanistan and Home Headquarters were closely involved with the Welfare Briefings for relatives and friends.

Later on in October Major Jim Kerr OC Rear Party assisted by the team at Home Headquarters, organised three very successful parades to welcome home the Battalion from Afghanistan. In Glasgow, Ayr and Penicuik, the people of Scotland came out in their thousands to support the Jocks and show their appreciation of a job well done.

The highlight of the Regimental Secretary’s year was his visit to the Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada for their annual Feast of St Andrew’s Dinner at the Armoury in Cambridge, Ontario. It was indeed a memorable visit and Colonels Terry Wilder, Owen Lackenbauer, Mark Fisher, Charlie Fitton, Major Paul Hale and many others organised a very enjoyable few days filled with visits to many places of interest including Niagara Falls.

After Christmas we went straight into final preparations for the 50th Anniversary of the Formation of the Royal Highland Fusiliers. It took the form of a very moving service at Glasgow Cathedral – at which Colonel Blair Agnew, who carried the Queen’s Colour at the Amalgamation Parade on 20th January 1959, read a message from the Evetts family. The service was followed by a march through the City to George Square, led by the Pipes and Drums and Colour of the Battalion where the Lord Provost and Colonel Niall Campbell, Deputy Representative Colonel took the salute and then hosted a Civic Reception in the City Chambers. We had over 700 veterans attending and the day finished at the Hilton Hotel where, after a few words by Colonel Niall Campbell, ex WO2 Steff Stevenson gave an excellent, presentation on the life and times of the Royal Highland Fusiliers.

It was a great day and we look forward to the 100th anniversary in 50 years time.

Of course throughout the year Home Headquarters continues to host a variety of dinners and gatherings as well as the fortnightly luncheon club; and again I am most grateful to Alex McDivitt for his unfailing support.

As always we are on the lookout for volunteers to help run the museum and open it at weekends. No matter how little time you have to give it will be much appreciated – anyone interested please contact the Regimental Secretary.

Finally all the very best to everyone for 2009 from all of us at Home Headquarters.



Articles

THE GOLDEN THREAD LINKS MANY REGIMENTS

Major N A Archibald MBE

Ian Archibald was called up in January 1940 and joined the Glasgow Highlanders (GH). They deployed to France after Dunkirk as part of 157 Infantry Brigade/52nd (Lowland) Division of the Second British Expeditionary Force (2BEF). This was successfully withdrawn via Cherbourg through the combined brilliance of General Alan Brooke and the Brigade Major, Cassels (both later Field Marshals). Ian ended the War as a Captain in the Highland Light Infantry (HLI), so progressed from the Government Tartan kilt of 1 GH to HLI Mackenzie trews.

His son Niall joined, what he could rightly call his father's regiment, the Royal Highland Fusiliers (1 RHF), in Canada in 1977 – and later exchanged his Mackenzie trews for the Government Tartan kilt of The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

Plus ça change, plus ça y reste la meme chose.

Not only does the golden thread run in the linear descent from antecedent Regiments, it weaves its links between the constituent Battalions of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. 2 SCOTS are unique in carrying the Assaye Colour on parade. However the 2nd Seaforth Highlanders (now 4 SCOTS) were also awarded with that distinction.

The Royal Scots Fusiliers (21st now 2 SCOTS) fought at Culloden as did The Royal Scots (1st) and Kings Own Scottish Borderers (25th) now united as 1 SCOTS. Lieutenant Colonel W S Churchill commanded 6 RSF in the Great War. That great man, known for his apposite choice of words, described The Gordon Highlanders

as “the finest regiment that ever was”. Perhaps the historian in him was thinking, among other episodes, of their magnificent engagement at Sorauren when, bereft of officers (dead), they halted the dangerous thrust of the French Army in July 1813.

The 74th Highlanders (2 HLI now 2 SCOTS) was a Campbell Regiment, an association that also distinguishes The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (5 SCOTS). That may also be said of the Black Watch as the designated tartan of Clan Campbell of Argyll is the ancient Campbell or “Black Watch tartan”. A number of the original Independent Companies that formed the Black Watch were largely Campbell units.

The Highland Regiments have a very famous association with the 51st Highland Division but even wider are the regimental links through 15th Scottish Division, in which virtually all Scottish Regiments, including the Cameronians, were represented in their advance after Normandy, in Op EPSOM as recorded in “Hill 112 Cornerstone of the Normandy Campaign” by Major J J How MC.

In World War 1 the 15th Scottish Division, including the Cameron Highlanders (4 SCOTS), served with great distinction, winning regard by the enemy as one of the most formidable in the British Army.

Today, the Battalions of The Royal Regiment of Scotland uphold the traditions of their antecedents and continue to soldier in a variety of operational roles, relevant to the spectrum of threats and challenges across the globe. Their distinguished service remains of the highest order. Only the structure is different, which enable the careers of SCOTS soldiers to be developed to their potential within the Cap Badge Wing of newly organised MS Soldier Combat at APC Glasgow.

A DEPOT DIARY (Part Three)

(The extracts from this shown here are again adapted from what were various writings by a Platoon Commander who served in the HLI Depot at Maryhill from 1956 to 1957.)

Range Work (various)

It was proposed by somebody at the Depot that we might compete with 5/6 HLI on at least the Miniature Range. (On the Open Ranges they were streets ahead. They were seldom out-shot by *any* Unit in Scotland.)

So off we set one evening to Hill Street (the 5/6 base) and were well welcomed. As in those primitive days there was no divorce between drinking and shooting, the welcome included a whisky or two. Luckily, we were well used to such. Not only would we have one or two before lunch each day but a few more before and after we'd dined (perhaps because Dinners at the Depot, other than on Guest Nights, were *very* primitive.) (Luncheons on the other hand, when our Directing Staff, Major Brian Carson and the even wittier Sandy Ingram, were present, were more than excellent.)

At Hill Street that night it didn't occur to us that our hosts'

hospitality had subtle goals. Perhaps their aim was to ensure that our aim would be even more inexact than usual.

Alas, our hosts were not aware that whisky does not detract from the competence of most hard-bitten Regulars. Nor did it do so. We won. (Just as well. Sandy Ingram had instructed us to either win or not bother to return.)

We also enjoyed further hospitality from 5/6 HLI. They were a very good shooting Battalion and would often have their team practising at Dechmont (which was, in those distant days, a very usable set of Ranges). We, the Depot Staff, could seldom find time for shooting practice during the working week (*then* Mondays to Saturdays!) and would therefore shoot with the 5/6th on Sundays.

This didn't do much good. In competitions/shoots the 'Depot' Team seldom got much better than the bottom place. But ... 5/6 HLI were frequent winners! *WE* might lose, but usually an **HLI** team would win!

On one occasion we and the 5/6th were at a 51st Highland Division meeting at Barry Buddon. The 5/6th did as well as usual



– and we did as badly! (Perhaps Major J W W Stevenson (then Lieutenant) will remember the occasion.)

But there was a bonus. Just about where the ways to the different Ranges diverged was the Pistol Range – and a *continuous* Pool Bull Shoot was being conducted there. The price for entry to each was a mere two shillings (ten Pence) for the necessary six rounds – which was a lot cheaper than having to buy them in a shop. Because of the Pistol Range's situation and the cheapness of Pool Bull entries, almost every passer-by 'competed'. The result was a *massive* sum to be won *each* time that a 'Pool Bull' was achieved.

So there we stopped whenever we could. The Range Officer was a Seaforth WO whom we'd known as a PSI at Hythe – and he didn't let us forget it! "Your lanyard, Sir," (which was *drooping* from our revolver's butt) "is *SUPPORTING* your arm!" We had been obeying a Regimental rule that an Officer must have his pistol *attached* to him (presumably because he would otherwise lose it), but we didn't argue. We unhooked it.

But we shot and shot. Only *TWO SHILLINGS* to fire off *SIX* of HM's armament! Pool Bull upon Pool Bull was achieved – even when firing from the hip. We were living in a NAAFI Mess and had to pay in cash. Our Pool Bull winnings met our entire bill!

One day we came back off the Range (at Dechmont), cleaned our rifle and handed it in to the Depot Armoury. Unfortunately, our favourite Company Commander chose then to inspect. He discovered that the rifle we'd 'signed out' was dirty! We were thereupon UNDER OPEN ARREST!

The one we'd 'handed in' was clean, but what could we do? We disappeared, took refuge in our room – and read 'Queen's Regulations'. This stated we could take 'exercise', so (with 'sash and sword-belt off') we 'exercised' ourself on the Depot square!

During this exercise period our Company Commander had re-investigated the Signing-out Book and the drawn rifles in the Armoury. As ours was apparently spotless, we were summoned. "You're no longer under arrest," we were informed.

We also met the Seaforth again, not the aforesaid WO but the Battalion. This was at the BAOR Rifle Meeting in 1958. There was an unwritten rule – no saluting, but both we and the Seaforth would disregard this. Our team would salute every Seaforth Officer and theirs would do the same for ours. This was great fun. One might be wandering along just behind a Colonel from some other Regiment or Corps and see some Seaforths approaching. The latter would smarten their stride, the Colonel would ready

himself to return a salute – and they'd cut him dead, reserving their compliments for us!

Later we'd even more fun. We'd decided that we would win the 'China Cup' AND the 'Falling Plates' at the Lowland Meeting – and would do so with the 'new' SLR (Self-loading Rifle). However, although HM wasn't as niggardly with .762 ammunition as she was with .38 (twelve rounds per annum per pistol!), our allocation of .762 had not yet arrived. So we shot, weekend after weekend, with our .303 rifles (No 4 Lee-Enfields). (We did so without *any* practice for the Main Competition. Our only concern was to win the 'China Cup' and the 'Falling Plates'.)

Then not long before the Shoot itself the Battalion was asked as to what ammunition was needed for our team or teams for each Shoot. The RSM telephoned to find out what we wanted but didn't get through. So he then requested .762 for most of our shoots – but .303 for the Main Competition. We were furious! We'd looked forward to the Main Competition as being no more than practice with our SLRs for the Shoots we'd set out to win.

But when the Day came disaster almost ruled. We finished close to the bottom of the China Cup shoots and we were *very* soon knocked out of the Falling Plates. Our scores in the Main Competition (which we had NOT practised for) would no doubt be equally abysmal. But, as we'd fired in our early China Cup and Falling Plate practices enough .303 to win a minor war, we were fairly accurate .303 shots. Despite that, the *published* scores told a different story. We'd again been soundly beaten.

This time the Cameronians came on top. If the 5/6th had triumphed we might not have questioned the results, but they hadn't. We thought a bit. We'd shot from, let's say, Firing Points 26 to 29 and had therefore engaged Targets 26-29, but the *published* scores disregarded this. As our awarded scores didn't match the butt signals we had seen, we objected.

Then and there the governing body allied the correct firing-point places to the correct targets – and declared that we had won!

...Nevertheless, we'd had an earlier failure. *JUST AFTER* we had laid aside our Lee-Enfield and seized a (well-zeroed) SLR we were practising with the SLR on the 300 yards Range at Dechmont. A roe deer ran across our front, we shouted out, "It's OURS!" – and we fired.

If only we had had our trusty No 4! The SLR (We swear!) kicked high, and we no more than creased the roe's back. Our Messes had no venison for supper that night..

VISIT TO BELIZE AND LAYING OF WREATH AT MEMORIAL CAIRN IN SALAMANCA – IN HONOUR OF RHF & RDG SOLDIERS KILLED DURING OPERATION IN BELIZE IN 1992

(Editor's Notes: *Following is an e-mail addressed to Capt Kamal Gurung, Asst Regt Sec, Home HQ RHF from Harry Mills who visited Belize in Nov 08 and laid an RHF wreath at the memorial cairn at Salamanca, Toledo District, Belize. The cairn was built in honour of Fus Bruce Luker 1 RHF, Fus Tony McAnally 1 RHF, Tpr Shaun Mulroe RDG and Tpr Neville McConnell RDG who were tragically killed in an*

road traffic accident on a jungle track 2kms south of Salamanca on 18 Dec 92 whilst on an operational tour with 1 RHF in Belize)

"Dear Kamal,

The following notes are an account of my visit to Belize and the laying of the wreath at the memorial cairn in Salamanca, Toledo District.

I arrived by taxi at the main gate of Price Barracks at approx 0900hrs on the 11 Nov 08 (which I and others formerly knew as



Harry Mills with BATSUB & AAC personnel standing in front of Bel Huey helicopter. (Left to right: WO1(RSM) Steve Cox The Rifles, SSgt G Wilde 25 Flight AAC, Harry Mills, Cpl R Kado 25 Flight AAC, Lt Col P S Germain The Yorks).



Harry Mills paying his respect to the soldiers killed in Salamanca, Belize.

Airport Camp). I booked in at the Guard Room which is now manned by the Belize Defence Force and I was soon introduced to WO1 (RSM) Steve Cox who gave me a guided tour of the BATSUB (British Army Training Support Unit, Belize) Administration Block. I was then introduced to Cpl R Kado 25 Flight AAC who gave me a safety brief and introduction to the Bel Huey Helicopter – this brought back fond memories of my attachment to our affiliated regiment 1 RNZIR in Singapore and Malaysia in 1985. I was then introduced to the Commander of BATSUB, Lt Col PS Germain of the Yorks. Soon after this we were on our way at approximately 0950hrs, our pilots for the day were Capt JF Pycke 25 Flight AAC and SSgt G Wilde 25 Flight AAC.

We were on our way to Salamanca heading South East over the Philip Goldson Airport runway and then South towards Cayo district and Victoria Peak. It was a clear and warm day with some low cloud cover – we flew down over the banana plantations of the Sibun river skirting mountain pine ridge and over Victoria Peak and onto Toledo Technical College which I remember as Salamanca Camp, we arrived at approximately 1050hrs and proceeded to walk over to the memorial cairn, where at 1100 hrs on 11 Nov 08 we paid our respects to Fus Bruce Luker 1 RHF, Fus Tony McAnally 1 RHF, Tpr Shaun Mulroe RDG and Tpr Neville McConnell RDG. Lt Col PS Germain recited The Royal Highland Fusiliers Regimental Collect, a sombre moment which brought a lump to my throat and made my journey seem even more worthwhile and just to remember that they are not forgotten. I also learned during my

trip that the Commander of BATSUB has written this into their diary as an annual event and that the cairn will be attended to and looked after by the Technical College staff – hopefully family members will read this and take some comfort from knowing that their loved ones are not forgotten and that their band of brothers will remember them.

Before departing Salamanca we also visited the cairn raised in memory of those who lost their lives in the helicopter crash at the sight of the old helipad this tribute was paid to the four Queens Own Highlanders and four RAF crew.

Whilst in Salamanca I noticed that the brass plaque was missing, so after speaking with you, you have informed me that the Regimental Secretary Col Steele has given me permission to source a memorial plaque which once complete will be sent to BATSUB where WO1(RSM) Steve Cox will ensure it is placed on the cairn, this when done will have made my trip worthwhile. I had a memorable trip which was made possible from my initial contact with RHQ and made complete by BATSUB and all their staff, to you all I say thanks and I wish you all success in the future.

I will visit the memorial cairn again over the next couple of years and keep you posted of its condition.

Thanks for the assistance.

Harry”

THE AFGHAN ARMY

Major J D Loudon, OC A Coy 2 SCOTS

The Afghan National Army (ANA) was formed mainly from the Northern Alliance and has been a unified fighting force since 2003. The ability of the Afghan military to provide country-wide security is essential to maintaining stability and the route to coalition withdrawal. Training the Afghan military is the foundation for achieving this strategic goal. The British are supporting this effort at the NCO training facility called the Kabul Military Training Centre (KMTC). KMTC houses the Bridmal Academy in which the majority of NCOs become qualified. Parallel to the Bridmal Academy are the mobile

training teams taking the NCO courses to the more remote Corps at Mazar-e-sharif, Herat, Gardez and Kandahar. It was within these training establishments that A Company focused its attention in the form of the Non-Commissioned Officer Training Team (NCOTT). Despite the name, NCOTT mentored rather than trained. The difference is crucial. Contrary to our normal military instinct to get things done properly, mentoring requires us to let the Afghans fail, then assist them to learn from their mistakes. Otherwise, the person being mentored will not progress.

It is at KMTC that you unearth the true Afghan soldier and NCO – varied in nature and wholeheartedly unpredictable. The Afghan army is fiercely proud and shies from cowardly behaviour. This



CSM proving to OC that he has carried ECM.

is reflected in any conversation – asking an 18-year-old recruit what they want to achieve, you would be met with the answer “kill many Taliban in Helmand.” The competitive nature of the soldiers is feverish, never wanting to be outdone. This pride helps

form the corner stone to developing the army into a solid and reliable fighting force. The soldiers have fighting in their blood, unsurprising given the country’s history. Every mine or ambush lesson is initiated with a quick ‘voice of experience’ from any number of students.

The Afghan Army as we know it has changed dramatically in recent years. Its past and present is turbulent and prone to change dramatically. As a result, the ANA tread cautiously with what we try to teach them, fearfully aware that if all else fails, they can revert to their age old tactics shared over the years in various Soviet or Mujahadeen circles. What was encouraging to see over a six-month period was the increased willingness of the Afghans to accept our suggestions and ideas. The Officers and NCOs are slowly beginning to trust the British. This is ironic given the families still tell their children “be good or the British will get you.”

The speed of change is dramatic. Under ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) scrutiny the Afghan army is being dragged, chased, and even followed. Despite the frictions, the Afghan army maintains a proud fighting spirit capable of fighting for the freedom and sovereignty of Afghanistan.

GARMSIR – A PLATOON COMMANDER’S PERSPECTIVE

Lt A N Lassoued, Pl Comd B Coy 2 SCOTS

Having completed PCD (Platoon Commander Division) I arrived into theatre two months into the Battalion’s tour of Afghanistan. After one and a half years training I was eager to finally do the job that I had spent so long and hard training for. Although I had been told much about conditions there I felt that it would only be through experience that I would be able to truly understand what life is really like as a soldier in the British Army’s fiercest campaign since the Second World War. As I flew over the Afghan landscape in the Chinook that would take me to the place where I would spend the next four months, two thoughts crossed through my mind, how would I react in contact, and would I be able to serve my Platoon and the chain of command to the highest standards that would be required of me? I knew that my leadership skills, determination, and tactical acumen would all be fully tested.

The role I was assuming was that of OC Titanium 40, the MASTIFF Call Sign at FOB (Forward Operating Base) Delhi in Garmsir; an autonomous role attached to fellow Scottish soldiers from A Company 5 SCOTS. I had been trained as a light infantry Platoon Commander so adapting to a highly armoured role would mean a new set of skills to learn.

The Platoon I was taking over had already done great work and as the ‘bayonet’ of the group, they initially jested with me with that old military adage of ‘half a tour’. To begin with it was a question of fitting in to their routine first until I found my feet. In order to experience what the men had been doing I rotated through the key positions in the crew. My first rotation was in the Op BARMA team (Op BARMA is a crossing-place drill). Admittedly this job filled me with more dread than the others as I had visions of IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) hidden in every rock, path and bit of cover available, however the lads were calm and well-practised



Titanium 40 on foot patrol in Garmsir.

and instilled my confidence in the drill. If there ever had to be proof that the drill worked it was when I found an IED on my first day! (Although improvised, it was very explosive)

When I arrived in Garmsir the US Marines had recently cleared the Taliban 10km south, civilians had moved back into the town after an absence of three years, and life was returning to normal. We were fighting a typical Counter Insurgency campaign, conducting VCPs (Vehicle Check Points) dominating the ground, and aiding in mentoring the local police, with the main threat being from suicide bombers and IEDs. This kind of environment relied heavily on the quick thinking and steady nerve of the Jock. Never has the case of the ‘strategic soldier’ been so true. Many times chaotic situations were prevented from becoming worse thanks to the calm judgment of the Jock recognising the difference between civilian and potential suicide bomber; a trait that I was immensely proud to witness.

When I had bedded in with the Platoon I was more able to use the skills I had learnt in training. I quickly noticed that despite the



fact that I had been trained as a light infantry man the principles, command tools, and estimate can be applied to any situation using any asset. PCD had honed those skills and it was very easy for me to adapt them to my new role. Another benefit of my training, developed from Day One at Sandhurst, was the ability to calmly and logically think through a situation. If you understand these skills well then you can adapt to any situation.

Adapting became essential in Afghanistan because just as we were becoming used to COIN (Counter-Insurgency) operations the situation rapidly changed one afternoon leading to Titanium 40 along with fellow SCOTS from A Company becoming the Battlegroup's eyes and ears in the previously unexplored regions of Nawa and Marja districts. Titanium 40's new role of Recce in Force pushed all of us to our limits becoming the first British call sign to prove a route from Garmsir to Lashka Gah through the Green Zone. Nawa and Marja turned out to be Taliban strongholds where, previously, they had complete freedom of movement. Situations were highly kinetic and during these operations the Platoon developed a strong identity and bond and harnessed our collective skills. I never saw soldiers work so hard with such

unquestionable selflessness, making me immensely proud to serve with such men.

As a Platoon Commander on his first deployment I found it good to listen to the ideas of the NCOs and the Jocks because everyone can add value. This had two key benefits, firstly to make use of all the experience within the Platoon, and secondly everyone then took ownership of the plan and the team worked harder and understood my intent better. As a Platoon Commander I would decide what would work best in the situation, adapt them to my own ideas, and coordinate the working parts.

I learnt a lot, we achieved a great deal, and I did almost everything that I ever wanted to do on Operations, but the one thing that I will always look back on as the most rewarding and enjoyable experience was the strong bond that I developed with the men in my Platoon. Living in such harsh conditions, getting to know what makes each other tick, and trusting each other with your lives, it was hard not to. I will always remember the pride I felt seeing them work so hard day and night to overcome any obstacle and prove the reputation of the indomitable Scottish soldier that makes them, in my opinion, the best in world.

MY REFLECTIONS ON KABUL

Fus M McIlum, C Coy 2 SCOTS

On the 4th of April 2008 I deployed on Op Herrick 8 to Kabul, Afghanistan with The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as part of 16 Air Assault Brigade. This was my first operational tour since joining the Battalion. We had done numerous exercises to prepare us for the deployment which was very helpful, although nothing in the U.K. can fully prepare you for the extremely hot weather we were to encounter in Afghanistan.

On arriving in Kabul the first few days were busy with familiarising ourselves with Camp Souter, zeroing our weapons and relieving the Coldstream Guards of their duties. Once settled in Souter we moved on to multiple rotations consisting of two days guard, two days QRF (Quick Reaction Force) and two days of patrolling. We patrolled several times a day, by both foot and vehicle. The QRF role required us to assist UK SF (Special Forces) operations, of which there were 2 or 3 a week, and VIPs, including protection for the UK Ambassador in HQ ISAF (Internal Security Assistance Force) and the Embassy.

KAIA (Kabul International Airport) Airport is the main airport in Kabul and is situated approximately 800m from Souter. We did many foot and vehicle patrols around KAIA as there was a high threat on it from insurgents. We also did many Humanitarian Aid drops to the local villages, giving them much needed supplies, including pencils and cooking utensils. We also assisted the US Forces in giving out medical help to the local population by providing security cordons and flanking patrols while the locals were being treated for any illnesses or injuries they had. There is virtually no medical care for the locals in Kabul so they were very happy with our help. Other tasks included crime-deterrence patrols, suspicious vehicle checks, clearance patrols and searching for mortar base plates.



Fus McIlum with his fans.

The local population were generally quite friendly although their eagerness to communicate can sometimes be misinterpreted for aggressiveness. Once settled into camp routine life was very busy, although the facilities in Souter were very good. We had access to internet, telephones, a gym and even a small shop. The food in camp was also very good. We were very fortunate to have such facilities as we knew many other soldiers in Afghanistan are living in a much worse environment.

Overall I think the tour was very enjoyable and challenging. It is quite hard being away from home for such a long period of time but it was most certainly worth it. And now, after a month-post-operational-tour leave, I am ready for the next set of challenges that await!!



MIXING GUNS AND MORTARS – EXPERIENCES OF A MFC DURING OP HERRICK 8

CSgt G P Woolley, FSp Coy 2 SCOTS

When OC Fire Support Company first mentioned that he would like something written for the Journal I thought to myself, not a problem, all I had to do was bang-out the usual, times, dates and places. But then he said it was to be something a little bit different from your usual run-of-the-mill article and wanted my thoughts and feelings of my Op HERRICK 8 experiences. Like everyone else in 2 SCOTS, the first time I heard of the deployment to Afghanistan was when the then Commanding Officer, stood on a chair during our CAST in Germany, and announced the switch of operational tour to Afghanistan from Iraq.

From the start I knew the tour of Afghanistan would be a fantastic opportunity for the Mortar Platoon. This kind of experience was one of the main reasons I had joined the Infantry. This would be a rare opportunity to test myself in the crucible of combat, to see how I would react, and find out whether I was up to the challenge. That said I was a little apprehensive when I was told that four 2 SCOTS MFCs were to qualify as 2ICs to Royal Artillery Forward Observation parties with 7 (PARA) RHA. That said, I was also excited, considering the myth and profile Forward Observation Parties always bring with them when attached to Company Groups. This would be the first case of infantrymen, and specifically Mortar men, qualifying in a role that is historically the sole domain of the Royal Artillery. I knew without a doubt that I would have to work hard to prove myself in their world.

My first experience of how the Artillery conduct business was during Ex Eagle's Resolve in Nov 07. The exercise was designed to run out the Fire Support Teams, shake out the cobwebs and insert the attached Australian personnel into their respective gun-lines. The Aussie lads caused much amusement, in their new winter weather clothing, as they had to rapidly adapt to the November weather in Sennybridge. The exercise was vital in helping us integrate into F Bty 7 RHA. I got to meet and sound out the personalities; perhaps more importantly they had a good look at me.

Sometime around the New Year, the decision was made to formally qualify myself and the other 2 SCOTS MFCs. I was told this came about as a result of discussions over the legal aspects of us calling in Artillery fire! I found this somewhat strange since you call in 105mm during Mortar courses, and the OP-level-trained personnel can call in mortar fire, without any formal Mortar training. I think this was a knee jerk reaction from within the RA world. Perhaps they felt threatened by the idea of the PBI (Poor Bloody Infantry), doing the job that was previously solely conducted by people indoctrinated at Larkhill.

We were placed on the first external level 3 Observation Post Course to be run outside of Larkhill, with 26 Regt RA in Guttersloh. I have to take my hat off to those guys, they do love to party! I have nothing but gratitude for the way that 26 Regt RA received and looked after us during the course. It ran for ten weeks. Though this time away, before an operational tour, was something that I could have done without. The course did teach us the slight differences in Royal Artillery Fire Control Orders. They are very similar to Mortar Fire Control Orders but at the same time are worlds apart. I would regularly find myself getting annoyed and frustrated with the methodical and templated

way that they would have to be sent. However, this would prove its worth later during the tour.

Anyone that has been to Helmand Province knows the numbed state of mind you develop when you have to spend any time in Camp Bastion. I can't speak for everyone, but personally I couldn't wait for my flight out to the FOB(Forward Operating Base). For the first six weeks I found myself embedded in an OP called Roshan Tower, above Musa Qala in the north of Helmand. Without a doubt Roshan Tower is a fantastic observation point, with visibility being typically over six kilometres and a 360° arc. The Green Zone however, is a somewhat different story. Once friendly troops enter the dense undergrowth – and I do mean dense – we lost positive eyes-on. This was always a difficult time for me, as I could hear my colleagues on the ground getting into contacts that I was unable to influence in any way. After six weeks I was released for good behaviour, but I owe Cpl Ian Getty 1 R IRISH heartfelt thanks for his friendship and safeguarding my sanity throughout this time.

I was then moved over to provide the Offensive Support for the Mastiff Group, operating out of FOB Edinburgh. This was a massive stroke of good fortune, as the group was manned by members of B Coy and FSp Coy 2 SCOTS. If anyone has conducted an operational tour detached from their parent unit, they will understand when I say that my time on Op HERRICK was the most boring, exciting, and lonely time of my life, especially without the support of your normal and trusted team. During my first few hours, on being reunited with the Mastiff Group, I could not stop smiling and talking to the Jocks. During my time with them I realised how much of a lifesaver the protected mobility of the Mastiff Armoured Vehicle really is. It is not just a Manoeuvre asset, but a Fire Support Platform in its own right. It can and did take damage that beggars belief. The fact that not one serious injury was sustained by the group during six months of deployment in the high tempo environments of Musa Qaleh and Garmsir speaks for itself.

Speaking about the Mastiff Group wouldn't be complete, without mentioning its soldiers. Without a doubt, if there was a more mixed bag of talents in one company in the whole of Helmand, I would be amazed. But history shows time and time again how effective this bringing together of different subject matter experts can pay off. Every man, bar none, justifiably deserves to be proud of their achievements. Over and over I saw and heard of soldiers placing themselves in harm's way, to either support their comrades, or to actively and aggressively get themselves into positions to attack enemy positions. After spending just under a month with the Mastiff group I then moved to support the soldiers of OMLT 1 (Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team for the Afghan Army) primarily drawn from 1 R IRISH. The two and a half months I spent with them showed me what it really meant to patrol in the Green Zone in Musa Qaleh day in, day out.

I can't put into words just how much the soldiers of OMLT 1, and in particular the men of call signs Amber 11 and Amber 12, impressed me. The normal breakdown of an OMLT patrol consists of between six and eight men mentoring twenty or thirty Afghan National Army soldiers. This may sound like a normal reinforced PI deployment. However, the average Afghan soldier is a totally different beast to our own, as anyone who has served with them will testify to. Command and Control of these troops can be problematic at best and damn near impossible at worst. Multiply



this by twenty and you begin to understand some of the problems routinely encountered by the OMLT.

I can still see vividly the time I was trying to “talk on” an Apache on to a bunker position prior to a potential assault. I watched in total disbelief as the whole ANA callsign that I was supporting got up out of cover and slowly walked in extended line towards the position! I honestly thought I was going to witness a slaughter, but amazingly the enemy abandoned the position without firing a shot and were destroyed by the ANA. This proved typical of the unpredictability of the typical Afghan soldier; unwilling to leave camp one minute and totally fearless the next.

During my time in Musa Qaleh with the Amber callsigns we came under enemy fire numerous times. Thankfully we did

not lose anyone, though some of the guys had some very close calls and now have some impressive stories to show for it. I am proud that I was able to support them by bringing in effective and accurate indirect fire, both 105mm and 81mm. This, coupled with controlling Apache support, ensured that the guys could continue to operate in some pretty tight situations. If anyone were to ask me if I had a defining memory of my time in Afghanistan, I would tell them of the time when we were withdrawing in contact with a casualty. In the heat of it I looked back to see the 105mm rounds that I had called in bursting in and around the enemy positions. All this was happening whilst an Apache hovered overhead like an avenging angel. The soldiers humbled me with their professionalism and dedication to each other, helping me understand fully for the first time the term; Brothers in Arms.

ADVENTURE TRAINING IN SCOTLAND – EXERCISE NORTHERN JOCK 2008

2Lt M D Oladjins, OC 4 Platoon B Coy 2 SCOTS

2 SCOTS have just completed a deployment to Afghanistan in a variety of operational roles. The MASTIFF Group, comprised mainly of B Coy and FSp elements, was amongst the first to deploy and, subsequently, to return. Spotting a couple of weeks in the training programme until the rest of the Battalion returned, OC MASTIFF Coy (who were first back) resolved to stuff them full of AT (Adventure Training)!

The AT took two forms; there were individual courses in Wales and Scotland and a week-long group activity. The courses in Mountaineering, Kayaking and Rock Climbing were attended by small groups who gained individual qualifications and provided all with a ‘taster’ for the group activity week. The group activity week was spent in the Highlands near Kingussie, where more than 100 soldiers attended over two consecutive weeks. This was organised by Capt Muir and Sgt Palmer who arranged a fantastic package. Activities included Rock Climbing, Mountaineering, White-Water Rafting and Mountain Biking. One or two evening expeditions to Fort William and Kingussie may also have been squeezed in...

I spent the first week with six soldiers at HMS Indefatigable in Anglesey, Wales. With several others from 2 SCOTS we completed our MLT (Mountain Leader Training) course amongst the peaks of Snowdonia. This qualified us to lead small groups in the summer, even though at times during the week it felt like a winter mountain warfare course! It was a very enjoyable week and the Jocks achieved the qualification with ease, unlike the majority of the RAF who seemed to struggle with navigating at less than 30,000 feet!

Each of the two Level 2 training weeks saw fifty Jocks travel north to Kingussie Lodge on the first week or Tulloch Lodge, situated between Fort William and Kingussie, on the second. They were both great base camps, right on the doorstep of our adventures. Sgt Palmer did some Afghan-style haggling with local Mountain Biking and White-Water Rafting companies and greatly reduced the price of these activities. The Battalion PRI fund and the MASTIFF Coy NAAFI profits from tour paid for most of the non-AT activities, with a minimal personal contribution from the Jocks. Food was plentiful, varied and of

the highest standard throughout, thanks to the single handed efforts of Pte Miah RLC.

It was a great week and everyone had a chance to relax and have fun, but also get the adrenalin racing, mentally and physically challenging themselves. It was amazing to see NCOs or Jocks who had been fearless in Afghanistan pushed out of their comfort zone by heights or wild rivers. To their credit these fears were faced down and conquered, then recalled later that evening with a few pints, some good food and a definite pinch of exaggeration. The Mountain biking was part of Sgt Palmer’s wet weather programme when it was too rainy to rock climb, and was extremely fast and exhilarating. A few heroes even tried the most difficult route, though most soon realised that they had gone too far outside their comfort zone into panic! We also managed to do a day navigating in the Cairngorms. All in all it was an excellent week and a very useful medium in which to continue decompression.

A word of warning for any Platoon Comd’s planning on white-water rafting with their Platoons. Be afraid, very afraid... Watch your back or you might end up in the river. Again and again...



MASTIFF Group White Water Champions. (Left to right) Cpl Vono, LCpl McKenna, Fus Omand, Fus Greenshields, Fus Bainitabua and LCpl Morrision.

50th Anniversary of the Formation of RHF – 1 February 2009



The Colour Party approaching the Glasgow Cathedral.



Veterans of Ayrshire Branch.



(Left to right): Lady Provost – Mrs Sheena Winter, Lord Provost Glasgow – Mr Bob Winter, Col Niall Campbell, Lord Dean of Guild of Merchants House – Mr John Chapman, Deacon Convener of Trades House – Mr David Dobson.



Pipes and Drums 2 SCOTS.



Officers waiting for the command to fall out at George Square.



Veterans of Glasgow Branch marching from Glasgow Cathedral to George Square.



Reminiscing and celebrating in Hilton Hotel.



And the celebration continues in the Piper.



RSMs of the past and present lining up at the 50th Anniversary of the Formation of RHF on 01 Feb 09. (Left to right) Maj Willie Shaws, Maj Bill Mathews, RSM John Hamilton, Capt Harry Roy, Maj Jim Kerr, Capt Jimmy Lee, RSM Walter Barrie, Capt Walter Hunter, RSM Walter Barrie.