



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND



ASSOCIATION JOURNAL 2023 VOLUME 20



Contributions

We welcome letters, articles and comments from our readers. If you have questions to ask or a story to tell that will be of interest to The Royal Regiment of Scotland, please contact the Regiment through our website www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org

All contributions are accepted at the editor's discretion and may be edited.

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Next Edition

Units are asked to submit material for the next Journal, covering activities throughout the whole of 2024 by 31 Jan 25. Further details will be provided nearer the time. Views expressed in this Journal, unless stated otherwise, are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of The Regiment, The Army or the Ministry of Defence

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REGIMENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Colonel-in-Chief

His Majesty The King

Deputy Colonel-in-Chief

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

Colonel of the Regiment

Lieutenant General Sir Nick Borton KCB DSO MBE

Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

Major General RRE Lindsay CBE

Major General AP Reilly OBE

Major General JC Roddis DSO MBE

Brigadier ME Munro

Brigadier BMA Wrench

The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel J Dunn

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One RD O'Neil / Warrant Officer Class One S Paterson

The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland Royal

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel M Hayton

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One AC Ferrier

The Highlanders, 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland Royal

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel AJL Hempenstall / Lieutenant Colonel GW Muir MBE

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One AR McLellan / Warrant Officer Class One GR Allison

Balaklava Company 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders)

Officer Commanding: Major RC Weir

Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class Two S Cox MVO

52nd Lowland, 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Honorary Colonel: Major General AABR Bruce OBE VR DL

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel RJ Stuart MBE / Lieutenant Colonel LJ Curson

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One J Thompson / Warrant Officer Class Two S McKnight

51st Highland, 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Honorary Colonel: Colonel JRG Cosmo MBE

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel DID Watson

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One B Warwick

Regimental Headquarters

Regimental Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) JD Tink



FOREWORD BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

Lieutenant General Sir Nick Borton KCB DSO MBE



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The Royal Regiment of Scotland
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The Castle
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2nd February 2024

Dear fellow officers, soldiers and veterans,

As I sit to write my final foreword to the Regimental Journal, I thought it better to pen a more personal letter to you all. In the coming weeks, I will retire from service and in doing so, pass on colonelcy of the Regiment to Major General Robin Lindsay. This Regiment and its antecedents have been my family, and in leaving a family, one cannot help but reflect with affection and deep sentiment. Having lived through the formation of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and watched it evolve, it has truly been one of my great honours in life to have represented it.

The Regiment has come a long way since its inception, and we are in a formidable position. It is now underpinned by a strong, coherent strategy which harnesses the collective horsepower of our talented officers who drive it forward. We are improving the mental and physical wellbeing of our people, training our soldiers better, doing more for veterans and ensuring we have a sustainable financial model for the future.

The pages that follow are a testament to a busy, happy regiment that remains at the forefront of Defence's operational main effort and our standing as the 'go-to' regiment for deployment remains stronger than ever. Take heart in knowing that our reputation as disciplined and fierce fighting soldiers precedes us. Know too that this reputation does not come unearned, and we must continue to display the utmost professionalism if we are to be the standard for others to follow. The geopolitical landscape is shifting, and agility and readiness is paramount. Never in my time has the world seemed more uncertain and we must be ready to face these challenges head on. I have no doubt that we are.



I leave you with some parting guidance in a moment of reflection. I have come to learn that life in a SCOTS battalion is like no other. Remember that which defines us. Our traditions, family ethos, dress, pipes and drums, wicked humour and indomitable fighting spirit mark us out as unique. It is special - protect it at all costs. While maintaining a forward-looking mindset, we must cherish and continue to celebrate our long, deep-rooted history. Take pride in putting on the uniform of your forebears; under those streaming colours, noble deeds were done. From those who served before us, find strength in their tales of derring-do, for there have been many. Above all else, we must always put the Jock at the heart of all we do – we serve to lead them.

Thank you for all your hard work today, your comradeship over the years and the many, many laughs along the way. It has been an honour to serve shoulder to shoulder with you all and I will miss the Regiment dearly.

Nemo me Impune Lacesit

Nick Barton



FOREWORD BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT





REGIMENTAL UPDATE

2023 has been a busy year for 2 SCOTS at home and overseas. The year began with C Coy deployed on the final rotation of Op NEWCOME, closing down the UK's contribution to the UN mission in Mali. The battalion experienced two short notice deployments: Ex WESSEX STORM and Ex STEADFAST JUPITER. The former being UK based, A Coy assisted 1 R IRISH and 2 RGR by providing enemy forces for their validation exercise, whilst the latter saw C Coy deploy to Romania to provide force protection for a NATO validation of HQ ARRC for the NATO Response Force in 2024. Much of the training and validation exercises throughout were in preparation for deployment on Op SHADER, with the first wave deploying in late 2023. Concurrently, 2 SCOTS have also taken position alongside international partner forces on Op INTERFLEX.

3 SCOTS have had a successful Re-ORBAT to Security Force Assistance (SFA) battalion and have deployed across the globe to numerous destinations including: Finland, the USA, The Republic of Korea, Japan, Brunei, Australia, Hawaii, and Mongolia, to name but a few. Episodic deployments are now in full swing in the Indo-Pacific given the battalion's regional SFA alignment. Whilst fulfilling in excess of 50 individual commitments from the wider Army and Defence network, the Bn ensured that cadres, promotion courses and adventure training continued, despite an increased tempo.

Similarly, 4 SCOTS had a busy year as they continued to re-role to a Light Mechanised Infantry Battalion, culminating in the validation phase on Ex WESSEX STORM. Early 2023 saw 4 SCOTS deploy on Ex WARFIGHTER in the USA, before Ex SPRING STORM (Estonia) and Ex MAPLE RESOLVE (Canada) in late spring, as part of a NATO Battle Group. The Bn then participated in Op INTERFLEX

from June – December, where soldiers from the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) were trained in basic and mounted tactics, as-well-as leadership training from section level command, to platoon level command.

BAK Coy were once again on the world's stage, this time for HM King Charles' III Coronation celebrations: firstly on Op GOLDEN ORB, London, as part of the procession; followed by Op SCEPTRE, Edinburgh, by providing the Army's contingent of the tri-service Guard of Honour. The company played the leading role on the Regiment's summer Freedom Parades, exercising the Freedom of Dumfries and Galloway, Fife and Stirling and receiving the Freedom from South Lanarkshire. BAK Coy were honoured to deploy to Ballater for HM The King's first Royal Guard at Balmoral since the Coronation. While deployed to Ballater, the company also represented the Regiment at local highland games and community engagement events.

2023 was not only for ceremonial duties: BAK Coy also supported Ex WESSEX STORM alongside 4 SCOTS before deploying to Cyprus for the annual Aden Patrol Competition. Towards the end of the year the company also undertook their annual fieldcraft training, conducting low-level training and a LFTT camp in Barry Buddon.

6 SCOTS have experienced a year that has seen many people committed operationally and on many exercises across and out-with the borders of the UK. They have deployed people in support of Op TOSCA as well as delivering operational effect under a 4 LANCS commanded Op INTERFLEX task force supporting the training of Ukrainian soldiers. A Coy deployed to Croatia on exercise alongside reservists from 7 SCOTS on Ex SAVA STAR and the Battalion has undertaken many training opportunities with focus on baselining capabilities but also expanding in new areas such as Drone operators. Competitions have been a highlight and 6

SCOTS have been involved militarily in the driving arena as well as on Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL and in the Jocks sport, the Battalion football team were runners-up in the Army Reserve Football Cup.

7 SCOTS devoted much of their time and efforts to deploying on Ex SAVA STAR, Croatia, to work with the Croatian Armed Forces, specifically the 2nd Mechanised Battalion 'Pumas' from the Guards of the Armoured Mechanised Brigade. The battalion supported the Allied Forces Federation's involvement with the Cateran Yomp by providing real life support and transport for over 70 service people that are recovering from injuries and trauma from the US, UK, Canada, Denmark, France, Georgia, to name but a few. The battalion deployed to Edinburgh in July and contributed to Op SCEPTRE by supporting the military element of the Service of Dedication and Thanksgiving for His Majesty The King, and the people of Scotland.



REGIMENTAL ROLL OF HONOUR

OFFICERS

BARRIE, Walter Reid

24823176 Capt, b. Chryston, Lanarkshire.
Killed in action Afghanistan 11/11/2012.
1 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

McDERMID, John

561716 Capt, b. Glasgow. Killed in action
Afghanistan 14/11/2007. 2 SCOTS, Attached 2 YORKS,
formerly RHF.





OTHER RANKS

BINNIE, Sean Conor

25171259 A/Sgt, b. Dublin. Killed in action Afghanistan 7/5/2009. 3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

COLLINS, Stuart James

30034943 Pte, b. Bellshill. Died of Wounds United Kingdom 2/9/2021. 1 SCOTS

DEMPSEY, Barry

25079101 Cpl, b. Ayrshire. Killed in action Afghanistan 18/8/2008. 2 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

ELLIOTT, Kevin Robert Alexander

25136352 Pte, b. Dundee. Killed in action Afghanistan 31/8/2009. 3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

FLINT, Samuel Alexander

30158273 Fus, b. Blackpool, Lancashire. Killed in action Afghanistan 30/4/2013. 2 SCOTS.

HERTHERINGTON, Robert Murray

25232174 Pte, b. Houston, Texas, USA. Killed in action Afghanistan 30/4/2013. 7 SCOTS, attached 2 SCOTS.

JOHNSON, James Bradley

24958609 LCpl, b. Chatham, Kent. Killed in action Afghanistan 28/6/2008. 5 SCOTS, formerly A and SH.

KENNEDY, Scott

25164918 Pte, b. Dunfermline. Killed on operations against insurgents Iraq 28/6/2007. 3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

KERR, Jamie William

25208345 Pte, b. Dunfermline. Killed on operations against insurgents Iraq 28/6/2007. 3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

MASON, Thomas

25202313 Cpl, b. Bellshill, Lanarkshire. Died of wounds United Kingdom 25/10/2009. 3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

MATHEWS, Jonathan William

24937064 Sgt, b. Edinburgh. Killed in action Afghanistan 28/7/2008. 4 SCOTS, formerly RS.

McDONALD, Sean Gordon

25110838 Pte, b. Toronto, Canada. Killed in action Afghanistan 7/2/2010. 1 SCOTS, formerly RS.

McLAREN, Robert McLean

30029105 Pte, b. Buckstone, Derbyshire. Killed in action Afghanistan 1/6/2009. 3 SCOTS, formerly RE.

McLAREN, Scott

30105449 Pte, b. Edinburgh. Killed in action Afghanistan 4/7/2011. 4 SCOTS.

MILLAR, Stuart Angus Finlayson

24914269 Sgt, b. Clackmannan. Killed in action Afghanistan 31/8/2009. 3 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

MOORE, Johnathan

25183149 Cpl, b. Bellshill, Lanarkshire. Killed in action Afghanistan 7/2/2010. 1 SCOTS, formerly RS.

O'DONNELL, Craig

25146937 Pte, b. Alexandria, Dunbartonshire. Killed in action Afghanistan 4/9/2006. 5 SCOTS, formerly A and SH

PIKE, Michael John

25141952 Cpl, b. Okehampton, Devon. Killed in action Afghanistan 3/6/2011. 4 SCOTS, formerly HLD RS.

POOL, Joseph McFarlane

25175213 LCpl, b. Dumfries. Killed in action Afghanistan 5/9/2010. 1 SCOTS, formerly KOSB.

SAVAGE, William Thomas

25170821 Cpl, b. Irvine, Scotland. Killed in action Afghanistan 30/4/2013. 2 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

VATUBUA, Joseva Saqanagonedau

30065586 Pte, b. Fiji. Killed in action Afghanistan 1/1/2011. 5 SCOTS.



SCOTS ASSOCIATION

President

Maj Gen (Retd) Bob Bruce CBE DSO

Chairman

Lt Col (Retd) Jonathan Tink

Secretary

Kevin Wood

Barry Wylie

2023 was another successful year for the SCOTS Association. The inaugural SCOTS Rally was held in March, the annual golf championships in June and the first SCOTS Race Day in September. Towards the end of the year our veterans paraded at the Cenotaph in London for Remembrance Sunday. The Association also teamed up with Leafyard, a mental health app which is offered free to all our SCOTS veterans.

The Association held its regular branch, executive and general meetings where ideas were discussed regarding increasing the awareness of the Association amongst SCOTS veterans, so they can stay connected and how to expand our regional branch network across Scotland and to key areas in London. In October, a representative from each of our eleven branches mustered at Regimental Headquarters to receive their branch standards.



Branch representatives with their Branch Standard



Muster, March and Remember

SCOTS RALLY

The Association's inaugural SCOTS Rally was held in Edinburgh, 24 – 26 March 2023. The weekend consisted of the Black Hackle Dinner Night, which was held at The Royal Scots Club, a Regimental History Day at Edinburgh Castle, the Association Annual Dinner at Murrayfield Stadium and a Muster, March, and Remember from Edinburgh Castle Esplanade, down The Royal Mile to the Regimental Kirk at the Canongate for a church service. The weekend's events were very well attended and well received.



Guests enjoying the meal and camaraderie at the Association Annual Dinner



Attendees of the Association Annual Dinner at Murrayfield Stadium



Regimental History Day



Golf Championship

The Golf Championship took place on 22 June at the Strathmore Golf Centre, Alyth. The event was at full capacity and was attended by both SCOTS serving personnel and veterans, 1 RANGER and veterans from our Antecedent Regiments. The championship was played in glorious weather and the Golf Champion Cup was won by Richard Morton – 7 SCOTS – and the Golf Challenge Cup by Paul Stewart – Veteran.

Race Day

The inaugural SCOTS Association Race Day took place on Saturday 16th September at Musselburgh racecourse. It was attended by guests of the Regiment, serving and veterans with their partners. The Regiment sponsored two races; The Royal Regiment of Scotland Trophy and the SCOTS Association Cup and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Attendees of the SCOTS Association Race Day



Winning horse at SCOTS Association Race Day

Remembrance

In October the President of the SCOTS Association, Major-General (Retd) Bob Bruce, laid a wreath on behalf of The Royal Regiment of Scotland at the opening of the Garden of Remembrance in Edinburgh. At the end of the official laying of wreaths, the families of our fallen were invited to plant a Poppy Cross to remember the 23 SCOTS officers and soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The families then joined RHQ staff for afternoon tea in the nearby museum café, which allowed the families to catch up with each other's news.



Families of the fallen at the opening of the garden of Remembrance in Edinburgh

SCOTS Association veterans travelled to London in November for Remembrance Sunday. The SCOTS detachment led the Scottish Division antecedent regiments on a march past the Cenotaph and back to Horse Guards Parade. The veterans then gathered for lunch and stories before departing well into the evening.



Veterans attend the Cenotaph

Various other events were held across the Association, the Highlands and Islands branch held a very successful summer dance, and the Lothian and Borders branch held regular Pie and Pint nights and the Grampian branch a very successful veterans' breakfast.

The Association has been very well supported by its President and the Executive Committee, the latter of which the majority are members of staff at RHQ. The primary object of the Association remains to promote and foster esprit de corps, comradeship, and Regimental interest amongst soldiers of the Regiment. We are in the early stages of developing a strong and vibrant Association, but the signs are positive that we can achieve this over time.

The aim of the SCOTS associations is to bring SCOTS Soldiers and Officers, from the serving and veteran communities, together, to build, maintain and rekindle bonds of friendship.



Black Hackle Dinner



SCOTS ASSOCIATION

REGIMENTAL SECRETARY – LIEUTENANT COLONEL (RETIRED) J D TINK



RHQ Staff

The start of 2023 saw the departures of Lt Col (Retd) Kev Wood (SO2 Veterans) and Karen Buchanan (SO2 Communications) to Edinburgh Garrison and Army Communication posts within the MOD civil service. Kev has been an outstanding member of the Regimental Headquarters team and has done much to bring our large veteran community back into the fold. He has rewritten the constitution, established a vibrant SCOTS Association and planned and executed several events which brings our serving soldiers and veterans together. Karen revamped the way we did our social media to ensure we spoke with one voice and established our first SCOTS website. We wish them well in their new posts and thank them for their support to the Regiment.

But out with the old and in with the new. Barry Wylie and Zoe Carmichael have joined RHQ as SO2 Welfare and SO2 Communications and Engagement respectively. They have adapted superbly to their new roles within the MoD, settled in very well to the team and are driving forward their new initiatives to further enhance the veterans and communications outputs. Of particular note was the arrival of Captain (Retired) Scotty McFadden as the Regimental Adjutant. Using his wealth of experience and knowledge Scotty has done a great deal to cohere the Regimental effort in support of our objectives and tasks.

This year we held the inaugural SCOTS Rally, a weekend that aimed to bring the Regiment together, the serving, our veterans and their families and friends. The Officers' Black Hackle

Dinner Night was held in the Royal Scots Club on the Friday evening and was very well attended and an excellent evening. The following day The Colonel of the Regiment hosted our antecedent Regimental Association Presidents to a lunch at the Castle and used the opportunity to brief them on the Regiment. That evening the SCOTS Association held its inaugural annual dinner at Murrayfield stadium which was a great success. On the Sunday the Regiment mustered on the esplanade, marched down the Royal Mile and held a service in the Regimental Kirk at Canongate to remember all those that served in the Regiment that are no longer with us. It was a fitting end to the Rally which will be held in the third week of March each year.



Supporting the delivery of the Regimental Strategy has remained a priority this year with each member of staff aligned to either a Foundation or Line of Operation team. We have completed our first year with our commercial communications and marketing partner and have seen the benefits of such a relationship, particularly regarding our communities understanding of who we are and what we do.

The Regiment's identity and brand continues to build through furthering our good relationships within our communities and the proactive engagement of key stakeholders. The Regiment received the Freedom of South Lanarkshire and exercised its Freedom rights in Dumfries and Galloway, Fife, the City of Stirling, Penicuik, Alloa and the Borough of Berwick Upon Tweed.

The SCOTS Association continues to grow. The RSMs as chairmen of the Battalion branches promote the benefits of the Association and encourage attendance across all ranks. The regional branch chairmen have established branch committees to assist in the running of the branches particularly the planning and execution of events. This year we had a record number of SCOTS march at the Cenotaph and the maximum number possible attended our annual golf championship day at Alyth. New to this year's Association calendar was the SCOTS Race Day held at Musselburgh racecourse. It was good day with serving and veterans in attendance and the aim is for the race day to become an annual Association fixture in the events calendar. The inaugural Royal Regiment of Scotland Trophy was won by War Defender and presented to the winning trainer by our guest, the Lord Provost of North Lanarkshire.

A quick and busy 2023 it was for all at Regimental Headquarters but a very worthwhile and enjoyable one as well.



SCEPTRE



The Red Arrows flying over Edinburgh Castle



The Coronation Medal

Throughout 2023 The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS) have been engaged in every high-profile public event – from marking the late Queen Elizabeth II's funeral to HM King Charles III's coronation. Op SCEPTRE was the codeword given to all activities related to the Service of Dedication and Thanksgiving for His Majesty The King and the People of Scotland, on the 5th of July, in Edinburgh.

Commander Joint Military Capability (JMC) (Scotland)'s intent was to plan, co-ordinate and deliver the Defence ceremonial contribution to Op SCEPTRE at a standard befitting of the occasion, while enhancing the reputation of the Armed Forces both at home and overseas. Op SCEPTRE was a one-day event, executed in ten phases, all planned and executed by SO2 G5 Plans and Garrison Sergeant Major, both of whom were SCOTS.

JMC (Scotland) and 7 SCOTS established their operations room in Redford Cavalry Barracks and received Army Force Elements (FEs) from the SCOTS (inc BKA Coy, 2 SCOTS Pipes and Drums, Regtl Mascot – Cpl Cruachan), SCOTS DG, HCR, SNIY, 105 & 12 Regt RA as well as Tri-Service FEs from the RN and RAF, and FEs from the King's Bodyguard Scotland (Royal Company of Archers). Also involved were musicians from the Army Cadet Force and Combined Cadet Force in Scotland, both tied to SCOTS (Robert Gordon's College CCF P&Ds & 51X Cadet Military Band).

The SCOTS led on many of the main moving parts of the day that were tactically controlled by 7 SCOTS. A Tri-Service Guard of Honour (GoH) – commanded by Officer Commanding BKA Coy – escorted 'The Honours of Scotland' to the ceremony, shortly followed by Cpl Cruachan and WO1 Tuach (GSM) who led the People's Procession from Edinburgh Castle to St Giles Cathedral. Once the Honours and the Tri-service GoH were in position, 2 SCOTS Pipes and Drums departed

the Palace of Holyroodhouse with the Royal Party, making their way to St Giles. Following the ceremony, 2 SCOTS P&Ds led the Royal Party back to the Palace of Holyroodhouse as the GoH, WO1 Tuach, Cpl Cruachan and the remainder of the parade made their way back up the Royal Mile, but not before they were treated to the spectacle that is the RAF Red Arrows flying over Edinburgh, releasing their red, white, and blue smoke in celebration.



The Honours of Scotland, held by The Lord Lyon, King of Arms



2 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Commanding Officer

Lt Col John Dunn

Regimental Sergeant Major

WO1 Steven Paterson

Battalion 2IC

Maj Robert Colquhoun MBE

Adjutant

Capt James McWilliams

Operations Officer

Capt Andrew Oliver

Operations WO

WO2 Scott Pew

As I write these notes, I marvel at the fact that 12 months have passed so quickly but that in some ways that so little has changed. Once again, we find the Battalion dispersed on operations with at least the next six months plus dominated by Ops SHADER, INTERFLEX and a FIRIC deployment. One could feel daunted by delivering such a range of tasks concurrently but one need only reflect on 2023 to see the capacity and skill of 2 SCOTS as a collective and individuals within it to deliver whatever is asked of us to an exceptional standard.

In the first half of the year, 2 SCOTS' operational tasks have been dominated by the close down of the UK contribution to the Mission in Mali, Op NEWCOMBE and SOREHAWK. In the face of considerable uncertainty, C Company performed its task to a very high standard ensuring the extraction was conducted in a safe and efficient manner. Perhaps less noticeable was the contribution that the Battalion has made to support the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Throughout the UK and Europe, members of 2 SCOTS have supported the efforts to prepare



Lt Col John Dunn. Battlegroup attack, Oman

equipment and vehicles that will be sent to Ukraine. The Battalion has also deployed teams on Op INTERFLEX on Salisbury Plain from April to July. Our Pipes, Drums and Bugles have been busy providing musical support to His Majesty The King's Coronation in London (Op GOLDEN ORB) and to the Presentation of the Honours of Scotland to His Majesty in Edinburgh (Op SCEPTRE). Being part of these historic occasions has been a huge privilege for the band who have represented the Battalion and the Regiment admirably earning the first coronation medals in the process.

We have also seen a fantastic display from our troops on exercises around the world. In March and April, a composite of A and B Company soldiers deployed on Ex DIAMONDBACK to the United States on a major US Army exercise. Fully integrated with a US Army Brigade, the 2 SCOTS team excelled in the challenging mountain and desert terrain, winning acclaim for the impressive effect they could achieve even with a small force. The Commanding General of the 1st (US) Armour exclaimed 'Those Scots can fight!!' and the small force of less than 50 Jocks was recognised as "the most lethal Infantry Sub-Unit"

2 SCOTS



in the Armoured Brigade. Fresh from success across the pond, the Battalion was stepped up at short notice to provide the opposing task force on Ex WESSEX STORM replacing 3 PARA who were deployed to evacuate UK nationals from Sudan. Supported by tireless work from our enabling team to help them deploy in good order to Salisbury plain, the company group from A, B, FSp and BHQ excelled in testing the Royal Irish and Royal Gurkha Rifles Battlegroups. Despite the circumstances, the Jocks put in another tremendous performance. After the summer, our own training and supporting the training of others dominated the Forecast of Events. A and ISR Coys delivered an exceptional 'greens across the board' performance in their Mission Rehearsal Exercise for Op SHADER in October impressing the Mission Readiness Training Centre with their professionalism, humility, and willingness to learn. Such a performance requires significant dedication and is a testament to the hard work and preparation of all involved.

C Coy's Autumn did not work out as planned with a short notice callout to deploy to Romania to support a major NATO validation exercise, particularly important during this time of uncertainty and conflict in Eastern Europe. Tasked with protecting the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps headquarters led by the Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen Sir Nick Borton, the team gave a great account of themselves and were proudly announced to visiting VIPs as being from the SCOTS, 'the General's own Regiment'. At the end of the eight-week deployment, the troops also saw something of the country and Bucharest.

Fire Support Coy has not been outdone however, with soldiers completing specialist cadres, the Mortar Platoon deploying to Kenya in support of the Grenadier Guards, Ps&Ds performing in the Tattoo in Edinburgh and the Machine Gun Platoon picking up a myriad of tasks that took teams across the globe from

Brunei to Latvia, and drawing praise from both the Brigade and Divisional Commander. ISR Coy too have recently completed some gruelling cadres in some extremely challenging weather conditions, showcasing their legendary tenacity through wind, rain and snow.

Headquarters Company has again underpinned everything we do in 2 SCOTS, providing support and sustainment in camp. The departments have also delivered training for their own development, and this was exemplified by the Regimental Aid Post deploying to Kingston, Jamaica to develop their emergency medicine skills in the A&E department of Kingston Public Hospital.

Despite all these commitments, we continue to tend to the Battalion as an Institution. The team in Battalion Headquarters drive forward the empowerment agenda started by our predecessors. Now called Continuous Improvement, 2 SCOTS was awarded the silver accreditation this year, one of the few units in the Field Army to have achieved this standard, as we implement the procedural and cultural changes necessary to make us a more efficient, cohesive and motivated team. The Quartermaster's laser focus on in barrack improvement is paying off and Glencorse was selected as a trial site to test sustainable technology such as air source heat pumps in the accommodation instead of traditional gas boilers.

Training and development continue at pace with more course passes than can be recorded here, adding to the collective knowledge and skill of the Battalion. There have been some fantastic performances most notably that of Cpl Crawford achieving 'Top Student' on PSBC. Away from routine business, members of 2 SCOTS continue to be successful on the sports field and military competition. There are too many teams and people to congratulate here so I urge you to read on to hear about their exploits in the Company notes.

Finally, we continue to take on the challenges of poor recruit inflow head on. We are active in the internal transfer market within the Army and have welcomed a good number of transferees and a growing number of rejoiners back into the fold. We are working with the Army Selection Centre, also based in Glencorse, to attract potential recruits to the SCOTS and in concert with the other Battalions are generating a better understanding of the Regiment and the opportunities we offer.

While the year has been marked with success and high achievement it has also been marked with profound sadness. The loss of Fusilier Jake Rendall in April was a tremendous shock for us all. Although he had only served in the Battalion for a short time, he was making his mark and would no doubt have gone on to do great things. I am also hugely grateful to those junior soldiers who rendered Jake immediate first aid and to the visiting officer and Padre for their sterling support to Jake's family. In the aftermath of his death, I have been struck by the impact these events have on family, friends and comrades and we have redoubled our efforts to look out for each other as we travel the sometimes-challenging road of life. I am grateful for the support of RHQ and others in this.

To close, I wish to thank those that have moved on in the last year and the whole Battalion for their continued efforts and commitment to deliver the fantastic outputs that are recorded in this journal. I reserve special mention to congratulate WO1 (RSM) (now Captain) Ryan O'Neill for his award of a Meritorious Service Medal and Major Gary Main (QM(T)) and WO1 (ASM) (now Captain) Peter Robinson for their Commander Field Army Commendations. They are the best of us and represent the hard work of hundreds of others.



2 SCOTS PROMOTIONS 2023

2023 again saw promotions across all ranks for both SCOTS personnel and our attached arms. The Commanding Officer had the pleasure of delivering the good news to the following 2 SCOTS soldiers and officers.

Selected for promotion to Major

Capt Oliver, Operations Officer

Selected for promotion to Warrant Officer Class One

Warrant Officer Class Two (RQMS) Bright
Warrant Officer Class Two (RQMS) Welshman

Promotion to Captain

Capt Dewhurst, OC Machine Guns
Capt Purslow, 2IC C Coy

Promotion to Lieutenant

Lt Macpherson, OC 3 Platoon
Lt Gray, OC 1 Platoon
Lt Bolton, OC 7 Platoon
Lt Thompson, OC 8 Platoon

Promotion to Warrant Officer Class Two

Warrant Officer Class Two (CSM) Andrews
Warrant Officer Class Two (CSM) Grant

Promotion to Colour Sergeant

Colour Sergeant Boag
Colour Sergeant McClelland
Colour Sergeant Simon

Promotion to Sergeant

Sergeant Aitchison
Sergeant Drysdale
Sergeant Muil

Promotion to Corporal

Corporal Steele
Corporal O'Lone
Corporal Brand
Corporal Hewitt
Corporal Vuki
Corporal Brebner
Corporal Oates
Corporal Pearson
Corporal Buadromo
Corporal Lochrie
Corporal Wallace

Promotion to Lance Corporal

Lance Corporal Conkie
Lance Corporal Doherty
Lance Corporal Hornby
Lance Corporal Allison
Lance Corporal Boyle
Lance Corporal Takala
Lance Corporal Cathro
Lance Corporal Rutherford
Lance Corporal Gallacher
Lance Corporal Thompson
Lance Corporal Bowyer
Lance Corporal Cowan
Lance Corporal DaSilva
Lance Corporal Foot
Lance Corporal Edwards
Lance Corporal Ferguson
Lance Corporal Black
Lance Corporal Vuetibau
Lance Corporal Koroveibau
Lance Corporal Rai 88
Lance Corporal Rai 95
Lance Corporal Thing
Lance Corporal Thapa
Lance Corporal Rana
Lance Corporal Gurung
Lance Corporal Rai 18
Lance Corporal Magar

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj Anthony Ronaldson

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 CSM Darren Pasifull

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt Semi Vakaru

Padre

Capt David Jeal

RDS

Sgt Steven Oliver/LCpl Adrian Wallace

Headquarter Company

2023 has been another busy, sometimes disjointed, sometimes complicated, sometimes difficult, but ultimately a successful, rewarding and enjoyable year for the company.

As always, the Enabling Component was at the centre of all unit activity, whether it was with individual or collective support and whether it was centred around firmbase activity or deployed capability and output.

Whether it was recovery of vehicles and equipment from Oman, re-role to Lt Inf, Op SCEPTRE, UK Standby Battalion, Op TEMPERER, Op INTERFLEX, Ex HARAKA STORM, CAST, Regimental Freedom Parades, Charity support, JCCC Repatriation & Reburial tasks, Community Engagement, Op SHADER 18, enabling support to unit cadres or the plethora of individual trawls both within the UK and overseas, everyone within the company has stood up, dealt with the task to the highest standard and produced fantastic results.

2 SCOTS



As always, we have had a revolving door of personnel posted in and out of the company. I cannot mention all arrivals and departures but will highlight a certain few who have left and have made a huge positive impact on our respective teams and sub-unit. Capt Gary Main promoted to Major and went back to 4 SCOTS as QM, the CQMS, CSgt Sam Donnachie promoted to WO2 and took over as 2IC MORTAR Platoon, Capt Nicky Diciacca left MTO and went to Balaklava Coy as QM (T), Capt Ben Carter will depart to pastures new as we reduce the size of the LAD and the ASM, WO1 Peter Robinson promoted and

moved to 2 Bn REME as RCMO. We welcomed in Capt Allan Campbell in from 3 SCOTS as QM (T), Capt Scott McNally moved from RCMO to MTO, and we welcomed the promotion and internal movement of the RSM, WO1 Ryan O'Neill to become the RCMO. WO2 Matthew Hutchison arrived from 1 RANGER as MTWO, and finally, WO2 (RQMS) Steven Paterson promoted to WO1 and became the Regimental Sergeant Major. Well done Patty/Tara.

I will not try to further elaborate on all the activity that the members or departments within the company have

taken part in this year, nor will I try and recount the trying or funny occurrences during this frenetic period. I will however say that from bottom to the top, from the youngest Private to the top corridors of the unit and sub-unit command, everyone has performed exceptionally and I thank you for all your efforts, good humour, hard work, continued support and loyalty to the Battalion, Commanding Officer and to "High Quality Company". On to 2024.



WO2 Scott Pew and CSgt Gabriel Tora on Op SHADER 18



Beeslack Secondary School pupils laying a wreath at 2 SCOTS Memorial, Glencorse Bks



Quarter Guard for arrival of Fijian High Commissioner, Glencorse Bks



LCpl Duncan trying to train her dog to touch type, Glencorse Bks



Major Bob Whyte laying a wreath at 1 SCOTS Memorial, Dreghorn Bks



The Commanding Officer and the Fijian High Commissioner cutting the Fiji Day cake, Glencorse Bks



WO2 CSM Pasifull driving the 2 SCOTS Reburial Party, New British Cemetery, Belgium



A COMPANY FOREWORD

Officer Commanding

Maj Finlay Anderson

Company 2IC

Capt James McWilliams /

Capt James Gillespie

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 Lee McConachie /

WO2 Michael Donnell

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt Chris Andrews /

CSgt Michael Carroll

1 Platoon

Lt George Gray

Sgt Garry Watt / Sgt Scott Boyle

2 Platoon

Lt Connor Spence

Sgt Martin Murphy

3 Platoon

Lt Finn Macpherson

Sgt Greg Hamilton

OC Foreword

In 2023 A Company have been focused initially on readiness followed by Mission Specific Training (MST) for the company deployment to Iraq, Kuwait and Cyprus on Op SHADER 18. The main events have been providing a Royal Guard Investiture at Holyrood Palace, a deployment to a joint divisional exercise in the USA (Ex DIAMONDBACK), a last-minute deployment to Ex WESSEX STORM as Task Force Hannibal and most recently the collective MST for Op SHADER including a Mission Rehearsal Exercise and Public Order Exercise.



A Company prior to deployment on Op SHADER

A Company have built from strength to strength; a solid foundation of promotional courses and returning NCOs from training establishments have built an exceptional team, ready to deploy to Op SHADER from November 2023. The A Company Group will assume the role of UK Mobility Company Kurdistan (UKMC(K)) where the primary role is providing Force Protection (FP) to senior military coalition officers, diplomats and VIPs throughout northern Iraq. The soldiers of A Company are excited for the opportunity to deploy on a medal-earning operation in an ever-changing region. As most new soldiers join a Rifle Company on their first posting, this is a first tour for most of the company; a challenge they are all keen and excited for. On return from Op SHADER A Company will focus on their institutional resilience, career courses and potentially bolster the Battalion efforts on Op INTERFLEX. The Black Swans remain ready for new challenges in 2024.



Acclimatisation Run

Ex DIAMONDBACK – February to March 2023

In what would become a recurring theme for 2 SCOTS in 2023, there was little forewarning that we would be taking part in Exercise DIAMONDBACK – the name given to the enormous (predominantly armoured) exercise that takes place in the U.S. Army's National Training Centre (NTC) in Fort Irwin, California. With around two month notice, 2 SCOTS were chosen to replace a British cavalry regiment which had had to pull out – how, exactly, we as a light-role unit would seamlessly take their place was cause for both curiosity and excitement. Excitement was certainly felt by all at the prospect of exercising in California. Palm trees, beaches, and

2 SCOTS



endless avocado groves would surely greet us – a far cry from the Pentlands or Salisbury Plain.

Not so. Fort Irwin does not benefit from the large coast of California, and is instead situated far inland, in the heart of the Mojave Desert. No sea, then, but plenty of sand (some 640,000 acres of it to be precise). Having landed in Las Vegas - giving us a quick glimpse of what to look forward to on R&R - we drove to Fort Irwin to begin the in-camp acclimatisation phase. The focus here was on staying fit as well as getting used to the heat and altitude, while simultaneously familiarising ourselves with the American kit we would be using during the exercise, namely rifles, radios, and vehicles. With Capt Allwood acting as OC and Liaison Officer with our American counterparts, we quickly discovered that they very much intended to make use of our unique dismounted capability.



Aviation Assault

The first two phases of the exercise saw us cover a great deal of ground on foot, particularly through the large mountainous ranges that litter the training area. At this the Jocks excelled, and our utility in clearing enemy sentry

and Javelin positions posted high up was quickly noted. Several evening skirmishes also showed our ability to fight at night, not a simple task when battling up very steep and jagged terrain. That said, after the dust had settled from one particularly long engagement, a member of the OPFOR asked, "are y'all Special Forces?!" Not quite, but nice to have been asked... The Jocks continued to punch well above their weight for the remainder of the exercise, including a fantastic third and final phase in an urban environment. Their reward for this was a chance to experience some things not often seen on Dreghorn training area. First, an aerial move to assault a compound in the form of two Chinooks and a fleet of five Apache helicopters, and secondly, spectating a full-scale live firing exercise undertaken by Company of M1 Abrams Tanks.

Back to the camp, then, to enjoy the epicurean delights of the U.S. Army's Dining Facility. Simple pleasures perhaps, but life's possibilities seem limitless in the feelgood glow of a DFAC cream pie!

The Adventure Training in San Diego, a combination of mountain climbing and surfing, was unforgettable, so too a trip to the Grand Canyon. And, finally, an invigorating and deeply cultural two-night stay in Las Vegas – the perfect way to round off an extraordinary 6 weeks spent in the USA.



*Lt Macpherson and CSgt Andrews
Chinook Training*

Ex WESSEX STORM – Task Force HANNIBAL – April to May 2023

On 25 April 23 A Company were deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM in Salisbury Plain as Task Force HANNIBAL. This came as a surprise as we had been warned off for the task on 22 April. However, the CQMS team and the remainder of the company worked extremely hard to ensure we met our timings and deployed in good order.

Once we arrived at our home in Rolleston camp it was straight into TES issue and briefs at Westdown Camp. Upon completion it was straight into Orders and deploying out on the ground less than 48 hours later.

One of the highlights of the exercise was the Task Force HANNIBAL assault onto Cope Hill Down village. Along the route in we stumbled across an enemy recce screen which resulted in a rather short brouhaha. Once we were at the Form Up Point, 3 platoon was launched and broke into the village. Suffering a few casualties along the way, we were able to get a foothold in the village. After fierce door to door fighting, it was only myself and Sgt Murphy who remained, at which point we decided to go rogue and stumbled across a command post within the building which was quickly destroyed.



CSgt Andrews finally got a round in



After a large influx of “BCRs” I offered to go and attempt to retake the village, which was no easy task, however I managed to gain a foothold and retook a street. Much to my dismay OC A Company told me I had to surrender, this resulted in spending 5 hours in detention, but we were humanely treated.

We also deployed to Corsham Mines where the company gained experience operating in the subterranean environment which was a challenging but enjoyable experience, the stairs in and out of the mine however, were not so enjoyable.

Overall, it was a great experience for all involved and the company got a lot of benefit from the exercise. Another successful collective training challenge to prepare us for operations later in the year.



Conditions in detention



Capt Gillespie Piping the last stand

Op SHADER – Mission Specific Training – Aug to December 2023

In anticipation of deployment on Op Shader 18, A Coy embarked on the mammoth task of pre-deployment training; for many young Jocks this is their first tour, and their undertaking of the plethora of training requirements has been commendable. Initially starting with a series of ranges in Barry Buddon and Otterburn, the night shoots that once looked like a provincial nightclub, with lasers gracing every square inch of the sky, were soon honed into a disciplined firing line! Likewise, these ranges proved a fantastic proving ground for A Coy's Company Sergeant Major, WO Donnell, to stamp his Brecon-approved mark on the company's fieldcraft.



3 Platoon AAR Med Serial on Op SHADER TEMPEST MRX

In September A Coy took to cascade training – a like-for-like replica of our Erbil actions, with the notable exception that the mid-eastern bazaars being replaced with the bustling metropoli of Biggar and Penicuik; the Jocks cruised round Midlothian and beyond in 4x4 vehicles, providing protection for notional escorted personnel, and trying not to scare too many locals while appearing slightly out of place with a pistol and holster at each of our waists. Major Anderson took the opportunity to nominate his wife, Lauren, to attend a maternity appointment as a VIP under the watchful eye of 1 Platoon.



Keeping Fit in the FOB

With October came the looming task of our mission rehearsal exercise, Ex SHADER TEMPEST, and Caerwent was our staging ground, with the blessing of atypical weather for a Welsh autumn. Our kind observer-mentors from MRTC threw everything they could at us to give us the ‘worst day in Erbil’, but A Company prevailed; with every mass-casualty event, base attack or fleeting contact being responded to in force by the Jocks. The MRTC loan vehicles of broken Land Rovers, however, did not prevail, and as such we were obliged to

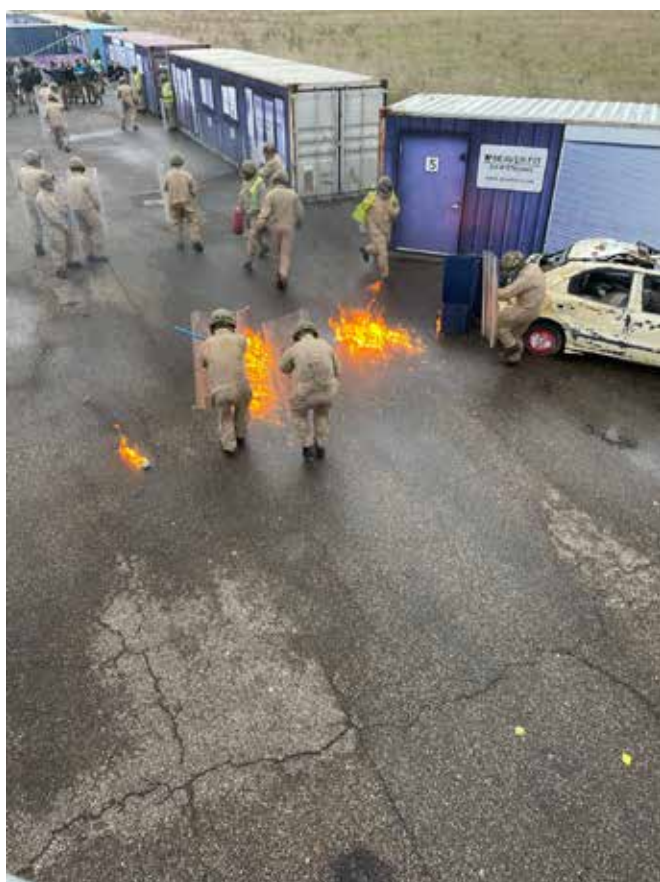
2 SCOTS



use hire cars within our rural convoys – these salubrious wagons were kindly adopted by the platoon sergeants, with special mention to Sgt Boyle for his novel use of a brand-new BMW 5 series as a domineering armoured vehicle. I'm sure it was nothing to do with the heated seats.

Finally, we came to our last hurdle of a public order exercise in Bassingbourn. This proved to be an enjoyable week for all, with the platoon commanders re-enacting their finest Zulu fantasies, the Jocks providing Old Firm-esque civvop, and the platoon sergeants relaxing at the back.

The result is a highly trained company ready to deploy on Operations to Iraq.



A Coy Riot control training in preparation for Op SHADER



A Coy Riot control training in preparation for Op SHADER



BRAVO (ISR) COY

Officer Commanding

Maj Andy Campbell
Maj James Donkin

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 Scott Pew
WO2 Peter Grant

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt Warren Grant

Anti-Tank Platoon

Capt Luke Allwood
CSgt Richie Muir
CSgt Chad Simon
Sgt Andy Dunsmore
Sgt Pete Mawhinney
Sgt Jo Nayacakalou
Sgt Joe Raduva

Sniper Platoon

2Lt Stewart Steven
CSgt Gabriel Tora
CSgt James Coxon
Sgt Gordy Smart

ISR Company Foreword

Another cracking year from ISR Coy, who remain entrusted to deliver at the forefront of the Battalion's busy schedule. As you'll see from the PI articles below, the Coy has had a presence in almost every aspect of the Battalions output for 2023. Highlights include Ex DIAMONDBACK, the delivery of three superbly planned and executed specialist platoon cadres, Ex WESSEX STORM, OPFOR tasks, jungle patrols in Brunei, Op SHADER MST and a number of outstanding career course finishes at CAMS and IBS.

A constant churn of personalities in the Coy, especially in Coy HQ, with the outgoing OC posting to RMAS for an easier life and the outgoing CSM moving to BHQ for the opposite! At the platoon level, a lot of work has gone into growing and developing the next generation of the battalion's specialist platoon operators; this year alone

has produced a fresh inject of over 20 gunners, snipers and recce patrolmen pass the demanding cadres and earn their coveted badges.

Much to look forward to in 2024 – the first half of the year will see elements deploying to Iraq, Cyprus or Kuwait on Op SHADER 18, or supporting the Bn-wide delivery of Op INTERFLEX in Wathgill and Salisbury Plain. Perhaps most importantly will be efforts to defend and retain the New Love Cup title, which was won in style this year with an emphatic and glorious victory in the final over A Coy. A superb team effort embodying the excellent outlook, dedication and achievements demonstrated by the company in the course of the wider year. Well done to all.

RECONNAISSANCE PLATOON

OC Reconnaissance

Capt James Bamford
CSgt Gerry McGuinness

Reconnaissance Sgts

Sgt Matt Drysdale
Sgt Tony Iliffe
Sgt Gary Hocking
Sgt Kev McAvoy
Sgt Stevie Wilson

Yet another successful year of finding everything that moves has been had by the men of the Reconnaissance Platoon. We started with a turbulent period whereby we deployed a patrol to California on Ex DIAMONDBACK to support a US Armoured Brigade level

exercise. The small, dismounted platoon caused so much carnage amongst the enemy armour that they were invited back specifically by name. The lads made the most of some down time and the opportunity to embrace their inner cowboy was not missed.



The Recon Platoon with their US counterparts whilst deployed on Ex DIAMONDBACK



The command element of the Recon Platoon deployed on Ex DIAMONDBACK

2 SCOTS



Following this, it was a few days off and straight down to wreak havoc upon the Royal Gurkha Rifles and Royal Irish. As Task Force Hannibal there was some extra freedom to use their ingenuity to overcome everything the battlegroup threw at them. They even managed to clandestinely listen in to pre deployment orders – not that much could be understood as none could speak Nepalese!

Our focus since has switched to an OP SHADER deployment and running a Recce Patrolmans' Cadre. The senior members of the platoon have been at the forefront of training conducted with a significant contribution to various range packages and some strong performances on the MRX. With the cadre, Ex OVERWATCH FUSILIER, we commenced training in September with a zero week where we focussed on basic skills and fitness. We were fortunate to have a few bluebird days up in the Pentlands and all the guys set themselves up for success on the cadre.

The cadre saw us travel to Kirkcudbright, Ballykinler and Otterburn. We had 30 students drawn from across the Union Division and 4 Brigade as well as support from platoons from across the Battalion. This was a very testing training event that was only made harder by -10 temperatures accompanied by wind and snow. All involved dug out blind for each other and should be rightly proud of successfully qualifying as Recce Patrolmen.



The Platoon conducting static navigation training in the Pentlands during Ex OVERWATCH FUSILIER Zero Week



Op extraction drills



Short halt under the stars



Night shot in Ballykinler



ANTI-TANK PLATOON

2023 was another busy and successful year for the 2 SCOTS Anti-Tank Platoon. The platoon bid farewell to the 2IC, CSgt Muir who took over as the FSp Coy CQMS. CSgt Simon took over as the 2IC and had an excellent performance on the Anti-Tank Platoon Commanders and 2ICs course, finishing third overall, beating the majority of the platoon commanders on the course.

Most of the platoon started the year by preparing and subsequently taking over UKSB. After a busy period during Land Regional Hub (LRH) Oman, where the platoon had a very strong performance this was a welcomed quiet period. The Anti-Tank platoon made up almost half of the 2 SCOTS Alpine Ski Team on Ex FROSTED BLADE, with notable performances from novices Cpl Paul and LCpl Mitchell who both made it onto the 'A' hill. In February, a section led by Sgt Dunsmore deployed on Ex DIAMONDBACK in the US, forming a lethal Rifle and ISR Coy Group embedded in a US Armoured Bde level exercise. Sgt Dunsmore's section had an excellent performance and managed to destroy numerous enemy armoured vehicles and were crucial to an armoured break-in on a large urban area, where they were able to destroy four enemy MBTs.

Whilst on UKSB another section was urgently required to provide OPFOR for Ex WESSEX STORM for the 1RGR Battlegroup. With less than 48 hours notice a section led by Sgt Mawhinney deployed and had a highly successful exercise. In June the platoon completed a Javelin Gunner's cadre, which qualified new members of the platoon and other soldiers from the Battalion to fire a Javelin. It also served as a good refresher course for the more experienced members of the platoon. The cadre was planned and run by Sgt Mawhinney with support from Cpl Boyle



Team shot at Bovington

and Cpl Cockrell. Fus Bowtle had an excellent performance and was the top Jock on the course.

In August the platoon spent the week in Land Warfare Centre where they visited the Anti-Tank school, the Tank Museum and Lulworth Gunnery school, finishing with a go-karting endurance race. The platoon received a brief on the Anti-Tank career courses at LWC by the Anti-Tank Division. They then moved to Lulworth Gunnery school where they received a current threat brief on Armoured Fighting Vehicles and also got 'hands on' a Challenger 2 MBT and Warrior AFV. The platoon then went to the Tank Museum where they received a private tour and the junior members briefed the platoon on current AFVs that were on display in the museum!



Go kart winners



SNIPER PLATOON



Skyline

2 SCOTS Sniper PI has had a busy but very productive year. The platoon returned from Op NEWCOMBE, West Africa where they were deployed as part of the Long-Range Recce Group (LRRG) on a peace keeping mission to help stabilize the region as part of the UN. Once the PI returned, they conducted training in Otterburn for our 2 SCOTS led UNION DIVISION Sniper Operators' Course (SOC), that had to be split for Mission Specific Training (MST) for Op SHADER. Starting in August 2023 with the field and tactical side of the SOC, gave us some great days out in the sun stalking and practicing other Sniper skill sets. October saw the PI working hard on FTX for OP SHADER with the PI split in to two multiples within the ISR structure. This was a great opportunity for all members to nail down some basic skills and drills as well as a high level of medical training that is imperative to the Operational role. Once all this was complete Sniper PI professionally transitioned to the remainder of the

SOC which was the Final ex and field firing phase in some high 35kph winds. 2 SCOTS now have three newly qualified Snipers: Fus Mitchell, Fus Tovoka and Fus Strain. A massive well done to the hard-working Sniper instructors, Cpl Campbell and Cpl Davidson, and the planning and Bookings from Sgt Smart. In December we entered into the Scots Division Sniper Competition, which tested all Sniper skills in -6 weather conditions with LCpl Boyle and LCpl Notman taking away the reward for best overall Pair.

The PI welcomes 2Lt Steven and CSgt Coxon and wishes good luck to LCpl Campbell who is posted to ITC as a Physical training instructor (PTI).



Snipers have 20min to sketch and plot all targets before conducting the ACMT



Relaxing in the sunshine



CHARLIE COMPANY – 2023

Officer Commanding

Maj J N Mackinnon
Maj S T Wright

Company Second in Command

Capt T J Purslow

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 J Haveron

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt J Scott
CSgt R Cook

A constant theme across the Battalion and wider Army, 2023 was another packed year for the Clansmen. The drawdown of Op NEWCOMBE in Mali took the Coy into Spring, although not the tour the Jocks desired, it

still provided valuable operational experience for many. After some well-earned post operational tour leave, the focus shifted to light role infantry skills for the re-role from light mechanised infantry. For the second year running, the Clansmen deployed to Brecon for Ex CLANSMEN ASSEMBLE, de-bunking many of the myths around the Sennybridge training area and an excellent opportunity to brush off the basher and Gore-Tex! The training accomplished was challenging, fun and when appropriate arduous and saw the Coy achieve platoon level training. Included on the exercise was the requirement to validate as the CBRN protection group, a relatively new task to the Field Army and one that the Jocks relished and excelled at, the Coy will be on readiness for this task until summer 2024.

With the blustery climes of Brecon behind us, a very short notice task to Romania would see the majority of the Clansmen from Lt below deploy as the force protection for the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corp (AARC) readiness exercise from early Sep to late Oct. Although on occasions a mundane task, once again the Clansmen jumped in with both feet and certainly made the most of Bucharest.

On arrival back to the UK, attention turned to preparing for Op INTERFLEX, where the Coy will deliver leadership courses from Jan – Jul 2024 to Ukrainian commanders of all ranks. Leadership and Ukraine focussed conceptual development, along with learning Ukrainian tactics was the focus until once again it was time for the Christmas festivities.

7 PLATOON

Officer Commanding:

2Lt H Bolton

Platoon Sergeant

Sgt D Mathieson

The annual Infantry alpine ski championships Ex FROSTED BLADE, held in Val D'Isere, a genuine opportunity to experience the 'Army offer.' Consisting of five weeks of mentally and physically challenging training throughout December and early January. Ex FROSTED BLADE is designed to take soldiers and officers of all abilities of skiing and develop them through specific racing tailored training programmes. The aim, to produce teams confident and capable to progress through to the Divisional and wider Army championships in France. This year 2 SCOTS sent two teams to the exercise, comprising of 7 novice skiers and 1 experienced skier.



Perfect conditions for kilts

2 SCOTS



All smiles at the bottom of the hill

After what felt like an incredibly long journey dodging French lorry drivers, we arrived in resort safe and sound. Excited for what was to come, the team collected their skis and settled into the accommodation. The next morning the exercise paraded somewhat bleary eyed at the lifts at 0830 hrs. Here we were split into provisional groups and were issued a French ski guru from Evo 2, who (through much Glaswegian - French translation) would eventually turn many of the novices into race capable athletes. For the beginners the learning curve was steep, the slopes not so much – but tumble after tumble and run after run, the legs began to ache and the quality of skiing improved. At the end of each long day, aching bodies retired to sample some of Val D'isere's numerous restaurants and bars – the team 2IC taking diligently his skis to Cocoricos every night to get their edges sharpened or stolen.

In what seemed like a blink of an eye, Christmas came and went. Whilst many on the exercise returned to the UK The Royal Regiment of Scotland representatives RV'd on the slopes to give some lessons in how to, or how not to get on and off ski lifts with kilts on.

The break from training was well received and the bruised bodies managed to recover. Everyone was excited for the Christmas festivities to end and the racing to ensue.



Easy does it on the upper slopes

During race week tensions were high. 2 SCOTS split down to two teams, A Hill, and B Hill. Both competing for individual and team prizes. Whilst the weather conditions became awkward for competing in the downhill speed events, the slalom, GS and Super G went ahead. Whilst no medals were won from the teams, the effort put in by all was somewhat heroic in difficult conditions on icy slopes – individuals are required to have the utmost confidence in themselves and what they have learnt when racing at speeds of up to 70mph.

The top members of the team travelled onto Les Contamines on Ex PIPEDOWN where they competed in the Divisional Qualifying Championships, here the tempo was turned up. With the weather now permitting, the team raced in all disciplines. The firm favourite was the downhill where the technicality of gates is replaced with sheer speed and bravery, an infants' bread and butter! Competition was ferocious and we narrowly missed out on places at the Army Qualifiers, but the conditions are truly set for 2 SCOTS in future winter exercises.



8 PLATOON

Officer Commanding

2Lt A Thompson

Platoon Sergeant

Sgt J Maclean

In September, Charlie Company, with backfill from B and Fire Support Coys, deployed at very short notice to Romania to provide force protection for the major NATO exercise, STEADFAST JUPITER. We deployed from Glencorse in good order and began our journey to Bucharest via the Joint Air Movements Centre and Brize Norton. We arrived at the Romanian army camp 24hrs later, where we linked up with 22 Signal Regiment, who we would be attached to for the duration of the exercise. We had a good day integrating with the Gurkha squadrons, with Fus Gallacher presenting the history of 2 SCOTS as well as the closeknit history of Scottish and Gurkha soldiers.

The initial five weeks consisted of the build phase. For 2 SCOTS this consisted of understanding the compound we were to guard, setting up a guard room and building perimeter wire defences. Once our guard was set up, the Royal Signals and Royal Engineers could begin their build. During this time there was opportunity to explore Bucharest, a particular favourite was the thermal spa where Jocks, NCOs and Officers alike could relax and have some downtime on a rare day off. The weather throughout the exercise was exceptional, rarely below 25 degrees and always sunny.

Once the build was complete, the ARRC staff began to arrive in preparation for the execute phase of the exercise. During the execute phase the role for us did not change, and the Jocks continued to provide protection, not only of personnel but also of critical exercise equipment. At no point did their enthusiasm levels drop and their professionalism and sense of humour remained exemplary. The execute phase



8 Platoon ready for QRF

also saw the Colonel of the Regiment, Lieutenant General Sir Nick Borton KCB DSO MBE, arrive as COMARRC. He was extremely keen on meeting the Jocks at every opportunity and was very proud to tell visiting guests that we were a part of his regiment. The execute phase lasted 10 days, and on completion the collapse of the CP began. We were the last ones to collapse and afterwards thoughts quickly turned to the journey home.

The return to Glencorse was eventful to say the least! Morale was certainly tested after a literal case of "on the bus, off the bus" on the airport tarmac. Thankfully however, we only had to wait four days until we were split into three groups and through planes, trains and automobiles eventually made it back to camp. Luckily, all were accounted for unscathed, and everyone took something away from this broadening experience.



Colonel of the Regiment meeting the Jocks



9 PLATOON

Officer Commanding

Lt T Hamilton-Cox

Platoon Sergeant

Sgt K McAvoy

Sgt S King

The last year has been incredibly busy for 9 Platoon, much like the rest of Charlie Coy and 2 SCOTS. The year kicked off with the continuation of the draw down of Op NEWCOMBE. 9 Pl were some of the last troops to leave Mali in March after over four months of fighting the G4 battle. It wasn't the tour that we were hoping for, however, still a rewarding deployment and an introduction to most in working with partner forces and the wider UN effort. For many in the platoon it was their first deployment so navigating the sand dunes and volcanic rock of the Sahel when we did patrol was certainly a testing experience. For those lucky enough to be on the last flight out, being stranded on the Dakar airfield for 8 hours led to two nights in a beach front Radisson, courtesy of the RAF credit card. It certainly beat the regulation decompression package delivered from South Cerney.

On return from Op NEWCOMBE, attention swiftly flicked to validating as part of the CBRN protection group, a task given to Charlie Coy. Switching from the warm climate of West Africa to the delights of Sennybridge Training Area was a return to reality for all. Yet, our two-week deployment on the annual Ex CLANSMAN ASSEMBLE offered an opportunity to train collectively post re-orbat and integrate new members of the Pl into our training. As is the pace of Army life these days, after a successful validation exercise 9 Pl were packing their bags once again to deploy on Ex STEADFAST JUPITER in support of the ARRC. The time in Romania was enjoyed by all who deployed.



The Clansmen

Outside of normal work routine, members of 9 Pl have capitalised on many of the opportunities that the Army can provide. From multiple people successfully completing a JNCO cadre and subsequently promoting, to participating in AT and the much-lauded

Ex FROSTED BLADE, the Pl have certainly kept themselves busy. Attention now is firmly on providing the best training we can to the Armed Forces of Ukraine as we deploy on Op INTERFLEX and deliver a PCBC equivalent.



9 Platoon ready to deploy



FIRE SUPPORT COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj Ben Large
Maj Edward Shepherd

Company 2IC

Capt Alastair Turner

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 James McKenna
WO2 Christopher Andrews

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt Richard Muir

Tech Sgt

Sgt Graham Hayworth

OC Foreword

From taking over the Coy in the summer, it has been a pleasure to see the value and dedication Fire Support Company have been adding to the Battalion and wider Army over the past year.

As you will read in the Platoon updates, the Coy has supported activity all over the UK and further afield. Having returned from Ex KAJAR OMAN at the end of 2022, the Coy quickly re-cocked and deployed both on Ex WESSEX STORM and Op INTERFLEX concurrently. Here they supported A Coy taking the fight to the RGR as TF HANIBAL and provided valuable training to our Ukrainian counterparts, respectively. Alongside this the Assault Pioneer Platoon were tested to the extreme in their ceremonial role, participating in every high-level ceremonial event over the period. This included the Edinburgh Tattoo, Op UNICORN, Op GOLDEN ORB and OP SCEPTRE. A challenge that they lapped up and performed to an immaculate standard in all respects.

After summer leave it was straight back to it with Guns Pl delivering a high-quality Cadre and much of the Mor Pl deploying on Ex HARAKA STORM in support of the Grenadier Guards BG. I deployed on this exercise as an OM

and found it very interesting to see how other light role infantry BGs operate in an environment that we as a Bn know so well. Safe to say they would have stood a chance against any SCOTS mob.

The end of the year saw support to various Bn efforts including Ex STEADFAST JUPITOR and Op INTERFLEX. FSP Coy answers the call as always and it gives me a deep pride to see them get stuck into everything that is thrown at them with minimal fuss and maximum effort.

Next year will see FSP Coy deploy to the Falklands as the RIC. Although a South Atlantic winter could be seen as a daunting task, the hardy Men and Women of the FSP Coy team are more than up for the challenge.

THE MORTAR PLATOON

OC Mortars

Capt Alexander Cartwright

2IC Mortars

WO2 Samuel Donnachie

Mortar Sgts

Sgt David McGregor
Sgt Charles Gray
Sgt Eric Kiogora
Sgt Craig Aitchison



The Mortar Section after completion of Ex HARAKA STORM

2 SCOTS



The team 'enjoying' a heavy carry on the cadre



Live firing on Ex HAKARA STORM

The Mortar Platoon has had another busy year supporting the Battalion. We have had soldiers deployed in support of Op NEWCOMBE 5, Op INTERFLEX and numerous exercises across the world. Notably, a complete section deployed to support 1 Grenadier Guards on Ex HAKARA STORM. Ex HAKARA STORM is the latest iteration of exercises in Kenya and is a real test for all Battle Groups that go through it. Despite the austere conditions and near constant rain, the 2 SCOTS Mortar Section showed that they were far superior to the Grenadier Guards winning the inter section competition in Archers Post. Sgt Aitchison must get a special mention as this was his first task after promoting to Sgt!

The Mortar Platoon did have an 'enjoyable' period on Salisbury Plain, playing Task Force Hannibal for 16 Air Assault Brigade. Pushing the brigade back, the platoon showed that we have the ability to perform the tasks of the rifle platoons as well as mortaring. Albeit our gorilla tactics may have been a little dubious!

Back in the UK, the Mortar Platoon has been working on how it will operate in modern conflicts. Taking on new technology such as drones and understanding counter battery fire concepts, we have worked hard to make sure that we can be as lethal as possible, whilst maintaining our survivability. One of the greatest challenges we find is how to manoeuvre around the battlefield at

speed to support the rifle companies. In our cadre in February we will be testing the use of civilian 4x4's to manoeuvre. Easily replaceable and more difficult to spot than traditional green fleet vehicles we aim to become a modern fighting force ready for the challenges of 2024.

It hasn't all been green training through. The soldiers have enjoyed some AT, sport and time at home with their families. 2024 looks like another busy year and I look forward to seeing what the platoon can accomplish.



THE MACHINE GUN PLATOON

Officer Commanding

Capt James Gillespie
Capt Pete Dewhurst

PI Sergeants

Sgt R Smith
Sgt K Macmillan

This has been a mighty year for the 2 SCOTS MG platoon. Following on from Ex KAJAR Oman at the end of 2022, some serious rebuilding was required. A re-ORBAT from Light Mechanised Infantry to Light Infantry saw the amalgamation of the two MG platoons into one. This also saw the training of three new Cpls; Brand, Oates and Vuki, who all completed their Commander's Course at the start of this year. We also saw two new LCpls; Cannon and Fergusson, promoted to gun controllers.

The platoon's first real challenge was assisting A Coy as task force Hannibal on Ex WESSEX STORM against 2 RGR. The platoon was exceptional, particularly noted for their determination defending Bridge-Carr Village and their out-the-box thinking causing havoc during the defence of Corsham Mines. Following on from this, the platoon was split across various tasks including providing support to Op INTERFLEX on Salisbury Plain.



Gun pair firing on an ACMT



Gun pair firing HMG on Kirkudbright Ranges

After Summer leave the guns platoon had their annual opportunity to train and qualify their gun lines. This year saw the course split between Kirkudbright ranges and Otterburn training area. We relish the opportunity to practice our actual trade and this year did not disappoint. Over 100,000 rounds of ammunition were fired over the 6-week course and over 20 soldiers were qualified. We also used the opportunity to lean into our supporting arms and introduce them to the gun line. Having attachments familiar with the equipment and tactics we use allow them to fit seamlessly into the platoon when required and helps our soldiers know what they can do to assist our enablers and keep our guns firing.

Throughout this year the MG platoon has had a big focus on fitness. Double PT is the norm in camp now and the soldiers have bought into the benefits that all-round fitness can bring. At the end of November, the MG platoon organised a charity event running 4 miles every 4 hours for 48 hours. The ultramarathon event tested the platoon's physical and mental resilience.



The Machine Gun Platoon completing the David Goggins challenge



THE PIPES, DRUMS AND BUGLES / ASSAULT PIONEER PLATOON

Pipe Major

CSgt Lilbahadur Gurung

Drum Major

Sgt Thomas McKay

PI Sgt

Sgt Joe Davies

Reflecting over the last 12 months, it has been a very busy year for the platoon. The band have had new appointments, members arriving and some leaving, along with various Military courses being attended whilst also supporting several high-profile Military and public events.

The platoon said farewell to Cpl McWhinnie as he takes on a new role as an instructor at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming (ASBM&HD) and good luck to Cpl Roberts as he leaves to take on his new role, as 4 SCOTS Pipe Major.

Notable events that the Platoon participated in include an excellent Assaye Day Parade, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, The Lord Mayors' Show in London, and numerous Freedom parades around Scotland. This was a great opportunity to show off the battalion, and the leaps and bounds in which the band has progressed over the past few years.

The 2022/2023 period saw the platoon participate in some of the biggest Royal engagements in living memory. Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee parade was attended, followed by the sad affair of the Royal State Funeral of HM Queen, she received both in Scotland (Op UNICORN) and in London (Op LONDON BRIDGE). Following this, the platoon was back on parade, for the Coronation of HM King Charles III, both in London (Op GOLDEN ORB) and in Scotland (Op SCEPTRE). I am sure many of the platoon will agree that these jobs are some of the biggest we are likely to do in our lifetime.



The band parades before Op GOLDEN ORB

With no time for rest, it was back up to Edinburgh for the return of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Again, this was a first for many members of the platoon and very enjoyable, but with nerves of steel the band pushed through the drawbridge under the concealment of smoke and lights and put on a fantastic performance every night for people travelling from far and wide to witness.

Following all the musical performances the band changed out of their ceremonial uniform into combats and headed off to Weymouth to conduct our annual Assault Pioneer training. This allowed the platoon to refresh skills they need to operate as an effective asset within the Battalion.



The platoon enjoyed some tourist attractions during our visits to London

Sgt Davies, Cpl Crawford and Fusilier Blairford travelled to Messines Ridge in France to participate in a number of Poignant services. They played an important role as Bugler, Piper and Bearer party when burying Soldiers from the Highland Light Infantry, who were recently found at the spot in which they bravely fell.

November's Remembrance period took the band to London once again, where we were on parade during Armistice Day for the Lord Mayors show. The following day - Remembrance Sunday - full advantage was taken to put on a regimental tie and attend the service at the Cenotaph at Whitehall. A wonderful experience being the people on the sidelines, watching for a change!



The platoon getting stuck into the other side of our job!

Several notable personnel changes included a farewell to Fusiliers Cooper and Nisbet as they come to the end of their time in the Army. We wish Fusilier Nisbet the best of luck as he transfers from Regular to Reserve service with 6 SCOTS. We welcome to the platoon LCpl Susil Rai and LCpl Sujana Rai who join us as a drummer and a piper from The Gurkha Division. Congratulations are in order, for Fus Blairford, Tytler and Saka and partners on the birth of their children. Final Congratulations are in order on the promotion front: Fusilier to Lance Corporal - LCpl's Nugent, Grubis, Black, Rai, Edwards and Rai. LCpl to Cpl - Cpl Steel and Cpl - Sgt- Sgt Roberts.

Individuals who have previous Pipe Band experience and are interested in a career change are always welcome; please come along and visit Pipe Major Gurung and Drum Major McKay at the Pipe Band Block. We would also welcome soldiers who have no Pipe Band experience but would like to tackle the challenge of learning the Pipes or Drums. Soldiers interested in a career change will also have the chance to attend Assault Pioneer courses which will be regularly attended over the next 12 months.



THE CIS PLATOON

RSO

Capt Chris Smyth

RSWO

WO2 Ian Crews

CIS CQMS

CSgt Lee Gemmell

BSM

CSgt Andrew Mcpherson

The past twelve months have been bustling with activity for the 2 SCOTS CIS Platoon. The platoon once again demonstrated its rigorous commitment and determination to provide and sustain secure communications to 2 SCOTS whilst deployed both globally and within the UK. Our communicators have also proved vital in their support and facilitation for the other companies in the battalion enabling them to conduct their various exercises and pre-deployment training for operations abroad. We've even managed to squeeze in some personal and professional development for the troops to ensure they are more employable both within the service and out on civvie street.

We began 2023 with an influx of new communicators, fresh from the rifle companies across 2 SCOTS. Due to our technical nature and the capabilities that we provide, this would mean a lot of hard work from our senior communicators to get them upskilled and professionally accredited as soon as possible. Running back-to-back basic and intermediate signals courses, we were able to qualify everyone by the end of March; a truly remarkable feat that those instructors should be proud of. As summer approached, a highlight was the notorious charity event: The CATERAN YOMP. This 54 mile trek up and across the Cairngorm Mountains was composed of members of the CIS Platoon and organised by our own CSgt

Gemmell in aid of the ABF Soldiers Charity. The team completed the event in good spirits and raised several thousand pounds in support of their cause. Thankfully the weather also held true to keep morale high.



The CATERAN YOMP CIS Team

April saw the initial handover of Regimental Signals Officer (RSO) from Capt S Stenhouse (2 SCOTS) to Capt C Smyth (1 RIRISH) before going on his respective qualifying career course. Concurrently, under the watchful eyes of the RSWO, the platoon was busy preparing for the testing phase of the 2 SCOTS headquarters in the south of England. Many tents, cam nets and radios were packed, repacked, and configured to ensure the smooth deployment on such an important exercise. The RSO, in true officer fashion, returned from his course the week prior to deployment and with a

quick update from the RSWO on how everything would work, enabled the platoon to deploy on a very successful exercise. The troops conducted themselves professionally and with the knowledge that there was only a week left to push until they could enjoy themselves over their well-earned summer standdown period.

As autumn approached, it saw some members of the CIS Platoon deploy to London to view behind the curtain at what the future of defence could look like and what they were experimenting and testing with. Our primary aim was to view and learn about the new and innovative ways to exploit our current communication kit, but sometimes it's easy to be distracted by shiny new things such as jetpacks, an armoury of different weapons, tiny thermal cameras and large armoured vehicles; all from every corner of the globe!

Nearing the end of 2023, we had success in the form of promotions and distinction worthy career reports. This is a result of the hard work from our soldiers who work proudly at their trade and allows our capacity to grow and provide a better quality of service to 2 SCOTS. We also welcomed back some communicators who recently departed from the Armed Forces to test



BGHQ hiding in plain sight

2 SCOTS



A future soldier concept from DSEI

the waters in civvie-street. They have been warmly received back into our team and are being aligned to various taskings to ensure their careers are being invested in. We also had our CIS Platoon social night which involved a secret Santa event, visiting the 2 SCOTS Christmas markets on the patch, before finally heading into Edinburgh Christmas markets for a few glühweins. As 2023 draws to a close, we look forward to what 2024 may bring. There will be more opportunities within the UK and abroad to refine and develop our skills, but also to demonstrate our effectiveness to other units and our allied partner nations.



INTELLIGENCE CELL

IO
Capt Seumas O'Duffin

AIO
CSgt Stuart McGregor

Cell Sgt
Sgt Mark McLaren

Cell Analyst
Fus Danielle Mullen

2023 proved as action packed as ever for the Int Cell, with members of the team deployed on exercises and operations around the world.

We welcomed Fus Mullen as the latest addition to the team and benefitted from her assistance in preparation for Op SHADER and Op INTERFLEX. As a key member of the Bn Boxing team, Fus Mullen was victorious at both The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing Night as well as repeating this impressive feat against the same tough opponent on tour at the Royal Anglian Regiment Boxing. Her hard work and tenacity have been impressive to witness, and the Cell wishes her all the best with her future endeavours. We also waved off Sgt McLaren as he left the army to embark on further adventures overseas. A hugely valued member of the Cell and the wider Bn, Sgt McLaren's expertise, diligence and good humour will be greatly missed. The RCMO's Dept however are no doubt overjoyed that the high-spirited noise levels in the shared corridor have dramatically decreased since his departure.



Champion Boxer Fus Mullen with IO and AIO

As for the remaining stalwarts, both IO and AIO have been kept busy, qualifying variously on courses as Continuous Improvement Advisors, Unit Intelligence Officers, Public Order Instructors and CBRN Defence Advisors. The team also deployed with the Bn on Ex WESSEX STORM as TASK FORCE HANNIBAL, using their finely tuned J2 skills to put both the RGR and R IRISH battlegroups through their paces on Salisbury Plain.

In May the IO was lucky enough to act as ADC to the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, spending a memorable week at Holyrood Palace in somewhat different conditions to Westdown Camp. By July however Capt O'Duffin and CSgt McGregor were back on the Plain for the joys of CAST, once again dusting off their range rings and enemy doctrine. During a challenging but ultimately rewarding week, the team put in a fine performance and were commended by directing staff on the quality of their wargaming.



The IO briefs the CO on the enemy

As autumn approached, hopes of firing up the Int Cell kettle for a cup of Earl Grey were again dashed as CSgt McGregor, Jungle Warfare Instructor, was summoned to muster a jungle patrol team and whisk them off to Brunei. Despite minimal preparation time the scratch team thrived under the canopy, becoming the only UK based team to achieve a Silver Medal on Ex SUNDA PATROL, 4 LBCT's inaugural jungle patrols competition.

2023 also proved fruitful for the Cell's Continuous Improvement efforts, with the Award of Silver Accreditation in recognition of the work done over the past several years. Although other commitments drew the team's focus as the year progressed, we look forward to working towards the next steps and the Gold award in future.

Throughout the year the team prepared and supported training for Op SHADER and Op INTERFLEX, with CSgt McGregor deploying in Dec 23 for his 6-month tour in Baghdad. The IO too has been kept busy, stepping in as Adjutant in late 23 for a three-month stint. The Cell eagerly anticipates re-forming in summer 24 to consolidate before handing over the finest small team in Bn to our successors!



QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster

Maj Iain MacLachlan

Quartermaster Technical

Capt Alan Campbell

Regimental Quartermaster Maintenance

WO2 Shaun Whitehead MC

Regimental Quartermaster Technical

WO2 Andrew Bright

This has been another challenging year for 2 SCOTS Quartermaster's Department with major parts in supporting C Coy Op Newcombe MRX and deployment, A Coy Ex DIAMOND BACK in the USA (March – April), HOTO of all Protected Mobility vehicles (April), Op SHADER MRX and deployment support for A Coy (September – December) and then finally the HOTO of INTERFLEX from December 23 until July 24.

On top of these events, we also sadly had the death of HM The Queen and the Coronation of HM The King and all the short notice tailoring that CSgt Benson and Cpl Murdoch excellently managed. I am not sure how Doch managed it in-between playing golf, but well done to him for winning the golf competition. CSgt Ross MacKinnon (G1098 SNCO) moved to 7 SCOTS and Sgt Vananalagi jumped ship to 1 Royal Welsh as the Welfare SNCO. Both were excellent in their roles and their poor daily banter in between constant brews has been sorely missed.

CSgt Alan Duncan has moved from 2 SCOTS Welfare to G1098 and now needs some Welfare, and Sgt Grandison (JAMES SNCO) has removed the red hackle and finally knows the power of the white hackle and has a Glaswegian accent starting to form. LCpl Davy Johns and Pte Kaikba (Mr U60) have also joined the RLC 1 LO team and have



Cpl Matty Rounding sending out his direction

been a great asset to the team. Cpl Matty Rounding (Lt Col Dick Strawbridge doppelganger) arrived from FSp Coy and has immediately made his desk his own – if you see it, you will know what we mean!

The A Coy Op SHADER MRX has probably been the biggest task to ensure was administered properly and ready for all to take part in. In October 23 the RQMS(T) initially ran with this complex task, but when it all got a bit too much for him, he ran to the Commanding Officer and asked if he could help in BHQ? Luckily, the RQMS(M) Shaun Whitehead had the ability to immediately take over the task and deliver it to a very high standard. The team worked very hard, and they were congratulated and told that they had been the most forward leaning and supportive QMs that they had seen. Joking aside - WO2 Andy Bright has been an amazing RQMS(T) and he has just been promoted to WO1 and will make an excellent RSM at 7 SCOTS.



Cpl Rounding, Gurung and Pte Kaikba hard at work as always



CATERING DEPARTMENT

The Catering Department again has been heavily involved in all Battalion events and trawled to support other units and deployments at short notice. Sgt Sahai deployed to the Falklands for 6 months and has been highly praised. Both SSgt Henderson and Sgt Townsend have managed the workload extremely well and they have a highly motivated and happy team. This was clearly demonstrated on the Op SHADER MRX where they produced outstanding food for two locations of 100+. Pte Blunden only burnt the chips a few times, and seemingly nearly succeeded in burning the water!

Cpls Brown, Halford, Ptes Kerr and Reeves were always in good spirits at the hotplate and dished out high standard food. It's just a pity that the banter was not at that standard also.

LCpl Dunn must be banned from driving, and he is lucky the MTO never saw him in the transit van! You can always tell its him driving as the scream of the engine and high revs gives it away!

Without the happy bunch of G4 heroes in the QMs and Catering Pl, then the Battalion would grind to a halt.

Well done all!



LCpl Dunn protecting his scoff!



Pte Blunden giving us a thumbs up as he only lightly burned the chips this time!



2 SCOTS LAD



The LAD managed to get away on a mountain biking expedition

OC LAD

Capt B Carter

AQMS

WO2 D Robertson

General

2 SCOTS Light Aid Detachment (LAD) has supported the Battalion as it moved back from Light Mechanised Infantry to Light Infantry. This has made the last year a busy one for all trades as the equipment has been transferred over to different units. During 2023 members of the LAD have deployed to Mali, Benin, Poland, Kenya, Germany, Iraq and various UK locations. Notable highlights in barracks from this year have been utilising the Innovation Fund to vastly improve tooling at the LAD, working with industry on MOT inspections standards and a well-received charity night that raised nearly £1000 for the REME Lifting the Decks charity.

Operations and Exercises

With competent, eager soldiers, there has been no shortage of demand externally for the workforce, resulting in many deployments across the year. A section from 2 SCOTS deployed

with SCOTS DG Battlegroup for Op NEWCOMBE as part of the theatre. Such was their professionalism and skill in a testing location, the team were nominated for an Engineering Award, an outstanding achievement. Op INTERLINK involved inspecting the vehicles donated to Ukrainian forces in Europe, ably carried out by Cpl McFarlane before Sgt Musgrove deployed in support of the HQ elements. This year has also seen a large dependency on 2 SCOTS LAD for vehicle inspectors in Kenya, with three members deploying for long periods to ensure BATUK could continue to exercise. The LAD's most focussed deployment, however, has been on Op SHADER as part of the UK Manoeuvre Company. A small section from the LAD spent the second half of the year training on various equipment such as Civilian Armoured Vehicles and RAF aircraft equipment to enable the best output in theatre. In sum, a busy but rewarding year deployed.

Training and development

Across the REME there has been plenty of change to inspections standards, giving an opportunity at 2 SCOTS LAD to work closely with civilian industry. This useful link meant that MOT station best practice was implemented in our

hangars and a tooling initiative enabled better tools for our people. Outstanding work, particularly from the Protected Mobility section. Being tasked as UK Standby Battalion ensured the LAD routine was busy to keep all Land Rover and SVs on the road for a 12-hour notice to move for three months. A last-minute Ex WESSEX STORM also tested the adaptability of the LAD, but each problem was worked through with a smile on their faces, such is the high morale of the team.

Sport and social

The LAD holds some keen mountain bikers, an army footballer and strong runners so sport is always taken seriously. This year the team organised multiple AT trips to enjoy the best of the Scottish countryside, with a trip to the Cairngorms a particular highlight. The REME Lifting The Decks initiative is a Corps wide challenge to test the physical attributes during October to help focus on mental wellbeing. Having been previous winners of the charity award, this year the LAD once again took on the physical challenges with great enthusiasm. To raise money for the charity Sgt Gilling put together an excellent dinner night, raising nearly £1000. Plenty of fun was had, giving an excellent send off to many leaving the LAD whilst giving junior ranks the taste of mess life.



The LAD conducting their annual summer function



TRAINING WING

Training Officer

Capt T H Oakes

Training WO

CSgt S Alexander

CSgt C Grant

Training SNCO

Sgt P Breen

Sgt D Boag

2023 has been a busy and rewarding year for the 2 SCOTS Training Wing, not least given the full churn of the team. Capt Oakes arrived in mid-June to take over as Trg Offr, followed closely by Sgt Breen in July and CSgt Alexander in September. Fortune favours the bald! We also bid farewell to Sgt Boag, who has been assigned to MRTC on promotion to CSgt, and CSgt Grant who has taken over as CSM A Coy, 4 SCOTS.

As a newly formed Training Wing, we were very quickly introduced to the hectic nature of Bn life with copious exercises, range packages and Cadres to deliver.

And so, with Ops SHADER and INTERFLEX on the horizon, we got stuck in into the bread-and-butter taskings that the Trg Wing delivers throughout the year, before switching fire onto the more Op-specific exercises and range packages. In late August the Pre JNCO cadre started for the Jocks wishing to take their first step on the promotion ladder. Pre JNCO cadres are one of the more rewarding jobs that the Trg Wing provides, developing junior commanders to successfully complete the UDTT JNCO Cadre and return to Bn ready and eager to promote to LCpl.

During the autumn months, the Bn deployed on a number of PDT exercises and ranges, with the full support of the Trg Wing. Numerous trips to RCO ranges in Barry Buddon meant that the Trg Wing became particularly familiar with the layout of the ranges, as well as Baynes bakery. Sgt Breen, no stranger to their incredibly moreish steak pies, was delighted to have them regularly delivered to him as he diligently took charge of safety on the ranges.

A highlight of the PDT cycle was the Public Order exercise, delivered by the Trg Wing with the help of instructors from across the wider Bn. The exercise was run in Bassingbourn under the watchful eye of the MRTC validation team, focussing on PI operations within the Coy context. With only a few injuries and the very occasional missing tooth, the Jocks relished the chance to have a good scrap with one another, all the while feeling the warm glow of petrol bombs around their feet!

In the new year, the Trg Wing will be spread across the numerous tasks being conducted by the Bn. Capt Oakes will deploy on Op SHADER 18, CSgt Alexander will become a lead instructor for the delivery of Trg on INTERFLEX and Sgt Breen will provide a supporting role on INTERFLEX.

PHYSICAL TRAINING WING

SSI

SSgt Scot Craft

SI

Sgt John Fleming

This year the gymnasium staff have been involved with many events, With the Battalion bidding farewell to SSgt (SSI) J Hodkinson an incredible RAPTCI and LCpl Masson who was successfully selected to transfer to the RAPTC. 2 SCOTS have since welcomed Sgt (SI) J Fleming RAPTC posted in from RMAS. Events included BISMARCK Challenge 23,

The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing, British Army Warrior Fitness (BAWF), Angus VC courses & Inter-Company Sports Competition which was won by FSP Company.



During an exceptionally busy forecast, 2 SCOTS gymnasium hosted 2 Army in Scotland (AiS) BAWF Events. This saw various units from across Scotland attend and compete in the fierce team series competition. Our very own 2 SCOTS BAWF team lead by Maj Anderson managed to qualify for the final event held in Aldershot and the Army School of Physical Training finishing in second place overall across all teams within the army. A Fantastic effort all round.

BAWF Event

2 SCOTS



SCOTS boxing show

The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing, held at the Oriam Arena in Nov 23, was a hard-fought competition where soldiers from across all 5 Battalions demonstrate admirable levels of determination, courage and commitment. The highlight of the event was Fusilier Donaghy collecting best boxer of the evening. The Gymnasium held a 6-week regimental training camp supporting all boxers in their journey to the event.

The Battalion has also gained 3 new All Arms Physical Training Instructors (AAPTI) in Cpl Couper, LCpl Kerr & Fusilier Nedd after completing the 9-week course at the Army School of Physical Training, with all 3 AAPTI's now front and centre of PD delivery within the battalion. LCpl Kerr has demonstrated sporting prowess and was awarded his regimental sports colours for his commitment to Army Cycling.

SSgt (SSI) Craft RAPTC also delivered 2 highly successful 4-week intense PT/ Rehabilitation courses, aimed toward injured SP, with the goal to enhance their rehabilitation and become fully upgraded by the end of the concentrated course, which was the case for 70% of SP who attended the course in Feb 23.

Sgt (SI) Fleming immediately put his mark on Physical Training within the battalion by introducing The Jock Athlete Programme aimed to improve, educate, and enhance soldier performance within the battalion. This included individualising all SP training and increasing the volume with the battalion Physical Training programme. This resulted in clear improvements across all components of fitness, highlighted by Solider performance on various Annual Testing and arduous military events.



AAPTI pass off



Jock athlete program



THE MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

MTO

Capt N Diciacca
Capt SL McNally

MTWO

CSgt D Imrie
WO2 M Hutchison

MT Sgt

Sgt B Stephenson
Sgt MD Miller

The last six months has seen a significant amount of change for the MT Platoon. Several stalwarts of the department have moved on during the summer months with Capt Diciacca, CSgt Imrie and Sgt Stephenson all leaving for pastures new. Collectively, they all depart with our thanks and best wishes for the future.

New additions to the team include WO2 Hutchinson (MTWO) and Sgt Miller (MT Sgt), both arriving in Jul 23 ahead of the Bn's re-role to light infantry. The change of role resulted in the reallocation of the protected mobility fleet with the Foxhound and Jackal platforms now surplus to requirements.

There were mixed feelings from the Jocks following the departure of the vehicles, particularly after delivering to such a high standard in Oman as a Light Mech Bn. Jackals were always a fan favourite when operating in the sunnier climes of the gulf states, less so in Salisbury Plain!



FSp Coy on a maint day during Ex KHANJAR Oman



Initial safety brief delivered by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

The craziness of the Christmas week standdown remained true to form with only just enough time to squeeze in the Winter Driving Awareness training prior to the Jock's Lunch. The Battalion were kindly supported by both Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The fire brigade ably demonstrated how to extract a casualty from a damaged vehicle utilising the latest cutting-edge equipment....no pun intended. After swiftly dispatching the donor vehicle, the 'Jaws of Life' were put to good use with the MT Platoon holding down Fus Lynn for a toenail trim.



Cpl Burton and Cpl Smith sorting out who gets the most expensive hire car



Cpl Weir and LCpl Flannagan surveying the damage to the demonstration vehicle

The new year was fast upon us followed by a rapid deployment to Wathgill Camp in support of Op INTERFLEX. At the time of writing, the core of the platoon were neck deep in 4x4 vehicles in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales. Sgt Miller and Cpl Burton are in their element, throwing vehicles passes about with more skill than a Las Vegas card dealer. Meanwhile, the MTO can be found gently rocking in his chair wondering what happened to his Christmas leave – time passes by quickly for the elderly.



THE REGIMENTAL AID POST

RMO

Maj Grant Milne

Med Sgt

Sgt Dale Baker

2023 has been a busy and engaging year for the 2 SCOTS RAP. The year has seen various deployments and taskings across the country and globe, with every member of the team being utilised to support these exciting opportunities.

This year started with Jeyasingham and Cawkill deploying to Nepal to support Ghurkha selection. At the same time, Sullivan Reeve and Cpl Lyons deployed on a CBRN exercise in Brecon, Wales. During this tasking, they were involved in multiple training lessons that ISR Company conducted, and they were also there to provide medical cover for the duration of the exercise.

By February half term Cpl Bowie had deploy to Cyprus to provide medical cover on the 5 SCOTS patrol competition.

The RAP's medical Sergeant Baker deployed to Lebanon and Kenya this year, where he assisted in delivering medical training with JCTTAT and assisting the Coldstream Guards on Askari Storm as the UAP Medical Sergeant.

Major Milne, the RMO, was tawled to support the RIB in Cyprus from April – May. Within 48hrs of arriving, the unit was put on 12hrs notice to move and by the end of the week he had deployed to Sudan in support of Op POLARBEAR, the non-combatant evacuation operation of British Nationals in Sudan.

In June, Kirk supported 1 PWRR on OP INTERFLEX in Warcop. Whilst on this operation, they helped to provide treatment in the medical centre and deployed on exercises with the Swedish training team to provide medical cover

for both the Swedish and Ukrainian soldiers.

The highlight of the year for 2 SCOTS RAP was in July 2023. The team deployed on Ex KINGSTON SERPENT for a 2-week clinical placement in the Emergency Department of Kingston Public Hospital. This was the first time an RAP in Field Army had deployed on an overseas clinical placement without the wraparound of a larger overseas exercise. The team worked alongside their Jamaican counterparts to provide lifesaving treatment for those with medical, surgical and traumatic life-threatening injuries in Kingston Public Hospital. We adopted a day and night work pattern to allow a wide range of clinical exposure. The RAP split down into two teams of two CMT's and an MO to allow all of us to work closely with patients and learn more from a 1 to 1 basis with the doctor. Once the 2 weeks clinical placements were complete, the team enjoyed 48hrs of well-deserved R+R on the West coast of Jamaica, including deep sea fishing, visiting the Bob Marley Museum and the Appleton Estate Jamaica rum distillery.



Ex KS visiting Bob Marley Museum

In the autumn months, 2nd Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland started PDT for Op SHADER. During this time, the RAP attended the ARB and MRX. On MRX, some members of the team were tested on their soldiering and medical skills, to prepare them for the Iraq environment. They conducted various validation scenarios so that they were aware of the procedures used whilst in Iraq and how to protect themselves.

In conclusion, the year has kept the 2 SCOTS RAP team busy and fully engaged with supporting the Battalion and wider Army with unique and interesting deployments. These opportunities provided experiences, skills and lessons to all those involved. In 2024 the RAP looks forward to supporting Op INTERFLEX, SHADER and FIRIC.



Ex KS 23 RAP in Kingston Public Hospital Emergency department



AGC DETACHMENT

RAO

Capt John Kirkwood

Det Comd

Gapped

RAWO

WO2 Stephanie Sanderson

PSS

Sgt Nukhaiz Munir

SSA

Sgt Ben Charles

UA

SSgt Angela Cleave

AGC Foreword

The Battalion entering a period of high readiness for deployments, numbering Op SHADER and Op INTERFLEX among them, has meant another hectic year for the detachment.

The structural changes to the detachment's workforce have now been put in place and all are working hard to ensure the best support to deployments.

Op SHADER has been the Regiment's main effort from early last year after handing over UKSB, and now delivering vital training on Op INTERFLEX until summer 2024. The SPS detachment has and will continue to be at the forefront providing constant Pers Admin and G1 support.

Most of the det will be rotating through Wathgill at various stages to oversee departures and arrivals of the Ukrainian soldiers and give them the best support possible in a critical time for the European continent.

The det has had another busy year with huge amounts of concurrent activity to support the Battalion:

Op SHADER

Several members of the detachment have deployed on MRX, ARB, ranges and various other serials in preparation for Op SHADER. Particularly pertinent given the current situation in the middle east.



Pte Mugford with A Coy on the Ranges conducting Night Shoot on PDT

Pte Mugford has fully integrated with A Coy and Pte Chalkley with B Coy. They have supported their Coys to a high standard to get troops deployed in good order, a particular challenge given the current unpredictability of deployments and what they will look like.



Pte Chalkley on MRX supporting B Coy and conducting PDT in preparation for Op SHADER

Cpl Lorandi and LCpl Naqvi are currently deployed in Kuwait and Cyprus in support of Tri – Service personnel transitioning to and from OP SHADER and the broader middle east (BME) for SOT, R&R and EOT.

Kenya

LCpl Doherty and Pte Hodgson both deployed to Kenya at various stages. A great opportunity which also involved Doherty getting out and about, providing support to locals in addition to his main job. Pte Hodgson's stories of snake bites and close encounters with other wildlife also made their way back to Glencorse which clearly made for an eye-opening experience for him.



Pte Hodgson integrating with the Grenadier Guards ensuring they have regular team cohesion days out

Sport

Pte Chalkley competed in the Individual Swimming Championships, and then later joined the AGC Swim Team at the Inter-Corps Championships where they came fifth place overall.

2 SCOTS



Pte Chalkley and the rest of the AGC Corps Team after their amazing performance

WO2 Sanderson and Pte O'Brien along with 2 SCOTS females competed in the BAWF (British Army Warrior Fitness) in Leuchars in December 2023. They competed in several different challenging physical elements such as weightlifting and intensified cardio, where their hard work saw them achieving a commendable third place.

Charities

Cpl Weatherston completed a Charity event over 7 weeks to help raise money for Edinburgh's Childrens Hospital, consisting of a daily 4-mile tab with weight, seeing her raise over £500. The det was very supportive and kept her company at various stages. Sgt Maughan, LCpl Shaw and Pte Chalkley also took part in the Edinburgh Marathon Relay where they raised over £400 for the British Heart Foundation. Both superb achievements.



The girls after running 26.2 miles between them in the Edinburgh Marathon Relay for another amazing cause

Postings in and out/promotions

The detachment has welcomed some new members in the last year, WO2 Stephanie Sanderson, Sgt Nukhaiz Munir, Sgt Ben Charles, Cpl Sara McColl, Cpl Colin McIntyre, Pte Adam Hodgson, Pte Amelia Chalkley and Pte Millie O'Brien (fresh out of phase 2 training) who have now fully integrated into the Regiment. Sadly, two strong members of the detachment are in the process of transitioning from military to civilian life, Capt John Kirkwood and Sgt Nukhaiz Munir and the whole Regiment wishes them great successes for the future.

It's been a successful year in regards to promotions, Sgt McAlroy on his promotion to SSgt, LCpls Doherty and Lorandi on their promotions to Cpl, Naqi on her promotion to LCpl, Pte Shaw on her promotion to LCpl and Pte Summers on his promotion to LCpl. A huge congratulations to Sgt Charles as well who was awarded the New Years Honours – outstanding achievement.



2 SCOTS UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

UWO

Capt Kev Pedder
Maj Robert Whyte

AUWO

CSgt Alan Duncan
CSgt Davidson

Welfare JNCO

Cpl Tait

Welfare Clerk

Mr Ross McDermid

AWS CDW

Ms Gina Clark

The Unit Welfare Office saw a change in appointments with the Welfare Officer - Capt Kev Pedder - departing to take on a new role as a civilian with Police Scotland, with Maj Bob Whyte returning from Czech Republic as COS BMATT to take on the role as Welfare Officer. We also saw the departure of CSgt Duncan who moves to the QMs department and CSgt Charles Davidson taking on the new role as AUWO.

The Welfare Office has delivered welfare support to SP and their families during a busy tempo of pre deployment training, overseas training, and deployments, as well as the Unit conducting wider commitments throughout the Army.

The welfare team has delivered many activities during unit deployments, ensuring a variety of activities were available to meet the needs of the soldiers and their families and the wider community. The events included HM The King and Queen's Coronation party within the married quarters. The streets were closed off with red, white, and blue bunting out in force to celebrate this momentous day.



The Coronation Party

Moving into the middle of the year, the annual AWS residential scheme took place, held at Lockerbie Manor Activity Centre. The centre offers a variety of activities including high ropes, rifle range, climbing wall, crate stacking, and more. The centre is set amidst seventy-eight acres of tranquil woodland and fields inhabited with an abundance of natural wildlife. The kids had to conduct a multitude of outdoor activity and challenges under the watchful eye of our very own CDW.



The Christmas Market

As we move into the deployment, plans are in place to deliver BFBS Cinema. This will provide a unique cinema experience for military personnel and their families. They have cinemas across the UK, Cyprus, and the Falkland Islands, with all the latest blockbuster films. The Jocks and their families will have a cinema night with mates or matinee fun with the family, so grab your popcorn, sit back, and lose yourself in the magic of the big screen. This exclusive service is

specifically designed for remote military locations or those without a cinema nearby wanting to host a community movie night. This movie event will hopefully enhance morale.

In the background we continue to work tirelessly to forecast many events throughout the year. At the fore front, the welfare team will continue to deliver welfare support for our soldiers and their families during this busy year.



Santa visits the patch

A special thanks should be noted to Ross McDermid who continues to manage the bookings of the contact house and the hall; with his key input to welfare events most nights of the week, it is a busy hub of activity. Gina our AWS CDW continues to provide the youth clubs every Tuesday evening and supports our families. During the cold winter months, we welcome all to our monthly bacon roll and coffee mornings during the year with special guest appearances from our local providers.

We look forward to continuing our support to you all. On behalf of the 2 SCOTS welfare team, we wish you all the best for 2024.



2 SCOTS FAMILIES DAY



29 Sep 23 Glencorse Barracks

Following the Regiment's successful Freedom Parade through Penicuik, 2 SCOTS took advantage of the late summer sun to invite our families into the barracks. The plan was to celebrate both Assaye Day and enjoy a barbecue with some light refreshments on a relaxed Friday afternoon.

The families day presented the last opportunity for us to come together as a Battalion ahead of the split deployments supporting both Op SHADER and Op INTERFLEX Nov 23 – Jun 24. The sub-units were dispersed for a number of months, which afforded us little time to entertain our families in a social gathering post summer leave.

With a promising, but very limited window of sunshine predicted, the barbecue was fired up! Staff Sergeant Henderson and her team produced another herculean effort, seemingly able to feed four hundred hungry people with ease, despite blustery conditions under the canvas. The Jocks waited patiently, in the prone unsupported position, to allow our guests to feast first before descending full frontal to destroy an impressive stack of burgers.

With the families well fed, the kids were free to take advantage of the activities on offer. Sadly, the remnants of Storm Agnes, and the gusting winds of 40kph, resulted in the fans' favourite bouncy castle remaining grounded. Luckily, Sgt Wilson from the Recce Platoon was on hand with a selection of heavy weapons to entertain the crowd. As

ever, the weapons stand proved just as popular with the adults as it did with the younger generation.





2 SCOTS FAMILIES DAY

Face painting and arts and crafts, organised by our Welfare Team under CSgt Davidson, lined the route to the indoor assault course. The gym floor was transformed into a creative work of art, designed, and delivered by SSgt Craft and Sgt Fleming. With a slightly nervous Project Officer watching from the wings, the kids were guided masterfully over a series of obstacles and jumps. A well-deserved certificate of achievement awaited those that crossed the finish line.

The hidden gem of the afternoon was the DCCT fun shoot, custom built by Sgt Mawhinney from the Javelin Platoon. An exciting narrative set the scene for the brave defenders that were left behind to slow the enemy's advance on Glencorse Barracks. With the weapon handling controlled by a hand-picked selection of JNCOs, the families were free to earn their bravery medals with a courageous defence of the barracks.

With the sun dipping for the horizon, and the threat of rain in the air, the families retreated to the SFA. The lonely figure of the RQMS standing outside the Officers' Mess, desperately trying to figure out what he was going to do with the 18 x 24 tents book-ended the day.... some say he is still standing there.

Capt SL McNally





OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee

Maj J E Donkin

Mess Secretary

Capt J C Bamford

After a four-month hiatus in the Omani desert, the 2 SCOTS Officers' Mess hit 2023 with a lot of catching up to do on the social front. Having missed the chance to celebrate St Andrews in the traditional month of November, the Mess hosted a BG Dinner Night with a St Andrews' flavour in January to mark the return from Ex KHANJAR OMAN. Having earned the respect of the Bn over the previous months in the desert, the Officers from the attached Light Dragoon's squadron were invited to join us and add some good chat and entertainment to the evening. Tales of dubious Scottish ancestry and poor whisky palates aside, great fun was had by all.

to hold all of our whisky, glasses and tankards. Tony Ronaldson now insists on spending most afternoons in the room, depleting the cabinet's precious contents and passing on life lessons to unsuspecting subbies! In a similar vein, Alex Cartwright has delivered the MVP of mess improvements with the installation of a Guinness Microdraught tap. Its most excellent feature is a counter that gives you a total number of pints poured – which is not in any way considered a competition!

Post-lunch Times quiz sessions remain a popular mess endeavour – Macpherson, Turner and O'Duffin the intellectual lieutenants driving for the hallowed regimental afternoon that follows a 12 out of 14 score! Sadly, a churn of OCs has somewhat diminished the cerebral punch from the field officers but has added to a far capable mid-field in the Officer's Mess football team!

In November, the second St Andrews Dinner of the year was used to bid farewell to a number of officers posting out or departing service. Fine food, a good batch of Athol Brose from the Adjutant and bucket reeling was a great way to see them off and welcome in the festive season.

As is always the case, and amongst the madness of pre-INTERFLEX handovers, SHADER PDT and a raft of actual work, silly season was frantic but most enjoyable. Carols across the patch culminating with 30 for dinner in Assaye House (special mention to the Colquhoun's Christmas cocktail), serving Xmas dinner for the Jocks and NCOs, a Christmas service from the Padre inclusive of a rather retro selection of backing tracks for the carols, a solid 4-1 win over the WO&Sgts Mess in the Mess challenge and then the mad rush to close the Bn down. A great period of fun activity before the Bn spreads far and wide for the first 6 months of 2024!



2SCOTS / LDs pre-bucket reeling!

A Dia de Los Meurtos party followed in August as the main event of the summer. Suitably strong margaritas, face-painted señoritas', and questionable moustaches were flavour of the day and helped set the scene for a fantastic evening. Sunrise was seen in by a small and dedicated crew – with the subaltern's mixology to blame for some of the early departures!

2023 has been a year with some excellent mess improvements: Luke Carver managed to get his hands on a fantastic wooden cabinet to upgrade the Whisky room. How it got into the Mess remains a mystery, but it is large enough



St Andrews Dinner Night



THE WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member

WO1 (RSM) S Paterson

President of the Mess Committee

WO2 J Haveron

2023 has been yet another exciting year for the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess and whilst we had hardly dusted the sand from our webbing following deployments to Oman in autumn 2022 and Mali in spring 2023, we again find ourselves on the precipice of deployments... This time onto Op SHADER, which will see mess members operating out of Iraq, Kuwait and Cyprus, and closer to home, on Op INTERFLEX, the United Kingdom's contribution to supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine in their fight against Russia. To add to the bustle of pre-deployment activity, the battalion has also undergone a re-rolling of capability that sees us transition from light mechanised, to light role Infantry, and as you can appreciate, the management of this is very much a G4 battle that sits well within the expertise of our mess members. The sigh of relief from Tech Sergeants Hayworth, Elvin and Millar was tangible as the last "Lt Mech" vehicles rolled out of Glencorse Barracks for the final time (many heading to our friends in 4 SCOTS) and they now have spare time to make an appearance at tea and toast once again. Despite the tempo of activity in the battalion over the last year, where possible, we have ensured that the mess remains active and that key events within our diary were not missed.

2023 kicked off with the annual must – the Burns' Supper. Hats off to WO2 Scotty Pew who managed to plan what was an excellent evening from the dust bowl of the Land Regional Hub in Oman. As is customary, the address to the guests was filled with factual information and was in no way intended to embarrass the late entry officers and WO2 Lee McConnachie captured

the character of our LE colleagues well, reminding them that although they have flown the nest to the 'dark side' they are always in our sights. The Quartermaster, Major Iain Maclachlan, mustered up the courage to deliver a reply but this only reaffirmed that the 'old yins' have become somewhat soft since leaving the mess. The Cronies of the evening deserve a special mention, as many of them would have rehearsed their poems whilst lying in a desert leger in the desert of Oman. Sergeant Danny 'the caveman' Cave deserves special recognition for his delivery of 'Address to the De'il' which was delivered in true 'caveman' fashion. It is also understood that most BHQ officers knew the lyrics of Killicrankie before Colour Sergeant Stuart McGregor thanks to his repetitive practice within their earshot during the estimate process!

The summer was the first real opportunity to have the mess back together after a prolonged period apart and the planning and execution of the summer ball fell to WO2 Shammy McKenna, who as some may know, loves a party. The evening was a resounding success, and although Shammy managed to all but deplete the GPF, it was thoroughly enjoyed by all. This was Shammy's last gig as lead for a mess function, as he is soon to depart the mess taking up the role of Training Warrant Officer for the United Nations in Cyprus.



Mess members looking dapper as usual

The summer also saw the changeover of our Tara, with responsibility as the senior Jock being passed from now, Captain O'Neill to WO1 (RSM) Paterson. As 2024 shapes up to be another year of operational activity, we are fortunate and well primed to face the challenges ahead with RSM Paterson at the helm, and I would like to wish Captain O'Neill all the best as the career management officer. Captain O'Neill, see you at Burns '24!

You may recall that in 2022, we welcomed in an honorary mess member, Sergeant Robert Robertson, formerly of the Highland Light Infantry. The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' mess, as you know are the custodians of traditions and the golden thread of our organisation and the welcoming in of an honorary member maintained the integrity of that thread. Sadly, in 2023 Sergeant Robertson passed and it was an honour, at the request of Sergeant Robertsons' family, to lay him to rest.



Three Sheriffs: Company Sergeant Majors Haveron, Pasifull and McKenna

2 SCOTS



Staying with the golden thread you will be pleased, and probably not surprised to hear, that the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' mess retained the much-coveted Walter Barrie Cup. It was an admirable attempt by the Officers' mess to try and pip us from the top spot but as expected, they failed.

One thing that has been reaffirmed again this year is the quality of our SNCOs and Warrant Officers within the mess. Whether it is in the delivery of training, the welfare provision to our soldiers or the logistical support and assurance of the G4 team, 2 SCOTS Warrant Officers' and Sergeants Mess continue to deliver. Of note, was now WO2 (CSM) Chris Andrews and CSgt Stuart McGregor, who with very little notice led a team of Jocks (and a young subaltern) on the inaugural Brunei jungle patrol competition. Safe to say their leadership was instrumental in the team's success as they managed to be the only non-Brunei based team to finish the patrol with all their original team members. They were truly setting the example for others to follow.

Following on from the success of 2023, 2024 is shaping up to be yet another exciting year for the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess.



SCOTS

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3 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FORWARD

This is my first forward as Commanding Officer of 3 SCOTS, and I'd like to start by paying tribute to my predecessor – Lt Col Matty Hayton – as he departs for pastures new. It is brilliant to be back in the battalion and to see so many familiar faces as well the progress that has been made. Though life remains ever busy as the British Army seeks to remain relevant in the ever-changing global context, there remain some reassuring constants, not least of which is the tenacity and humour of the Jocks.

Before I go into the detail of the past twelve months, I'd like to recognise and congratulate WO1 Ferrier on his selection for commissioning and to Capts Howie, Ingram and AMaj Fairweather for their promotion to Major. I'd also like to congratulate Sgt Couper for his recognition in the King's Birthday Honours List by being made a Member of the British Empire. Furthermore, it was great to see Maj Marshall and Sgt Christie being awarded CGS Commendations, and Capt Ingram, WO2 Roadnight and CSgt Grey awarded CFA Commendations; finally, Maj Magee received a Joint Commanders Commendation from recent operations. All thoroughly deserved, and all a reflection of the professionalism and dedication of those individuals and the wider 3 SCOTS team.

Since the last update, the Battalion's reputation for excellence and dedication has continued to keep it at the forefront of the Army's operational outputs. With elements having returned from Eastern Europe on a high, the Battalion began the new year by restructuring in its new role as a Security Force Assistance Battalion (SFAB). 3 SCOTS have been aligned to the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. This signified a return to the region following the closure of the British Garrison in Hong-Kong on 1st July 1997. Naturally, being the Indo-Asia-Pacific



Commanding Officer 3 SCOTS, Lt Col Smith

facing SFA Battalion, Alpha (Grenadier) Company were immediately despatched to Kenya for six weeks. There they operated alongside the Coldstream Guards during the worst period of rain in recent memories, which saw soldiers resorting to sheltering in Porta-loos to avoid the deluge. As ever, when on exercise with another unit, the Jocks excelled, drawing praise from all around them. Concurrently as part of our journey to being a SFA Battalion, BHQ deployed to Bosnia to train the Bosnian readiness HQ to conduct planning as part of their training towards NATO readiness; finally, we deployed a training team to Gambia to assist their force preparation ahead of a UN deployment.

The Battalion got its first taste of the Indo-Asia-Pacific when Alpha (Grenadier) Company deployed to Brunei on Ex SARI BEAR alongside B Coy 1RGR spending a month improving their jungle skills and understanding how to operate in the challenging jungle environment and the

region. Their deployment was followed rapidly by a Brunei version of the Cambrian Patrol in which the Battalion gained a silver and bronze medal. Thereafter Bravo Company deployed to Korea on Exercise IMJIN WARRIOR, returning to the peninsular 70 years after the last time the red hackle was worn there. They exercised alongside the Korean 11th Brigade embedding with Korean units before enjoying some much-earned cultural time in Seoul and visiting some of the battlefields of the war.

Not to be outdone, Alpha (Grenadier) Company deployed to Hawaii, working alongside the US SFA Brigade with the Royal Thai and the Indonesian Army and Delta (Light) Coy deployed to Japan, becoming the first British Army soldiers to embed with the Japanese Defence Force. Not only a first in terms of location, the soldiers of Delta (Light) Coy also acted in a new role, providing critical Remote Piloted Aerial

3 SCOTS



Systems support to Japanese Company Commanders. Charlie Coy also played their part, providing the exercising troops for a Five Powers Defence Agreement CPX in Darwin Australia, alongside soldiers from New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia. For the first time in recent memory, the P&Ds were in danger of being upstaged for overseas travel. However, the Pipe Major put a stop to this by touring the Islands of Oceania on USS Pearl Harbour and the Drum Major deployed a team to Canberra, Australia. In addition, 3 SCOTS had four teams competing in the RGR's first jungle patrol competition, and had Jocks deployed to Indonesia, Thailand and Mongolia.

Away from operations, the Battalion played its part in the summer's coronation events. Such ceremonial representation included providing a guard of honour for His Majesty The King whilst receiving the Honours of Scotland at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Moreover, the Ps&Ds were a regular feature at Balmoral this year, performing for the presentation of the Guard's new Colours and for the traditional Cocktail Party. The Fijian choir also got in on the act, performing for the King at an intimate church service in Ballater.

Away from the day job, the Battalion has been equally as active in the sporting arena. Last winter we deployed teams to Norway, Germany, France and Austria to compete in Nordic and Alpine Skiing as well as Bobsleigh, Skeleton and Luge. The Battalion Rugby team was undefeated in 2023, thanks to the distance teams are prepared to travel to play us and the exceptional coaching from Pte Bulumakau and Maj McRobbie. Golf remains high on the Battalion's sporting priorities and the team completed a successful tour of Fife and Perthshire this year. However, less traditional sports are also featuring in the Battalion: there are several ice-hockey players and archers, taekwondo

is a regular feature on Wednesday afternoons, we even have a Battalion darts team who compete in a local league – though the fitness regime is questionable! Finally, the summer Highland Games was a great success with Charlie Company coming out on top this time.

Alongside this activity we still take time to honour those upon whose shoulders we stand. Red Hackle Day in January still began with Jonny Cope echoing around the ramparts and gunfire for the Jocks. The Officers' Mess by some miracle, won the traditional football game, before completing the day with a victory in the Sergeants' to Officers challenges. On Ticonderoga Day the PTIs laid on a 5km gun run to commemorate the lack of guns in the battle in a session which is still discussed to this day. As part of our run-in to the Aberfeldy Muster the battalion raised £10,042.74 for the Samaritans by walking from Fort George to Aberfeldy over a period of 5 days. The Charles Hankins prize was awarded to Pte Campbell of Bravo Company for his heroics at the scene of a particularly bad car crash and the Andrew Maitland award was given to Capt Scouse Grisdale, who as Welfare Officer went above and beyond in his two years in this post.

So, as I mentioned at the start, some things have changed but many constants remain. The Jocks are still hard at work, they still have fun and there is still a deep sense of pride in the Regiment. The Battalion is now routinely committed across the globe, cementing the reputation and positive ground sign in doing so. Most importantly, the Battalion remains respected for its professionalism, dedication, skill and humility. 2024 will no doubt offer more of the same!



OBITUARY

**30310247 Craftsman
Christopher (Chris) MILLAR**

DOB: 04 Nov 1997

**Royal Electrical and Mechanical
Engineers (REME)**

Craftsman Millar grew up in Stewarton, Ayrshire and joined the Army in February 2019. He conducted his initial training at the Army Training Regiment Pirbright until June 2019. He then completed his Vehicle Mechanic trade training at the Defence School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in Lyneham, successfully completing his course in June 2020. From there Craftsman Millar was assigned to his first unit, 2nd Battalion REME, in Leuchars, Fife. He served with the 2nd Battalion until January 2022. During this period, he qualified as a Class 2 Vehicle Mechanic and as an All-Arms Physical Training Instructor. Craftsman Millar was then Posted to 3 SCOTS as part of the Light Aid Detachment in Fort George, Inverness. He joined a close-knit team of REME tradespersons and was responsible for maintaining the unit's fleet of high readiness vehicles. As a Physical Training Instructor, he was responsible for delivering all physical training sessions for a company of 140 personnel. An extremely fit individual, Millar was passionate about physical training, always leading by example on all sessions he planned. In April 2022 Craftsman Millar married Mihaela and settled in the married quarters in Inverness.

Craftsman Millar deployed to Eastern Europe with the Battalion between May and November 2022 where he was responsible for the maintenance of the operation's essential fleet of protected vehicles. Physical Training Instructors were limited on operations and he was essential to maintaining the fitness of the unit whilst it was deployed. This included designing individual fitness plans and implementing ideas for isolated locations with limited access to equipment, a task he excelled in, taking genuine pleasure in helping others.

Craftsman Millar was a consummate professional in trade and as a Physical Training Instructor, he was well mannered and personable. He was selected for promotion to Lance Corporal this year and was awaiting his next assignment. An integral part of the Light Aid Detachment, Craftsman Millar was ever present and fully immersed in the team and always at the centre of social events ran by the Detachment and the Company. Craftsman Millar passed away at his home in Inverness on 27 Oct 2023.

Nemo Me Impune Lacessit.





ALPHA (GRENADIER) COMPANY

OC

Capt Marty Gray

2IC

Lt Rebecca Strawbridge

CSM

WO2 Andy Ritchie

CQ

CSgt Ryan White

Ex ASKARI STORM

February 2023 saw A Coy deploy to Kenya to support 1 Coldstream Guards (1CG) on Exercise ASKARI STORM. 1 and 2 platoon were split down and used to backfill 1CG. Upon arrival in Kenya, the Coy undertook acclimatisation and RSOI (Reception, Staging and Onward Integration) before moving to the training area to conduct a full build-up of dry training and to ensure A Coy personnel had effectively integrated with 1CG. Live Fire Tactical Training followed this, culminating in a Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFEX). This CALFEX provided a unique opportunity for A Coy to experience live attacks with assets held above Coy level, such as live artillery.



The Coy then deployed on the exercise phase, with the Grenadiers having their skills tested over weeks of battlegroup

level training that saw 1CG assessing different doctrine. A Coy played a pivotal role in the success of the Exercise, supporting two of the four 1CG Coys deployed.

Before returning to the UK, there was time for the company to experience some R&R in Kenya. Troops visited animal sanctuaries for photos with some of the 'Big 5', conducted Adventure Training, including white water rafting, and relaxed at local swimming pools.

Ex SARI BAIR STRIKE

Due to the Battalion shifting focus from Europe and having a new Area of Operations in the Indo-Pacific, training moved from focusing on Temperate Climate Operations to Jungle Operations. The first task A Coy faced due to this was to build experience within the Close Tropical Environment (CTE or Jungle). Ex SARI BAIR STRIKE was a 1st Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles (1 RGR) Exercise that we were invited to participate in. The aim of the exercise was to provide 1RGR SP (Service Personnel) with a refresher of their jungle skills and to provide A Coy with the foundation knowledge to enable them to operate in the CTE. It was a two-phase Joint Exercise alongside Bravo 'Sari Bair' Company 1RGR. The first phase was a jungle patrol phase, with the second phase being a river operation phase. The exercise challenged all participants to learn and adapt to the jungle.

Sunda Patrol

On 24th September 2023 eight A Coy personnel again deployed to Brunei on Exercise Sunda Patrol, a jungle patrol competition organised by 1RGR. It was the first time the competition had ever been run, and with the Indo Pacific being 3 SCOTS new area of operations A Coy were keen to test themselves in an environment that they are likely to be spending an increasing amount of time. With only 2 weeks in country there was



a lot to learn in a short space of time. The jungle warfare instructors (JWI's) of 1RGR spent 1 week delivering an intensive programme of jungle specific lessons. After this A Coy were straight into the competition, which spanned from Monday afternoon into Friday morning. The competition was split into 3 phases and was incredibly physically demanding. The first phase involved a 100m river crossing through crocodile infested waters. On reaching the other side the team had to patrol through the jungle and perform a CTR on an enemy jungle camp. The following day was the survival phase where the team had to spend 24hrs in the jungle with just their daysacks, webbing and weapons. Using what nature provided, the team had to craft their own animal traps, water collection systems, signal fires and shelters to spend a very wet night in. The final phase was the patrol skills phase where the team inserted into the jungle via helicopter. They then had to tactically navigate through roughly 12km of undulating jungle terrain. Throughout the duration of the competition JWI's were constantly assessing and grading the team on a range of criteria, from low level patrolling skills to the quality of the CTR back briefs being delivered by commanders. Despite losing a handful of patrol members to injury in the first part of the competition, the A Coy team won a silver medal. The only team in the competition without any trained JWIs or OTIs to do so.



ALPHA (GRENADIER) COMPANY

JPMRC

On 13 October, 18 personnel from 3 SCOTS left Fort George bound for Hawaii to take part in the Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Centre (JPMRC) rotation. This was to be the first-time soldiers from the battalion would attend this exercise. The 3 SCOTS exercising element was made up of two teams of five. One of these teams worked as advisors to the Indonesian Army, while the other team was tasked with advising the Royal Thai Army.



The initial phase of the deployment saw 3 SCOTS teams integrating with units from the US Army's 5th Security Force Assistance Battalion (5 SFAB). While the primary focus was of course on the forthcoming exercise, the soldiers didn't miss the unique opportunity to explore Hawaii's beaches.

After this initial phase came the arrival of the partner forces, with whom we managed to achieve a few days training with prior to deployment on the exercise itself. The lessons covered a good breadth of infantry specific areas. Allowing us to gain a good understanding of not only where their strengths and weaknesses lay, but it also helps us better understand how to get points across simply and effectively when working with a nation culturally very different from our own.

The exercise itself lasted 11 days and involved around 5,000 soldiers from across the region, making it the largest exercise many of us had taken part in by some margin. It therefore helped us to understand the pace and intensity of exercises at this scale. As well as where and how SFA teams best slot into conventional scenarios.

The exercise ended on the 10 November, allowing us time to conduct a Remembrance Parade on 11th November. We were joined by members of 5th SFAB in our 2 minutes silence, a poignant way to bring an end to 4 weeks of working alongside one another.

In terms of lesson learnt, we have continued to shape our understanding of where our strengths and weaknesses lie as advisors, as well as skillsets that might be required or deemed as useful in the future. It has also given us further exposure to working with nations with vastly different cultures from our own, something that you can never do too much of. It has also helped to deliver an insight as to the capabilities and competencies of Indo Pac nations we may work with in the future. JPMRC helped us to identify our own individual advising styles as well as how to get points across to a training audience whose knowledge of the English language is incredibly limited. These are all points to be taken away for future deployments.

3 SCOTS



BRAVO COMPANY

OC

Maj C McRobbie MBE

2iC

Capt S Smith
Lt A Duff

CSM

WO2 M Arnold

CQMS

CSgt S Mackie

5PI Comd

Lt Blackhall

5PI Sgt

Sgt Cameron

6PI

Lt Duff
2Lt Barrie

6PI Sgt

Sgt Ross
Sgt Creighton

7PI

Sgt Tamang
Lt Calder



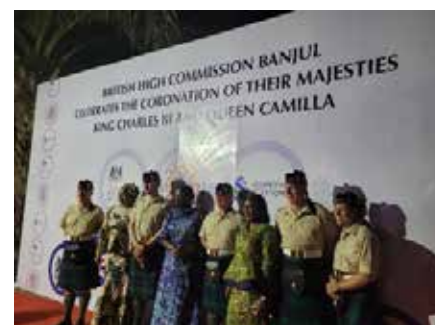
The Gambia STTT

Bravo Company have been at the cutting edge of implementing our new and exciting role of Security Force Assistance which at its core relies on capable and empowered Jocks doing what they do best: networking, grafting and operating at a level far higher than would routinely be expected of a soldier.

Fresh from operations in Europe in 2022, Bravo Coy dusted themselves off and prepared to deliver SFA across the globe. The Gambia was the first port of call, training a conventional Partner Force and delivering some of the best results the Defence Attaché had seen.

The team, supported by 1 RGR, 32 ENGR and 5 Med, delivered training to a QRF taskforce from across the Gambian Armed Forces on critical skills such as the Estimate and Orders Process, CIED, Team Medic, Light and Mechanised Infantry Tactics, Reassurance Tactics and how to operate from a FOB. Bonds were formed, Wanjo juice was exchanged and testament to the training delivered the QRF received their validation to enable them to participate with a Bangladesh UN mission.

The team experienced a rich variety of life in The Gambia, being hosted by the High Commissioner at his Coronation party where their kilts secured them VIP access. They duly repaid their hosts by serenading them with some classic Top Gun music. Needless to say, no-one had lost that loving feeling by the time the team returned to the UK.



B Coy soldiers were the talk of the town at the Coronation Celebration



"It was clearly the best in my 3.5 years. The relationship they built up with the Gambian soldiers was extremely impressive and they were clearly highly respected" – DA The Gambia"



BRAVO COMPANY

Alas, our next foray out of Fort George to play enemy for 3 PARA in Kenya was cancelled at short notice. Clearly due to 3 PARA, worrying they would be no match for B Coy, praying for a Coup that would impact our deployment flights. Their prayers were answered, and they were redeployed to Cyprus and B Coy stayed at home. We agreed with the Padre we would try harder at the Carol service to get back in God's good graces. As a result, B Coy had a rare opportunity to conduct its own training and the team moved East to Aberdeen to consider the attributes and culture we would require for SFA employment.

Op BRAVO TEAMWORK provided an environment where our SP had the opportunity to analyse themselves, identify positive and negative character traits within themselves, their own team or whilst observing another team. WO2 Arnold introduced soldiers to intrinsic/extrinsic motivations: goal setting and evaluation, leadership and followership, the effect of positive and negative mindsets, readdressing fear of failure, team building and leadership challenges out of core infantry roles. Lessons were both discussion and task based, giving all ranks an opportunity to present and be heard in a relaxed environment. The week culminated with a team initiative challenge day, with all members of the Coy gracing the streets of Aberdeen to complete various challenges and record their success, owing to true Jock humour, most images are not fit to print!



B Coy soldiers enjoying their final challenge

It wasn't all conceptual thoughts in 2023, in September 6 Platoon led a team to Croatia on Ex SAVA STAR. This was an excellent opportunity for B Coy to not only develop our skills as an SFA Coy, but also to support 6 and 7 SCOTS in providing quality training to their soldiers. Working alongside a mechanised Croatian Battalion presented its own challenges; however, by understanding their capabilities we were able to utilise their recce and fires to assist in destroying the enemy. The extremely dense woodblocks of central Europe provided a valuable training opportunity, giving our junior commanders a more challenging, but realistic understanding of what is required to conduct FIWAF in this part of the world.



6 Platoon on the attack

As 6 Platoon fought through the forests of Croatia, 5 Platoon and elements of the Company HQ were bracing for the jungle of South Korea in what was the first conventional testing of SFA concepts and employment in a conventional operating environment. The team were embedded within a Republic of Korea Brigade being validated for operations on the DMZ alongside C Coy 1 SCOTS GUARDS. OC B Coy and CSM enjoyed the comforts of a bunker HQ with the BG HQ, while 5 Platoon were treated to a picturesque view of the MDA from an exposed tree line high up the valley. 5 Platoon had the last laugh though, following the BG being over-run requiring the OC and CSM to

put their SERE skills into practice. The CSM enjoyed his return to stalking and route selection through enemy lines, the OC less so. The two made it in time to see Pte Murray secure the honour of being the last surviving Brit, taking to the tunnels in a Rambo-like fashion until well after Endex was called.

Post-Exercise the team ventured to see all that The Republic of Korea had to offer. This included a trip to the DMZ as well as a Battlefield Study of Gloucester Hill. 71 years after The Black Watch earned their Battle Honour at the Hook, the red hackle remains a recognisable symbol and a coveted presentation by our partners.



Sgt Cameron and his upgraded Platoon Commander

Not to be outdone Lt Duff fell on the sword and deployed on Ex PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP spending several weeks with the Pipe Major on a US ship touring Fiji and Tonga developing resilience plans. While not convinced of the productivity levels while on ship Lt Duff certainly made the most of the opportunity and through force of personality ensured value was added. In doing so Bravo Company demonstrated SFA capability across the spectrum of conflict operating in Competition (Gambia) preparing for Crisis (Ex PP) and demonstrating credibility in Conflict (Korea).

3 SCOTS



Behind each employment and task has been an exceptional team of G4 enablers. A by-product of Ex BRAVO TEAMWORK was the self-generated and funded enhancement of living accommodation to generate a Company Personalities board encapsulating all members of the team, the review of stores holdings to create a Company common room and TV room that's now equipped with a PS5, wall mounted TV, several games, pool table, dart board and speaker system along with further areas for social activities.

Having visited every continent on the globe B Coy rounded off the year by delivering The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing night in Edinburgh, the spoils of which the Company took great pleasure in disposing of at their Christmas function.



DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj DF Hamilton

Company Second in Command

Capt B Dodson

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 R McClurg

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt C Sloan

Platoon Commanders

13 PI – Lt Hugh Thornton-Kemsley

14 PI – Lt Sam Mooney

Assault Pioneers – CSgt Craig Lowe

Our training started in February with Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR 1 – our first run out as a Company completing the Battle Craft Syllabus in Garelochhead. After multiple vehicle breakdowns challenging our ability to even get to the area, the week tested patrol skills; section attacks; route/obstacle clearances; house clearing drills; and culminated with a platoon deliberate attack at dawn. It saw some mixed conditions which tested the Jocks – some of whom had not been in the field in over a year due to the nature of 2022 commitments. By the end however, new teams were forming and Comds had a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the company.

March saw the Coy almost entirely committed across multiple external trawls, supporting courses in Warminster; Escape and Evasion exercises; and leading the UNION DIV pre-Brecon Cadre. This last task was led by 2Lt Thornton-Kemsley (T-K) who delivered an outstanding month of instruction and support to aspiring new junior commanders, earning independent praise for his efforts and the professionalism of the 3 SCOTS training team as a whole.



Delta Coy HQ

Delta (Light) Coy has had an excellent journey through 2023. Starting as a newly formed Rifle Coy, the team has worked hard to train the basics, build cohesion, validate as a deployable Sub-Unit and then deploy overseas to deliver our new SFA role successfully.

After Easter leave, the Coy prepared to deploy to Kenya to play enemy for the 3 PARA BG, along with a large part of the rest of Bn. This prep included deploying to Tain on Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR 2 to further hone our Dismounted Close Combat skills. After months of preparation however, and even getting down to RAF Brize Norton and loading our kit onto the plane, the exercise was cancelled for all 3 SCOTS pax due to flight permissions. Not to be caught up in the chaos however, the advance party did manage to nip off for a day of boating along the River Thames in the stunning weather to soften the blow of a cancelled OTX.



Delta Coy Swim in the Thames in Summer whilst waiting on RAF flights



Delta Coy crawling into flanking position in Tain

Back to Fort George, and 6 weeks of blank space on the training programme needed to be filled rapidly. With Bn shooting competitions and other commitments coming fast, CSM McClurg and Sgt Chadburn pulled it out of the bag with a fantastic AT package based in Balmacara House in Skye. This saw Delta Coy kayak, mountain bike and hill-walk around Skye, returning to our self-run bar and unwinding together in the evenings, with a much-needed dip in the Fairy Pools each morning to clear fuzzy heads! The end of this week saw a turning point in Delta Coy – no longer a set of strangers thrown together from across the Bn but a fully formed body of fighting men working together for each other as one. The Golden Don was back.

3 SCOTS



Jocks jump in Fairy Pools in Skye

Summer saw the whispers of a possible deployment to Japan circulating around BHQ, and the OC was given a seat at the planning conference in Main Building with the objective of getting 1-2 spots on the exercise. After 2 months of wrangling, and getting written out of the exercise 3 times, the final Delta Coy deployment on Ex VIGILANT ISLES 23 was to be an SFA team of 16 pax. This saw a huge rush of activity, from drone training and LFTT to getting validated as a Coy using the virtual suite offered by the ICAVS team from Warminster.



Japan embedded tactical training

Whilst the rest of the Coy trained and validated to deploy to a country where no-one in Bn had trained before, concurrently a section was sent on Ex SUNDA PATROL – a Jungle Patrol Competition hosted by 1RGR in Brunei. Lt Sam Mooney led the team to finish (no small feat as many did not) with a bronze medal in an intensely tough competition that was everyone's first experience in the Jungle environment. Showing the strength of the young soldiers and officers of Delta Coy.

In November the Golden Don deployed three teams to Japan. A team of Observer/Mentors led by the OC; a Team of Liaison Officers led by the 2IC; and 4 pairs of UAV operators that would fully embed inside Japanese Coys. The exercise took place across multiple training areas on the main island of Honshu and saw the team supporting the 3rd Bn of the 1st Airborne Division. Week 1 saw the first ever bi-lateral Live Firing between the UK and Japan, with Delta Coy troops fully embedded inside Japanese sections and firing alongside them – a moment captured by the gathered media. The newly trained UAV pilots guided assaulting troops onto target whilst simultaneously gathering footage to use in the After-Action Review.

After a few days back in camp to recover, the Battle Group deployed on FinalEx by both road and CH47. The following 2 days saw periods of intense fighting whilst the BG cleared complex, close tropical terrain. The UAV teams were hugely valued by the Japanese OCs, as they are usually a brigade asset for the JGSDF, and their use combined with advice from the embedded LOs saw a reduction in casualty rates by approximately 80% and an increase in lethality of the JGSDF Coys that was evidenced by their TES system data.



Japan UAV Pairs

Although short, the exercise was physically demanding. JGSDF TTPs are to conduct all patrolling and fighting with bergen on, and this combined with the gradient of the jungle terrain made soldiering alongside them physically and mentally taxing. CSgt Rushfirth from the Mortar PI had a particularly gruelling experience up one feature which called for 3 points of contact – hauling himself up using vines in the mid-day heat. After much anguish and multiple slides back down the hill to start again, his strength of character shone through when he immediately had a laugh at himself at the top, endearing himself to the Japanese soldiers around him.

This feeling of friendship and camaraderie was further strengthened during the final party held for the BG back in camp, where the British contingent were shown what full Japanese hospitality looked like. A night of good food, endless alcohol, music, dancing, slapstick plays, and more than a little nakedness brought both nations together stronger than any bi-lateral training ever could. During the evening, we introduced the entire BG to highland dancing (CSgt Lowe leading a group of 50 Japanese soldiers with Cpl Hall piping) and also to Bucket-Reeling with all of its shenanigans (Capt Dodson coming up champion in the second game). Our shared love for whisky was an instant hit, and we even managed to convince 3 separate groups of Japanese officers to introduce us to Sake and tell us all about it whilst we finished their bottles.



DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY



Ex Vigilant Isles 23



Japan Post Exercise Party



CSgt Sloan and Pte Campbell meet Japanese Entertainment

Once the exercise was over and our AAR delivered, the Coy moved to Tokyo for a 5-day R&R package. As well as touring the endless city of Tokyo and practically moving into a karaoke bar until we were evicted, CSgt Lowe secured money to take everyone to Kyoto for some real culture. A return trip on the famous Bullet Train ticked everyone's bucket list, and the sensational shrines, landscaped gardens and street markets gave everyone a taste of traditional Japan away from the bright lights of Tokyo.



Japan RandR



Japan RandR2

Once back at Fort George, the Coy was fully reunited and continued to knock out CO's PT without fuss like they had done all year. Yet another re-orbat looming in the new year saw the well bonded team part after a fantastic 13 months together. Lt Sam Mooney moves to Charlie Coy and Lt T-K and CSgt Lowe move to Alpha (Grenadier) Coy. We said goodbye to LCpl Matasai who left the Bn after completing full Colour Service. We receive the Mortar Platoon as a whole who will split into 2 SFA Teams in our new orbat, and welcome 2Lt Tom Beale, freshly back from JWIC and 2Lt James Rowsell straight from Brecon. Congratulations are due to CSM McClurg, who promoted to WO1 and will be the next RSM of 2 R IRISH; as well as Sgt John Fay who promoted to CSgt and Cpl Tommy Creighton who promoted to Sgt. We had 14 Ptes promote to LCpl in 2023, showing a real wave of talent coming through the Bn in the next generation. And for the generation after that, we congratulate Ptes Mouat, Shiels and Thomas on the arrival of their new-born children.

As the unchanged Command Team (to whom I owe everything) look out at a newly formed Delta Coy waiting to gel and attack the challenges of 2024, the CSM's mantra is in everyone's minds – "We go again!".

3 SCOTS



Assault Pioneer Platoon

Platoon Command

CSgt Lowe

Platoon Sergeant

Cpl Forsyth

2023 saw the role of the Pioneer Platoon leaving the Pipes and Drums Platoon and forming up as part of an independent platoon within Delta (Light) Coy.

Since the re-ORBAT it has been a busy period for the Platoon. The start of the year saw CSgt Lowe deployed to Otterburn, as part of the support for the Union Division Training Team. Concurrently to this, Cpl Forsyth deployed with the remainder of the Platoon to assist the SF Selection Course providing enemy support to their cadre. CSgt Lowe & Cpl Hall deployed on Ex VIGILANT ISLES 23 at the end of the year as part of the Delta Company contingent and the Delta Company section of this journal covers our time in Japan.

During the less busy times, the young Jocks have been going through some basic Pioneering lessons from EMOE (explosive method of entry), mine field clearance, as well as an insight into in-service explosives. Pte Campbell demonstrated the skills he had learned in these lessons on EX GOLDEN WARRIOR I by breaching a minefield at night for the first time and successfully finding all INERT mines which is no mean feat for a young Jock.

The Assault Pioneer PI deployed, as part of Delta Coy to Tain on Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR II. This Ex consisted of Sect Comd led lessons moving onto Section Attacks by both day and night. This was a good opportunity for the Sect Comds to develop their sections and their own abilities. During the EX, the sections covered various terrains at night using no artificial light. This was a valuable experience for the Jocks, putting in to

practice the use of both the LLM and the HMNVS. By the end of the EX all sections had covered day and night navigation as well as conducting CASEVACs and other low-level skills.

The latter part of the year saw LCpl Sangerman & Pte Jones training members of Delta Coy on the in-service RPAS (Remote Piloted Aircraft System) this enabled Delta Coy to deploy on EX Vigilant Isles 23 with 8 fully qualified RPAS Operators who were embedded within the Japanese callsigns. This was the first time that British soldiers directly embedded within a Japanese ORBAT.

We have qualified LCpl Lyon as an Assl Pnr Sect Comd, as well as a Boat Safety Supervisor. Cpl Forsyth and Pte Jones are now both qualified Plant Operators, able to operate light-wheeled tractors. LCpls Pope and Sangerman, and Ptes Campbell and Finlayson were qualified as assault pioneers. CSgt Lowe has gained his Battle Noise Safety Supervisor Qualification.

We also congratulate LCpl Lyons on his promotion to Cpl.



Delivering lessons in Fort George for SFA Validation



Asst Pioneers clearing minefield during Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR



Route clearance to allow PI Attack in Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR



Delivering equipment lessons in Fort George as part of SFA Validation



Field Lessons during Ex GOLDEN WARRIOR II



CSgt Lowe and Cpl Hall driving home from LFTT in Japan



CHARLIE COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj Pendlebury

Company Second in Command

Capt Gray

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 Lavery

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt Kyle

2023 has been a busy and rewarding year for the Company. There have been several ORBAT changes, platoons have joined and left the company, and the role of the company as a whole has changed in 2024 under the new SFA ORBAT. Throughout, C Company (the Savages) have been ever professional and resilient soldiers, and they will continue to be so under their new SFA role. The 2024 ORBAT sees C Coy now consists of 3 platoons: the Reconnaissance Pl; the Recce Aware Pl; and the Sniper Pl.

2023 saw soldiers from C company deploy to a number of UK locations: Cape Wrath for a Mortar Pl Battle Camp; South Wales for a Company Battlecamp; Devon to play a Hunter Force; Tain for sniper training and sniper competition; Otterburn for platoon cadres; Balmoral to play the Pipes and Drums for His Majesty; and Aldershot, Catterick, Aviemore and the Hebrides for sport and Adventure Training.

The overseas list is even more impressive: CSgt Millar and the Anti-Tank Platoon exercised with the 1 R ANGLIAN and NATO forces in Sweden; Pipe Major Muir and the Pipes and Drums supported defence engagement activity in Fiji, Tonga, and Australia; Coy HQ and a composite team of officers and NCOs deployed to Australia for a CPX; whilst



Live Firing on Ex CELTIC SAVAGE

small teams and individuals supported other 3 SCOTS companies in South Korea, Japan, and Brunei.

The year began with platoon cadres for each of the Company's five platoons. All cadres culminated in one of the highlights of 2023 - Exercise CELTIC SAVAGE. At the end of March, Inverness became a much quieter place as The Savages departed Fort George for a two-

week exercise in Sennybridge, Brecon. Ex CELTIC SAVAGE was the culmination of the 3 SCOTS Support Weapon Cadres and was an opportunity to bring all individual disciplines together and operate as we should be doing in a Battle Group context, setting the conditions for Rifle Coy actions.

3 SCOTS



Fyrish Monument

The two-week exercise consisted of two phases. Phase 1 saw PI training where the individual PIs closed out the remaining cadre TOs that they could not complete in isolation. Phase 2 saw Coy level training where the full fury of the Savages was brought together. The exercise was punctuated by a number of capstone events including Mortar Urban Live Fire; Ex SAVAGE DANCE (Fan-Dance); Rifle Coy integration training; and Ex SAVAGE RAID (the final combined arms manoeuvre Live Fire attack).

2023 continued to be eventful for the Savages. Delivering a Company Section level patrol competition, adventurous training and supporting a host of trawls the Battalion was charged with delivering. Autumn and winter 2023 saw some exciting overseas opportunities as noted above and a chance for The Savages to begin their foray into the Indo-Pacific and other countries.

A few notable mentions should be highlighted for 2023:

- Maj Drapper moves back south of the border to assume his new role with the Collective Training Group based in West Down Camp on SPTA.
- WO2 McCarthy, now Capt McCarthy, earned his well-deserved late entry commission and moved to become MTO 3 SCOTS.
- CSgt Miller, who excellently deployed the Anti-Tank PI to Sweden, moves on to the Infantry Battle School as an instructor.
- Cpl McQueen leaves the recce platoon to take up a role as a Cpl Instructor at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick.
- CSgt Meighan and Sgt Dougall move on from CQMS and Sniper 2IC respectively to take up roles as PSIs with our sister Reserve Bns.
- Praise must be given to the whole G4 team, who have supported all activity with steadfast logistics.
- CSgt Brownless and his sniper platoon were bold and decisive in planning and executing the first ever

Scottish Division Sniper Competition (SDSC), with over 40 participants from local civilian and wider Army units attending.

- Congratulations should also be given to Capt Smith and Cpl Verrall for passing the Light Role Recce Commanders' Course.
- LCpl Mullin on obtaining an Instructor's pass on the Section Commanders' Battle Course.
- Cpl Campbell for a very strong performance on the Jungle Warfare Instructors' Course.

As the new Company takes shape, 2024 is gearing up to be memorable. The Company deploy to Barry Budden for a two-week battlecamp, before the Recce platoons conduct the recce patrolman's cadre and snipers deliver their annual marksman and stalk training package.



CHARLIE COMPANY

Reconnaissance Platoon

OC Recce

Capt Stu Smith

Recce 2IC

CSgt Keltie White

The start of 2023 saw the reconnaissance platoon conduct a recce patrolman cadre, to qualify the platoon as trained recce soldiers. This was the first patrolman cadre since 2018. The six-week cadre was a demanding but enjoyable training package that stretched and tested members of the platoon in the dark and demanding art of light role reconnaissance. Based primarily at Fort George, the cadre made extensive use of the surrounding Cawdor Estate and concluded with a final exercise on Sennybridge Training Area in Brecon, Wales. This year the platoon were joined by students and instructors from 2 SCOTS who were instrumental in delivering this challenging training cadre. At the conclusion of the cadre nine students were newly qualified as Light Role Recce patrolmen with the remainder of the cadre gaining re-qualification. The top student prize was awarded to Pte McMahon.

The first week of the cadre saw the students being assessed in the basics of their role. They completed the 8-mile loaded march before moving onto navigation theory. Navigation theory was followed by practical assessment with the students being tested on their navigation skills by day and night both with and without Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment.

Following the successful completion of these assessments the students moved onto another vital skill - communications training. As the Battle Group's eyes and ears, observation is meaningless without good communication. Recce patrolmen must be confident in both HF and VHF communications systems, and they took to the training well.

Finally, the cadre were introduced to Battle Group doctrine and tactics. An essential element of the cadre and one which the soldiers grappled with successfully throughout the cadre.

The cadre deployed ahead of Charlie Company to conduct its final exercise in Brecon. This was a testing four-night exercise that saw the students conduct a search over 6km before inserting into a sub-surface observation post matrix to develop an enemy target. The exercise culminated with the observation posts being bumped and the platoon withdrawing to an RV where they developed courses of action for an assault.

The expectation of a recce platoon soldier is that they have the depth of knowledge to develop a coherent plan that makes best use of the Battle Group's assets and the confidence to brief that plan to anyone, from a Section Commander to a Commanding Officer. In order to develop confidence in what can be an uncomfortable and alien briefing environment the back briefs were done exclusively by the Pte soldiers who had to brief on their aspects of the plan and take questions.

Post cadre, the Platoon deployed on Ex SAVAGE POSEIDON, an urban operations package, led by Cpl Verrall. The exercise focussed on the development of the recce platoons RAID and STRIKE capabilities in a complex urban environment, using simmunition

to create realistic training. The Royal Marines base in Arbroath provide an excellent facility to conduct large scale indoor urban operations training and the platoon will certainly return to Arbroath in the future to conduct further training. The Platoon made the most of being based in the Highlands and conducted an adventurous training exercise consisting of hill walking, mountain climbing, and canoeing.

2023 ended with much success: LCpl Mullen received an Instructors Recommendation on his Section Commander's Battle Course. Cpl Verrall represented the battalion on Ex FROSTED BLADE (the infantry skiing competition), after passing the Light Close Reconnaissance Commanders' Course. And Cpl Campbell passed the Jungle Warfare Instructors Course.



3 SCOTS

Mortar Platoon

Platoon Commander

Capt William Dakin

Platoon Second in Command

CSgt Jamie Rushfirth

2023 has been an extremely busy yet rewarding year for the Mortar Platoon. The year started with a Mortar Cadre, attended by personnel from both 3 SCOTS and 2 SCOTS. Following this, the Mortar platoon took part in Ex CELTIC SAVAGE, where the platoon honed the skills developed over the mortar cadre and applied it to an urban environment. The platoon had the opportunity to conduct live firing in this environment and coordinated activity with the Sniper Platoon and other support assets.



Mortar Live Firing

The start of the year saw the Mortar platoon focus on tactical, green activity. Exercises, however, were not the only activity conducted by the platoon, being significantly involved in ceremonial duties in May at the General Assembly.

The Mortar Platoon also led C (Fire Support) Company to victory at the Fort George Highland Games. Key highlights were Cpl Cavin placing well in the Weight Over Bar and Hammer Throw events, Cpl Dibba in the sprints, and the Tug of War team to which the Mortar Platoon provided most of the people and almost all of the mass.



Highland Games – Tug o War

In the latter part of the year, the Mortar platoon competed in Ex SAVAGE APTITUDE, a patrol competition conducted on the training areas around Fort George. As always, the skills and drills of the Mortars outshone our competition.



DISPERSED BOMBARDMENT PT

This set the platoon up perfectly for the next big event on the calendar. Another exercise, Ex DISPERSED BOMBARDMENT, this time in Cape Wrath, in September. The exercise focused on increasing the efficiency of the platoon's mortar drills, as well as developing individual soldiers in navigation, communications, and other basic infantry skills. Warm weather and sunny beaches made it a highlight of the year. The beaches provided the perfect opportunity for some tough early morning PT sessions led by Sgt Salter. The Mortar Platoon has conducted a significant amount of live firing this year, with the Jocks firing approximately 400 rounds over the course of the cadre. Ex DISPERSED BOMBARDMENT also

provided the chance for some down time, where the platoon visited Smoo Caves and went zip-lining across the dramatic cliffs on the North coast of Scotland.

The opportunities provided by 3 SCOTS moving to Security Force Assistance (SFA) also didn't go to waste. With elements of the Mortar Platoon heading out to Australia, Japan, and Brunei to conduct a variety of activities.

Ex SUMAN WARRIOR saw members of Platoon HQ and C Company HQ deploy to the Northern Territories in Australia, to conduct a CPX, integrated with the Australian Army. The exceptional hosting skills of the Australians, ever-present sunshine, and the chance to spot crocodiles presented a welcome change from the familiar Fort George seagulls and Scottish weather. A few members of the Mortar Platoon supported Ex VIGILANT ISLES in Japan. This exercise was the first time that the UK deployed under the Reciprocal Access Agreement between Japan and the United Kingdom and the first time that 3 SCOTS conducted SFA activity in Japan. The soldiers from the Mortar Platoon acted as members of an SFA team, enabling combined arms manoeuvre and facilitating interoperability.

The platoon also sent individuals on Ex SUNDA PATROL in Brunei. The aim of Ex SUNDA PATROL was to showcase the jungle skills of competing teams, operating in a Close Combat Tropical Terrain Environment, assessed by experienced SMEs from 1 RGR. Ex SUNDA PATROL 23 was only open to teams from the UK; however, future iterations are set to be multinational. The Mortar Platoon is looking forward to the opportunity to test ourselves in this environment, competing against teams from various nations with different training, 2024 looks just as busy for the Mortar Platoon.



CHARLIE COMPANY

Sniper Platoon

Platoon Commander

CSgt Tony Brownless

Platoon Sergeant

Sgt Nico Russell

2023 was a very successful year for the Sniper Platoon. The year commenced with a Sniper Operators Cadre (SOC) in the arduous conditions of the Scottish Highlands. The final exercise of the SOC finished by coming together with the rest of the Company to deploy on EX CELTIC SAVAGE in Sennybridge, Wales, which resulted in successfully badging two snipers and welcoming them into the platoon. Two other students from the SOC then went on to conduct retesting after some remedial training with the platoon, leading to four new badged snipers joining the Sniper Platoon in 2023, a great achievement.



Sniper inside an urban hide

The Basic Sniper Operator Course (SOC) is an arduous course designed to test a soldier's mastery of new skills across a multitude of disciplines and testing landscapes. The course pushes the strongest of soldiers in fitness, navigation, observation, stalking, judging distance, marksmanship, static map reading and sniper knowledge with the hope of qualifying them as a Badged Sniper. This year's SOC saw students from 3 SCOTS and 2 YORKS partake in the intense eight-week course, delivered in two distinct phases:



3 SCOTS Sniper platoon

- **Part One** – Marksmanship – Four weeks. One of the weeks was held in Barry Budden, focused on an introduction to Live Firing with the Sniper System. The week was spent on the gallery range learning to group and zero the weapon system, collect real world data, and apply it to marksmanship out to a range of 700m. The students also enjoyed two sets of Physical Training (PT) a day to ensure they were prepared for the fieldcraft phase. The highlight of which was the infamous Ghillie Run, where students were encouraged to find the dirtiest, wettest areas of the training area and crawl through it to weather their Ghillie suits. The week was rounded off with application of fire practices at night using the Sniper Night Sight. This period culminated with the Sniper's Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) which proved to be a tough test. With the wind blowing at 20 kph, only two of the students, Ptes Muritoki and Gordon, remained unfazed, passing the test with ease. The rest needing to wait until the re-sits in week four to gain their passing grade.
- **Part Two** – Fieldcraft – Four weeks. Operating in the local area the course moved to Cawdor estate for large parts of the fieldcraft training. The students started with a couple of days of classroom-based learning before they started to run around the area. The students were introduced to:
 - Sniper Intelligence Preparation of the Environment (IPE)
 - Psychological & Mental resilience
 - Air Photography
 - Sniper Target Acquisition
 - Logging and Reporting
 - Stalking
 - Methods of Judging Distance

3 SCOTS



A team from Cawdor who successfully stalked on to the enemy position

A highlight of the SOC was the Sniper PI deployment on Exercise OVERWATCH, a 48-hour Observation Post (OP) exercise where the students must insert into an area and dig a sub-surface OP. The training objective is to observe enemy movement, log and report all actions while maintaining their readiness to provide a precision strike if required. This exercise is designed to test the Snipers ability to continue to work at a high tempo even when exhausted. A long insertion followed by hours of digging an OP, followed by 48hrs of silent overwatch, all without warm food is extremely demoralising, but something that needs to be prepared for. It is not for the faint hearted.

But it all leads up to the badging test!

If the students weren't already feeling the pressure, they were now. Over the course of a week, they were tested in all elements covered in part two of the course. Each student has one attempt to pass each skill and one re-test if they fail. If the students pass every skill, they become a badged Sniper; however, if they fail one skill, they get a deferred pass meaning they have three months to be re-trained and tested. Any further failure will mean they will need to re-sit the full eight-week course.

As the year continued, the Sniper Platoon entered an eight strong team into the Battalion shooting competition, again they displayed the exceptional marksmanship expected and won the Overall Winning Team and the March and Shoot Trophies. Not one for resting on their laurels, the Sniper Platoon entered a section into the Company patrol skills competition, coming away with a first place yet again. Soon after this, the Sniper Platoon jumped straight into planning the first ever Scottish Division Sniper Competition, which saw 3 SCOTS host six military and six civilian teams, and 3 SCOTS Sniper Platoon coming out on top and winning the SDSC Trophy. At the tail end of the year, the Sniper Platoon have just re-rolled under the new Security Force Assistance (SFA) Orbat and are training and preparing for upcoming SFA deployments.



The SDSC Winners Award - Stag head along with a plaque



CHARLIE COMPANY

Anti-Tank Platoon

Platoon Commander

Capt Lachlan E Broad

Platoon Second in Command

CSgt Ross Miller

The Anti-Tank Platoon became the first of the Bn's Support Weapons to complete a cadre in 2023. Running for three weeks out of Barry Budden Training Camp, the PI were instructed on Anti-Tank theory, Weapon Handling and Doctrine which covered the employment of the weapon systems and Anti-Tank Tactics, Techniques and Procedures. All of which was tested in the conduct of Anti-Armour Ambushes set in a tactical scenario.

As the Bn's only dedicated "Tank Killers" this specialist PI is central to the Bn's ability to FIND and STRIKE the Enemy and is a critical component of the Combined Arms Battle.

The Anti-Tank Cadre started with a focus on the basics: the first week consisted of daily Physical Training (PT) sessions tailored towards the rigors of carrying the heavy equipment used by an Anti-Tank Gunner. This was followed by classroom-based theory lessons on the weapon system, and the roles and responsibilities of each member of the platoon.

The evenings allowed the students time to get a to grips with each of the weapon systems and fine tune their skills on the Indoor Trainer (IDT) in preparation for the Gunner Skills Tests in week two.

The second week continued with the progressive build up PT focused on longer tabs with increased weight,



CSgt Miller instructing on Cadre – CSgt Miller delivering Anti-Armour Ambush

Instruction moved from the classroom to the field and was focused on the more practical aspects of constructing a bush-hide, tactical occupation of an Observation Post (OP), stop-short drills, FRV drills and Occupation and Detachment Commander's briefs.

The final week of the Cadre was focused on the completion of the Gunner Skills test, written Military Knowledge tests and an Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) recognition test. Week three was designed to be the summative test week for the students. The students deployed as an Anti-Tank section to conduct an Anti-Armour Ambush, which required them to put all the skills they had learned so far into practice.

Upon completion of the Anti-Tank Cadre the newly qualified Anti-Tank Gunners focus quickly swayed to the Platoon's deployment to Brecon to conduct Ex CELTIC SAVAGE.

Providing a stage for a shake out, Ex CELTIC SAVAGE was generated to focus on the Combined Arms capability that the Support Platoons pride themselves on. Over the two weeks the platoon conducted a series of NLAW stalks, Passive Ops and Anti-Armour Ambushes. Though stalking is a relatively new concept to modern Anti-Tank Platoons, it has proved through modern application to be wildly successful when conducting anti-armour operations. Inspiration for the concept was drawn from the British PIAT teams in Sicilian campaign during the Second World War. It is currently being practiced by Ukrainian forces.

3 SCOTS



Vehicle (AFV) recognition lessons, loaded marches and a host of liaison tasks were the recipe for success and was what led to the platoons excellent performance.

Returning from Finland the platoon's focus switched to the Battalion re-orbat, falling into Bravo Company and trying a new structure. The platoon is now poised and ready for what 2024 has to offer.

The Anti-Tank Platoon during Ex CELTIC SAVAGE

Though the Cadre qualified new Anti-Tank Gunners and Ex CELTIC SAVAGE provided a great opportunity to test the platoons soldiering skills, workforce numbers became a concern. The Anti-Tank Platoon has gone through a period of reconstruction. Following a fast-paced period, the platoon has found itself supporting a host of Battalion deployments, resulting in us operating in a dispersed manner. The Anti-Tank Platoon has not only had a new Platoon Commander but also the addition of a commitment to a NATO level exercise.

Exercise HAMMER was conducted in Finland and demand the platoon to pair with other British partners to embed into the Finnish Army and adopt the position of their Anti-Armour capability. The exercise itself was comprised of a peer-on-peer dry exercise incorporating Leopard 2 A6 Main Battle Tanks amongst other armoured platforms. This is the first Security Force Assistance (SFA) task that the platoon had been aligned too, sparking the requirement for a training surge. Armoured Fighting



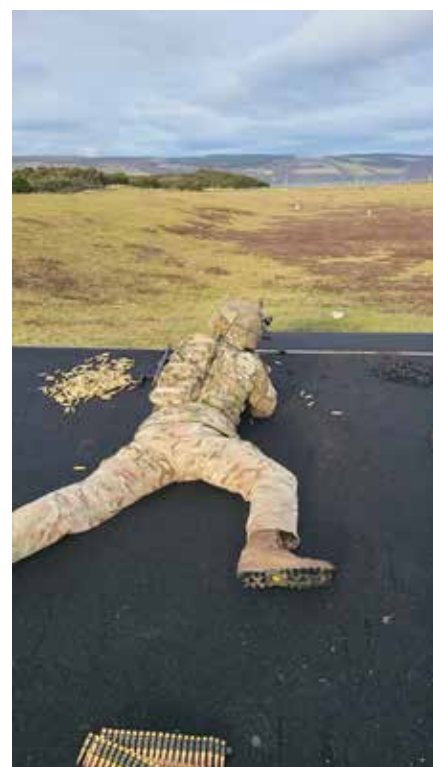
The successful completion of Ex HAMMER, and the platoon's leaving gift for CSgt Miller as his time with the platoon comes to an end and his new venture as a Brecon Instructor begins



PIPES + DRUMS AND MACHINE GUNS



Kings Coronation Massed Pipes & Drums



Lt Role Ranges

Pipe Major (Machine Gun Platoon Commander)

CSgt James Muir

Drum Major (Machine Gun Platoon Sergeant)

Sgt Peter Muir

Pipe Sgt

Cpl McCaskill

The last 12 months have been a hive of activity for the Pipes and Drums of 3 SCOTS, including participating in the prestigious event that was the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, the Presentation of New Colours to the Ballater Royal Guard and a cocktail party in Balmoral hosted by HM The King, all whilst preparing for the Battalion to take up the new role as SFA. This period also included a re-role to the Machine Gun Platoon from being Assault Pioneer Platoon.

The first quarter of the year saw the delivery of the re-role, which was taught over a six-week period, focusing on the Lt Role mechanics, classroom-based lessons and Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWTS) before moving onto the sustained fire role, cumulating in the GPMG SF Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) in Tain. The live fire training saw an impressive degree of shooting, with an average of 25,000 rounds fired per day. This period showcased the stopping power of the new role. This newfound skill was put to the test immediately on Exercise CELTIC SAVAGE, a C Coy led full LFTT package, which saw our newly qualified gunners live firing B Coy into their final assault positions.

In early May the platoon switched fire from machine gunners to our secondary role as pipers & drummers, gearing up for the biggest single military event of the year, HM The King's Coronation. For the platoon this started in Edinburgh Castle. The Pipe Major, fresh off his Gun Platoon Commanders' Course, with



Tain AWR SF Week

3 SCOTS



cam cream still hiding behind his ears travelled to Edinburgh to play for The Stone of Destiny leaving Scotland. This was marked with a new pipe tune written by Pipe Major James Muir, "The Stone of Destiny", the tune played out to millions across the world on BBC to officially kick off Coronation celebrations as the Stone was taken out of Edinburgh in a ceremony attended by The First Minister and supported by a Quarter Guard from the Battalion.



Stone of Destiny leaving Edinburgh Castle

As the Stone journeyed South, so did the Platoon. 7 Pipers and 5 Drummers led by Pipe and Drum Major respectively. For the full performance, 3 SCOTS were chosen as the centre band, a big honour to be front and centre for the biggest occasion of the year and the first for His Majesty The King. 5 days of gruelling rehearsals followed, marching through London at 0400 in the morning, the only time London is silent (until the beating heart of Scottish Infantry, the Pipes and Drums came marching through!)

In the summer the Platoon was afforded some down time after a very busy start to the year. This saw Aviemore become the new home for the Platoon for two weeks for some well-earned and deserved adventure training. Rock climbing, hill walking and canoeing was on offer. This was offered up in a round robin for all to participate, kindly being organised by the Recce platoon at the time. However, there is no rest for the wicked - or the private soldier! Moving on from our relaxing period we welcomed back Pte Ryan Small from

his Class 3 Drumming course, where he earned Top Drummer and Pte Andrew Spiers from his Class 3 piping course, where he also earned Top Student. Pte Cameron Taylor also returned from his Class 2 Piping course, following in his father's footsteps, qualifying as a piper. Everyone was back just in time to join the Battalion shooting competition where there was a strong showing throughout, and firmly topped off by winning the falling plate competition in front of the Battalion. Not bad for a platoon of indirect-fire specialists.

Straight from a well-earned summer leave, and off to Ballater for the Presentation of the new Colours of His Majesty the King to the Royal Guard. A full parade followed, marked with the old Colours being retired and slow marched off the parade to the regimental tune Auld Lang Syne, and the new colours marched on to "Wha Saw the 42nd". A little hat tip to the band on parade that day. It must be noted that this was for the first time in over 50 years this had taken place in Ballater, on the Royal Grounds of the Balmoral Estate.



Pipe Major visiting a Tongan School



Machine cadre 2



SF Teach Week



HQ COMPANY

Officer Commanding
Maj Paddy Marshall

Company Sergeant Major
WO2 Andy Reid

Company Quarter Master Sergeant
CSgt Jacky Gray



Maj Marshall

At the helm is Maj Paddy Marshall, having replaced Maj Ian Houston at short notice in March 2023 whilst covering his own duties as Quartermaster. Ian Houston was presented with an opportunity of a lifetime to become the Kit Person and facilities manager of Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC. Ian, an avid supporter, and season ticket holder, jumped at the chance.



Ian Houston and Duncan Ferguson

Look at the bottom left of the picture; you can take the man out the SCOTS but not the SCOTS out the man. The Coy would like to thank Ian and his family for their service and dedication to the SCOTS. We wish them all the best for the future.

As you can appreciate the Platoons and Departments of HQ Coy have been exponentially busy with a vast turnover of personnel. We continue to support the Unit in transition to the Security Force Assistance. This includes deploying all soldiers and their equipment to the four corners of the globe. For anyone wishing to see the world, then 3 SCOTS is the place to be. As well as supporting our own soldiers we continue to support wider defence by sending our soldiers to Operations around the world from training foreign armies in England, supporting emergency Ops in Cyprus and exercising in Belize, Falkland Islands, and Africa. A very busy but rewarding job for all who serve in the Coy and Bn.



Poppy Roof Close up

One of the finest achievements for the Unit in 2023 must be the installation of the Poppy Roof at the Community Centre on Wimberley Way. The project was the brainchild of roofing artist Gary MacIntyre from Dingwall and former 3 SCOTS Corporal Conner Farmer. Both approached Maj Marshall with the concept. The OC championed the idea through DIO and Mitie, and the roof was unveiled at a Remembrance Service in front of the centre on 11 November 23. This was covered by the BBC and STV as well as other local and national media. The team had all the materiel graciously donated by local firms in the highlands and worked relentlessly through two major storms to complete it on time. 3 SCOTS are overwhelmed by the generosity and thank all involved for their efforts.



Poppy Roof Aerial view

3 SCOTS



Fort George Highland Games and Fort Festival 16 September 2023

In 2023 the Bn ran a Highland Games and 'Fort Fest'. The concept was to open the competition to the other SCOTS Bns and blue light services in the highlands. The day consisted of the usual highland games events: piping, bugling and highland dancing competitions, with prizes for the winners of each. There was lots for friends and family to do, including stalls, bouncy castles, and Highland Porsche club. The day was supported by our own Pipes and Drums, as well as the Queen's Own Highlanders Association Pipe Band. The only Unit that was not operationally committed and able to attend was 5 SCOTS (BKA Coy). Access to the event was also permitted to the paying customers of Historic Environment of Scotland, it is estimated that around 1300 people attended the day, ultimately assisted by the weather.



Highland Games Caber Toss



Highland Games Gun Run



Fort Fest Set up



Fort Fest in full swing

To continue the party atmosphere the Bn then hosted 'Fort Fest' which was a lawn party with staging and the appearance of two local bands and a disc jockey. Guests had been bussed in from Inverness to join in the celebrations with the living in soldiers and partied into the wee small hours. Due to a busy calendar, we are having to take a rain check in 2024 because of operational commitments but look forward to planning the next event in 2025.



QUARtermasters DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster

Maj Paddy Marshall
Maj Mikey Fairweather

Quartermaster Technical

Capt Phil Ingram

RQMS (M)

WO2 Mark Robb

RQMS (T)

WO2 Bryan Young

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer

SSgt Rona Smith

Master Tailor

Sgt Thomas Couper

Works Services Manager

Ms Wendy Young

Army Force Protection Advisor

Capt Tony Topping (RLC)

Unusually the department has not been split over the last year and had a chance to support the numerous sub-unit exercises from Fort George. This also allowed key preparation time for the annual inspection period in Nov 2023.

As ever there has been a turnover of key personnel: RQMS (T) Ross Hunter left the military for a new civilian career which saw WO2 Bryan Young step into the fold in May, having previously been the Bn Trg/OPSWO. May also saw a change within the LO Team, with LCpl Willie Chuma leaving and LCpl Gideon Lungu join as his replacement from RLC. August saw the handover of the QM, with Maj Paddy Marshall moving on to OC HQ Coy and Maj Mikey Fairweather taking over the reins on return from APC. The new QM was told on several occasions that he had big boots to fill

– luckily for him this was nothing new as he only has size 6 feet! CSgt Shaggy Lockhart was next to move on in Sep after completing a 24-year career, he was superseded by CSgt Donald McMaster (returning from 6 SCOTS) and taking over the position of Tech SNCO (G1098). Sgt Stuart Grandison finally got the opportunity to leave the Bn in Sep - having spent his whole career up here and moved to 2 SCOTS as the JAMES SNCO. His replacement was Sgt Richie Uttley, coming from 2 SCOTS and taking over the position of Tech SNCO (EQPT).



Farewell to WO2 (RQMS(T)) Ross Hunter

We welcome all the new arrivals and wish all those that have moved on the very best in their future endeavours.



Farewell to Sgt Stuart Grandison

Stores Team

The team have been pushed hard over the last year. The realities of what a Security Force Assistance Battalion will look like was soon clear to see for all with the number of countries in the Indo-Pacific that our soldiers would deploy to on various exercises. Brunei, South Korea, Japan, Hawaii, and Australia to name some, which all came with a different resource requirement. Warm weather packs to the tailor shop enhancing shirts for the jungle, the team were kept on their toes. The jungle of Brunei threw more lessons learned at us with a requirement to reach into the Lived Experience Innovation Fund (LEIF) to purchase decent hammocks that would stand the tests this harsh environment threw at those deployed there.

The year ended with our LSA&I and LEA. A massive effort from all in the preparations and conduct in all areas to ensure we were in a good place throughout, with only a few observations to deal with. This led to some plaudits from the Commanding Officer for SSgt Haverty and Cpl Hartland on an individual level and to the whole team collectively. On the 1 Dec 23 Bn HQ and elements of the G4 team took over UKSB(N) for 3 months. Our attached Sub-Units were based in Edinburgh, Ripon and Bulford which brought challenges in the split and issue of the Protective Equipment Pack (PEP) or as it is now known, Stocks Held Forward. A small team deployed to 4RA for the handover of the kit, of which 1x ISO was sent to each Sub-Unit location.

Finally, huge congratulations go to Sgt Couper - our Master Tailor - upon his award of an MBE for outstanding support to Op UNICORN and The Kings Coronation.

3 SCOTS



Catering Team

This year has once again proven to be a year full of activity for the catering team. Our chefs have supported the Battalion in sporting events, cadres, functions, and other events including incorporating a catering stand into the 51X Army Youth Challenge. This showcased the versatility of OFCS, opportunities, development, and further education available to military chefs.

SSgt Rona Smith started off the year slightly differently, with 5 weeks on the ice in Igls Austria and later Lillehammer Norway. This was after being selected for the British Army Luge Team. Rona was selected as the new Master Chef and will continue in this role for the full tenure at 3 SCOTS.

Sgt Ashford conducted a skills workshop for the team throughout April, re-introducing butchery skills that are gradually being phased-out due to PAYD. This was done using locally sourced meats, wild game, field kitchen and 10-person ORP. This produced fantastic food whilst furthering the leadership and development of the JNCOs and junior chefs.



Sgt Ashford conducting a butchery lesson – French Trim

A team of talented Cpls - "Tags" Tagivetua and Jimee took turns between Ballater and Aviemore, supporting the Bn on AT and Op TEAMWORK. Tags also took on a 3-month deployment to Belize in the latter part of the year.

We welcomed the addition of LCpl Josefa "B" Biunaiwai who was quickly deployed to cater for the CIS cadre in Aberdeen before completing the mandated ALDP. As an avid rugby player, B trains with the Bn team, Highland Rugby, and Army Scotland.



Bn BBQ – SSgt Smith, Cpl T, LCpl B & Pte Fishenden

Pte Fishenden was tasked to cater for the RLC30 pre-launch in Worthy Down and 5 SCOTS whilst on HM Royal Guard in Ballater. His return to 3 SCOTS was short lived as he soon jetted off to Cyprus for 6 months to cater on Op TOSCA for 39 & 71 ENGR.

Pte Manners took a different route this year and tried her hand at the world of competitive catering at Ex JOINT CATERER 2023. She won a silver in Open Pasta and a bronze in Junior Cook and Serve. This fantastic achievement has set Pte Manners up for the international stage at the Joint Culinary Training Exercise (JCTE) in Virginia, USA.



Pte Manners Open Pasta Competition – Ex JOINT CATERER 2023

Awards & Promotions

MBE

Sgt Thomas Couper MBE

CGS Commendation

Maj Paddy Marshall

CFA Commendation

Capt Phil Ingram

Beige(L)

Maj Mikey Fairweather

Capt Phil Ingram

WO1

WO2 Mark Robb

Cpl

Cpl Tony Moir

LCpl

Pte Manners (RLC)

Pte Norbert (RLC)



CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer
Capt Jordan Greene

Regimental Signals Warrant Officer
WO2 William Paterson

CIS Platoon, like the wider Bn, has had a varied and busy 2023. A multitude of changes have presented opportunities for both enviable deployments as well as conceptual and technical development.

We have had an active role in the majority of Bn activity this year, with the team working quietly in the background to ensure that the Bn is supported. The move to the Indo-Pacific has made this all the more relevant. The terrain and distances involved have necessitated an uplift in HF training to ensure effectiveness, as seen on Ex SUNDA PATROL. An arduous competition, hosted by 1 RGR in the Brunei jungle, it reinforced the importance of CIS training down to the lowest level.

This theme of the centrality of CIS carried through to other major exercises. Ex IMJIN WARRIOR saw the successful employment of AFANC by soldiers in Korea. These devices give real-time battle-tracking capability to the individual soldier and massively increase their effectiveness as well as their partnered force.

The request for this type of advanced equipment is underpinned by our move to Security Force Assistance (SFA) and the changes to our PI structure. This sees small teams dispersed across the Indo-Pacific with two distinct communication challenges: how do we communicate with partnered forces? And how does a potentially section-strength team communicate with HQ elements in the UK? There has been



Platoon signaller in the field

huge effort at every rank to provide a workable solution to these challenges.

It is not a new problem: throughout 2023 we have partnered with the US 5th Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) and lessons have been learned from how they solved a similar problem set. This integration has given us a framework from which we can begin to create our own concept of communications, which was successfully briefed to 11 Security Force Assistance Brigade Commander in October. Following this, a series of CIS courses have been developed to train the Bn in the new skills required. These courses will be trialled in 2024.

In terms of soldier development, it has been a year of firsts! Cpl Eadie and Pte Chalmers were the first 3 SCOTS troops to attend the Royal Signals OpNet Lite course, which focuses on deployable secret connectivity and Ops room set-up. This is a new capability for the Bn, as well as a display of our capability in a traditionally Royal Signals only field. We deployed CIS personnel to various corners of the world for the first time, such as Sgt Tudor in Hawaii with 5th SFAB, or Cpl Omondi in Australia training with our partners from Singapore and Malaysia. Sgt Tudor and Cpl Eadie were the first UK personnel to attend the Advisor Communications Course, hosted by 5th SFAB in Seattle, USA. Cpl Eadie was also the first 3

3 SCOTS



CIS soldiers with 5th SFAB

SCOTS soldier to attend the Army Special Operations Brigade CIS Course, Ex EAGLES CALL, gaining valuable insight on how the Rangers approach a similar problem set to SFA. Special recognition should be given to Pte Chalmers, who has successfully completed the Regimental Signaller course, and Pte McDonald, who has completed a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer Cadre.

Despite all this activity, we have not neglected the home front. Sgt Hague raised £500 for charity by completing the Loch Ness 24, a gruelling 24-hour endurance race. He also assisted an adventurous training rock climbing expedition to Skye. The PI conducted navigation training in the Cairngorms,

as well as canoeing on Loch Achilty, making the most of the training opportunities on our doorstep.

2023 been a year of transition, but ultimately very rewarding for the CIS Platoon. The troops are at the forefront of SFA CIS development, proving their worth to both the wider Bn and our international partners.



REME LIGHT AID DETACHMENT (LAD)

Artificer Quartermaster Sergeant
WO2 G Horsburgh

2023 saw a few challenges and changes to 3 SCOTS LAD. The untimely passing of Craftsman Christopher (Chris) Millar was a shock to the Bn but more so the Detachment. We rallied as one and supported his wife Mihaela through a difficult time. Chris was an integral part of the team; we miss him dearly.

We have had a frantic period with personnel being assigned away as the LAD reduces to 11 in line with 3 SCOTS workforce direction. This has created opportunities for some of our Service People (SP) to deploy to Kenya and Op CABRIT. Close interaction with Army Personnel Centre has resulted in SP being assigned to locations of their choice across the Army, which is positive.

In line with our restructure requirements the Bn saw a significant reduction in vehicle platforms. Testament to the hard work of the LAD who prepared over 200 platforms for issue to the Field Army. With the remaining fleet held at varying levels of readiness the team still have targets to meet and have an ongoing fight to maintain a lethargic fleet. Armourers have had an extremely busy period maintaining and inspecting around 3000 pieces of equipment, excellent work by SSgt Armstrong and his team.

In the margins the LAD has still maintained a positive training and development plan throughout 2023. Professional and personal development remains a top priority and SP have managed to complete most courses as required.



LAD St Eligius Day Event

We saw some progressive upgrades to the LAD facilities with more in the pipeline for 2024. Essentially new workshop equipment has either been sourced or has been indented for and these will all assist with efficiency and compliance across the unit.

Further integration with our fellow REME SP at 39 Engineer Workshop led to very successful St Eligius day events both at Kinloss and Fort George. Engineering Challenges followed by a social evening in Kinloss was well received with a further Engineering Challenge at Fort George involving the whole Bn. No real surprises when HQ Coy were presented with the trophy for a second year running.



REGIMENTAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Regimental Administrative Officer
Captain D Hillan

Detachment Commander
Captain C Robertson

Regimental Administrative Warrant Officer
Warrant Officer Class 2 V Armstrong

Unit Accountant / Financial Systems Administrator
Staff Sergeant P Clemerson

Personnel Support Supervisor
Sergeant W Savu

Staff Support Assistant
Sergeant A Martin

The past year has seen a lot of changes in personnel in the 3 SCOTS SPS Detachment with numerous arrivals and departures. We have welcomed a new Detachment Commander, Capt Robertson, a new Financial Systems Administrator, SSgt Clemerson, and we have also welcomed LCpl Saukila. The Detachment has bid farewell to SSgt Hadzor, Cpls Mumba and Serukalou and Pte Evans. Sgt Habia has been reassigned to the Battalion after a 6-month temporary assignment to BATUK.

Through a demanding 2023 the Detachment has seen many successes, Cpls Mumba, Habia and Serukalou have all promoted to Sgt. Ptes Evans and Harvey have both been selected for promotion to LCpl. Cpl Martin successfully completed the Staff Support Assistant (SSA) course and has been covering the role of the Staff Support Assistant since Sep 23.

The AGC Detachment restructured due to Pers Admin Capability Review (Future Soldier Structure) by centralising the OR4 into the Admin Office in BHQ. Since then, the Detachment has adapted to the changes in order to support the Battalion. The Regimental Accountant role has merged with the Financial Systems Administration role in creating the new Unit Accountant role. This makes SSgt Clemerson's job extremely challenging, managing not only the public funds but also the non-public. Each Sub-unit is now adjusting to the new ways of working with G1 support being provided by a singular Jnr MPA.

Members from the AGC detachment competed in the Triple Crown Challenge at Worthy Down in May 23. The competition consisted of a 12 mile march and shoot. The team performed well earning a bronze medal.



3 SCOTS AGC Triple Crown Team 2023

The AGC detachment has supported the Battalion with multiple overseas exercises throughout the year such as Ex Sunda Patrol and Ex Sava Star in Brunei, Ex Imjin Warrior in Korea, and Ex Suman Warrior in Australia. The AGC detachment supported all these exercises in a variety of ways ensuring the Bn remained operationally effective throughout.

In Nov 23 the RAO department completed a Full G1 Audit where the hard work throughout the year paid off. No observations meant a very well done from the CO and a well-earned cohesion event to celebrate.

Pte Cortez took part in the Ex Taberfeldy march where members of 3 SCOTS conducted a 112.2 miles weighted march from Fort George to Aberfeldy Black Watch memorial over 5 days. The event was arduous, with physical and mental challenges along the way, with the addition of the unpredictable weather of the Scottish Highlands. On completion of the event members of the Battalion and veterans congratulated the team at the Black Watch memorial. The team raised over £10,000 in support of suicide prevention and mental health awareness.



3 SCOTS Aberfeldy Memorial



UNIT WELFARE OFFICE



Wives and partners Christmas Party

Unit Welfare Officer (UWO)

Capt Ian Carlisle

Assistant UWO

CSgt John Fay

2023 has been an eventful period within the UWO. Following the coronation of HM The King, the military community came together and held a street party, with the fortune of good weather on our side we had over 200 people across the community participate and mark the event.

As we moved into the summer, we saw the changeover within the team and said our farewells to Capt Richard Grisdale, who was selected as Quartermaster of ATR Winchester and WO2 Barry Smith who moved on promotion to the 3 SCOTS Ops WO role. We also welcomed Charlene Bleakley – our new AWS community development worker.

As Halloween loomed, we received a donation from the Army in Scotland fund and held a Halloween children's party, which was well attended by kids and parents. Some of the fancy dress was spectacular!

The Unit returned from its multiple deployments just in time for the Christmas festivities. In collaboration with the families, the welfare team delivered several events including the wives' dinner night, a wreath making workshop and the childrens' Christmas party, with special guest St Nicolas (AKA Maj Paddy Marshall). All this was supported by a donation from the Army in Scotland fund and AMEY.

With the 2024 calendar filling up, the welfare team prepare for another busy year supporting the Bn and their families.



MEDICAL SECTION

Regimental Medical Officer

Maj Natalie Taylor

Medical Sergeant

Sgt Derrick

Sgt Daulton

The medical section is arguably the most used department in HQ Coy. The team are subject to trawls supporting our own soldiers as well as wider defence. At the time of writing, we have three medics in station, the others are deployed on Operation INTERFLEX, Kenya and leave. The turnover in the section has been challenging. We wish all those team members moving on the best of luck for the future, and welcome Sgt Ngu as 3 SCOTS Nurse and Sgt Derrick (Med Sgt) in lieu of Sgt Daulton who is on maternity leave having welcomed baby Emma into her team. The life of a medic has its perks as newly promoted LCpl Campbell can testify.

Ex IMJIN WARRIOR - South Korea
by LCpl Campbell



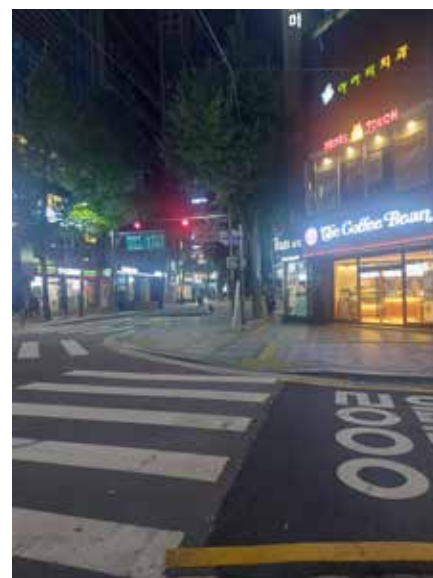
LCpl Campbell Ex IMJIN WARRIOR

On the 4 Oct 23 I deployed with Bravo company to South Korea to take part in one of the biggest partnered exercises in the Indo Pacific – Ex IMJIN WARRIOR. The exercise name was given to mark 70 years since the end of the Korean war where Britain sent around 60,000 troops fight. The exercise was a testing experience for everyone – the terrain was completely different to what we were used to training on and was challenging. There were high altitude mountains, jungle like forests and built-up urban areas which soldiers would be prone to injuries if not conditioned to the environments. The terrain was not the only worry for a medic out there, as there were also 3 types of poisonous snakes on the training area, giant Asian ‘murder’ hornets, mosquitos and wild boars. My role on the exercise was to carry out RLS, providing medical treatment to those injured on the ground and transporting patients to hospital who required further medical treatment. I worked alongside two Scots Guards medics, who were also deployed with companies to provide treatment on the ground and handover patients to myself to provide further treatment or take to hospital.

Working with a Korean medical facility was challenging: the medical skills and knowledge we have as British Army medics is very different to the South Korean medics. Also discussing treatments with doctors and nurses in the hospitals and seeing how they treat different injuries was an eye opener, but us British medics did stand our ground to protect our patients when needed, to ensure they were given the appropriate and essential treatment required.

Working alongside the South Korean soldiers was great. 3 SCOTS got involved and worked well alongside the Korean teams. We played sports in our down time with the soldiers and interpreters.

We learnt some Korean language, learning the basics such as ‘hello’, ‘thank you’ and ‘goodbye’. The language is harder than other countries we have deployed to, but the Koreans really appreciated the efforts made to get to know them. The Koreans we worked with were mostly national service, which requires men from the ages of 20-30 years old to give 18 months of their lives to become trained soldiers to serve their country. The kit and ration packs we carry as soldiers were slightly different to the Koreans, the Koreans were amused by the variety of different rations we are issued. They only have around 5 ration pack types which are all very similar and don’t hold as much food inside. Their bags are self-heating but over-all the British rations seemed to be the favourite for deploying with, and they were a lot lighter too. At the end of the exercise our CoC granted us 48 hours in the Capital city Seoul.



Seoul by night



MEDICAL SECTION



Gloucester Hill Memorial

It was an amazing experience! I had never been in a city so big, just strips of illuminated buildings, miles long. There were plenty of food markets advertising their own cuisine, and many stalls with clothes and gifts, coffee shops on every corner. It was like a different city at night compared to during the day. We had a 3 SCOTS Korean BBQ night to get a taste of the Korean cuisine and take in the culture. Some of the guys were professionals by the end with using chopsticks, but some of us had to stick to the good old knife and fork. We also

carried out many cultural visits in our down time, this included a tour of the DMZ on the Korean border.

We also visited Gloucester Hill War Memorial where the Battle of Imjin Warrior took place in 1951. One of the biggest battles to happen after the Second World War, the British Army's 29th British Independent Infantry Brigade Group fought hard and suffered many casualties in this war.

Upon reflection, South Korea has been an experience I'll never forget, an amazing country with very caring and friendly people. The Exercise was a massive success, 3 SCOTS and the 1st Battalion Scots Guards have made a stronger impression with the South Korean Army and have taught them even more skills which will make them better soldiers.



SCOTTISH DIVISION SNIPER COMPETITION 2023

Exercise Director

Lt Col M Hayton

Senior Planning Officer

Major A Pendleton

Planning Officer

Colour Sergeant T Brownless

RCO

Colour Sergeant S McLaren

Sergeant N Russell

Sergeant J Cameron

2023 saw a brand-new competition hosted by 3 SCOTS in Inverness. The Scottish Division Sniper Competition (SDSC) was created for all the Scottish units to compete against each other to find Scotland's top Snipers. In addition to the SDSC, there was an Open Division for other units of the Military and Civilians to enter. This was planned as a Tri-Service event with competitors from Civilian gun clubs and Police Scotland attending also with invites being sent out to 42 teams.

There were various aims for the competition: promoting Sniping along with shooting in the Highlands; to develop relationships between the competing teams and also with companies that support the Military or shooting; to test the Snipers in the unique, harsh environments of the Scottish Highlands; and to introduce the Snipers to time-based pressure with real consequence which cannot be replicated in our current training environment.

Planning the event was a lot more complex than initially assessed. With the introduction of the Open Division to this competition it brought with it many more planning consideration, such as complications with civilians firing on

military ranges but also having them use their own weapon systems to compete. With support from many different areas including DIO, SASC and DSA, along with lots of range related staff work, 3 SCOTS were finally granted a range waiver to allow civilian firers authority to fire in the competition with their own weapon systems.

Planning for the competition exceeded 5 months, but it was a huge milestone when invites were finally sent out with confirmed dates of 27 Nov 2023. The plan was to have all the Scottish Units attend the full five-days and the Open Division the final three-days. A full course of fire was given to the competitors so everyone understood how the shoots would run except the final event. Unfortunately, as with any competition, some of the teams had to pull out of the competition with the SCOTS div dropping to only 4 teams out of 8 and the Open Div dropping to 6 teams out of 12. Thankfully the Inverness based Cawdor Gun Club took advantage of the extra spaces available. The SCOTS Div consisted of 2 SCOTS, 3 SCOTS, 4 SCOTS and SCOTS DG. The Open Div consisted of 2 YORKS, 1 Royal Welsh and 4 teams from Cawdor Gun Club.

Finally, the 27 Nov arrived, after weeks of further plans, rehearsals and more rehearsals, the 3 SCOTS range teams were finally ready to receive the firers. The SCOTS div teams began the competition with Sgt Russell, Sgt Cameron and CSgt McLaren as the RCO's on each range, the firers were put through their paces in time pressured precision events.

Event 1 – Game Time – Precision shoots on the Gallery range between 100m – 400m. Bingo was run as a pair event where each team competes against another team in a game of precision bingo. Plate Party was a series

of different sized circles all scored according to the size of the circle with the smallest being only 9mm big. The firers were allowed to engage 5 of the 12 circles to get the highest points. Rapid Bolt was the final event where the firers had to engage a large target with 5 rounds then 5 single small targets as quickly as possible.

Event 2.1 – Know your Limits – The Sniper No.1 assessment. This event is run testing the Sniper in their ability to engage targets within the expected Estimated Scoring Area while moving between 600m and 300m under strict timed restraints.

Event 2.2 – Guardian Angel – The Sniper No.2 Assessment. This event was run to test the Sniper No. 2 in their ability to protect the Sniper No.1 in close combat while moving from cover to cover.

Event 3 – Change of Pace – This was an alternative position shoot. The firers had to advance from 600m – 300m and return, stopping at each firing point to engage targets from designated firing positions without the use of and support from bipods or tripods.

Event 4 – Lone Survivor – This was a Nav Ex which leads to a long-range engagement. The Nav ex covered around 6km in which the Sniper pairs gathered intel on the targets at each checkpoint. At the end of the Nav the Snipers had to use this intel to engage targets between 600m – 1500m.

Event 5 – Murder Hole – The Loophole Shoot. The firers start 10m behind cover and are timed to crawl forward behind the designated firing points which are large boards with different sized loopholes cut out of them. The Snipers then had 3 mins to set up their position, engage their targets and move to the next firing point tactically.



SCOTTISH DIVISION SNIPER COMPETITION 2023

Event 6 – The Hunt – The Stalk. Firers start 3km away from an enemy position and have 3 hours to stalk forward and observe the enemy position. Once in position all the firers' data was gathered, and they were taken to a firing line to fire at the target live.

Event 7 – R. E. D – A rapid Engagement shoot. Targets were set between 300 – 500m, The Sniper No.1 beginning by engaging their specific target, this gives the No.1 10 sec to engage their first target, once complete the No.2 has 10 secs to engage their target again and repeats the shoot 5 times.

Event 8 – Judgement Day – The Final event. The Snipers bought in to the fitness event where they had to cover between 1km – 3 km under direction from a PTI, they then moved to the range where they had 3 separate targets presented in a random order for 3 secs at a time: a Hight Priority Target (HPT), an enemy fighter and a civilian. The Snipers orders were to engage the HPT. This shoot could change the standings of the competition with just 1 round.

After all the events were complete there was a chance for the Snipers to relax and get together at the BBQ. There was support from Keela International, the Steel Target Company, Vortex Optics and more, with some setting up stalls to showcase their equipment. With the cold weather taking its toll, the prize giving was welcomed, with support from AIST fund and SCOTS Regt Trust fund, along with other donations, the prize table was well worth the hard work. The Open Div was won by Mr Hudson & Mr Longhurst of Cawdor Gun Club and the SCOTS Div was won by Cpl Duthie & LCpl Bell of 3 SCOTS.

3 SCOTS now look forward to hosting the competition again in 2024, with the hope of running it earlier in the year.





THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee

Maj DF Hamilton
Maj C McRobbie

Secretary of the Mess Committee

Capt A Duff

Mess Treasurer

Capt L Broad



3 SCOTS Officers' Mess

There has been a step up in activity for the Officers' Mess this year, with more functions and more mess improvements delivered throughout the year. The young officers – who are the ones who always bear the brunt of the work – have dug out blind and the end of 2023 sees the mess in a really good place thanks mainly to them.

With the Mess acknowledging that our Reeling abilities had taken a sharp drop due to back-to-back operational commitments, the year kicked off with a Ladies Dancing Night, which combined a relaxed Reeling practice with a chance to get wives and partners in for dinner in our outstanding public rooms. The night was a success, with young officers getting to meet some partners for the first time, and everyone having a laugh through the chaos. The PMC would like to take this opportunity to apologise for his little fib when he described the Eightsome Reel as a “medium” difficulty reel! It is definitely for the pros, but we

nailed it in the end and can now show our faces at the Royal Caledonian Ball amongst other events, where we will be expected to demonstrate it in front of hundreds of onlookers.

We squeezed in a summer function amongst a busy schedule, and this time the Mess opted for an informal themed party in order to save the formal event for Christmas. A Prohibition-themed party followed: with entries through hidden staircases; jazz band playing throughout the night; and the roulette table spinning as fast as the flapper dresses on display. In proper Officers' Mess fashion, we drank our own bar dry and had to switch to champagne for the final hour, but that just made the ladies happier – most notably Alfie Blackhall's girlfriend who was definitely not shy in writing his name down to pass out bottles to any passer-by!

In September we enjoyed hosting a cocktail party prior to the Bn stepping off into the foray of the Indo Pacific. We remain indebted to the fantastic support from the Pipes and Drums as well as our Fijian choir who as always excelled.

Upon return from our travels, we rolled out the red carpet and hosted our Christmas Reels Ball to celebrate the end of a challenging but rewarding year. Huge thanks are owed to Mrs Hillan & McCarthy for their sterling efforts in decorating the marquee and adding flair to the occasion. It was safe to say everyone enjoyed the Miele gelato cart and the very quick introduction to barn dancing from our US colleagues in 5th SFAB. Though the jury is still out on whether you should be listening to a rock ceilidh Prodigy mash up while doing an eightsome.

As mentioned at the start, the mess has come on a long way thanks mainly to the Livers In. We have a newly revamped Leather Room with a decent sound system and soft lighting; we actually have alcohol in our bar (don't get me started...); we have fully accounted for all property, with the museums being happy with our holdings; we have acquired and consumed a huge quantity of mess-branded champagne (a hugely successful and profitable project); we have finally delivered the Mess Caricature; and we have started to replace the ageing crystal which we have limped on for over a decade now. This on top of the functions delivered which fix us inordinately. It is the livers in who have made the mess a better place to be, and the two PMCs are incredibly grateful to them all. We hope that the changes initiated at our end have gone down well – function set up during working hours; clear ups taking place later in order for livers out to drive in safely to help; Field Officers and LES moving furniture mid-function in order for you to get to know our wives and partners better.

We are a close-knit family in the Officers' Mess, our relationships have a direct impact on the efficient running of the Bn and in 2023 they have been greatly strengthened – with lots of fun and stories made along the way!



WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member

WO1 (RSM) Alan Ferrier

President of the Mess Committee

PMC: WO2 Martin Arnold

2023 saw the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess represented across the Indo-Pacific as the move to our new role as a Security Force Assistance Battalion becomes reality, this saw our SNCOs represent the mess in Hawaii, Japan, South Korea and Australia over the past 12 months, with the general consensus at tea and toast, being that it beats Otterburn any day of the week! Although the globetrotting sounds glamorous, the troops will tell you that the mountains of South Korea and the heat of Darwin and the Australian Northern Territory are both physically and mentally challenging, Hawaii less so for the SNCOs of Alpha Grenadier Company.



RSM and New Zealand RSM in Australia

Even with our global travels the mess held some fantastic events this year, with a Jocktober Festival organised by CSgt Kenny MacFarlane, the Christmas Ball organised by WO2 (CSM) Andy Ritchie, where we had the opportunity to host our American partners from the 5th SFAB and introduce them to some Scottish hospitality in Fort George. Alongside our large-scale functions the LIM's, led by Sgt Dalgleish and Sgt Hague, have been busy in the scruff's

bar with pizza nights and themed lunches to encourage members into the mess.

The Mess has strived to have a footprint in the local areas (across Moray and Inverness) with members taking part in a number of marquee events, including the Loch Ness 24hr endurance race and the Strathpuffer Mountain Bike Enduro. These events provide an opportunity for our mess members to challenge themselves and show off the qualities and resilience of our SNCOs. Sgt Salter and CSgt Fay both put in strong solo efforts on the Loch Ness 24, whilst WO2 (RQMS) Mark Robb led a 4-person relay team including Sgt Chris Hague, WO2 (RAWO) Vicky Armstrong and Sgt Paterson.



LochNess24



Strathpuffer

Red Hackle Day presents an opportunity to remember our antecedent traditions and celebrate the Jocks, the day started with an early breakfast in the mess followed by the SNCO's conducting

Gunfire Reveille with the Jocks and JNCOs, the highlight of the day being the Football matches between the Jocks and JNCOs followed by the WO's and Sgts' Mess against the Officers' Mess against the Officers Mess, I am delighted to inform you that revenge was exacted this year, with a 2 - 1 victory.



WOs v Sgts football

This saw a few familiar faces depart the Mess having completed their service; we say a fond farewell to Sgt Richardson, Sgt Beattie, Sgt Qalobulaiwasaikabara, CSgt Lockhart and WO2 Ross Hunter, who have all made the transition to a civilian career. We also saw promotional success within the mess, with WO2 (RQMS) Robb being selected as the next RSM of the Bn, and WO2 (CSM) Rab McLurg being selected as the next RSM of 2 Royal Irish, WO2 (CSM) Martin Arnold has been selected as the next RQMS of 1 RANGER and WO1 (RSM) Ferrier has commissioned and will move to ITC Catterick.



Pull From Camp



SAILING

In 2023, 3 SCOTS participated in two Sailing Expeds: the first being the Infantry Sailing Association's Ex Norther Boomerang Bayonet (ISA Ex NBB). Hampered by battering winds and big swells, the crew gallantly sailed the "Bayonet" from Conwy Marina to Holyhead and back. The trip was fraught with some minor mechanical issues and a failing Genoa headsail, which saw WO2 Lavery and Pte Wilson wrestle the sail back onboard out of the drink, to later conduct repairs in the marina.



The second outing took the form of JSASTC Ex Highland Express (Ex HE). This found the crew navigate the Inner Hebrides. Departing Dunstaffnage Marina, we sailed 280 nautical miles in the late summer sun visiting Craohb Haven, Islay, Jura, Iona and Tobermory, to name a few of the destinations.

2024 is shaping up to be a busy year for 3 SCOTS. However, where possible we will focus on developing our crew, by increasing our RYA Comp Crew qualified SP and progressing those who already hold this ticket onto RYA Day Skipper. This will increase our capacity and potential to conduct future Unit led Expeds or for individuals to take part in JSASTC sponsored Expeds.





3 SCOTS DARTS TEAM - (RQMS(T)) BRYAN YOUNG



Singles event



Corey Marshall and Cpl Ali Tod

This year the Bn darts team has been re-established after a lengthy break due to commitments and the pandemic. The Unit have entered a team into the 2023/2024 winter league in Inverness. We practice and play our home matches at the community centre on Wimberley Way, where matches are on a weekly basis against local civilian teams in both league and tournament formats. The team consists of 3 SCOTS Service Personnel, veterans and families. Halfway through the season the team experienced some success and won our first silverware – Cpl Ali Tod (B Coy) and Corey Marshall (son of Maj Paddy Marshall) finished third in the Inverness Doubles Tournament held at the British Legion Club in Inverness.

The Defence Darts Community has been launched by the Staff at RAF Brize Norton. This is gaining traction and as fellow enthusiasts we are doing our bit for recognition of the sport. Currently we have eight players preparing to qualify for a Tri-service competition called Operation BULLSEYE which will be held at Brize Norton, this is a Pro-Am tournament, where serving members will play with Professional Darts Corporation Superstars. In addition, we have players registered for Defence Darts League, an online darts league playing against other serving members throughout the world.

3 SCOTS



3 SCOTS RUGBY 22/23

The Rugby team has embraced the mantra of work hard, play harder. While the Bn has fulfilled its commitment to SFA across the Indo-Pac, the rugby team has fulfilled theirs on the rugby field through an unbeaten season. Over the last few years the team has struggled to gain momentum; however, with a fresh 2022/2023 season, head coach Pte Bulumakao and the new rugby officer Maj McRobbie, the team was set up for success. Having not lost a game throughout the season in March the team travelled south to Aldershot for the Army Championship Cup final where they would meet the Engineer's Titans. This was the biggest game of the season and ranked the team amongst the top teams in the Army. The team showed grit and determination throughout, deservedly taking the win and cementing their spot as a top team in the ARU. While the focus was largely on the 15s season, the team managed to get away for the Mull 7s competition in May, after an excellent day 1 and 2, the team found themselves in the semi-finals against rivals and often teammates Highland RUFC. The team put in everything they had; however, a last-minute try meant Highland clinched victory and went on to win the tournament. The team has additionally supported inter-regimental fixtures both in 7s and 15s playing 2 SCOTS and 4 SCOTS, this provided the Battalions the opportunity to come together both for competitive sport but also to enjoy watching Scotland vs Fiji at Murrayfield.

While success came as a team there were also individual successes with Cpl Rokoduguni and Pte Muritoki representing the Army Mens Team. Capt Smith, Lt Blackhall, Sgt Bruce, LCpl Gasaulalayawa, LCpl Biumaiwai, Pte Vacacokaivalu, Pte Navelinikovo and Pte Muritoki all representing Army Scotland.



The team has shown huge commitment throughout the season, travelling the length of the UK to play, training in temperatures close to freezing and coming together in organising socials for the team and their families. All of which has led to success on and off the field. The team looks forward to the 2024/25 season and to continue our success.



Training at the Fort



ARU Championship Cup winners



Mull 7s Semi-Finalists





TABERFELDY

WO2 M ARNOLD
CSM B COY

Whilst deployed on Op COPPERWING, far from the hills of home, a young officer made the fatal mistake of vocalising his thoughts without a filter. The Commanding Officer lay down the gauntlet for companies to organise a charitable event and after throwing ideas around a table Lt Smith highlighted our physical challenges required more gusto and presented a plan to march from our home in Fort George to Aberfeldy. The CO suggested it could become a Tab, the Adjutant in waiting highlighted it could meet up with the Aberfeldy muster and TAB-ERFELDY was born.

It took until September 2023 to materialise but following a lot of planning, driven by Lt Duff, WO2 Arnold and Sgt Cameron, the team rallied together with members from across the Battalion to march with their stretcher to our antecedent Regiment's ancestral home, some 112 miles away, to raise money for Samaritans UK. The walk saw the team stop at Lochingorb Castle, Aviemore British Legion, Dalwhinnie Distillery, Kingussie, Blair Castle and Pitlochry on our way down meeting many kind and generous people on the way. An exclusively female fitness class was very surprised and excited to see 20 soldiers walk out the woodline north of Aviemore and were very generous!

The team crossed the River Tay some 120hrs later, tabbing over Wades Bridge in Aberfeldy to the sound of the Pipes and met the Black Watch association members and guests at the Black Watch memorial for the Aberfeldy Muster service. The soldiers from 3 SCOTS were kindly hosted by the Regimental Association for lunch and some refreshments afterwards. In all the

team raised an impressive £10,042.73 having smashed through numerous pain barriers, fuelled by jelly-beans, an undisclosed amount of vapes, and sheer grit. An honourable mention for Pte Murray who after taking his boot off on day 4 left half of it inside but still demanded to carry on, crossing the finish line with the team on the last day. Alas Lt Smith only managed a day...



3 SCOTS





SCOTS

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4 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Before writing my first foreword as Commanding Officer, I reviewed previous ones written by my predecessors, and noted how many highlighted how busy the year had been. Not much has changed, but I prefer to describe it as being in a state of constant activity, which undoubtedly places strain on our people and their families, but when it is coupled with a clear purpose and is about delivering against the Defence priority, then it can equally be rewarding activity. This past year has seen great opportunity and experiences for the 4th Battalion.

The defining period for the Battalion in 2023 was its support to Ukraine on Op INTERFLEX. Although the operation is now over 18 months old, 3 SCOTS wrote about their experiences in last year's journal, it remains a truly rewarding and humbling experience. Rewarding in the sense that 4 SCOTS led and contributed to a multinational team that trained just shy of 4000 Ukrainians over a six-month period from June to December. It also provided a real opportunity for our soldiers and NCOs to learn and develop. Humbling in that the Ukrainians we were training were truly citizen soldiers and on the leadership courses, which 4 SCOTS developed and led on, the trainees had significant operational experience. The professional dialogue was invaluable and gave real focus to our people on what mattered and how we should approach our own training.

The other critical activity this past year was the Battalion's successful operational validation on Exercise WESSEX STORM. The Exercise came on the back of a hugely impressive conversion to the Foxhound vehicle in the months preceding, as 4 SCOTS became a fully-fledged Light Mechanised Infantry unit. The Exercise takes place across the plains of Salisbury. This multi-month event is



Lt Col Gordon Muir alongside our Ukrainian partners during Op INTERFLEX

designed to test the Battlegroup to its limits and to prepare it for operational deployment. A pass was critical as the Battalion was planned to take-over as NATO's Very High Joint Task Force Land or VJTF(L) on 1 Jan 24. The VJTF(L) is the UK's primary land force contribution to NATO, designed to be able to deploy within 48 hours to any emerging or heightened crisis.

Success was not preordained, so the hard work and continual fighting ethos of the Jocks during a challenging period was noteworthy. The rest of year was spent on ensuring the Battalion's readiness for the VJTF(L) task. The completion of WESSEX STORM was in many ways the easy part, there remained a significant administrative and training burden which proved challenging while delivering INTERFLEX at the same time. In addition, we received well over two hundred vehicle platforms and over 1000 lines of equipment at Boulton Barracks in Catterick in anticipation of our role as VJTF(L). Our LAD and Tech team were excellent in the face of a considerable undertaking.

The year also saw company elements deploy to Estonia and Canada as well as Battle Group Headquarters to the US on a major divisional exercise. The Pipes and Drums remained in demand. Under the new leadership of Pipe Major Roberts and Drum Major Minto, they have had a full schedule of Royal and routine engagements as well as their annual pilgrimages to Basel and Edinburgh tattoos. We also had, at its height, almost 5% of the Battalion deployed on various winter sports.

This year also saw the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Ali Hempenstall, and Regimental Sergeant Major, Andy McLellan, handover after their period in command. I would like to pass on my personal, and the wider Battalion's thanks for all their hard work and care looking after and leading the 4th Battalion.

As 2024 commences, the Battalion is well set to grasp every opportunity once again. An exciting year beckons, as we await whether our hard work and preparations will be tested by NATO and continually ensure that we are ready for the challenges ahead.



SOLDIERS' PROMOTIONS

CSgt – WO2: CSgts Boyle, Buntine, Coleman, Dunnachie, Grant and Parkins.

Sgt – CSgt: Sgts Balzeretti, Cummings, Prentice, Southcoat and Young.

Cpl – Sgt: Cpls Ashmore, Barker, Boyle, Connally, Cook, Digman, Ellis, Hanlin, Macklin, McBlain, Mckiddie and Roberts

LCpl – Cpl: LCpls Anson, Clarkson, Donald, Gray, Harrop, Jaata, Moffat, Singh and Truesdale.

Hldr – LCpl: Hldrs Anderson, Bailey, Bolalevu, Boyle, Christie, Cook, Feeney, Hancock, Herbert, Jacobs, Jamieson, Johnston, Ketewai, Killorn, King, Laing, Mason, McClelland, Mcdowall, Murray, Pieterse, Rankin, Robertson, Silomea, Sinclair, Singh, Smith and Whyte.

From all ranks within 4 SCOTS, congratulations to all the individuals mentioned, you all thoroughly deserve it.



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

OC

Maj A H Cunningham

CSM

WO2 PW Du Toit – WO2 D Dunnachie

CQMS

CSgt D Simpson

2023 presented a series of challenges for HQ Coy with departments being relied upon to support and enable the constant high output in support of the Battalion. The first half of the year focused on Ex WESSEX STORM where elements of the company were evaluated on the re-role to Light Mechanized Infantry, in harsh conditions on Salisbury Plain. RQMS (M) Allison (now RSM) spent 2 weeks building the battlegroup assembly area from scratch called Camp Hector, receiving over 300 vehicle and 1000 service personnel. The second half of the year was consumed by support to Op INTERFLEX and preparation for Very High Readiness Joint Taskforce (VJTF(L)). With the dispersed nature of the Company, getting ready for VJTF was difficult and resulted in CSM Dunnachie finishing the year with significantly less hair than he started!

This year presented significant churn within the Company, most notably Maj Cunningham taking over as Company Commander in June and Maj Main taking over as QM (M). There were several other changes including WO2 Dunnachie taking over as CSM as well as a new RQMS T and RQMS M.

Despite all this change, HQ Coy marches on and remains ready to face any challenges that 2024 or indeed that VJTF(L) may bring.



Camp Hector on Wessex storm



Maj Cunningham and Cpl Caird on Wessex Storm



RQMS getting his birthday cake on Wessex Storm



CSM Dunnachie and Capt McGurk doing an ACMT in honking weather!



4 SCOTS

ALPHA 'GRENADIER' COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj C Treasure / Maj G Burnett

Company Second in Command

Capt E Honeyman

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 C Grant

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt P Cook / CSgt C Marr

1 Platoon

Lt O Shankland

Sgt J Granger

2 Platoon

2Lt C Price

Sgt I Foreman / Sgt Digman

Machine Gun Platoon

Capt G Sandiford

CSgt Cook / CSgt J Cumming

Sgt K McDonald

Introduction

The sheer breadth, and at times concurrency, of the Company's activity over the last 12 months provides example of Fd Army's considerable tempo as it continues to balance commitments and deliverables. Our people achieved much though, including two major exercises (Ex WESSEX STORM and SPRING STORM), a four-month deployment delivering Op INTERFLEX, leadership courses and delivery of both a 4 SCOTS JNCO Cadre and MG Cadre. All set against the backdrop of training and preparing for the assumption of VJTF(L) readiness on 1 Jan 24.

Looking forward, 2024 proves to be equally dynamic. Now on 5 days notice to move the Company deploys immediately on Ex WINGED SERPENT with 16X to SPTA. A key milestone on

our readiness pathway this activation rehearsal, MARCH and Force-on-Force package with 2 RGR will test our ability to respond at pace in support of 4 SCOTS VJTF(L) readiness. The Company then moves swiftly between serials, including Ex GRENADIER GUNNER (MG ranges), EX HECTORS MARAUDER (Company LFTT), conceptual and urban training packages, and a Company JNCO Development week. Eyes are also firmly set on the Bn's deployment to Germany (Ex HECTORS THORN).

Ex WESSEX STORM (Feb-Mar 23)

The year started with the battlegroup deploying to Salisbury Plain to complete the last elements of training prior to starting the CALFEX and validation phases of the exercise. It was the first opportunity the battlegroup had to exercise at full scale since Ex COSSACK MACE in 2021, and included attachments from 32 RE and 4 RA.

As the exercise unfolded, we saw the Coy deploy from the rolling plains to the underground caverns of the Corsham mines; a first for A Coy. The CALFEX was an excellent opportunity for the Coy to integrate a mounted element into live firing exercises and incorporated support from the Mortar Platoon and guns from 4 RA.

A long five weeks, WESSEX STORM was a true test and ensured 4 SCOTS was ready for warfighting operations if required as part of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) (VJTF(L)).

Ex SPRING STORM (May- Jun 23)

When the opportunity arose to deploy to Estonia on NATO's largest multi-national exercise, Alpha Coy leapt at the chance. The exercise was multi-domain and included elements on land, in the air and at sea from almost all NATO members. A Coy was tasked to

operate as part of the Light Dragoons battlegroup, and we were to act as part of an opposition force brigade attacking Estonia from the east. The exercise was to confirm Estonian national defence plan. A novel feature of the exercise was training on private land; the whole country was the training area.



Alpha Coy, Ex SPRING STORM

The deployment started shortly after the recovery from Ex WESSEX STORM. We deployed the Company and fleet to Tapa, where the wider eFP Battlegroups were located and commenced our exercise preparations. Following a short period of training we took our positions near the eastern border of Estonia. Led by the LD battlegroup, Alpha Company was to strike pockets of Estonian 'enemy' bypassed by the Formation recce screen.



Apache overhead Alpha Coy FHD, Ex SPRING STORM



ALPHA 'GRENADIER' COMPANY

Throughout we operated on the public roads, villages, and farms of the Estonian landscape. For all in the company it was a first to experience main battle tanks and armoured fighting vehicles in people's gardens! The exercise was an excellent test of a Light Mech Company operating at reach supporting formation recce, and in the current climate could not be more relevant as we move on to VJTF(L).



Alpha Coy mounted, Ex SPRING STORM

Following the exercise, our host battlegroup had prepared a battlefield study and adventurous training package. The package was excellent respite following two arduous back-to-back exercises. The Jocks had the opportunity to go mountain biking, kayaking and canoeing through the Estonian countryside. The battlefield study was held in the border town of Narva where the Soviet Union sought to penetrate the German defensive line in 1944, particularly relevant to the nature of the deployment.

In all, Ex SPRING STORM was a testing, and enjoyable deployment and one which has helped us refine our skills as Light Mech Infantry.



Alpha Coy dismounted action, Ex SPRING STORM

Op INTERFLEX and preparation for VJTF(L) readiness (Aug-Dec 23)

In the summer, the government announced that it would be uplifting the provision of training to the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), 4 SCOTS found themselves as one of the Training Delivery Unit HQs for tranche 3. For Alpha Coy, deploying Aug - Dec 23 to STANTA after delivering a 4 SCOTS JNCO Cadre, training delivery focused on several 10 and 5 week leadership courses. The course structures were based on the Platoon Commanders Battle Course (PCBC), Platoon Sergeants Battle Course (PSBC) and Section Commanders Battle Course (SCBC). By completion, Alpha Company had trained a total of six Companies worth of trainees (c.500x SP) who returned to Ukraine to support their continued campaign, defending their sovereignty. Like the other 4 SCOTS Sub-Units, a significant feat given the number of soldiers in acting or local rank. In the background to all of this, with the Bn also concurrently preparing for assuming VJTF(L) @R2 on

1 Jan 24, the Company was constantly reorienting itself to close gaps and meet the required start standard. A real testament to the flexibility, adaptability and professionalism of our soldiers and junior commanders.



1 Platoon (Alpha Coy) on completion of their first leadership course

Remembrance Sunday (Nairn)

A terrific weekend and very worthwhile trip north for c40x SP from the Company. It is always an honour to participate in an event so deeply rooted in our history, and our affiliation to the north made the event even more special to all involved. The hospitality of both the Seaforth Club and Royal British Legion in Nairn was exceptional, making the weekend escape from STANTA and INTERFLEX well worth the 550-mile road trip to the Highlands. An activity we will seek to replicate in 2024.



OC Alpha Coy laying a wreath in Nairn on Remembrance Sunday



4 SCOTS



Alpha Coy's Colour Party, handsome and sharp



Alpha Coy during Nairn's Remembrance Sunday



Alpha Coy on parade during Remembrance Sunday

Ex GRENADIER SPRINT and Urban Training Facility (UTF)

Maximising on the placement offered by being at STANTA Alpha Coy took the opportunity to re-focus on Urban Ops following INTERFLEX by visiting the UK's premier CQB facility at Merville Barracks, Colchester. A taster session of what this facility offers, and first step in our return to operating in the urban environment, the focus was on section level offensive and defensive CQB. Integration of CMT from 16 Med helped develop considerations for care under fire and the realism created in a force-on-force construct, facilitated real consideration as to how to move and fight at the individual level. The

Company also utilised this window to achieve PI Day and Night Attack on STANTA. The use of IR illum, LLM and NVS added some additional complexity, and the inclusion of a MG PI GPMG gun line during the defensive shoots added value and development.



2 Platoon, UTF



Alpha Coy CQB package, UTF

1 Platoon

Working within the heart of 4 SCOTS, 1 Platoon, Alpha Company has emerged from a challenging and wide-ranging year of deployments and exercises. The journey began on Salisbury Plain, where the Platoon deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM, a critical evaluation that ultimately led to the verification of the entire 4 SCOTS battlegroup. Throughout, the Platoon were subject to a challenging winter environment, ultimately prevailing over a dynamic and free-thinking enemy, Task Force Hannibal.

Deploying on Ex WESSEX STORM served as the foundation for 1 Platoon's year of intensive training and collaboration. The expanse of Salisbury Plain provided the perfect backdrop for honing our tactical skills and testing the unit's cohesion under an operational battlegroup scenario. The verification achieved

during this exercise set the stage for what would be a series of dynamic challenges.



1 Platoon, WESSEX STORM

From Salisbury Plain, 1 Platoon transitioned to the rugged terrain of Estonia for Exercise SPRING STORM. Here, the platoon worked hand in hand with the Estonian Defence Forces, forging a strong bond and enhancing their ability to defend against potential threats from the east. The Platoon operated within part of a wider scenario which saw a large-scale military invasion by enemy forces from the east of Estonia, in which the Estonia Defence Forces had to defend and repel a series of coordinated attacks on key areas of their country. With the troops of 1 Platoon providing a unique and dynamic enemy for the Estonians, the collaborative effort underscored the importance of international partnerships in ensuring collective security and deterrence.



Tough Mudder, Estonia – as if being on exercise wasn't enough!



ALPHA 'GRENADE' COMPANY

Back on home soil, 1 Platoon played a pivotal role in the in-house 4 SCOTS PJNCO cadre, a demanding course that tested both the tactical and physical prowess of its students to ensure they are ready to become a Lance Corporal in the British Army. All troops involved in the cadre battled for excellence and proficiency in their trade, showing a highly resilient attitude when attempting to absorb new information in a sleep deprived tactical environment. Over 35 soldiers from 4 SCOTS successfully passed the cadre, further solidifying the great instructional capability that is held by the JNCOs of Alpha Company. This cadre not only elevated individual instructional capabilities of the platoon but also strengthened the overall effectiveness of 4 SCOTS by preparing the future generation of JNCOs.

As the summer unfolded 1 Platoon geared up for yet another significant deployment: Op INTERFLEX. Closely integrated with the entirety of Alpha Company, alongside many NATO partner nations working in support for the Ukrainian cause. The platoon embarked upon training and preparing three complete rotations of Ukrainian troops. This marked a profound commitment to supporting the tactical training of over 300 Ukrainian soldiers, enhancing Ukrainian infantry battlefield survivability and lethality, alongside increasing their capabilities to defend against the ever-present threats in their homeland.

The operational tempo did not wane as 1 Platoon embraced the complexities of Op INTERFLEX. Drawing on their expertise and experience in a training and instructional environment, the platoon delivered comprehensive training modules, covering a spectrum of tactical elements. The collaborative effort showcased the adaptability and professionalism of 1 Platoon, earning

accolades for their role in preparing Ukrainian forces for the challenges they may face.

In conclusion, the journey of 1 Platoon over the course of a year reflects the excellent adaptability shown across multiple deployments, whilst working closely to enhance and prepare partner nation capabilities through international cooperation. From the plains of Salisbury, rugged landscapes of Estonia, and the training grounds of Thetford, the Platoon faced diverse challenges with commitment and determination. Their contributions strengthened the bonds of collaboration with international allies. As 1 Platoon now looks to stand at the forefront of VJTF(L) readiness, their achievements serve as a testament to the resilience and professionalism that defines 4 SCOTS as a unit.

2 Platoon

As part of Alpha Company's deployment on Ex SPRING STORM, 2 Platoon were given the opportunity to work as part of an integrated asset to a Light Cavalry unit. A role many were not used to but offered us the ability to hone our skills working as part of a different battle group typically further behind would be enemy lines. Some were able to act up in preparation for upcoming career courses and all gained valuable experience operating in an environment not limited to training areas and vital practice which offered real world problem solving we seldom have the opportunity to encounter. This was our first run out post WESSEX STORM as 2 Platoon and an excellent check zero for the pl as a whole.

2 Platoon were instrumental in the internal PJNCO Cadre run by Alpha Coy, from section commanders and instructors on the course, to playing vital enemy roles to test those on the

cadre. 2 Platoon enabled a testing and well-run course throughout, with some of our members as students on the cadre. The instructional capability of our section commanders and 2ICs fostered a conducive learning environment for potential Sect 2ICs.

Op INTERFLEX took the Platoon from the end of summer leave until Christmas. For many an opportunity to hone their instructional techniques practiced on the NCO cadre. The Platoon formed elements of the Sub-Unit Training Teams. Closely working with partner nation forces as part of the British Armies assistance to the war in Ukraine. These courses allowed us to share and discuss TTPs with the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), by imparting knowledge, with key focus on their experiences in several areas. Heavily focussing on the urban environment and trench warfare, the platoon were not only able to observe and mentor throughout the course but it offered an excellent opportunity for reflection of our own SOPs, whilst delivering training and refining our own skills. INTERFLEX saw the Platoon and Company deployed away from Bourlon Barracks for a number of months, forging close bonds between newly formed sections in the run up to VJTF(L) at the start of the new year. During this busy time a number travelled north to conduct a remembrance parade in Nairn, an area with close ties to A 'Grenadier' Coy. With young Highlanders able to meet and converse with veterans from the Regiment and its' antecedents, the golden thread remaining strong.

4 SCOTS



LCpl McGurk instructing on Op INTERFLEX

The New Year will see 2 Platoon deploy on Ex WINGED SERPENT working closely with 16 Med Regt. An unmatched opportunity to test ourselves with a focus on combined arms and combat service support. For many it will be the first time they see the full running of a medical chain and the incredible facilities and care which can be provided on the battlefield.

2023 has been a particularly busy year for 2 Platoon on exercise both at home and overseas. The adaptable nature of the platoon to change focus from one commitment to the next with limited drag is testament to the hard work and dedication of the Hldrs and NCOs. 2024 provides the opportunity for 2 Platoon to further hone their skills and operate in a variety of testing environments, ready for the next challenge.

This year we welcome back Cpl Gerrard + Sgt Digman and say a fond farewell to Sgt Foreman and Cpl Buntaine. We also wish warm congratulations to LCpl Anderson on his promotion.

MG Platoon

The 2023 season has been another business season for the Platoon. It has been a busy and varied period for the Platoon with a large turnover of Jocks and NCOs. The year started with the preparation for Ex WESSEX STORM, where the Platoon deployed to a snowy and windswept Otterburn for a mounted range package. In between extended stints of hiding in the combi van, the Platoon got to grips with the

Jackal and the HMG. The Platoon had a great time with large quantities of ammo meaning that all got to grips with the weapon firing and watched their trace fly down a snow covered re-entrant. A quick turnaround faced the Platoon with last minute prep of the Jackals as we found ourselves deploying to Salisbury Plain. We found ourselves operating in both the mounted and dismounted role. Slowly as the weather turned there was great envy as the Platoon passed the remainder of the battlegroup in their nice warm Foxhounds and Hebes. We thoroughly enjoyed the Ex and often working in isolation or linked up with the Antitank Pl. Resourceful rationing from Cpls Martin and Gibson allowed us to have regular fresh bacon baps throughout. The Platoon performed well and showed the importance of Machine Gunnery to the Battlegroup.



The MG Pl tooled up and good to go at Copehill Down (WESSEX STORM)

The busy year continued as the we found ourselves deploying to Estonia with the Light Dragoons Battlegroup. Great tomfoolery was had by all as the Platoon enjoyed the excitement, challenge and mild confusion of working and exploring a new country, whilst reading road signs in a new language. We, along with the rest of the Company, were tasked to advance East to West across the country. The new terrain allowed us to exercise as a purely dismounted entity. The Ex was enjoyed by all and the opportunity to train on public land, allowed all to see

parts of the country that we would otherwise not see. It wasn't all training in Estonia, and many of the Platoon took the opportunity to see as much of the country as possible, with many playing rugby, going on AT, day trips to Tallin and Battlefield studies. We enjoyed their experience of Estonia and made the most of every opportunity.



Cpl Martin reminding himself that Jackals are not amphibious vehicles

Flanking either side of Op INTERFLEX, we made the most of the opportunity to train. During June and July, the Platoon saw a new influx of Jocks and ran the GPMG (SF) Cadre. The 6 weeklong Cadre saw the Jock specialise in Machine Gunnery and get their hands on the GPMG in the SF role. The cadre allowed for the existing operators to work 1 Up in new roles. Plenty of range time and ammunition are vital for the success of a good cadre, and after 2 weeks of ranges everyone got to grips with their new speciality and were grinning from ear to ear. The Platoon continued to train in its specialism throughout the deployment on Op INTERFLEX and finished the year on a high. We conducted Heavy Weapon shoots in December, with the intent to develop and deepen our heavy weapon capability and lead the way in LMI Machine Gunning. Thetford was the perfect place to conduct the range and over the course of 3 days the Platoon rained havoc down on the Norfolk countryside.



ALPHA 'GRENADIER' COMPANY



HMG Ranges, STANTA

As we finish the year we must say goodbye and thank you to CSgt Richard Cook who gains yet another Hackle to his collection as he moves to take up a CQMS at 2 SCOTS. We also lose Cpl Kenny Gibson to ITC and we wish him all the best in his next adventure. Congratulations on promotion for Cpl Singh, LCpl Jamieson, LCpl Johnston, LCpl King, LCpl Christie and LCpl Laing.



Winter Jackal shoots in Otterburn

Boxing

Whilst the blend of Op INTERFLEX and force preparation for readiness impacted on most extra-curricular activity, the Bn were able to commit to The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing Night in Nov. Winning three of the four bouts, and narrowly losing the fourth,

it was a great performance from the 4 SCOTS team, especially given this was their baptism of fire in the ring. From the nine boxers deployed (eight from Alpha Coy) six were due to box on the night (credit to the progress made during the 2 SCOTS training camp); however, a medical failure to one participant on the day resulted in two participants not being able to compete. Coffee (Delta Coy), Watson and Woodward (Alpha Coy) then moved to the Army Infantry Championship 4-7 Dec under the mentorship of Cpl Monaghan who has been superb. The Bn boxers again performed well. Woodward's bout was stopped in the 3rd round of the quarter finals, Coffey lost in the semi-finals (split decision), and unfortunately Watson had to withdraw in the semi-finals due to a rotator cuff injury, having won his heat. Training continuity into 2024 will set the Bn up for INTER Coys (Oct 24) and several representative events as we re-establish the Bn's boxing identity after the post-covid hangover period.



4 SCOTS Boxing Team with OC and CSM Alpha Coy, SCOTS Boxing Night

Nordic Skiing

In the realm of military athleticism, non-such sport would stand out in a way that Nordic Skiing does. Whilst participating in arduous physical skiing, range work and harsh environments, the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team stands out as a testament to its dedication, skill development, and the unifying power of sport in the army. Throughout a

series of exercises, the team showcased their prowess during the Pirbright development camp, alongside the frosty landscapes of Idre, Bessans, Serre Chervalier, and Ruhpolding, leaving indelible memories within the soldiers who have had the privilege of attending the season.

Foundation in Pirbright. The journey of the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team commenced with Phase One of Exercise INFANTRY NORDIC SWORD. A two-week training and development camp in Pirbright became the crucible where roller skiing skills were honed, and crucial administrative points were addressed. This phase laid the foundation for the team to independently compete in a season of skiing, emphasizing self-sufficiency and skill proficiency.

Battling the Elements in Idre, Sweden. The team's mettle was truly put to the test during Phase Two, as they ventured to Idre, Sweden, for the Infantry Championships. Spanning an entire month from November to December 2023, this training camp culminated in two official BBU Biathlon races with the 4 SCOTS team taking second place on the Biathlon Relay Race. The icy winds of Idre served as both adversary and ally, pushing the team to harness their Nordic skiing skills, and showcasing their resilience in the face of the Nordic elements. Walking away from this phase, the team had also received individual accolades, with Hldr Headley, a junior novice skier, receiving second place within his category having never skied before the camp.

4 SCOTS



LCpl Patterson – Northern Lights



LCpl Lewington and Hldr Cassidy on the start line

Conquering Bessans for the Infantry Championships.

The adventure continued as the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team descended upon Bessans for the second half of the Infantry Championships. Spanning six days, the team carved through the snow-covered landscapes, demonstrating their commitment to competitive Nordic skiing. This phase not only solidified the team's skill base but allowed necessary cross country competition experience before attendance of the divisional championships.



Hldrs Headley and Cassidy at sunrise

Divisional Championships in Serre Chervallier.

As January unfolded, the team's journey took them to the picturesque Serre Chervallier valley in France for the Army Divisional Championships. For ten days, the team faced off against formidable opponents, leveraging their solid skiing performance to secure a spot in the coveted Army Championships in Ruhpolding whilst winning individual medals along the way.



Hldr Headley – winning uphill

Racing Amidst the Competitive Elite in Ruhpolding. In Ruhpolding, the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team found themselves on the grand stage of Army Nordic Skiing, racing against the most competitive teams in the British Army. The snow-laden tracks of Ruhpolding witnessed the culmination of months of training, as the team pushed their limits and vied for supremacy in the Army Championships, again walking away with individual medals for team members.

Beyond the Slopes: Exploring Culture and History.

While conquering the snowy peaks, the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team also embraced opportunities to explore the rich culture and history of the regions visited. Venturing beyond the ski tracks, the team visited Munich for a Bayern Munich football match, alongside a trip to the Bavarian National Museum. Further excursions took the team to Salzburg, Berchtesgaden, and the Eagles Nest—the historic home of the Nazi party.



LCpl Rankin, Hldr Headley, LCpls Lewington and Patterson post-race

The determination showcased by the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team is a testament to the indomitable spirit of military sport and athleticism. Throughout the team's deployment, its members have transited eight European countries, competed in near international level sporting conditions, whilst winning medals and visiting culture along the way. From the foundational roller skiing skills in Pirbright to the challenging terrains of Idre, Bessans, Serre Chervallier, and Ruhpolding, the team's journey is a saga of skill development, resilience, and camaraderie. Beyond the competitive spirit, the team's exploration of culture and history adds a unique dimension to their story, highlighting the multifaceted nature of military sportsmanship. As the team leave a mark on the snow-covered landscapes, the 4 SCOTS Nordic Skiing team stands united as better athletes and more experienced soldiers.



ALPHA 'GRENADIER' COMPANY

Alpine Ex FROSTED BLADE 38 (Qualifying Championships Serre Chevalier)

After a hiatus last year due to a busy battalion schedule, 4 SCOTS Alpine team got up and running again this season to take part in Exercise Frosted Blade 38 and the Army Qualifying Championships in Serre Chevalier. What was a busy 6 weeks for the team saw experienced and novice skiers alike tested to their limits across the alpine disciplines. Departing from a drizzly Catterick Garrison south and across the channel, rain gave way to powdery snow as we ascended Bourg St Maurice into Val d'Isere. Skiers were welcomed by the committee and taken to pick up their kit and equipment which at first appeared somewhat foreign soon became second nature.

Skiers were grouped together, and the first three weeks saw us under the instruction of some brilliant and daredevil ski instructors, honing our skills on the piste and getting us ready for the challenge of ski racing ahead. Two of our team had never been on skis before; however, by the end they confidently navigated black runs and beginning to understand the intricacies and differences of a slalom versus giant slalom course. Those who have competed in these disciplines know the difficulty, even for an experienced skier to successfully navigate the course, testament to the hard work of both team members and instructors.

Soon, the instruction was over and baggy salopettes exchanged for catsuits and bibs as we began race week after well-earned few days of Christmas stand down. There was a noticeable shift in the tempo from cruising slopes to inspecting courses and visualising gates. The development hill saw much success with Hldr Oliver Stocks (B Coy) achieving 2 silver medals in Giant Slalom. The

primary hill may not have seen as much silverware but certainly saw those competing pushing themselves in the battle for seeding points with the bibs above and below them.



Lt Price

The Conclusion of Ex Frosted Blade saw our number half to 4 for the Qualifying Championships in Serre Chevalier. These 10 days were non-stop racing, beginning with Giant Slalom and each of the members competing in their first Downhill event. Reaching speeds of over 100Kmph, stomach lurching jumps and blind gates this was a highlight for most of us. Equal parts exhilarating and terrifying each member came through the finish with a grin on their face, which may not have been there at the start gate.

This winter season offered those on the trip an unmatched experience, learning a new skill, conquering fears and 6 weeks of soaking in the French ski culture.



McCallum SC



B 'BRAITHREAN' COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj JE Fish

Company Second in Command

Lt F Harley

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 G Lees

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt C Smith

5 Platoon

Lt AJJ Lambert

Sgt A Chilcott

6 Platoon

Lt H Eaton

2Lt B Richardson

Sgt G Cook

7 Platoon

Lt E Clarke

Sgt S Degei

Welcome to this year's edition of the Braithrean Company Regimental update. In 2023, like all the other Royal Regiment of Scotland sub-units, it has been busy. But for us, it has also brought about a period of significant change. Not only has the Company been reformed, having previously been split up to support wider Unit activity, but we have re-rolled and changed over a significant number of commanders. We have said good-bye to Major Scotty Russell and Lt Harry Eaton, both posted to E, and I would like to wish them all the absolute best in their respective adventures.

I had the honour of taking over B Company in August 23 and have been hugely impressed by the people I have the privilege of commanding. Their exploits over the course of the last year have been recorded below and I hope you enjoy

reading about them as much as I have had sharing the experiences with them. Having returned from a period of time away from Regimental Duty, it is refreshing to be back soldiering again. It is the B Company Jocks that make it so enjoyable. In the short space of time I have been here, the sheer amount of things we have achieved together is staggering. Not only did B Company successfully complete it's part of Op INTERFLEX, but we were due to venture to Morocco on an overseas exercise. This was cancelled at the 11th hour due to the terrible earthquake that struck Marrakech, a few days before we were due to depart. The soldiers of B Company stood ready to assist if requested, but alas, the call never came. However, the troops seized the opportunities that then presented: we were honoured to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our brothers and sisters from 2 SCOTS during Regimental Freedom Parades that fell over Assaye Day. We redeployed to STANTA, to conduct a number of blank and live fire exercises to get us prepared for our High-Readiness next year. And through-out the enduring professionalism and dedication of the soldiers, particularly the Junior-NCOs and Highlanders, is impressive. They want to get out and soldier. They want to be out in the dead of night, operating. And it is brilliant.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read the exploits, adventures and potential misadventures of B 'Braithrean' Company, 4 SCOTS. During the Regimental Freedom parades in Edinburgh, as a Company, we discussed (or rather I talked about whilst the Jocks politely nodded along) the moral component of fighting power – which makes soldiers put themselves in harm's way for their country. The element of belonging to a Regiment that has over three-hundred years of collective history and the fact that we are all a part of that. Being part of something which is much bigger than ourselves as individuals. Below are tales of the current generation of

Braithrean soldiers, captured, in history forever. And by reading these tales, you are part of keeping that history alive. Please enjoy.

5 PI

It has been an incredibly busy year for 5 PI who have been at the forefront of the Company and the Battalion, on Exercise and on Operations. The year started with Ex WESSEX STORM on a bleak and desolate Salisbury Plain, which proved the perfect training ground for Jocks and commanders to get to grips with the Foxhound vehicles. The platoon – who at this time were attached to Delta Coy – performed to a high standard, and set the standard for other platoons to follow. Be it developing ways of deploying camouflage and thermal netting quickly, digging trenches in record time, or conducting complex offensive actions to the highest standard - 5 PI was at the heart of the action. Particular praise goes to Sgt Chilcott who received a commendation for his performance on the exercise, and to Hldr Irvine who was awarded a CO coin for his contributions to morale and leadership throughout the exercise. The Jocks of 5 PI proved themselves on this exercise and set the tone for the rest of the year.



5 PI FHD securing Copehill Down



B 'BRAITHREAN' COMPANY



5 Pl on the move during Ex WESSEX STORM

A particular highlight for 5 Pl was B Coy's 3-month stint on Op INTERFLEX – the UK's commitment to the training of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The Coy was directed to lead the 5-week Junior Commanders course, and members of 5 Pl were put to work in various roles ranging from teaching, assessing, demonstrating tactics and guard duties. This was a good opportunity for junior commanders within the platoon to step up and take on more responsibility. Cpl Bruce was noted for his outstanding contributions to training and finding innovative methods of teaching. For most of the platoon this was the first interaction with foreign nations and partner forces and the platoon were highly professional in their interactions throughout the tour.



5 Pl go paintballing



Taking on the infamous Hudswell Steps!



Lt Lambert clearly misread the dress code for PT!

Following Op INTERFLEX, B Coy was due to deploy on Ex JEBEL SAHARA, a 6-week training exercise to Morocco, but sadly due to the earthquake this has been postponed. To keep momentum up, the company deployed on various field exercises and range packages to build up marksmanship skills and provide an opportunity for the newer Jocks to exercise with the platoon in the field. The platoon was then highly praised for its performance on a HUNTER FORCE tasking at RAF St Mawgan, where the chief instructor said the platoon's performance was the best he had seen in 45 iterations of the course – just another week in 5 Pl.

As 5 Pl moves forward into 2024, we say goodbye to those who are moving on to pastures new and thank them for their hard work during the past year. I was particularly grateful for the direction and guidance from Cpl Bruce and Cpl McIntosh when I first took over command of 5 Pl,

and I wish them all the best for the future. They leave big boots to fill. Thanks also go to LCpl McKendry and Boag, Hldrs James, Waddington and Blaikie who are moving off soon – 5 Pl wishes you all the best for the future.

The platoon finished the year in a much stronger place than it started it, with every single Jock more confident and competent in their role. 5 Pl has created a name for itself as the platoon to beat in 4 SCOTS and we look forward to keeping this momentum going into 2024. Next year may offer opportunities for overseas deployments and an opportunity to put into practise the skills developed in 2023. One thing that I can be sure of is this - if it all kicks off, 5 Pl will be there, ready and raring to go.

6 Pl

The past year has been a very busy period for 6 Pl; however, it has also been hugely productive and rewarding knowing that we are now in a good place for next year where we will be taking over VJTF. None of this would have been possible if it were not for the excellent attitude and work ethic of our Hldrs and JNCOs. They have carried out their duties with total professionalism, meeting deadlines and assisting the Coy wherever and whenever they were needed, so huge thanks must go to them. During Op INTERFLEX the platoon was split down and working as part of different teams: such as the Junior Leadership course, Pl Sgts course or the Pl Comds course, there was an opportunity for our soldiers to step into the next rank and gain vital experience which will aid them going forward. Hldr Feeney was acting LCpl for the Junior Leadership Course where he was given the responsibility of taking command of a section of Ukrainian soldiers, teaching fieldcraft lessons/ battle exercises and teaching them tactics and medical which could prove to be lifesaving.



4 SCOTS



LCpl Feeney delivering lessons to the Coy in STANTA

Cpl Butcher assumed command of the PI Sgts Course after the departure of Sgt Balzaretto who moved on to his E posting. Sgt Balzaretto did an excellent job of planning training and teaching the course on PI level actions, CSS, and how to administer their own soldiers on the ground. A highly demanding and busy course which required a lot of thought and planning however Cpl Butcher took it in his stride and completed two full courses with the PI Sgts.

The Jocks always have their role to play: they were the glue for the training teams and provided them with excellent demonstrations when needed. They also provided them with a thinking enemy force, who employed Russian based tactics and doctrine to give the best training value for the students on the ground.

After the unfortunate events in Morocco that led to EX JEBEL SAHARA being turned off, the Coy never stood still. We saw an opportunity to develop and train our soldiers down in STANTA on Ex BRAITHREN BATTLE CAMP and Ex BRAITHREN ARCHER where we conducted live firing packages from ACMT all the way up to Section attacks by night. We also completed dry training which allowed the new members of the Coy to get up to the standard that is required, this again was a fantastic opportunity to employ our own night TTPs which is where we strive to be the best in the battalion and lead the way on night operations.

During all of this, we have Hldrs achieving pass marks on their Cat C theory then going straight on to pass their practical assessment. They have become FOXHOUND Operators, another huge goal for the Coy and reaching the VJTF start state. Other tasks 6 PI have been involved in were sending some of our drivers down on EX WESSEX STORM to assist in driving tasks and assisting 5 PI on HUNTER FORCE which got excellent feedback from the permanent staff who run the course.

Overall, it's been a very eventful year for 6 PI, and I cannot thank all of the Jocks and JNCOs for their continuous efforts behind the scenes ensuring they are on top of all their personal administration as well as their daily workload, this attitude and work ethic will enable us to be "First to the Fight",

7 PI

With the reforming of B Company and its return to the main Battalion orbat, so too have we seen the return of 7PI. A full-on year has seen us reform in the early parts of 2023 under experienced hands of Sgt Degei, upon the Battalions return from Ex WESSEX STORM. A quick turnaround saw the platoon deploy onto Op INTERFLEX with the rest of Braithrean Company. Split amongst the various training teams that B Company provided, the experiences learnt and gained during Op INTERFLEX have been invaluable to all ranks. Many members of the platoon were given the role of acting 1-up during this deployment, an impressive feat for many Jocks who had not long ago completed their JNCO cadre. Of particular note, Hldrs Irvine and Rose performed well above the standards when given the acting rank of LCpl and the responsibility of taking charge of a section worth of Ukrainian trainees, many of whom had already had recent experience in the Ukrainian War. It was no surprise to see these individuals taking the challenge head on and with complete conviction. A hard and constant graft, yet one that rewarded us all with pride and purpose given the wider defence output that this domestic Op had – something which even the newest Jock appreciated and was extremely proud to be a part of.

Despite our overseas Exercise in Morocco being cancelled due to the earthquake in Marrakesh, the Jocks of 7 PI stood ready and eager to deploy in assistance of the Moroccan government. Although initially disappointed not to venture overseas, the Platoon was quick to get stuck back into valuable training as we deployed onto Ex BRAITHREAN BATTLE CAMP and Ex BRAITHREAN ARCHER in quick succession. Whilst not the exotic landscape of the Sahara Desert, returning to the well-known Thetford Training Area gave us the first opportunity to deploy as a platoon and blow off any tactical cobwebs. A large focus was put onto trench warfare – something the men of B Coy as a whole had learnt much about from the experiences of our Ukrainian counterparts during Op INTERFLEX.

Following our tactical re-refresh we turned onto the best part of training: live firing. Working from completing the ACMT on multiple weapons systems and advancing up to Section by Night LFTT. Again, this was a fantastic chance for the Jocks to hone their skills as we prepared for our upcoming role as part of the NATO RESPONSE FORCE.

Whilst the margins have been filled with numerous task and trawls to assist other units within the Field Army throughout 2023, 7 PI is now in an extremely strong place. Widely envied for having the strongest Jocks within the Bn – proven by consistently having our Jocks in the top third on every JNCO cadre in 2023 – we move into 2024 exemplifying the company motto: "B' the standard'.



B 'Braithrean' Coy on parade



DELTA COMPANY

OC

Maj F Stark

2iC

Capt J Thomas RM / Capt M Serpell RM

CSM

WO2 R Ritchie / WO2 E Buntine

CQMS

CSgt D Charles

13 PI

Lt A Robertson-Davies & Sgt C Manders /
A / Sgt J Lousion

14 PI

Lt C Clayden-Spence / 2Lt F Ritchie & Sgt
W Clifford / Sgt D Wilson

15 PI

2Lt T Stephens / Sgt P Ellis

Preparing for war has been the predominant focus of the Clan throughout 2023. This began in a very cold January with deployment on Exercise WESSEX STORM. Staying in a makeshift camp, conditions were fairly austere for our six-week deployment to Salisbury Plain. However, the Company benefitted greatly from a challenging and large-scale exercise with the Jocks' good humour and high soldiering skills pulling us through. Highlights included tunnel fighting in Corsham mines; several navigational challenges from JNCOs; and seizing victory from the jaws of defeat during the Battalion attack on Copehill Down. The Battalion successfully 'validated' in our role as a Light Mechanised Battalion with The Clan playing a central part in achieving this.



The Clan at EndEx of Ex WESSEX STORM

Following a brief spell back in Catterick, and two weeks of Easter leave, the Company then started to prepare for a second major exercise. Thankfully, this was in (mostly) more pleasant conditions in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. Attached to the Royal 22nd Regiment, or 'Van Doos', we took part in their equivalent exercise to WESSEX STORM but on a larger scale. With two Battlegroups exercising concurrently, the Company, which included a platoon from 1 Royal Yorks and 4 SCOTS Support Company elements, had an opportunity to experience some of the frictions of Brigade operations. Attached to both 1st and 2nd Battalion at various stages of the exercise, the Company conducted a number of 'missions' including a defensive and urban operation. Despite the language barrier, the Company had a great time and learned a great deal. Our Canadian hosts were extremely generous and ensured we maximised our time in Canada. This included a visit to Edmonton and its famous mall, the largest in North America, and a 'Clan vs Clan' rugby match



The Clan on tour

4 SCOTS



against the Edmonton Clansmen. The Company then made a 'short' trip down to Suffield, where we took the opportunity to visit Calgary. Whilst unfortunately unable to meet up with our Calgary Highlander counterparts, we were able to visit the Canadian Military Museum and enjoy the nightlife of Calgary.



Taking aim in Canada

Upon our return, the Company took a well-earned rest on summer leave before preparing to deploy on Op INTERFLEX, the UK's mission to train Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel. With many of the Company having deployed on this, this was a fantastic opportunity for the Jocks to build on our relationship with the Ukrainians. Perhaps more importantly, it was a task with real purpose, with some students returning to the frontlines as soon as they flew back from the UK. 'Student' is an important differentiation from 'trainee' and D Company were extremely privileged to be delivering a new series of Leadership Courses, often to students with significant combat experience. Alongside B and then A Company, and supported by elements of the Ranger Regiment, this gave us a unique opportunity not only to challenge ourselves in the design and delivery of combat training, but to learn a great deal from our Ukrainian counterparts. The Jocks excelled as always, balancing professionalism with a friendly approach that quickly built rapport with the students. Though there were at times disagreements this was, in the context of a war in Europe, to be expected and contributed to robust professional debate. It is not always the case that the tasks we find ourselves on have a real, tangible output that makes the Jocks feel like they are contributing

to something really important. This was thankfully one of those tasks, with real bonds of friendship and camaraderie developed in a very short space of time. We wish our Ukrainian brothers all the very best in their Operations - Slava Ukraini.



Members of the Clan in Canada



Introducing the Canadians to the GPMG



SUPPORT COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj SW Russell / Major MD Weir

Second in Command

Capt RA Mounsey

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 (CSM) D Devine / WO2 (CSM) S Boyle

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt S Boyle / CSgt H Cairns

Sniper Platoon Commander

CSgt L Tagica

Sniper Platoon 2IC

Cpl M McFee / Sgt D McBlain

Recce Platoon Commander

Capt C Stuart / Capt REC Hand

Recce Platoon 2IC

CSgt H Cairns / CSgt G Young

Anti-Tank Platoon Commander

Capt IR Pearson / Capt HRH Watson

Anti-Tank Platoon 2IC

CSgt C Brown

Mortar Platoon Commander

Capt RA Mounsey / Capt CT Jenkins

Mortar Platoon 2IC

CSgt G Watson

Assault Pioneer/Pipes and Drums Platoon Commander

CSgt (PMaj) P Grant / Sgt (PMaj) G Roberts

Assault Pioneer/Pipes and Drums Platoon Commander

Sgt (DMaj) R Grant / Sgt (DMaj) J Minto



WO2 (CSM) Devine and CSgts Brown and Cairns
on Op GOLDEN ORB – the Coronation of
HM The King

Support Company on Ex WESSEX STORM – CSgt Watson, 2IC Mortar Platoon.

Support Company deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM on 2 February, moving to Salisbury Plain and quickly settling into Camp Hector – 'Tent City'. During the initial stages of RSOI the Coy faced some challenges with using our JACKAL and COYOTE Protected Mobility vehicles, instead quickly re-rolling to using GS Land Rovers and 'HeeBees' instead. This resulted in many members of the Company needing to complete a GS course before the exercise even began in order to use the unfamiliar vehicles. The Recce PI decided to apply some natural cam and concealment to their wagons, which came in the form of repeatedly driving through very big puddles of mud, much to the dismay of the Quartermaster. These initial teething problems continued as the Mor PI Comd and 2IC quickly got themselves bogged in and had to call forward two of their JNCOs to bail them out, something that flew under the radar until submission of this article...

The Company quickly progressed onto the Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise, with the Mortar Platoon demonstrating their innovation and proficiency by successfully operating and firing out of Imber Village, which the Platoon grasped with both hands as it was the first time many of them had fired live ammunition from an urban environment. The ISTAR Group used this time for Platoon level training in amongst supporting the rifle companies going through the CALFEX, conducting multiple rehearsals screening across the Plain in their new vehicles.

The tactical phase saw the Company deploy in a fully tactical setting in their specific roles. The biggest hurdle for the company was on the communications front, with some novel radio setups quickly improvised in order to fight through, but as always, the Coy rallied together to find innovative solutions and made it work. The Recce, Anti-Tank and Sniper Platoons quickly gelled into a cohesive ISTAR screen, seizing the opportunity to work together whilst operating from their vehicles - for the first time for many - building upon dismounted exercises completed prior to the deployment.

By the final missions, the Company had come on leaps and bounds, with notable successes for the Anti-Tank Platoon in the final attacks marking a real high point. Some individual heroics from CSgt Tagica, who saved a group of Jocks from being captured by appearing on his quadbike from nowhere, steering with one hand and firing from the other both earned him a CO's Coin and probably a retest on his quad course...

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The Mortar Platoon at the end of Ex WESSEX STORM CALFEX

Three Peaks Challenge – Sgt Dick, Mortar Platoon.

Sp Coy participated in the National Three Peaks Challenge in September, with a team made up of a mixture of SNCOs, JNCOs and Hldrs from across the Company. Each soldier volunteered to attempt the 24-hour challenge, aiming to bag Ben Nevis, Snowden and Scafell Pike in just one day. Throughout we were ably supported by an admin team who ensured all were looked after and safely ferried between the Peaks.

We started the challenge by departing Boulton Barracks for Ben Nevis on 11 Sep. On arrival we set up camp at the bottom of Nevis, feasting on an outstanding BBQ made by the admin team/drivers.

12th Sep, 0500 reveille. Up nice and early, quick breakfast before smashing our first peak of the challenge. Starting at 06:04, we completed it 3:49:59 minutes exactly. A fantastic time to do it in and start off the challenge covering 9.16 miles and 4,350 ft in height. The weather was in our favour and taking in all the beautiful scenery of home. Morale was high as we got into the vehicle ready for the trip south to the Lake District. This peak is supposed to be the most difficult of them all but being fresh and everyone buzzing.

En route to the lakes, many of us got some sleep to preserve energy for what was known to be the hardest of the three peaks and that was for all of us, true. Unfortunately, on the way there the traffic was not great, and the lead driver may have fancied a more scenic route as he

was trying to sabotage our time taking a wrong turn, luckily it did not affect the time overall. Arriving we ensured day sacks were packed with enough water and snacks to get us up Scafell Pike. Hldr Wall decided to tell us the best way to attack this peak as he is from the lakes. However, it certainly was not the easiest, which we won't let him forget in a hurry... Scafell Pike took us 2 hours 29 minutes covering a total of 5.11 miles at an elevation of 2,979 ft in height. This was by far the most difficult, especially given that route... However, the journey was not over yet, back into the transport ready for the drive to Wales.

We arrived at Snowdon in the pitch black and our head torches are out and on. We began the ascent at 01:52. A more satisfying route under foot and a gentle incline compared to previous two. Morale is high as we are on the last peak and in good time too; it was just a shame that it was too dark to enjoy the scenery of Wales. As we hit the top, it was a run back down trying to do it as quickly as we could, passing the sunset watchers on their way up wishing us good luck, or questioning our judgement in taking on the challenge! We completed Snowdon in 3 hours 12 minutes covering a total of 8.26 miles and an incline of 3,100 ft.

Overall, a great adventure with great people who took on a challenge with no specific pre-training, showing great grit, determination, durability, as well as mental and physical resilience to get the task completed. We would have completed it in a better time if we had not hit traffic and taking an extra detour around the Lakes, however only 40% of the people attempting this challenge complete it in under 24 hours at all so we were very pleased with the result. We did this for a great cause too, raising £1,485 for Combat Stress. A great cause which made it truly worthwhile. Everyone who took part should be proud that they smashed it out and achieved what many did not.



Before

The famously camera-shy Sgt Dick poses for a selfie



During

CSgt Watson putting on a brave face



After

Well-earned celebrations



SUPPORT COMPANY

Support Company Cadres

Sniper Operators Cadre – CSgt Tagica, Sniper Platoon Commander

The Sniper Platoon ran a Sniper Operators Cadre from 15 May to 7 July, including students from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and 4 SCOTS Light Aid Detachment.

The first phase of the course began with the entry tests including RFT, night navigation and military knowledge tests to assess the starting standard and fitness levels of the students. The remainder consisted of intense and detailed theory work which proved crucial for the shooting and tactical stages of the course prior to deploying to Barry Buddon and Otterburn respectively. The shooting phase of the course lasted 3 weeks and culminated in the L115 A3 ACMT which all students passed.

The second phase, known as part two, saw the students deploy to Otterburn from 2 June – 7 July. This is the tactical phase of the course which saw a steep learning curve from the moment they arrived. Here the students were required to apply the theory they had learned in the field daily, being assessed on the seven sniper skills in preparation for badge week. There were also lessons on the construction and occupation of observation posts which saw the students build and operate from an OP, routine and logging/reporting targets. After four weeks of daily and gruelling training, badge week involved assessments in stalking, observation, judging distance, sniper military knowledge and night navigation. Students were given three chances to pass each test and weren't told their results until the end of the course. The culmination of the cadre saw the students and DS deploy on Final Ex which provided a challenging training environment to assess how well the students were able to apply their individual

skills as members of a sniper section/ platoon, placing further demand on the students that were selected to step up as pair commanders. During the three day exercise, further training benefit was found by current members of the platoon who were able to observe and mentor the students by passing on their knowledge of the role as well as deploying in role and in 1-up command appointments, thus allowing them to develop their experience and confidence going forward in preparation for future courses and deployments.



Snipers on the ranges in Barry Buddon



Putting names to photos is traditionally a challenge for the Sniper



ENDEX!



4 SCOTS

Recce Patrolman's' Cadre – Sgt Macklin, Recce Platoon

Firstly, the cadre began its initial two weeks within Boursillon Barracks, where the members of the platoon were given excellent theory-based knowledge from Cpls Gibson and McClurg in the form of presentations, laying the foundations for the standards to achieve when conducting reconnaissance operations for the next weeks.

Basic fieldcraft was maintained with navigational exercises run on the back door training area which was to a high standard with Cpl Cakaunivere taking the lead. Several members of the platoon excelled in this and highlighting individual strengths and areas for improvement. Furthermore, physical fitness events took place to test the soldier's robustness and condition soldiers for the next weeks. 2 mile and 5-mile best effort events took place and finally culminated in an 8-mile loaded march across the Catterick training area. As the initial 2 weeks in camp came to a close, it was time for the platoon to begin preparations to deploy to the Galloway Forest, where potential reconnaissance soldiers would be tested on tactical manoeuvres, observation post construction and conduct, compromise drills guidance tasks. It must be mentioned that even though all soldiers have a minimum start standard of soldiering in the field, they were still be tested in the basics of field skills and craftsmanship. Areas of detail that was focused on were occupation of OPs and the mental resilience to keep a high standard while observe and report was achieved by all. LCpl Muir deserves special mention for how he conducted himself throughout the cadre, always with a willingness to learn new skills as he aims for attending SCBC within the next few months.

Another point of pride for the Recce Platoon to take forward was how it integrated and conducted effective back briefs to the 3 Rifles JNCO cadre, displaying professionalism and strong knowledge of our job role. This culminated with the platoon setting the conditions and guiding the 3 Rifles company into its deliberate attack onto Castle Maddie.

Overall, the cadre was a success and lessons were learned and new areas of improvement were highlighted. Moving further into the year, soldiers were rewarded with a mental resilience challenge of jumping off a 15-foot waterfall to which further shown how the soldiers were willing to get stuck in despite adversity and helped bond the unit that little bit extra.



Recce Cadre students CASEVACing in the Galloway Forest



Sgt Boyle delivers orders to students at sunset

Anti-Tank Cadre – Sgt Grant, Anti-Tank Platoon

In a collaborative effort, students from 4 SCOTS, 2 SCOTS, the Royal Scot Dragoon Guards, and the Royal Yorkshire Regiment participated in an intensive 6-week cadre aimed at enhancing the Anti-Tank capabilities of the platoon. The cadre, hosted and mainly delivered by the platoon staff, spanned from June to July and comprised two distinct phases, each designed to hone both theoretical knowledge and practical field skills of students both new and old.

The first phase of the mandated Javelin Gunner Cadre began at Barry Buddon from 4 to 23 June. This initial stage primarily focused on theoretical aspects essential for the qualification of gunners. Participants delved into the intricacies of Javelin missile systems, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the equipment they would be operating. The phase concluded with a challenging one-night exercise, putting the acquired knowledge to the test in a simulated operational environment.

Transitioning seamlessly into the second phase, held at Otterburn Training Camp from 26 June to 14 July, the platoon immersed themselves in a more practical and field-oriented setting. This tactical phase was meticulously structured to cover various aspects of anti-tank operations, starting from the ground up. Training commenced with the construction of firing positions, emphasising the importance of establishing these securely and covertly. Subsequent modules included logging and reporting procedures, target engagement strategies, and the tactical placement of observation posts. The hands-on experience provided the gunners with valuable insights into the practical requirements of their roles in the field.



SUPPORT COMPANY

Furthermore, the cadre served as a vital training ground for commanders at different levels. From Observer/Controllers to Detachment and Section Commanders, all had the opportunity to enhance their skills in a simulated operational environment. The incorporation of testing serials for those in appointment ensured that participants were well-versed in their roles before progressing to further courses.

The culmination of the cadre was marked by a social event on the final day, where Captain 'Wee Man' Pearson, undoubtedly exhausted but gratified, joined his comrades for a well-deserved celebration with cold beers. This camaraderie not only fostered team spirit but also acknowledged the hard work and dedication exhibited by all participants throughout the rigorous training period with Hldr Bea being awarded 'Top Jock' for his efforts.

The 4 SCOTS Anti-Tank Platoon's cadre has undoubtedly elevated their operational readiness and strengthened their capabilities in the ever-evolving landscape of modern warfare. As these soldiers return to their units, the knowledge gained from this comprehensive training will undoubtedly contribute to the effectiveness and success of their future missions.

Mortar Cadre – CSgt Watson, 2IC Mortar Platoon

The Mortar Platoon deployed on their annual Bn 81mm Mortar Numbers Cadre and Executive (Execs) Cadre from June to July. The Numbers Cadre was needed to train new members of the Platoon and is also used to keep trained members current and competent. The Execs Cadre was needed to sufficiently train JNCOs before going on course at CAMS on the Mortar Standard and Advance Courses.

The first part of the Cadre was the teaching phase held in Strensall, York from 12 – 30 June. During this time those on the Numbers Cadre learned Mortaring theory and handling drills to a high standard. Those on the Executive Cadre learned how to operate from a Mortar command post and basic mortar fire control procedures. Throughout their time in Strensall the training was of a high and challenging standard, with students also working on their physical robustness through PT sessions and plenty 'heavy carries' as well as their mortaring capability.

The second part of the cadre saw the Platoon move to Otterburn Training Area to conduct the Live Firing phase from 2 – 14 July. This was used so the Platoon could put into practice everything they had learned during the teaching phase in a live environment, for some this was the first time they had seen the Mortars fire live ammunition. During this time, they fired live ammunition from a tactical setting which culminated in a tactical exercise at the end of the second week with two Mortar Sects. This exercise saw the Sect Comds working hard to keep command and control of their respective sections.

All in all, it was very successful cadre and a challenging experience for all. The chain of command identified Hldr Ford as 'Best Mortarman' on the Numbers Cadre and LCpl McCabe as 'Best Exec' on the Executive Cadre and would like to congratulate them both for their hard work throughout. The evidence of this being a successful cadre were the Platoon had Cpls McIntyre and Randalls both passing the Mortar Advance Course at CAMS and Cpl Hill and LCpl McCabe passing the Mortar Standard Course.



"So... this is a mortar" - Cpl MacEachem passing on years of knowledge in the field



Sgt Sovui enjoying a rare moment of calm in the CP between serials during the Live Fire phase

4 SCOTS



Capt Cam Jenkins (then OC Mors (Des)) pretending he is oblivious to the cameraman

Support Company on Castle and Palace Guard, Edinburgh – Sgt Martin, Anti-Tank Platoon

Edinburgh, UK - In a splendid display of precision and tradition, Support Company played a pivotal role as the Ceremonial Guard during the opening of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Tasked with the honour of forming the ceremonial guards for His Majesty's Lord High Commissioner, who took up official residence in the historic Palace of Holyrood, the event marked a grand spectacle ahead of the official opening the following day.

The task was divided into two parts, each with its own unique responsibilities. The first involved a Ceremonial Guard: one officer and nineteen other ranks at the iconic Edinburgh Castle on 19 May. Capt Pearson assumed the role of Guard Commander with Sgt Shaun Dick as Guard 2IC. The second saw another Ceremonial Guard, led by Capt Charlie Stewart as Guard Commander and Sgt Marlon Martin as Guard 2IC, stationed at the equally majestic Holyrood Palace on the same day. Both teams started their preparations on 16 May when they arrived at Redford Barracks. The days leading up to the

parade were dedicated to learning and practicing the intricate drill manoeuvres for the grand event, which unfolded on the esplanade of the castle and the courtyard of the Palace.

On the pivotal day of 19 May, at 1000hrs, the initial parade and inspection of the Guard commenced on the esplanade, led by Capt Pearson and Sgt Dick. This was followed by an equally meticulous inspection of the Guard at the Palace by Capt Stewart and Sgt Martin. The flawless drill and inspiring tunes from the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and the Royal Irish Band added an extra layer of grandeur to the proceedings.

Sentries were dutifully posted, and the rest of the troops marched back inside for well-deserved rest, as they were rotated every two hours through Guard duty. The troops showcased not only their unwavering commitment but also their remarkable discipline and dedication to the ceremonial duties entrusted to them.

At the end of the day, the troops were given the option to either stay in Edinburgh and enjoy a couple of well-deserved beverages or return to Bordon Barracks in Catterick Garrison. The efforts of Support Company did not go unnoticed, and Colonel AB Philips expressed his appreciation through a handwritten letter. In particular, Sgt Martin received special recognition for his immaculate turn-out, bearing, and performance, serving as a mentor to his fellow soldiers and JNCOs.



The Holyrood Palace Guard, with musicians from the Irish Guards



Capt Pearson and Sgt Dick – Commander and 2IC of the Edinburgh Castle Guard



Capt Stuart and Sgt Martin – Commander and 2IC of the Holyrood Palace Guard



SUPPORT COMPANY

Support Company on Op INTERFLEX – Capt Mounsey, 2IC Support Company

4 SCOTS were deployed on Op INTERFLEX Tranche 3 from June to December. The Battalion was deployed to Stanford Training Area in Norfolk and tasked with providing the Training Delivery Unit (think Battlegroup) headquarters and two Training Delivery Subunits (think Companies) as part of a multinational training group.

Support Company's involvement with Op INTERFLEX started in late-August, when the Coy HQ and training team leaders visited STANTA to conduct reces and receive the initial part of our handover from D Coy, 'The Clan', who we were taking over from. While Capt Mounsey was beasted on the various spreadsheets, the SNCOs took to the training area to find the best areas for their lessons and exercises once we took over training. As all of the Sp Coy Capts were on their Sp Wpns courses, the CSgts and Sgts were stepping up to fill their roles, with newly-promoted Sect Comds filling the role of the platoon sergeants. Sgt Boyle (Recce Pl) maintains that the CSgts did a better job than if the Capts were there, but he can't possibly know this for sure as he rarely stepped out of his G4 pick up!

Our actual deployment lasted from 25 Sep until 19 Dec. It began with us shadowing D Coy on their FTX, observing their closing ceremony and the departure of the AFU trainees. Four days later it was our turn to receive our first batch of 160 trainees. Or at least we thought it was in four days. Turns out the 2IC hadn't been beasted quite enough on those spreadsheets and read it wrong. It was only three days! So, after a bit of a panic, we set off to JAMC to collect the inflow of AFU. The 160 trainees were broken down into a Junior Leadership Course of 100 soldiers (modelled on SCBC), a Sergeant's course

of 25 (modelled on PSBC) and a Platoon Commander's course of 35 (based on a mix of RMAS lessons and PCBC training). The Platoon Commander's course was being delivered by a team from 4 RANGER under CSjt Sam Oliver, who were attached to us for the duration. CSgt Tagica from the Sniper Platoon lead the sergeant's course and CSgt Watson, CSgt Young and Sgt Dick delivered the Section Commander's course. The syllabus was a blend of Brecon-style leadership lessons and command appointments while also covering some basic tactical training to ensure a broad understanding of the NATO doctrine that the trainees would be tested on.

The junior leadership course and platoon sergeant's course were both five weeks long, and the training teams were soon comfortable in their role. By the second course we were into our stride. The JNCOs on the training teams had an excellent opportunity to develop their instructional techniques, gain experience working with interpreters and work in a multinational context. Most enjoyed the task and knowledge gained from it. It was highly rewarding to see the improvement in the trainees over the 5 weeks of the courses we were delivering. However, the future faced by our Ukrainian colleagues was never far from the minds of the instructors. This only served to increase the motivation to make the AFU more lethal and improve their survivability on the battlefield.

Support Company now has a long history training Ukrainians, from Op ORBITAL in 2017 and 2021, Ex COSSACK MACE in 2021 and Op INTERFLEX in 2022 and 2023. Our Ukrainian counterparts are rarely far from our thoughts, and we hope to be celebrating their victory soon.

Support Company Sporting Success. Football – Sgt Boyle, Recce Platoon

Support Company have continued to punch above our weight on the Battalion football scene in 2023, with the Recce Platoon's Sgt Boyle captaining the side to multiple high-profile successes, which set a strong foundation for the upcoming tour to Gibraltar in 2024.

LCpl Mason, also of the Recce Platoon, has earned the honour of representing the Army Under 23s team, and is only going from strength to strength, while Cpl McLurg continues to be a solid defensive anchor and source of stability at the back. Cpl Sayers (despite his height disadvantage...) has been a rock in goals as the Battalion team continue their journey in the Army UK North Division 1 league amongst some tough competition.

Cpl McIntyre (Mortars) has also gained his refereeing qualification, and notably refereed the 7 Brigade football tournament, somehow managing to avoid any high controversy...



The team hard at work in training



4 SCOTS

Ice Hockey – CSM Sp Coy

The first week in June signals the most wonderful time of the year and the highlight for all Armed Forces Ice Hockey players – the Tri Service Ice Hockey Championships that was held at Ice Sheffield Arena. Corps and regional teams from across the three services compete against each other over four days in two mini leagues for the Tri Service Championship Cup. The evenings are reserved for the Inter-Service Championship, where the best of the best from the British Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy battle it out for the highly coveted ISC Cup.

Four members of the 4th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland were selected to represent the infantry team, including the CSM and Sgt Dick. During the tournament there was some outstanding hockey being played by all teams. The infantry team did exceptionally well winning all their group stage games. The team successfully made it through the knockout stages beating The Royal Marines in the quarter final and the REME A team in the semi-finals. This saw the infantry team face the Navy Kings in the final. The Navy team were the reigning Tri Service Champions. The game was a gruelling from start to finish but unfortunately the Navy Kings managed to take the match 1-0 to win the tournament overall.

The British Army currently have several recognised ice hockey teams; RE Sappers, RLC Chiefs, REME Stallions, Infantry Ice Hockey, Royal Signals Ice Hockey and the Army All Stars. All of which compete in the Army Championships once a year. This saw the infantry team pack their gear and grab their sticks and head to Telford Ice Arena on a high after doing incredibly well at the Tri's.

It didn't take the team long to find their edge and quickly start dominating teams. The fast-paced hockey the team

quickly raised awareness from the other teams that the infantry were here to win. The team played exceptionally throughout the tournament and made it to another final. This time the opposition was the REMA A, a team that the infantry had beaten at the Tri's. Albeit at the Tri's it was a very close and exciting game, but the infantry were the victors. Both teams started very well and battled hard from start to finish. The game was scoreless and went into penalty shots. Both teams felt the pressure of taking penalties with some being scored and some outstanding saves by both netminders. Unfortunately, the infantry came off second best again with a 2-1 defeat.

The preparation for 2024 events has begun seeing the infantry team going to NI for a weeklong hockey camp. This will give the team the opportunity to train, bond and understand each other's plays, something that we did not get to do in 2023. The team is expecting to bring back gold in both Tri's and Army Cup.

Rugby – CSgt Tagica, Sniper Platoon Commander.

Over the years Sp Coy have had an influx of Rugby minded people come through our ranks, and our contribution to Battalion Rugby stayed strong in 2023. Much of the Sp Coy team is made up of Fijians and Scottish players that become a lethal combination on the pitch. This year has been no exception, and we have been training hard to win the Elgin Rose Bowl competition in 2024. On a slightly bigger stage, the Battalion has a very good rugby team that has competed amongst the best units within the Army Rugby community all the way to being promoted to premiership level, with a strong cohort of Sp Coy players amongst their number.

Sp Coy personnel have also produced several talented Rugby League players and are constantly representing the Infantry team during game time. Of note

are Hldrs Sevakasiga (Anti-Tank), Nakeli (Mortars), Mavileko (Anti-Tanks), Ketewai (Mortars) and LCpl Lutu (Snipers) amongst others who feature regularly on the infantry team. LCpl Lutu, still new to the Company, has captained the infantry team on several occasions which shows his mature attitude and that he is trusted to lead.

Some other rugby players within the Coy also play Club rugby outside of the Army (Darlington Rugby particularly) on Saturdays to a very good standard and are being recognised by the clubs that they represent. The locals were so impressed by LCpl Lutu's individual talent that a local farmer within the Darlington community has gone as far as sponsoring him with kit during weekend games. LCpl Lutu has been scouted before by London Scottish and was even invited to attend the Army trials - a star on the rugby field in the not-too-distant future and one to watch.



Infantry Rugby League – Hldr Sevakasiga



LCpl Ketewai (Mortars) and Hldr Mavileko (Anti-Tank)



SUPPORT COMPANY

Battalion Drone Operator Courses – Sgt Barker, Anti-Tank Platoon

In the latter half of 2023, 4 SCOTS successfully implemented and executed a comprehensive drone pilot training program whilst deployed on Op INTERFLEX. 27 pilots were trained over a six-week period, developing skilled operators across the Battalion in all five Companies and qualifying reserve soldiers in several attached units. Support Company HQ have been taking steps to establish a responsible and well-structured training program for drone pilots. Simultaneously, we have introduced a robust set of policies and governance frameworks to ensure responsible and safe drone use on exercise and operations.

The intensive 6-week training program focused on honing the skills of drone pilots, covering critical areas such as flight safety protocols, regulatory compliance, tactical employment, aerial surveillance and emergency procedures. This was led by instructors Sgt Barker and LCpl Higgs. The program aimed at providing hands-on experience and theoretical knowledge, creating a cadre of proficient drone operators.



Taking flight – Cpl Donald launches a drone (complete with mandatory shades of course)

The Pipes and Drums in 2023 – Pipe Major Roberts

2023 was the perfect example of the blended role of 4 SCOTS Pipes and Drums. We began the year alongside the rest of Support Company in focussing firmly on preparing for and deploying on Exercise WESSEX STORM, seizing the opportunity to share skills with the battlegroup's attached Royal Engineer squadron and continuing to hone our pioneering art. This involved obstacle breaching, explosive method of entry techniques and the preparation of defensive positions – all representing a great opportunity to bring on more junior members of the team on a large exercise as we look forward to Readiness in 2024.

Of course, we were heavily committed on the ceremonial stage, and it is only possible in this article to give a snapshot of the sheer volume of events, both large and small, that we have contributed to in 2023.

Operation GOLDEN ORB saw the band deploy wholesale to London to support the Coronation of HM The King, with CSM Sp Coy watching from afar whilst steering the Battalion Colour Party. In particular, Pipe Major Grant made a lasting impression on the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Tank Regiment, and the whole band were proud to participate in another State Ceremonial event of national importance.

We were welcomed back to the Basel Tattoo in July, an event that continues to be very popular with all members of the band, which was also an excellent way for the new Pipe Major and Drum Major to hit the ground running. Poignant too was that (now) WO2 Peter Grant was able to join us; going initially unrecognised by all the Basel 'regulars' now that he is clean-shaven in his new role as a Company Sergeant Major in 2 SCOTS. The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo swiftly followed, and the band made the most of our month in the capital as we will not be able to attend in 2024 given our Very High Readiness tasks for NATO.



The Pipes and Drums at the Basel Tattoo

4 SCOTS



Maj Weir, WO2 (CSM) Devine and WO2 (CSM) Peter Grant (2 SCOTS) with PMaj Grant and DMaj Minto at the Basel Tattoo

Individual successes have flown too. At the British Army Solo Piping and Drumming Championships in June, Drummer Faulds was named Army Champion Drummer, taking first place in Open Drumming, with LCpl Walkden nabbing first place in Open Bugling amongst other individuals placing strongly.



Army Champion Drummer – Dmr Faulds

From September, several of the platoon deployed with the rest of Support Company to deliver various Leadership courses to the Armed Forces of Ukraine on Op INTERFLEX. In particularly high demand was our expertise on mine clearance, with instruction by LCpls Walkden and Killorn receiving high praise. It represented a valuable

opportunity to learn lessons from Ukrainian soldiers who had encountered in real life the full range of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle devices available to the Russian forces – an unparalleled chance to share learning with our allies. We also provided pipers to VVIP visits and graduation ceremonies for both our own students and those of our partner nations who were running Basic Infantry Courses. LCpl Macauley also piped for the final attack onto Eastmere Village, with our embedded MoD journalist shamelessly scrambling over trainees to interview him. CSgt Watson and Sgt Boyle amongst others enjoyed telling him that the OC was demanding Farewell to the Creeks for every mini-H hour, meaning that when he really was being called for to help regain momentum, he had completely run out of breath.



LCpl Walkden – 1st Place in Open Bugling



LCpl Macauley takes a temporary break from instructional duties to ensure the Ukrainian final attack kicks off in style

In November, the Band pulled together to deliver what was perhaps our most high-profile event of the year; HM The King's State Banquet for the Republic of Korea. It was an all-hands-to-the-pump engagement, with students coming down from the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, as well as instructors from Op INTERFLEX being briefly released to perform. As always, the team pulled together and delivered a performance of the highest standards, helping to make the night uniquely memorable for the President and First Lady of South Korea.



The Pipes and Drums, accompanied by B Coy's Lt Clarke at Buckingham Palace



SUPPORT COMPANY



A Regimental first: Pipe Major Peter Grant and Drum Major Ruairidh Grant

While 2023 has been a year of great achievements for the platoon, it has also been tinged with sadness as we bid farewell to several from our ranks. Pipe Major Peter Grant and Drum Major Ruairidh Grant, move on – to 2 SCOTS and to civilian life respectively. They have a unique place in Regimental history by being the first brothers to perform as Pipe Major and Drum Major together and they leave behind a legacy of achievement on the highest profile State events, including of course, PMaj Grant's solo performance at the funeral of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, watched by millions around the world.

In addition, we must say goodbye to Cpl Mackay, Ppr Bray, Ppr MacBray, Ppr Duncan, and Dmr MacDonald. They all contributed their passion and talent to the platoon, creating musical experiences and making every performance a memorable one. We express our deepest gratitude for their dedication, camaraderie, and the countless hours they spent in dedication to the band.

With every departure, new opportunities arise, and we embrace the arrival of Pipe Major Roberts, Drum Major Minto, Dmr Cabebula, and Ppr Waugh. With more Pipers and Drummers in the training pipeline, the future looks bright in 2024 as the Band continues to go from strength to strength.



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CIS

Regimental Signals Officer

Capt J Heywood

Regimental Signals Warrant Officer

WO2 A Maclean-Maccines/WO2 Ben Coleman

Platoon Quartermaster

CSgt L Eager/ CSgt M Southcoat

Bowman Systems Manager

CSgt A Williams

Platoon Sergeant

Sgt R Urquhart

Trg Sergeant

Sgt H Hanlin

2023 was a fast paced and extremely busy year for 4 SCOTS CIS PI. The year started with WESSEX STORM, seeing the CIS PI deploying as part of the forward elements to conduct the PACEX prior to deploying onto the plain. With limited kit and challenging conditions, the CIS PI managed to establish a robust and functioning comms plan with limited time and space. WESSEX STORM was tough learning environment, and the CIS PI HQ took a lot away from it. After 8 weeks on the plain, the CIS PI retired back to Bourlon Barracks with all the vehicles and members of the PI in one piece and went on a well-earned Easter leave. It was at this time we said goodbye to our RSWO WO2 Maclean-Maccines who leaves us with a heavy heart and "will sorely miss his time with the CIS PI" (actual quote!).

Between April and June members of the PI took advantage of other Coys exercises and deployed to both Canada and Estonia. In the meantime, the rest of the PI took time to re-consolidate the fleet from WESSEX STORM. May

also bought with it the new RSWO WO2 Ben Coleman. The end of June saw the PI becoming increasingly more busy and more involved in the setting up of STANTA training area for Op INTERFLEX and under the guidance of the new RSWO the PI were in a good place to deploy.

Whilst the PI were busy gearing up for INTERFLEX, other members of the PI under Cpl Wood were preparing for the CIS cadre which was designed to train and educate soldiers on all things radios! With soldiers from across the battalion, across the Regiment and across the Union Division the instructors delivered a fantastic package that was well received by all. It also helped to increase the already impressive reputation of 4 SCOTS CIS PI. August bought with it plenty of sunshine and a new CQ and Trg Sgt in the form of CSGT Southcoat Sgt 'Hotdog' Hanlin. At the same time the CIS PI said goodbye to CSgt Eager who moved to IBS in Brecon. We wish him well in his next job and are very grateful for all the hard work and long hours he did as CIS CQ.



CIS PI trying their best to hide from the students on the CIS Cadre

A week in September was one to remember for members of the PI. The PI started the week with a day trip to Thorpe Park. It was then proceeded by a weeklong range package in the glorious sunshine of Thetford. Members of the PI had the opportunity to practise their

shooting and remember what a rifle looks like!



Some members of the CIS PI looking happier than others with their prizes



The BSM finally worked out which way the rifle was supposed to point

The main event of the second part of this year was Op INTERFLEX. The CIS PI was instrumental in helping to set up and ensure that the training teams had the best start possible. The CIS PI had the mammoth task of ensuring that the HQ was good to go with 2 weeks notice. They also had to ensure that there was enough radio and IT equipment and fight the endless battle of ensuring there was Wi-Fi across all 3 camps. Throughout Op INTERFLEX the CIS PI was required to run the Ops Room, be RLS and deliver other tasks where and when required.



CIS

Whilst half the PI were deployed on INTERFLEX with the RSO, the RSWO, and the rest of the PI were making sure the Bn were in the best state possible for the upcoming VJTF task in 2024. This was no mean feat and with half the PI away on INTERFLEX the RSWO and his team had to manage numerous vehicles coming from around the country into the Bn.



The BSM finally worked out which way the rifle was supposed to point

2023 for 4 SCOTS CIS PI was frantic and fast paced. The PI was split for most of the year and was constantly on tasks, however delivering to the highest of standards on everything that was asked of them. I am looking forward to the PI being together next year and what 2024 brings for all of us!

QMS

Quartermaster

Maj Gary Main

Quartermaster Technical

Capt Stevie Main

Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant (Maint)

WO2 Paul Roadnight

Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant (Tech)

WO2 Ross Parker

This has been another active year for 4 SCOTS Quartermaster's Department with major roles in supporting Ex WESSEX STORM (January to March), and OP INTERFLEX from Jun – Dec, which was based STANTA. The department have been extremely busy receiving the equipment and vehicles for VJTF (L) for the latter part of the year. Members of the Tailor Shop also supported The Kings Coronation. We have continued to provide logistical support and assurance throughout the year, for UK and overseas exercises and operations that the Battalion have participated in. Also maintaining support to those remaining in Catterick, managing the in-camp basing and infrastructure, the garrison firm base, and preparing for the upcoming audits and assurance checks, such as the LSA&I and LEA. Many personnel have been extremely proactive during the periods between activities completing career and equipment courses.

Despite spinning many plates, the professionalism and commitment from the QMs department ensured it functioned positively from a sustainment perspective.

Arrival and departures

Both QM's and RQMS's appointments have both changed over during 2023, with Maj Cunningham and WO1 Allison remaining in 4 SCOTS, as QC HQ and RSM, respectively. Capt Surgeon has departed the Army, with WO2 Bavadra and WO2 Navuso are in the middle of their civilian career transition on completion of their Colour Service. LCpl Cook and Daggert have moved onto different roles and left the department after both promoting within their respective capbadges, we wish them all the very best and thank them for their commitment.

Sgt Revill and LCpl Anson (now Cpl) have returned to the Tailors, after his posting at ITC C.

Ex Wessex Storm

The main event for the department in the early part of 2023 was the deployment to Salisbury for Ex WESSEX STORM. The QM Dept where instrumental in the Bn's success on Ex WESSEX STORM. Camp Hector was a tented village, made up of 62 tents, which was some achievement due to the poor wet and windy weather conditions. Equipment had to be collected at short notice from across the UK, ensuring the F Echelon could have the best training opportunities.

OP INTERFLEX

From Jul – Dec, the Bn were dedicated to providing training on Op INTERFLEX, based in STANTA. The QM (T) and Sgt Neilson had the demanding task of setting up and establishing the site over 3 separate locations. A challenging task as the STANTA site did not have any equipment assigned. Long and late days ensured all commodities were timely provided, making sure the training to Ukrainians, could be fully supported.



4 SCOTS

Very High Joint Task Force (Land)

4 SCOTS assumes the NATO's Very High Joint Task Force Land VJTF(L) on 1 Jan 24. The equipment planning, preparation and collection took in excess of 4 months and was delivered on time by the department. This was time consuming on MJDI, JAMES and coordination of collection from Unit across the UK, Europe and as far and wide as Kenya and Canada. The camp has noticeable started to fill up the with the increasing number of ISO containers that are dominating the QM's car park, ready for activation or deployment.



CSgt Neilson having breakfast after a CBRN serial during Ex Wessx Storm

PHYSICAL TRAINING

SSI

SSgt (SSI) D Best RAPTC

2IC

Cpl N Oyuga

September saw SSgt (SSI) M Hanson depart the gymnasium and handover to SSgt (SSI) D Best. Since taking over as 4 SCOTS RAPTCI a number of changes have been implemented across the Battalion to maximise output in the PD arena. Going into 2024 the aim is to see these changes develop and enhance the Battalions operational output, physical fitness, resilience, and general health.

Op INTERFLEX presented a number of PD challenges that should be reflected upon for future deployments of a similar nature, and how to best support

our Soldiers' health, fitness & wellbeing with limited facilities over an extended period of time away from the main base.

Cpl Oyuga continues to represent the Army at the highest level for cross country, whilst SSgt Best represented the RAPTC squash team in Mauritius on a 2-week tour. To round the year off SSgt Best and 11 others completed a Guinness World Record Challenge, lifting the most amount of weight as a team of 12 in a 1-hour window. The team gathered at the Army School of Physical Training in Aldershot to complete the feat, and unofficially smashed the previous record by 39,000kg and are awaiting official confirmation.



Guinness World Record Holders



4 SCOTS

LAD

Officer Commanding

Capt H Whelan

Artificer Sergeant Major

WO1 M Loveridge

Artificer Quartermaster Sergeant

WO2 J Coley

Introduction

2023 was an extremely intense time for 4 SCOTS LAD. The re-structure of the organisation coupled with continuous support to OP INTERFLEX and constant spanner-turning, left little time for the team to entertain extra-curricular activities. However, there were opportunities throughout the year which were grasped with both hands by members of the LAD.

Deployments and Exercise

The LAD were heavily committed in support of the Regimental tasks, deploying on Op INTERFLEX, Ex WESSEX STORM and provided support to the Sniper, Mortar and Signal cadres at Barry Buddon, Inverness and Otterburn. After deploying with a team on Ex SPRING STORM to Estonia, Sgt Popple then deployed on an enjoyable and rare bespoke task to Romania along with LCpl Thomas, providing Foxhound Equipment Support to Ex STEADFAST JUPITER.

AT and Sport

Members of the LAD also managed to take some time and attend some of the Adventure Training that was on offer from the Battalion and the REME Corps. At various times throughout the year, there were individuals enjoying themselves whilst conducting canoeing and hill-walking through the picturesque Inverness wilderness.

Cpl McIntosh, Cfn Simpson and Cfn Green successfully managed to secure a place on Ex SUPREME GLACIER, an annual 2-week skiing and snowboarding adventure to Austria, where they fulfilled their adrenalin addiction prior to having some very well-earned Christmas leave.

Captain Whelan has travelled across the UK, representing the REME as a critical member of their mountain bike team. WO2 Coley, Cpl Batty and Cfn Murphy Turner have all represented the Battalion football team, whilst Cfn Matthews has strongly competed for the title in the Army squash championships. The LAD also entered a team into the Bismarck Challenge, which they completed in a very respectable 43 minutes.

Promotions

A successful year for promotion within the LAD, the following 7 members were recognised and rewarded for their continuous hard work and relentless efforts:

- SSgt Card – Selected for WO2 AQMS
- LCpl Cardy – Selected for Cpl
- LCpl Crompton – Selected for Cpl
- LCpl Holden – Selected for Cpl
- LCpl Murphy – Selected for Cpl
- Cfn Hall – Selected for LCpl
- Cfn Matthews – Selected for LCpl



LCpl Haigh Cfn Reid Cfn Hall LCpl Lerpiniere



Apparently, attempting to drive on the side was the trend for EX WESSEX STORM!



4 SCOTS LAD Recovery Mechanics in action



REME Rider! – Captain Harry Whelan (OC LAD)



Cfn Simpson ready to jump during EX SUPREME GLACIER



4 SCOTS

TRAINING WING

Lt K Boyle
WO2 R McIntosh
CSgt P Cook/CSgt Parkins
Sgt Hughes/ Sgt Rogers

January 2023 saw the Bn continue their final preparations and deployment on Ex WESSEX STORM. The training wing remained back in Catterick with CSgt Parkins at the helm.

Due to Bn commitments over the first and second quarter of the year we were unable to send our PJNCO allocations to the Union Div PJNCO course, so the Bn decided to run our own internal PJNCO cadre. The planning and preparation fell to the training wing. CSgt Parkins performed a stellar job in coordinating and planning for this before handing over to Alpha 'Grenadier' Company to deliver. The course was a massive success due to the preparation and output from both CSgt Parkins and Alpha Company. A thanks to all.

During Exercise WESSEX STORM the driver training team were deployed to support and deliver conversions on our fleet. They worked non-stop to ensure that we were able to ensure we were well above the ratios required to drive and command our fleet. The team supported in converting SP from LR GS to FOXHOUND.

February saw the results for promotion of CSgt to WO2. CSgt Parkins was successful and was selected to be SP Coy CSM 1 Royal Yorks. This saw him move over the road to Alma lines in May. We would like to congratulate WO2 Parkins and wish him all the best in his new ventures.

May – September saw the dismounted close combat side of the training wing gapped. The driver training side under the direction of Sgt Hughes continued to get our soldiers qualified.

September saw CSgt Cook take over DCC element of the training wing. He was soon joined by WO2 McIntosh, Sgt Rogers and Lt Boyle respectively.

Tasks began to come in thick and fast. First was to plan the Bn's upcoming VJTF(L) qualifying range package – Exercise HECTORS MARAUDER – which is to be run from February through March. This will see the rifle companies progressing from section to company attack. Once they have completed their dismounted shoots, they will then move on to qualifying on the GPMG in mounted FOXHOUND live fire exercises. Support Company and Machine Gun Platoon will conduct the Platform weapons operator course to qualify on the JACKAL platform as well as conducting their specialist dismounted shoots. The initial PRT fell on the laps of Bravo 'Braithrean' Company and support who have been working hard preparing for the upcoming ranges. During this period, we also planned a visit for ITC Catterick recruits to "look at life". This was supported by Delta Company. We would again like to thank D Coy for their support in this. Another task saw the training wing team plan and conduct an ITR Fieldcraft and protect exercise – Ex HIGHLANDER – for Headquarter Company. This was conducted in Catterick training area operating through a series of stands to ensure that all HQ Coy SP were tested and qualified for the training year and VJTF(L). It consisted of a 12-hour exercise where the HQ element were tested in Fieldcraft, Navigation, CBRN, First Aid and Communications. There was lots of positive feedback from the SP that took part in the exercise as it was enjoyable

and they got out of the office to brush up on their skills and drills.

The training wing would once again would like to thank all those who have supported us.



Members of HQ on patrol on Ex HIGHLANDER



OC LAD enjoys a moment away from the garages



MT DEPARTMENT



BG Fleet prepare to deploy on Exercise in SPTA

Motor Transport Officer

Capt A R McLellan

Motor Transport Warrant Officer

WO2 A Bowie

Motor Transport Sergeant

Sgt M McKiddie

Introduction

Another busy year for the MT Department saw deployments on Ex WESSEX STORM, Ex WARFIGHTER and Op INTERFLEX. All of this coupled with supporting a busy calendar of “routine business” as well as assisting in the receipt of a sizable uplift in platforms to support the battalions VJTF commitments in 2024.

Personnel and Changes

In 2023, the battalion saw a high level of churn to key personnel, the MT department was very much a part of this.

Three members of the platoon transitioned out of the Army and started careers in civvy street. LCpl “Yogi” Yalovigau and Hldr Kumar left the army after serving their 22 year and 12-year contracts respectively. Cpl “Smudger” Smith leaving us after 13 years service to the crown.

LCpl Thuku transferred to the MPGS where he will start a new career at RAF Boulmer.

Cpl Kerobe and LCpl “Welshy” Welsh moved up to the driver training wing to assist with Sgt “Shug” Hughes in the wing to assist with the ever-increasing



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commitment to maintaining driver qualifications for VJTF.

Sgt Richie Uttley was posted to 3 SCOTS from his trawl at DST Leconsfield which saw Sgt McKiddie officially move into the role as MT Sgt.

We also welcomed back a couple of familiar faces, Cpl "Cod Heed" Carradice returning from the Divisional Training Team and assuming the role of Details NCO and Cpl Lee Hauley from the IET as our Green Fleet NCO.

The middle of the year saw a hand over/takeover of MTO, with the newly promoted ex RSM, Captain Andy McLellan, take the reins from Captain Craig Taylor, who moves onto 4 SCOTS RCMO.



MT Platoon mask up during Ex WESSEX STORM

Commitments and Tasks

The start of the year saw the department deploying on Ex WESSEX STORM with the rest of the Battlegroup. A highly demanding, but rewarding exercise, this was an excellent opportunity for the department to sharpen its warfighting teeth in the A1 and A2 Echelons.

Post-Exercise there was not much time to re-pack the grip-bags before some of the department deployed in Support to Ex WARFIGHTER. Based out of Fort Cavazos (formally Fort Hood) in Killeen Texas. Department personnel deployed in varying roles, mostly within the 7X Brigade HQ cell of the "Virtual" Exercise involving 3(UK) Division, 1st US Armoured Division and the 1st US Cavalry Division. A rewarding experience, that gave everyone the opportunity to operate tactically in a relatively stress-free environment, outside of their comfort zones, with some of the Jocks heading up full Battlegroups as Commanding Officers and Sgt McKiddie even taking on the mantle as 7X BEME, a role he got to grips with once he figured out what BEME stood for.

Texas also threw up other opportunities, with two stand down periods during the exercise, the opportunity was taken to travel further afield and explore the state. Groups visited Dallas and Fort Worth to take in sites such as The Dallas Book Repository, The Grassy Knoll, and the oldest indoor rodeo in the world in Fort Worth. As well as San Antonio, Round Rock, Waco and Houston. The MTO and MTO-des(RSM) taking the opportunity to have pre-handover meetings at most of the IHOPs and Denny's in the state.

The second half on the year saw the Battalion committed to Op INTERFLEX in STANTA, by far the most rewarding activity conducted over the last 12 Months. The department deploying an MT department forward to manage the sizable fleet and transport requirements of up to, and sometimes over, one thousand personnel. Ensuring that the training delivery sub-units were supported, in order for them to deliver valuable training to our Ukrainian partners.

A hugely busy, but rewarding period for the department and battalion, we now focus on readiness and ensuring we support the battalion in its aim to be first to the fight if called upon by NATO while on VJTF.



Cpl Hauley prepare his kit prior to deploying on Exercise



REGIMENTAL ADMINISTRATIVE DETACHMENT

Regimental Administrative Officer
Capt A R McGurk

Detachment Commander
Capt A Johnston

Regimental Administrative Warrant Officer
WO2 V Vavaitamana

The 4 SCOTS RAO Detachment has enjoyed another busy period for the year, full of various deployments, sporting events and adventure training.

Sgt Smith, LCpl Kinghorn, LCpl Sutcliffe, Pte Boyd and Pte Cornish all deployed to Salisbury plain on Ex WESSEX STORM in various roles from Pte Cornish and LCpl Sutcliffe being Rifleman within a section and Sgt Smith and LCpl Kinghorn as deployed IHUB in BG Main. This has enabled our department to be better prepared before commencing VJTF in early 2024. It was a rewarding experience, and an opportunity to demonstrate our versatility as soldiers both in the office and field.

Sgt Mercer, the regimental accountant, deployed with 4 SCOTS to Texas USA on Ex WARFIGHTER from March to May 2023. She deployed acting as SO2 G1 in a simulated 7LMBCT and was instrumental in the pre-deployment administration and recovery and did a fantastic job.

Across the sub-units, members of the detachment were involved in different exercises around the world. LCpl Sutcliffe had an active year, deploying in support of A Coy on multiple occasions in various roles. He deployed on Ex SPRING STORM in Estonia where he deployed as a GPMG Gunner within A Company where he received a Commander's coin for coping so well

out of his comfort zone and going above and beyond for the Battalion.

For the last 6 months of 2023 the Battalion deployed on Op INTERFLEX. This involved a variety of the detachment deploying and setting up the foundations for our part in the operation. This ranged from operational record keeping to controlling the PERSREP and dealing with arrivals and departures of the Ukrainian soldiers as well as keeping track of any trainees who sustained injuries whilst conducting training by informing the HAP at the first instance. It was a challenging deployment as we had to engage with multi-nationals and at times had to adopt to their way of approaching issues that might have occurred during arrivals and departures of the trainees. This was also a very rewarding period for our department in the sense of we got to work with different nationalities to better prepare the Ukrainian trainees for the ongoing war at their home front.



Cpl Kudekor attacking the hills in Germany

Throughout the busy year the detachment still managed to fit in some adventure training. Cpl Kudekor went

mountain biking in Germany for a week and enjoyed the thrill of biking in the mountains.



LCpl Sutcliffe (middle) shortly before his first jump

LCpl Witton and LCpl Sutcliffe got away to do some skydiving, they managed to complete five jumps throughout the week. Furthermore, Pte Hopkins travelled to Norway on Ex NORDIC CROWN to compete against other members within the AGC to show off his skiing skills. While he was on Ex NORDIC CROWN he learnt how to classic and skate ski and these techniques were used for the races they had.

Even though the detachment has had a busy year it has helped us prepare for the challenges that lay ahead inside the coming 12 months of 2024 when the battalion goes on VJTF. We look forward to further deployments and sporting events wherein we will show our versatility as soldiers.



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CATERING DEPARTMENT

Regimental Catering Warrant Officer WO2 (SQMS) J Till

As one-year closes, a new one begins, Catering Departments across the Army continue to find themselves heavily subscribed, operating at a level where a reduced workforce within the homebase becomes the normal standard. 2023 was no different and was met with countless trawls, deployments, and operations, which saw the department often spread to the four winds. On a positive note, this brought with it a lot of value, knowledge, and awards to highlight why we as a trade are as good and as valuable as we are to the Army - as the saying goes "the Army marches on its stomach."

Q1 of 2023 saw the department deploy on Ex WESSEX STORM 23, where the whole department of 14 deployed feeding c.950 SP in Avon Compound (Salisbury Plain) within an impressively built tented city, which encountered periods of harsh and inclement weather, but the chefs continued to power through, in what turned out to be an ever evolving and complex feeding solution throughout.

Q2 – Q4 of 2023 saw the department getting ready to fulfil Bn and 7X commitments whilst also meeting the needs for the VJTF(L) verification exercise. As the year progressed on, we found ourselves to be a more dynamic and outward thinking team, this will only bring value whilst being held at high readiness throughout 2024. We also had SP aligned to support HM The King's coronation and Op INTERFLEX.

To display the magnitude of deployments in which the department have been involved in, below is a summary of deployments, it's not until you see a lists like this that you realise how much your team has accomplished.

Deployments of 2023

- 1) Ex WESSEX STORM 23
- 2) Ex MAPLE RESOLVE
- 3) Op GOLDEN ORB
- 4) Ex SUNDERLAND DAGGER
- 5) Ex SPRING STORM
- 6) Op INTERFLEX
- 7) Ex HECTORS WAVE
- 8) Op SANDROCK/OP ELGIN
- 9) Ex HAKARA STORM
- 10) Ex STEADFAST JUPITER
- 11) Op TANGHAM

It is not all business

Although we are an extremely busy outfit, we also have individuals who juggle their busy work schedules to conduct extra-curricular activities which benefit themselves but equally give back to the organisation. These SP are:

Cpl Wake – Not only is he the rock-climbing IC within the Bn, but he also competes competitively in climbing competitions. In one competition he placed 10th out 120 competitors in the UK climbing championships. He has also completed rock climbing courses in Spain to boost his knowledge and ability within this field.

Cpl Davidson – He was successful in 2023 and now competes within the Army equitation show jumping team throughout the UK. In his first year of competing within such a prestigious outfit, he was shortlisted as the riders, rider of the year, which further cements his position within the team.

Cpl King – He prides himself in keeping physically fit and is the Bn strongman team 2IC. Throughout his tenure in the team, he has enthused some junior members of the Bn to partake in this discipline, with the aim of improving the mental health and wellbeing across the Bn. He competed in the Mey Highland Games in Scotland, where he placed an impressive fourth place in his first

competition. Most notably he recently completed a 24hr deadlift challenge with a small team, which was live streamed to highlight mental health illness.

Promotions

- 1) LCpl Dickinson to Cpl.
- 2) Ptes Menzies and Watson to LCpl.



UWO

Unit Welfare Officer

Capt Malcolm Wilson

Assistant Unit Welfare Officer

Sgt Leigham Oliver

Welfare assistant

Samantha Simpson

This year we say a sad farewell to Sgt Mav Botto and congratulate on him completing 25 years service, (all with the Battalion). Mav spent 3 years in the welfare office, tending to the needs of all our soldier and their families, Mav always had an answer to any question. He did a fantastic job; he leaves the Army to spend time with family in Cumbernauld.

But the revolving door turned again for this team. We welcomed the newly appointed Assistant Welfare Officer, Sgt Leigham Oliver. Ollie has hit the ground running and becoming an integral much-valued member of the team and the wider community.

We were excited to be allocated some needed cash to spend on the welfare facility. Many of you will have seen the main hall and the significant improvements that have been made. The modern furniture has enhanced the welfare and its certainly more welcoming for our people to have a space to enjoy. The team were exceptionally proud to open the cinema room which has been popular with the little ones, we were delighted to provide some films while the Battalion was committed on EX WESSEX STORM. The sofas are incredibly comfortable, and the team can confirm that some of our families have had a wee snooze, mostly adults!



Rev'd Tim Clarke-Wood holds a Field Service to 4 SCOTS BG on the completion of Ex WESSEX STORM

Our opening of the welfare cafe has been extremely popular and allows our service personnel a space for some respite away from the workplace, especially the MT platoon who are in here daily eating square sausage and the best seller Stornoway black pudding. It has been a remarkable success and attended by many of our families throughout the week.

The Welfare office has delivered a steady stream of activities whilst the unit was deployed OP INTERLEX. This included excursions for the families to some local attractions, with Alton Towers Theme Park being their favourite as we had perfect weather for the rollercoasters, and the adults were the 'kids' for the day we all had a blast. The animal farm was a great event, we had several animals ranging from rabbits to goats for holding and clapping, not that the UWO was impressed with the faeces on the floor, but it was worth it for the kids!

We finished the year off with our annual Christmas party: Rudolph, and Dancer were our VIP (Very Important Persons) guests this year. The grinch showed up (UWO) and spoiled the party but Santa put him in his place and the kids where delighted. They all met his Elf, and she had plenty of gifts for all.

In the background of all the main events happening throughout the year the team continue to deliver welfare support for our personnel and their families. A big thank you to Sam for booking and organising all the events and Flamingo Land tickets for our families, this will continue in 2024 as it is an extremely popular and close to the Garrison.

We look forward to continuing our support next year to you all. On behalf of the 4 SCOTS welfare team, we would like to wish you all a fantastic New Year. All the absolute best for 2024.

4 SCOTS



OFFICERS' MESS



Members of the Mess at the Black Hackle Dinner Night

With disparate Company commitments, it has been challenging to get the mess together in one place and there have been very few weeks where all Officers have been in station. That has not stopped mess activity and various events have been conducted in Estonia; Canada; and the UK.

Both A and D Company Officers maximised the opportunities available from their respective deployments to Estonia and Canada. The latter provided a range of opportunities including rugby in Edmonton; country music gigs in

Calgary; and remaining in Canada on leave to explore North America. Estonia provided the opportunity to explore country and partake in some sport. 2Lt Price and Lt Sandiford both laced up the boots to compete in the 10s tournament despite a number of years having passed since both had played competitive rugby. Major Treasure then joined them in completion of the 'Viking Run' 10km which was upgraded to a half marathon!



D Coy Subbies having some downtime in Canada



OFFICERS' MESS



Lt Shankland, Lt Sandiford, and Major Treasure in Estonia.

The summer brought a range of opportunities including the PMC and Mess Secretary ensuring the mess was well represented at the Brigade's 'NATO CREVAL' in Germany. This included hosting international colleagues and building relationships with the Brigade staff over some Weissbier. In Bourlon, the summer party allowed a final fling for a large number of mess members who were departing the Battalion in the following weeks and a great night was had by all.

Deployment on Op INTERFLEX made 'full' mess events even more difficult; however, a number of local establishments were available for occasional socialising during the Rugby World Cup and leaving dinners for a number of individuals including the CO and Battalion 2iC. The PMC and Mess Secretary also had the privilege to host some of our Ukrainian Armed Forces counterparts to the ever reliable, albeit not standard mess fare, of Nando's.

In addition to these events, and despite such a busy schedule, the mess made significant efforts to support Regimental activity, with a good showing at the Black Hackle Dinner in March and the Regimental Ball in November. Both are fast becoming annual 'staples' with, most importantly, our Young Officers having a chance to meet or catch-up with wider Regimental colleagues and generally have a fun time!



Captain Main QM(T) treats us to a bit of Karaoke at the Christmas party

Some festive activity was thankfully achieved despite elements of the mess still deployed on INTERFLEX. Though both staff drinks and Sergeants' Mess to Officers' Mess were rescheduled for January 24, 'Livers' in Carols', now in its 9th year, was a great night (stand aside some of the singing 'talent'). We also managed to have a Christmas Party which, though an intimate affair, was a lovely evening. After a fair bit of 'back in my day harrumphing' from senior mess members, the Livers In closed the year with a ski trip during Christmas leave.



Captain Heywood and his new pal

A week of skiing and snowboarding awaited them in Les 3 Vallées. The team arrived at Geneva Airport and jumped in a hire car up to the Alps. The first command task soon awaited them.... snow chains. With falls, crashes, and some perfect carving, the group made up some distance on the piste. Master classes in powder-skiing from Capt Heywood, and piste-skiing from Capt Sandiford, were witnessed by all. Regular stops to refresh with Irish Coffees and Hot chocolate fuelled everyone prior to some leisurely lunches. The snow was fantastic; with regular dumps of fresh powder, the resorts looked fantastic. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip, and all returned injury free. Well, almost injury free; Lt Ritchie did suffer a mild stroke after seeing a burger for €38 in Courchevel!



THE SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member
WO1 G Allison

President of the Mess Committee
WO2 C R Grant



Burns 23 under Chief Cronnie Marwick

The year started with a great Burns Night under the watchful eye of WO2 Stevie Marwick. A great night was had by all: from the classic LE cohort to the youngest Officer in the Mess, experiencing what many call the best night in the Sergeants Mess.

A temporary lull in Mess antics supported the various exercises that took us away from Bournon Barracks, such as Ex WESSEX STORM and SPRING STORM in Estonia to name a few. Unfortunately, the summer function was cancelled due to the Bn being deployed at short notice on OP INTERFLEX, as the Army increased its commitment and support to Ukraine. However, before the deployment, there was the handover of RSMs from WO1 A McLellan to WO1 G Allison with the greatest tradition of being chaired out from the Sergeants Mess to the Officers Mess.



WO1 McLellan being chaired out by the WOs

OP INTERFLEX gave a lot of Mess members the opportunity to step up into more senior roles that they normally wouldn't get the chance to do. The Mess excelled and were continually given praise from other UK Forces as well multi-national Forces, but mainly from our Ukrainian counter parts.



The winning team from the Coleman Cup

Although thoroughly busy, we managed to keep the traditions alive with the Assaye Cup, which was held with minimal mess members (and somehow a full Officers Mess) which caused an upset that resulted in the loss of the Assaye Cup to the Officers' Mess. We also started a new tradition of the Coleman Cup put together by WO2 Less with help from PMC from the Cpls Mess. This consisted of a game of football between the Sgts and Cpls Mess, that was held at Norwich City Training ground, which was a great experience for all that attended. At the end of the match the Sgts' Mess were the winners.



WO1 Allison and PMC WO2 Grant pre ice-luge

The Christmas function, planned during OP INTERFLEX by WO2 Grant, was firmly on track and held in the 5-star resort of Rockcliffe Hall. A fun, and long overdue night was enjoyed by all. More significantly, it has brought the Mess back together and given it the momentum to be successful and bountiful 2024.



SCOTS

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5 SCOTS



OFFICER COMMANDING'S FOREWORD

Officer Commanding

Maj Rob Weir

Company Second-in-Command

Capt Henry Atkinson-Clark

Capt Elliott Smith

Quartermaster

Capt Malcolm Morrison

Capt Nicholas Diciacca

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 Scott Cox

Company Quartermaster Sergeant Major

CSgt Christopher Morrison

1PI Comd

Lt Steven Damiani/gapped

2PI Comd

Lt William Bird

2Lt Lewis Turnbull

3PI Comd

Lt Angus Calder

1 PI Sgt

Sgt Marika Nayadravuki

2 PI Sgt

Sgt John Barclay

3 PI Sgt

Sgt Derek Davidson

Sgt Lewis Robertson

This year we said farewell to several key Company personalities. From Company HQ, the 2IC, Capt Harry Atkinson-Clark, retired from the Army altogether and set off for pastures new in East Africa. Our QM, Capt Malcolm Morrison, stayed somewhat closer to home and is now 50 miles further North as QM 7 SCOTS.



Sgt McKenzie being awarded a Brigade Commander's Commendation for his tireless efforts throughout Op UNICORN in 2022

Amongst the Platoons we said goodbye to Lt Will Bird, who is off to 1 RANGER, Lt Steven Damiani, who is now at 3 SCOTS, and Sgt Degi, who returned to 4 SCOTS. As replacements we have welcomed Capt Elliott Smith, Capt Nicholas Diciacca, 2Lts Angus Calder and Lewis Turnbull and, Sgt Lewis Robertson.

The Company welcomed 2023 with a very tight schedule of pre-deployment training to ensure it was fit and ready for Ex WESSEX STORM, where it would be attached to 4 SCOTS as a light role company for the duration. This was a demanding exercise, and I am pleased to say that the Jocks performed brilliantly throughout. It was a real pleasure to fight as part of a SCOTS Battle Group and give the RIFLES a run for their money. More on that later.



Pte Thompson smiling through his final kit check before deploying on Ex WESSEX STORM



5 SCOTS

Following 6 Weeks on Salisbury Plain with the mercury below zero, we decided that a warmer climate would be more agreeable for our next activity. This year, the Aden Patrol competition was held in Cyprus which provided ample opportunity to exercise on different terrain in arduous conditions. This year the Aden Banner was won by Cpl Kelly and presented by Lt Col Mark Kerr – you can find SCOTS everywhere! Cyprus also provided the opportunity for some much-needed recreation; however, I will leave the detail to Sgt Barclay, which can be found in the next few pages. We ended our 'green' phase with a joint Battlefield Study to Sicily kindly organised by 51 Brigade.



The 51 Brigade battlefield study to Sicily. Here members of BKA Coy show the brigade flag next to the 51st Division memorial at Sferro Hill. L-R Pte's Eldon & McCarthy, Sgt Nayadravuki, Maj Weir, Pte Campbell, LCpl McCleod

The Company continued to make history by representing the Regiment at the HM The King and HM The Queen's Coronation, known as Op GOLDEN ORB, which even for drill hardened soldiers was an exercise in marching. To have been part of the largest parade since Sir Winston Churchill's funeral was a distinct honour and one that will not be forgotten.



The Company 2IC, Capt Elliott Smith, unsure if he is rehearsing for the coronation or on week's 1-5 as a cadet

Of equal, or indeed greater, importance (depending on your stance) was the activity surrounding Op SCEPTRE. Royal Week this year included movement of the Honours of Scotland to St Giles

Royal Week this year included movement of the Honours of Scotland to St Giles Cathedral as HM The King

celebrate his coronation." change to "This year Royal Week included attended tri-service Guard of Honour down the a special service to presenting the Honours of Scotland to HM The King at St Giles Cathedral, in celebration of his Coronation. Prior to HM The King arriving at the cathedral, 5 SCOTS led the tri-service Guard of Honour down the Royal Mile.

Looking into 2024, we are scheduled to support the Army Special Operations Brigade on Ex APOLLO SABER, completing our Company training objectives on Sennybridge training area before heading off to Germany to support the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst for a couple of weeks. An excellent way to see out my command before handing over to Major Neil Cargill in the summer.



Pte Dolan experiences the fire power of Crimea. The 1853 Enfield, the rifle of the 'Thin Red Line'



EX WESSEX STORM

Balaklava's road to Ex WESSEX STORM started on a warm summer's day in June 2022 when, requiring office space to work, 2IC 4 SCOTS sauntered into the Company offices. As Maj Anthony Gill and I caught up over a brew it became apparent that he was deficient 1x Light Role Rifle Company to make up the 4 SCOTS Battle Group order of battle. After understanding the dates married up with a huge bit of white space in the Balaklava forecast of events, we shook hands and then proceeded to make it happen. It's amazing what seems like a good idea on a lazy summer's day in Edinburgh.

Having been committed to the 2022 Royal Guard, time was short to meet the Ex WESSEX STORM start standard. As the premier Battlegroup exercise within the UK, we knew that the Company had a steep learning curve and not a lot of time to climb it. We sprinted from the Royal Guard into a punishing series of low-level exercises designed to get the Jocks used to the conditions they would surely encounter. I fully believe that the weeks spent on the Pentlands in December went a long way in developing confidence and fieldcraft.

Following Christmas leave, the Company linked in with 4 SCOTS to make use of their range package designed to get the troops ready for the Combined Arms Live Fire portion of the exercise. I cannot thank the 4 SCOTS team enough for including us in their plans to ensure that we were trained across the board in order to depart Redford in the first week of February 2023.

The exercise was split into four phases: combined arms live fire, battle group integration, mission zero and optimisation. The Jocks' favourite appeared to be the combined arms live fire exercise, specifically the raid + the defence, and mainly due to the Battle

Group assets they were exposed to. Engineers blowing holes in razor wire to grant access to a compound and the Artillery stonking the ground in-front of them were particular highlights.

For the main event, mission zero, the Battlegroup was being assessed, and for the soldiers of 5 SCOTS it was paramount that whatever happened, they should equip themselves well. We were joined for this phase by a platoon from the Canadian Reserves all bearing the names of our antecedent regiments. The mass they provided to the Company and their near imperviousness to cold (one of them had a heat injury) was a real battle winner during the early missions. Our Canadian cousins really came to the fore during Battlegroup integration, where they adapted well to British operating procedures and proved their enthusiasm during a very well executed break in of Imber Village led by Lt Damiani with Sgt Degi.

A defensive action and a delay followed, with the cold slowly sapping morale throughout. It was here that the Company learned some excellent lessons - specifically that just because you place an ambush does not mean that the enemy will trigger it! It was thanks to the effort of Cpl Armstrong turning his building into 'Jigsaws Palace' that the Balaklava area of responsibility held.... and it was touch and go for a second. The delay was particularly interesting, mainly for the drivers. The ability of a light role company to keep up with the movements of a light mechanised Battlegroup is severely limited, which meant that we spent a good 15 hours playing 'whacky races' through the Plain. But our moment came after the valiant actions of Alpha and Delta Company culminated. Balaklava was launched into the fight. It was a sporadic affair with key memories being the Canadian Platoons World

War One charge into the enemy...which worked strangely, and Lt Bird's Platoon fighting surrounded but holding the ground.

For the final attack on Copehill Down village the Company would be the break in with Alpha Coy providing deception. Having said goodbye to the Canadians, we were down a Platoon and so it was all hands to the pump with our Vehicle Mechanic, Cpl Paterson, assuming the role of OC's Radio Operator and Cpl MacDonald being sent from the stores to a rifle platoon.

Having been led into the forming up point by 4 SCOTS Recce Platoon, and having been slightly delayed by a fire support team attempting to call in fire on a field of cows, the attack went in. Lead by Lt Bird's Platoon, the deception by Alpha Company had been such a resounding success that the first two buildings were captured without a shot being fired. Then disaster struck and the OC was killed. I would have liked to have written that the Company was then rudderless, proving my worth; however, the Platoon Commanders and Jocks carried on with very minimal disruption and, after Capt Harley assumed command, carried on the fight taking a large number of buildings. Following Delta Company echeloning through, Cpl Prime was able to capture the 3 RIFLES CO for a SECOND time earning him a commendation from CO CRTC. There was a little debate with the Brigade Commander in the after-action review regarding if we crossed the line of departure on time, but Jock persistence and persuasion came good in the end.

5 SCOTS



ENDEX!!

With mission zero successfully completed the Battlegroup then moved on to optimisation where 4 SCOTS were able to experiment in a failsafe environment. The Jocks who got to Corsham mines were very impressed with the complex and had a great time. With ENDEX called we were able to look back on our successes and lessons learned knowing that we were all better soldiers and officers for the experience. Thank you to 4 SCOTS for supporting our participation





ADEN PATROL COMPETITION - CYPRUS

Sgt J Barclay

In March 2023, Balaklava Company deployed to Episkopi Garrison, Cyprus, for the annual Aden Patrol competition. The multi-stand competition was expertly organised by the training team and designed to test the soldiers' fieldcraft, leadership, teamwork, and mental and physical robustness. The sections stepped off on a 50km route moving from stand to stand, where they were tested on a variety of fieldcraft and battlecraft skills.

The patrol took place over two days, and we encountered some seriously dusty, undulating, and unforgiving terrain starting from the ruined village of Paramali on the southwestern shore of the island. Section Commanders were given the route with the objective of reaching all the checkpoints, both manned and unmanned, as quickly as possible. The aim was to complete the route, with all checkpoints met, command tasks passed, and with their Section complete if they were to be in with a chance of winning the hallowed Aden Banner.

Along the route the stands included; a reconnaissance serial - run by Cpl Sheerin, key leader engagement (KLE) - run by Sgt Robertson, a signal stand - run by Cpl Murphy, a section attack - run by Lt Bird, battlefield casualty drills - with Cpl Sheerin and Findlay, and finally, a captured persons stand - with Sgt Davidson.

Despite it only being March, the Cypriot weather proved quite a challenge for unacclimatised troops fresh off of a winter exercise on Salisbury Plain. Sections conducted administration and were driven out to the starting point at Paramali Village where they were met by Sgts Barclay and Davidson. The teams were in good spirits as they set



2 Platoon in Paramali Village before stepping off

off – albeit rather covered in sun and cam cream! The whole exercise was challenging, given the unfamiliarity of the area, the terrain and heat. Despite all these challenges the junior non-commissioned officers and soldiers showed a huge amount of grit and determination to complete the exercise and demonstrated some remarkable fieldcraft skills.

Once the sections had completed the route, they reunited at Paramali Village, broke into platoon harbours to carry out recce patrols and the obligatory dawn raids on separate objectives – mercifully the early H-Hour meant that the heat was more bearable. Despite the weather, with minimal rest and lots of miles in their legs, the Jocks did extremely well to deliver some slick tactical actions.



No trip to Cyprus would be complete without the obligatory photo at the Kourion amphitheatre

5 SCOTS



The winning section of the Aden patrol competition was presented the Aden Banner by Lt Col Mark Kerr. Well-done Cpl Kelly and the men of 1 Sect, 1 Platoon

We finally headed back to the Garrison and conducted platoon admin ahead of a well-earned 24 hours of R and R, which culminated in some welcomed water sports and some free time to enjoy the local 'culture'. The winning section, led by Cpl Kelly and LCpl Weir, were presented with the Aden Banner at the memorable Ancient Kourion, Greek/Roman Theatre by Lt Col Mark Kerr, an ex-5 SCOTS stalwart. They will proudly retain the banner for the next year.



HM THE KING'S CORONATION

As the Regiment's lead on state ceremonial and public duties events, Balaklava Company have led with the Regiment's support to HM The King's Coronation events in 2023. Namely, this has been the coronation itself, Op GOLDEN ORB, and the presentation of the Honours of Scotland, Op SCEPTRE.

Balaklava Company was to provide a marching contingent for the coronation procession, which was composed of detachments from all regiments across the Army, as well as representation from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force. With plenty of compeed and polish, 24 Jocks and 3 officers were led to London by the OC to commence training with the other Army detachments. Unsurprisingly, the Army deigned the Infantry fit to inhabit Longmoor camp, where we would conduct some remind-and-revise of foot drill. Feeling confident of our drill ability we thought we would be in for a relaxed week, before we found ourselves under the gaze of (acting) WO2 Marr and CSgt Smith – then both SCOTS Colour Sergeant instructors at the RMAS. The Jocks soon became the demo troop! A special commendation must be made to Sgt McKenzie, the 5 SCOTS Master Tailor, who single-handedly supported the tailoring of practically the entirety of the Infantry cohort present.

Our time at Longmoor fortunately came to an end shortly, as the Infantry began training at RMAS. Here, the extensive grounds allowed the whole Army processional group to clock up the much-needed mileage that we would be replicating on the main day. For many of the Jocks, this was their first time within the RMAS and certainly a more pleasant visit than many a young officers! It was here that we first saw the real mechanics of how the day was to unfold and some of the interesting methods employed, including the 'ticker tape'



The Honours of Scotland, with LCpl Simpson keeping a watchful eye!

used to synchronise the whole event through hidden earpieces.

Having refreshed the blisters at the RMAS, it was time to bring together all three Services. The challenge, of course, being where do you find space away from prying eyes for over seven thousand troops? RAF Odiham provided the solution and became a familiar beat for all of the Jocks. The entertainment was provided by the RAF, who, with a ban on any FOD producing materials, relegated most of the parade to marching in combat boots and No. 2's. Even the most uniform conscious of us were relieved to have a break from our brogues!

With the Coronation imminent, and the parade now familiar with all aspects of the day, we were moved into London for the overnight rehearsal. Balaklava arrived in Waterloo as rush hour subsided and to the surprise of the remaining commuters. It seems London was unaware of the quiet rehearsals taking place. The evening itself went

off without a hitch, with Cpl Armstrong remarking that this was perhaps the most memorable part the Coronation. Standing in the silence of Whitehall with Big Ben gently ringing in the distance or marching over Westminster Bridge with not a car in sight, is something few get to experience.

With everything now in place for the day, and rain on the forecast, we stepped off from Wellington Barracks knowing full well that the Jocks could be confident to display their Regiment on such a memorable occasion. I think it likely that the reader, however, had a better view of the parade than us!



5 SCOTS

With the Coronation complete in London, Balaklava Company returned to Edinburgh to prepare for Op SCEPTRE – an event within the more usual Royal Week where the Honours of Scotland were to be presented to HM King Charles III and HM Queen Camilla. This occasion was considerably smaller than that in London, but no less impressive or impactful. The Royal Mile and St Giles put an altogether different perspective to any event, let alone one such as this. Once again, Balaklava Company, with some much-appreciated

assistance from 3 SCOTS, provided the majority of the Guard of Honour and the various other Guards and duties across Edinburgh on the day. GSM (WO1) Tuach led with the training, with a novel addition to the normal ceremonial events of Edinburgh provided by the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (HCMR). HCMR arrived in Edinburgh with their deployable stables and nearly 100 horses, who provided company to the less-than-pleased Cruachan IV and his companion. An interesting spectacle took place daily from the HCMR's arrival,

with 2 SCOTS Pipers 'inoculating' the horses with their tunes. The effect was a ripple of horses' heads bolting back into their stable as the piper marched by, and I can imagine not to either party's amusement!

On home turf now, the Jocks were far more comfortable than most when negotiating the cobbles of the Royal Mile and the day itself was perfectly executed, with a good mix of pageantry, protestors, and pride in the moment.



Balaklava Company forming the escort to the Honours of Scotland, setting off down the Mile



ROYAL GUARD

After participating in the Coronation events and celebrations, the Company was looking forward to another deployment to Ballater to deliver the first Royal Guard with HM King Charles III as the sovereign.

Balaklava Coy (BKA Coy) successfully deployed to Victoria Barracks in early August, after summer leave. Having settled in, we began the season with the Aboyne Highland Games. Regrettably bad weather meant that the festivities weren't as festive as one might like, but nevertheless, the Company put up good representation with Pte Lumb dashing to take the lead at the start of the hill run. He would admit later that it was perhaps a little foolish and he should have saved himself for the remainder! The Guard Commander, Major Weir, put in a strong performance alongside Sgt Nayadravuki, Pte Millar-Thompson and Pte Eldon. Pte Barrow secured a cash prize for his efforts in the sprint category and the tug of war team fought admirably against the semi-professional teams. Alas, we were no match for them. Overall, the first run out for the Company went extremely well and it would be good practice for games later in the calendar.

With HM The King arriving at Birkhall, the Security Platoon, headed up by Lt Blackhall and Sgt Robertson, began liaising and operating with elements of the Police. At Victoria Barracks, the Company hosted a capabilities day where the police and the Company came together to display kit and equipment and learn one another's capabilities and techniques. This was highly successful, as it gave all involved a greater insight into what we can bring to the table, as well as a way of introducing oneself.

The Ballater Highland Games were quickly upon us. Emboldened by our performance at the last games, and with some practice tug of war sessions under the belt, Balaklava Company entered again, this time with home team advantage. The weather was exceptional which also significantly improved the spirits of everyone. Alas, once again it was not enough, and the team was resoundingly beaten. Major Weir, Lt Damiani, Sgt Nayadravuki and many others from the Company took part in the Ballater hill race, unfortunately Lt Blackhall and Capt Smith were indisposed and couldn't partake. Their support from the side-line was greatly appreciated, however.



BKA Coy training hard in the sunshine!

Pony Platoon, headed up by Lt Damiani and Sgt Nayadravuki, had a longer period of training available to them due to the red stag stalking beginning a little later this year. This was much appreciated as it allowed those who had no experience to properly familiarise and become more competent and comfortable with the highland ponies with whom they would be working

alongside. The Platoon learnt how to care for, sustain and manage the boisterous beasts, each of which had their own unique personality.



HM King Charles III presenting the new Balmoral Colour to The Royal Guard

In late August the engagements came thick and fast, first with HM The King's formal arrival parade outside Balmoral Castle. The main event came later that week, with the Company presented with the new Balmoral Colour from HM The King and HM The Queen. This required significant practice and hard work. Fortunately, on the day we were blessed with excellent weather, albeit with the midges deployed in full force to keep things challenging. Nevertheless, it was an honour to be part of such an intimate affair and to be one of the few units to have been presented with a new Colour.

The very same evening, the Officers attended the Aboyne Ball. The Mess had been practicing hard and put on an excellent display. The highlight was the redcoat foursome, unconventional, however many compliments were passed on. The festivities went on late until the evening and I'm sure one or two were paying the price the next morning for First Kirk.

5 SCOTS



The Braemar Gathering, at the beginning of September, marked the end of the Highland Games season, and again the Company was represented well – commendation goes to the OC yet again on defeating another of the hill races. A quarter guard, under Sgt Robertson, welcomed HM The King and other members of the Royal Family. The day was a pleasant, a fitting end to a great season of competition.

Soon the Ghillies Ball was upon the Company and the soldiers had been practicing under the Sovereign's Piper every day for an hour and they were in excellent form. Later in the evening when some guests started to drop off, they took to dancing with each other, to an excellent standard, as noted by HM The King. Their hard work paid dividends on the night.

The Royal Guard also offered opportunity to partake in sporting pursuits, which the Company excelled in. One of these is the Gelder run, a route through the Castle grounds, run by the Guard, Police and Household staff. Pte Ramnanansingh won decisively and nearly broke the record. Capt Smith and Lt Damiani tried their hand at salmon fishing. However, with the water low and with low numbers in the river, they both drew an enjoyable blank. The red deer stalking season began mid-September and the Officers, WO and SNCOs were kindly invited to shoot. Furthermore, the Company put two teams into the Royal Marines Association Clay Pigeon Shoot. This kind invite stems back to when the Argylls and Marines formed the Plymouth Argylls in WW2 after both had been severely depleted in the withdrawal to Singapore. It is great to see this relationship maintained to this day. Both teams, Officers and SNCOs, put in a good effort and finished middle of the pack. Furthermore, WO2 Cox organised a charity golf tournament, bringing together local businesses, estates and Army teams. This was excellent event



The first Gelder Run finishers, including 4 Potential Officers

in which Balaklava Company brought home the trophy.

Balaklava Company concluded HM The King's Royal Guard 2023 in late October, having worked closely with the Police and the estate whilst engaging with the community. It was one of HM The King's firsts, and required flexibility and hard work by all. As ever the Company put its best foot forward.

Lt S. Damiani



HM THE KING'S ROYAL GUARD GOLF COMPETITION

WO2 (CSM) Cox

As HM The King's Royal Guard started to come to an end it was only fitting for the Guard Sergeant Major to host the first Royal Guard Golf competition at Ballater golf club, an occasion the club supported wholeheartedly. The invitations had been sent early August, and in traditional SCOTS fashion, all Battalions sent representation to support the event. This was a free event for all teams involved as our sponsors from Arnold Clark, The Whisky Room and O2 kindly donated the prizes. Prizes were awarded to; the winning team and the best dressed team, whilst each player had five attempts to win closest to the pin on all Par 3's; and there was also the longest drive competition winning an iPad, unsurprisingly won by the current Infantry Golf Champion LCpl Stevenson - to the annoyance of 4 SCOTS CSM Dean Dunnachie who thought he had it in the bag until the last hole.



Cpls Toman, Sheerin and Armstrong modelling a more traditional golfing look as well as demonstrating the sporting utility of the kilt

The weather held firm, and the club's greenkeeper had done an outstanding job maintaining the course. The players turned up in their top golf attire with 6 SCOTS looking surprisingly dapper and winning the best dressed team. The competition was a four ball better ball Texas Scramble. Each competitor used a minimum of four drives within the 18 holes, 90% of full handicaps, maximum

handicap 24, giving all teams a real shot of winning the trophy.



The 6 SCOTS team (Maj Law and CSM McKnight) looking very dapper indeed

The players were in place and as the Sovereign's Piper, WO1 Paul Burns, sounded the air horn the time had come for all teams to tee-off. It was stiff competition with some excellent golf played and some questionable shots, most notably from 3 SCOTS' Maj Paddy Marshall when he almost took out Balaklava Coy's Cpl Prime on the 12th tee - a moment only Maj Marshall knows if it was accidental or not (I am sure it was the latter). The golfers gave their all, even 7 SCOTS CSgt Ross MacKinnon's bad back held for the full round (just about). As the teams sat down for their meal, the scores were counted, and the results were in. The closest to the pins were won by WO2 McKnight, Mrs Sheena Foggy, Cpl Toman (BKA Coy), Pte Duff (BKA Coy) & Mr Jack Hill. It was close at the top of the leader board with the local Ballater fire brigade hitting 62 coming in third, and on 57 joint first were 6 SCOTS & BKA Coy, with BKA Coy winning on a count back. With two Army golfers in the BKA Coy team, 6 SCOTS did well to take it to the wire. The trophy was a silver replica of the Army Golf Challenge cup last won by the 91st Highlanders in 1908 and hence a fitting tribute that BKA Coy took the trophy home.



The Royal Guard proving that time spent in recce is seldom wasted! CSgt Morrison, Cpl Prime, CSM Cox and LCpl Stevenson

A big thank you goes to Ballater Golf Club and all of the sponsors, without whom the event could not have happened. However, once again it was the Regimental family coming together and showing their continued support to each other that makes such occasions extra special. When the Jocks do it, they do it right.



5 SCOTS

EX BALAKLAVA MARKSMAN

2Lt Angus Calder

With the Company's commitment to ceremonial duties largely wrapped up, it was time to re-zero the weapons after some thorough rifle drill and make for the ranges. With a limited time to conduct our annual battle craft syllabus training, it is imperative that Balaklava Company make the most of this time on the ranges. With a change from recent years, the OC decided to de-pressure the two-week package for 2023 and focus on developing marksmanship across the rifle company's arsenal.

With many new arrivals, the rifle annual combat marksmanship test allowed the Platoon Commanders to identify their crack shots. Fortunately for them, this meant allocating them to heavier weapons! These lucky few spent the remainder of their time perfecting their use of the GPMG and Sharpshooter, whilst the majority of the Company had some good quality time with coaching, mentoring and the opportunity to constantly improve.

The chance to utilise the furniture on the IBSR, or 'furniture' range, was eagerly sought after and grasped with much enthusiasm which pushed further the aim of developing marksmanship across the Company.

The Company then came together for the live fire tactical training element, where 2Lt Angus Calder had constructed a challenging fire team attack lane. Throughout the day and night, the fire teams were tried and tested on their skills and drills. With the additional time on the range, we had the opportunity to have some of the potential junior leaders step up. This was their chance to showcase their ability when given command of a fire team. Performing admirably and taking away some good development points, these future leaders have come away with more confidence and understanding all in preparation for the future.



Conducting the ACMT



ARDVRECK SCHOOL ACADEMIC & ADVENTUROUS

At Ardvreck School, we are honoured to offer the MOD's Continuity of Education Allowance which ensures Armed Forces parents only pay 10% of our boarding fees.

In breathtaking Perthshire countryside, Ardvreck Preparatory School nurtures and educates your children in a caring, and loving, family environment. This is most definitely the school every grown-up wishes they had attended as a child. It's where kindness, courtesy and good manners are at the forefront of every human interaction. It's an environment where working hard and playing hard are of equal importance and where good humour and fun permeate every undertaking.





6 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel RJ Stuart MBE

Executive Officer

Major G Law

Battalion Second-in-Command

Major D Coppard

Quartermaster

Major P Naismith

Adjutant

Captain H Grieve

Regimental Sergeant Major

Warrant Officer Class Two (Acting RSM)
S McKnight

A great year of opportunity for our Reservists. There were many opportunities for soldiers at all levels to get out on exciting training both in the UK and abroad. Even as I write this, we are looking to fill a Cold Weather Operators course in Canada for January 2024. The highlight of the overseas calendar was Exercise SAVA STAR in Croatia, and back in the UK it was Operation INTERFLEX supporting the training of Ukrainian soldiers.

The focus this year was building on the "reset" year, where we returned to focusing on field exercises and relearned our skills after a few disrupted years. Companies have been training together more and increasing the mass of soldiers at each event. In turn, this allowed the Junior Non-Commissioned Officers (JNCOs) more time to practice their trade, for which I have received multiple endorsements from external parties.

Soldiers deployed on Op INTERFLEX have continuously received praise for their diligence and professionalism. Singled out regularly have been Sgt Brian Hughes and Sgt Tam Stott who each have maintained a superb standard throughout and a level of emotional intelligence worthy of recognition. A combined annual deployment exercise with 7 SCOTS saw 6 SCOTS deploy to Croatia to train alongside 7 SCOTS, 3 SCOTS, medical Reservists and Croatian soldiers. An exercise that experienced searing heat, followed by torrential rain was thoroughly enjoyed. Having a prolonged period in the field and under arduous conditions solidified the platoon's infantry skills. A number of these soldiers are now well placed to attend career progression courses.



Urban Training in Croatia



LCpl McAuley leading his section in Croatia



Maj Hunter reliving his CQMS dream

6 SCOTS entered several military skill competitions, including the now eagerly anticipated four-mile cross country weighted Bismarck Challenge for the third year running. The MT Platoon with WO2 Gary Stewart and Cpl John Ferguson completed 'Mudmaster' - an off-road navigation challenge - for the second year and Lt Jack Lord led a Cambrian Patrol Team to a silver medal.

In balance to the field training there was success on the football pitch with 6 SCOTS coming runners-up in the Army Reserve Cup. Lt Rich Dunbar led a mountaineering expedition in Scotland, while there was an inspiring and enjoyable battlefield study trip to

6 SCOTS



Sharp Shooter Cadre

Walcheren, Holland. Social events and outings for companies and Messes were back in full swing, including the Officers' Mess Christmas Ball in The Corinthian Club, Glasgow and many other socials being organised by the soldiers.



Commander's brief

Next year the Battalion will build upon its successes whilst continuing to listen to and action soldiers' feedback. This will see us reinvest in Adventure Training, including skiing in France, whilst bringing soldiers together for less, but more targeted training. This will reach a crescendo with 6 SCOTS participating in 19 Brigade's first multi-unit all-arms overseas exercise in Germany.

As I hand over Command to Lt Col Lee Curson I reflect on how extremely privileged and proud I have been to work with all of the soldiers, civilian staff, and officers over these two years. This is a Battalion that are always looking to do more and push harder. I have been particularly humbled by our junior leaders as they have the hardest of roles; however, they have managed the balance of esprit de corps, leadership, teamwork and challenge exceptionally well.

Credible, Capable and Deployable



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Commanding Officer
Maj Watty Hunter MBE

Second-in-Command
Capt Garry Rattray

Permanent Staff Admin Officer
WO1 Brian Moody

Company Sergeant Major
WO2 Jeff Seery

Signals Permanent Staff Officer
WO2 Gaz McLay

Company Quartermaster Sergeant
SSgt Chris Ward

2023 has been another challenging period with HQ Company taking up a more supportive and enabling role across the whole Company. The primary role of the Company has changed from carrying out collective training together, to a more hybrid force, who can deliver support to the Rifle Companies with specialist training and logistics. HQ Company have delivered chefs, infantry instructors, drivers and additional staffing to all three Rifle Companies and for all the Battalion events this year. Our aim is to further enhance our resources to better support the Battalion in the year to come.

Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE)

This year 6 SCOTS delivered a slightly different format to the normal ADE. HQ Company deployed to the Kirkcudbright training area for a two-week training exercise delivering a programme of lessons and battle exercises for all those troops who were due to attend their Combat Infantry Course. In addition, there was a programme of cultural visits and a two-day adventure training package of mountain biking and hill



Sect Attacks Delivered on ADE

walking. All of the training was delivered by the Reserve Non-Commissioned Officers, with the training being varied and interesting. There was even time to carry out additional drone training which made the individual stalking exercise a more exciting and demanding task for those taking part.



Searching the Enemy



OC's Poor Attempt at Drone Spotting

EX MUDMASTER 24

This Exercise is a driving and navigational competition which takes place across the whole of Scotland, open to all Service personal and civilians who are members of a motorsport club. The competition uses a wide range of vehicle and motorcycle variants. HQ Company submitted a very experienced team of WO2 Garry Stewart (off road driver) and Cpl Fergie Ferguson (on road driver) with our vehicle of choice - the MAN 6 Tonne Service Vehicle. Upon arrival at Redford Barracks, WO2 Stewart was issued with his five map sheets which he had to join together in order to plot a route with the grid references, with all the checkpoints included. The exercise tested the team's ability to navigate cross country and through forestry blocks as well as around the A & B roads in Scotland. At the same time, they are being tested on their ability to manoeuvre the vehicle in difficult, testing conditions and scenarios. The whole event was exhausting, challenging, frustrating at times, but immensely enjoyable and is highly recommend it to all for 2024.



6 SCOTS



Mudmaster Start Line... Go!



WO2 Stewart Taking the Scenic Route

Team Bonding

Social and team bonding activities are an important part of being in a team and HQ Company have taken part in some enjoyable activities this year which included a day trip to the Glasgow indoor golf range, followed by a Company meal at one of Glasgow's American themed restaurants.

Training

Individual Training Requirements (ITR) is at the heart of the daily routing of the Company and ensuring everyone is compliant and deployable per the Army deployability standards. HQ Company have set in place a detailed programme that allows for our soldiers to do the online ITRs in their own time, which allows for the Company training days to focus on the plethora of real-time support tasks we need to carry out. A key part of the Company's output is the delivery of logistic resources and a constant programme of top-up training on our equipment and problem solving exercises keeps the HQ Company team sharp and on point.



Cpl Ferguson Delivering Vehicle Training



Company 2IC on top of generator drills



Working together on problem solving

Congratulations

A massive well done to CSgt Chris Ward who received the "6 SCOTS Employer of the Year" award and was presented with the trophy at the 6 SCOTS Christmas Pud weekend. This is the second year

running an HQ Company staff member has been awarded this award. CSgt Ward received the award in recognition of his dedication to the unit and his flexibility in post, which saw him deliver Security Risk Management training to every Company in the Battalion, and his willingness to fill the Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant slot during a period when the post was gapped. Everyone in HQ Company is proud of his achievement. Also, a huge congratulations to SSgt Jen Lawrence who received a Commanding Officer's Coin, for her work delivering catering and her support and instruction to units across the Brigade and wider Army. And last but not least, Sgt Cleland who also received a Commanding Officer's Coin for his energy and hard work in the G4 Stores and his running of the Battalion ammunition account.

Farewell

The Company have said farewell to WO2 Lynn on his appointment and posting to B Company as their Company Sergeant Major, the HQ Company's loss is a B Company's gain. Everyone would like to thank him for all his work in HQ Company and wish him all the very best of luck in his new role.

At the time of writing this, HQ Company are preparing to deliver another cadre camp in March to the 6 SCOTS masses, which will include a Land Rover General Service cadre, a Basic Radio User cadre, medic training and a Range "K" qualification cadre. These activities will quickly be followed with the planning and preparations for the 19 Brigade deployment exercise in Germany in June, where HQ Company will again be delivering training to the Brigade during the deployment. HQ Company continue to be the oil that runs the 6 SCOTS machine, and throughout the year we saw a tremendous level of professionalism and dedication by all our reserve soldiers and officers. I'm sure 2024 will deliver more of the same.



ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Major CK Jetuah

Company Second in Command

Captain J Beale

Permanent Staff Admin Officer

Captain D Tait

Company Sergeant Major

Warrant Officer Class 2 B Ewart

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

Colour Sergeant S Boyd

East Claremont Street Platoon Commander

2nd Lieutenant J Lord

Galashiels Platoon Commander

Captain J Beale

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI)

Colour Sergeant B McIntosh

Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI)

Sergeant P Paterson

Regimental Mentoring Support Officer (ReMSO)

Sergeant K Harris

The new year held many exciting opportunities to look forward to. Having received a taste for overseas exercises during Ex KHANDJAR OMAN, there was a high level of anticipation and enthusiasm for Ex SAVA STAR, the joint exercise with 7 SCOTS working in partnership with our Croatian allies.

The cadre camp in March was the first main event of the year. WO2 Ewart and Sgt Paterson deployed their many years of expertise from the sniper world

and ran the sharpshooter cadre for the Battalion. The cadre was a great opportunity for the soldiers to get hands on with such a capable weapon system and to hone their marksmanship skills, shooting at 800m which was a new experience for many. The reservists enjoyed the activity and are eager to repeat and build on the excellent training received. During the remainder of the cadre, members of the Company completed the General Service Land Rover and range qualification cadres, providing continuous development to individuals.

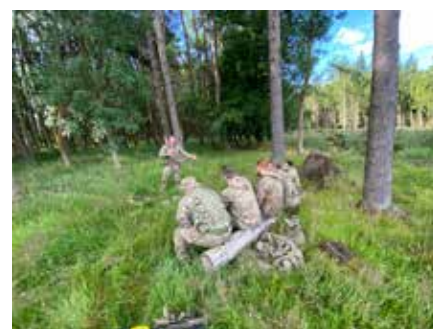
For His Majesty the King's Coronation, CSgt McMaster attended as part of the 6 SCOTS colour party. It was great to see representation from the Battalion and Company taking part in such an important event. Other members of the Company took part in the celebrations that followed in Edinburgh.

Sgt Hughes, Pte Gray and Pte Downie mobilised to support Op INTERFLEX in May, as part of a wider deployment of infantry reservists. During this time, they worked with regular and reserve units to deliver several training courses for our Ukrainian allies. At times those deployed from 6 SCOTS had to step up a rank to fill gaps and provide skills and expertise to ensure adequate training was provided. They will return not only having provided key support to a high priority activity but will return to the unit and their civilian employers with a unique experience working in a multinational partnership, with an increased knowledge of the training environment.

In summer, the Company deployed to Castletlaw Ranges in the Pentland Hills for their Annual Combat Marksman Test. The range was planned and executed by reservists with LCpl Johnston utilising his new qualification

as Range Conducting Officer to run an excellent range. The day was a success, the good weather made the event all the better! The desire to conduct live firing is clear across the Company and we hope to do more in 2024.

In 2023 we continued our Community and Social Responsibility effort (CSR) with our involvement in the Battalion Green Lion project. The project aims to improve our impact on the environment and is part of the Army's wider initiative. The Company came together at Portobello beach, sweeping 2km of shoreline for rubbish, whilst discussing the Army Reserve with members of the local community. This was a great way to help develop the image of 6 SCOTS and develop a sense of community in the area. In the afternoon an all-ranks "round table" discussion was held, reviewing the training being delivered and how it can be improved and developed.



A traditional 'Field Classroom'



JNCOs teaching field basics



6 SCOTS

July and August provided further opportunities for field training with a Company level Exercise, Ex TITANIUM BADGER, and two beat up exercises with 7 SCOTS in the run-up to the joint main effort, Ex SAVA STAR. Ex TITANIUM BADGER was another great opportunity for the reserve staff to lead with the planning and delivery of a field exercise. A complete Company level command post was established with HQ Company providing training support and expertise. This provided soldiers on the ground the chance to practice and perfect reports and returns in and out of contact.

Beginning late on the Friday, the weekend covered some basic drills and skills, taught by our Junior Non-Commissioned Officers, before progressing to offensive actions, with full sections carrying out aggressive patrols by day and night.



Mountain biking in Galloway Forest

In late August, the Battalion deployed on the annual deployment exercise in Kirkcudbright, with 2Lt Lord ran the mountain biking adventurous training. It was a successful training package which made full use of the '7 Stanes' trail centres available in Galloway Forest Park. The ability to organise and conduct adventurous training within the Company is a great asset and provides variety of training on offer to the reservists.

As the darker days descended, the Company worked on their navigational skills. Ex NOCTURNAL BADGER tested the abilities of the troops to navigate alone by day and – as the name suggests – at night. Skills covered in the build-up training included: knowledge of pacing, bearings and grid references, alongside more advanced skills such as triangulation were tested.

As ever 6 SCOTS were well represented during the Remembrance Parades. Soldiers and Officers paraded in Edinburgh, Glasgow, the Borders and at various village services. It is encouraging and welcoming to see the continued public support for Reserve Forces and the Armed Forces across the Lowlands of Scotland.

It has been a busy year for the reservists, balancing busy civilian careers and a full training programme. Already, we are looking forward to June and 19 Light Brigade's "Super" ADE in Germany which will allow us to integrate with multiple units to conduct training at a scale not experienced by many of the Company's soldiers. We will deliver on all opportunities presented, to ensure we maximise the value to our soldiers, whilst continuing to demonstrate their worth to the public and wider Army.



Remembrance at Peebles War Memorial



BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj M Douglas

Second in Command

Capt A Guzowski

Permanent Staff Admin Officer

Capt M Green

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor

CSgt G McCann

Permanent Staff Instructor

Sgt D Davidson

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt D McClung

Company Quarter Master Sergeant (Res)

CSgt C Knox

Recruitment Engagement Mentoring Support Officer

Sgt B Stuart

Throughout 2023 B Company saw many of its members involved in wide a range of exercises and tasks, both overseas and in the UK. The past year has also been turbulent for workforce transfers. We welcomed CSgt McCann and Sgt Davidson as our Permanent Staff Instructors, whilst Sgt Allison, Sgt Stevenson joined as Reservists as did Capt Guzowski as Company Second-in-Command. A warm welcome to all.

Sadly, we have had to bid farewell to a number of our members who have moved on to pastures new. For the majority this is a move within 6 SCOTS: CSgt McGinley and Sgt Bell have transitioned from regular to reserve service - assuming a media role in HQ Company and Platoon Sergeant in C

Company respectively. Upon promotion, CSgt McIntosh moved to A Company as their Senior Permanent Staff Instructor, whilst our Company Sergeant Major, WO2 Macphail, and Cpl Rogerson (Royal Army Medical Corps) have taken a leave of absence from the Reserves. All members of the Company would like to thank them for their professionalism and hard work during their tenure and wish them all the best for the future.



OC bids farewell to CSM WO2 Macphail

Congratulations to Pte Lane who passed his Combat Medical Technician training, as well as LCpl Spiers and LCpl Orr upon earning their Range Management qualifications. It has been hugely rewarding to see our junior members progressing through their training pipeline. Ptes Hunter and Young successfully completed their Combat Infantry Courses and joined our ranks of trained soldiers, allowing them to fully engage with the many opportunities in 6 SCOTS. Trawls to support training and Defence engagement activity saw Pte McCall gain invaluable experience by deploying to Croatia on Ex SAVA STAR with 7 SCOTS alongside the Croatian Armed Forces. WO2 Lynn and Pte Lane supported the training of Ukrainian forces as part of Op INTERFLEX, all promoting Global Britain and adding real value to the Battalion and wider Army.



Pte McCall on Ex SAVA STAR

B Coy began the training year with Ex SOLWAY SLEEPOVER which was a core combat skills weekend within Kirkcudbright training area. The weekend started with weapons lessons and theory refresher sessions, before deploying onto the training area for a Battle Exercise practicing a variety of core combat skills. Despite the somewhat 'challenging weather' all exercising troops benefited from this event, particularly the junior members as it provided a variety of Individual Training Requirements to be achieved as well as aspects of the battlecraft syllabus. Skills covered during the Exercise ranged from patrolling, section level attacks, counter improvised explosive device and, everyone's favourite, the casualty evacuation.

During March, the Coy began to focus on the battalion cadres camp which was conducted within an icy Otterburn training area. The cadres camp was opened to all units within 19 Brigade and produced tangible output for the battalion and wider brigade. The cadre camp was delivered over a two-week period and enabled those partaking from B Company to be qualified in a variety of areas ranging from sharpshooter, quad bike, team medic,



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CSgt McIntosh Briefs the Troops



Pte Lane RAMC, hones his CMT Skills

defence trainer for subsequent trade training, signals, driving as well as the planning and conduct of dry training, incorporating blank ammunition and pyrotechnics. Every soldier was able to complete two cadres ensuring they benefitted from new skills which will help them progress in their Reserve careers. Physical training was also achieved under the B Company Physical Training Instructor, Cpl Mathews, who conducted a Soldier Conditioning Review as well as a brisk TAB across Otterburn training area.



Short and Sharp

The aim of the cadres camp was to increase qualified personnel within the battalion in order to support realignment to our 'future soldier' Order of Battle and meet 19 Brigade's Operational demands. The cadre camp proved to be a great success, achieved valuable results and has since been incorporated within the 19 Brigade training cycle.



LCpl Bruce, conducts his assessment exercise

Exercise AULD REEKIE enabled members of B Company, as well as the wider Battalion to rendezvous in Edinburgh for a superb multi activity package. The weekend began with the troops honing their pistol marksmanship skills under the guidance of Sgt Allison before a competitive element was introduced with prizes awarded for best shot. With all post range administration complete, it was a quick change into civilian attire for a visit to Regimental Headquarters within Edinburgh Castle. For some of the junior members of the battalion, this was the first opportunity they had to learn about the origins and history of the regiments which were amalgamated to form The Royal Regiment of Scotland as it is today. After a few well-deserved beers around the Royal mile, it was back to the convivial Colinton area for a bite to eat followed by a military knowledge quiz.



The winning team



CSgt Knox coaches LCpl Spiers

The troops were tested on their knowledge of regimental history and military knowledge with prizes awarded to LCpl Anderson and Pte Jones of A Coy who achieved the top scores. The second day of the exercise took place around Castlelaw training area and consisted of a navigational exercise over the Pentland hills. The fresh air combined with the hills, served an ideal reprieve for any cloudy heads. Credit goes to CSgt McIntosh who delivered an outstanding event which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended.



BRAVO COMPANY



Visit to Regimental Headquarters



Top of Tinto Hill



Navigating around the Pentland Hills

Tinto Hill, near Biggar in Lanarkshire, provided a central location for B Company to practice their navigational skills whilst carrying equipment over arduous terrain. On completion of a safety brief and kit check, members of the Company navigated their way around a series of checkpoints whilst carrying 15kg bergens. The Exercise served as an ideal opportunity to practice basic map reading and develop leadership skills amongst the junior cohort. The troops performance climbing the hill with bergens gained the praise from the many civilian walkers who they met along the route. Fortunately, the weather held off until the final leg, where a brew and bacon roll were enjoyed in the café at the bottom of the hill, just as the heavens opened.

Throughout the year our recruitment, engagement and mentoring support officer, Sgt Stuart, has attended numerous events across the B Company

recruiting area in order to attract interest. Armed Forces Day in Ayr was well attended and enabled the Company to highlight what it can offer, leading to some new members entering the recruitment pipeline. We look forward to them progressing through their training syllabus and joining our ranks as fully trained soldiers in the coming year.



Pte Pipe, Sgt Stuart, Pte Anderson and Pte Hunter at Armed Forces Day, Ayr

Autumn saw B Company hone their anti-tank and urban skills in preparation for Ex LOWLAND ATTACK 23 which was scheduled to take place in Barry Buddon. Unfortunately, this particular exercise was cancelled due to the Met Office issuing a red alert weather warning within the East Coast area just as we were about to deploy. However, the weather was a little less harsh on the west coast and allowed our soldiers to partake in community engagement through the environmentally focussed Global Charge events. The Global Charge featured more than 100 events across the globe which focussed on conservation, the environment and improving sustainability. Members of the Company donned their wellies

and spent a day conducting voluntary conservation work on a local nature reserve within the Ayrshire area. They managed to replace over 200 tree guards for the Scottish Wildlife Trust whilst becoming more aware of their personal impact on the environment, and more importantly - understanding how they could reduce it. The troops reflected on their efforts and dried out over a bite to eat, post event.

The latter part of the year was spent preparing to pay our respects to our fallen with our soldiers supporting the parade in Glasgow, which is the second largest in the UK, as well as laying wreaths at Remembrance parades within Dumfries and Ayrshire. The final event of the year was the Christmas Pud in December, which was held within Hotspur Street Army Reserve Centre in Glasgow. The weekend consisted of team building events, group led physical training, as well as briefs setting out the exciting opportunities for our soldiers over the next year. Prizes were also awarded to the Employee of the Year as well as for environmental initiatives. The 'Young Team' were served their traditional Christmas meal by the Officers and Warrant Officers in the Army Reserve Centre and was an excellent way to round off a busy year.

As Officer Commanding, I would like to thank all members of the Company who have put a shift in throughout the year and delivered, particularly the permanent staff who provide the continuity, remain flexible and ultimately 'make things happen.' The past year has been varied, rewarding and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Looking ahead, B Company has a lot to look forward to and will prepare to embrace all the challenges 2024 will no doubt bring.

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Pte Hunter, CSgt McCann, Pte Anderson, CSgt McClung, Sgt Stuart, Capt Green complete conservation tasks



CHARLIE COMPANY



Coy personnel completing Pistol ACMT – Jul 23

Officer Commanding

Maj LJ Herbert

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 G Simpson

PSAO

Capt A Blair

Company Quarter Master Sergeant

CSgt R Hamilton

CSgt J MacMillan

2023 saw significant changes in the C Company staff, with the handovers of Maj Ken Neilson to Maj Liam Herbert and of Company Sergeant Major WO2 James Duncan, on successful commissioning, to Company Sergeant Major WO2 Glen Simpson. Perhaps most notable was the departure of long-serving serving Company Clerk Janice Lauchlan, who all personnel wish the very best in her retirement. She is replaced by the well-known face of Karen Irving moving from HQ Company.

On the permanent staff side, we welcomed CSgt Tam Meighan and Sgt Jamie Dougall to the Company, whilst wishing CSgts Kev Conway and Jonny

Cummings all the best in their new roles. Likewise, we bid farewell to Lts Stewart and Steven, emigrating to New York and Aberdeen respectively, and to Pte Hutcheson who commenced his regular soldier service.

There has been a huge amount of achievement to celebrate this year and the Company has been as active as ever across the range of Defence tasks. Sgt Stott, LCpl Orrick and Pte Finnie all deployed for six months in support of Op INTERFLEX, training Ukrainian personnel. Our team are now enjoying some well-deserved Post Operational Tour Leave before returning



6 SCOTS

to Battalion. C Company took the lead on the Glasgow Remembrance Parade - the UK's second largest Remembrance parade after the Cenotaph - providing the Guard of Honour led by Lt Porter. Our personnel acquitted themselves immaculately after some refresher drill under the watchful eye of CSgt Meighan.

In training, the drill night and weekend program of events has focused on developing core infantry skills, whilst giving the soldiers more ownership of their skillset and enabling them to direct more of the training program. The Battalion's Cadres Camp in March saw the Company expand its number of sharpshooters and qualify additional team medics to meet its warfighting increment responsibilities. Numerous

personnel then deployed alongside 7 SCOTS to Croatia on Ex SAVA STAR, where they enjoyed a challenging annual deployment exercise, building interoperability with Croatian allies.

In fitness and sport the Company has also been busy. We led on the 6 SCOTS entry into the Divisional fitness competition, Ex BISMARCK CHALLENGE, with Cpl Cook, LCpl Creedican, Pte Thomson and A Coy's 2Lt Lord all completing the challenge in a commendable time. Latterly, we also deployed LCpl Creedican in his capacity as a PTI to support the British Army Training Unit Kenya, though his sessions will be missed in Hotspur Street. Lt Dunbar took to the hills with members of the Company to deliver

Summer Mountain Foundation Training. The OC, Maj Herbert, led the Infantry Judo Training camp in Pirbright, leading to great success for the Infantry at the Army Judo Championships.

Looking into 2024 there is a huge amount to be positive about: the Company continues to go from strength to strength, increasing its trained strength with some truly commendable performances on the Combat Infantry Course (Reserve) and the next round of Junior Non-Commissioned Officers are readying themselves for attendance on both Section Commanders' Battle Course and Platoon Commanders' Battle Course in the coming year.



Glasgow Remembrance Parade 2023, C Coy Guard of Honour



LOWLAND BAND OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

By Cpl Fiona Allan

Director Of Music
Capt A Knox

Band Permanent Staff Instructor
WO2 ML James

Band Sergeant Major
WO2 J McQuat

A huge year for the Lowland Band with the global spotlight of HM The King and HM The Queen's Coronation, on top of all our many usual activities.

Coronation of HM King Charles III

With the Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS Band) needing to increase their size to 60 marching musicians, seven members of the Lowland Band were chosen to support at the Coronation of HM The King and HM Queen Consort in London.

The SCOTS Band played a critical role in the Coronation procession by leading the Commonwealth contingent down The Mall and into the gardens of Buckingham Palace. Before the big day itself there were a lot of rehearsals: for the first few days these rehearsals were held at Pirbright Camp where we were staying with 1,200 troops and musicians taking part. Rehearsals then moved to the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, where The Mall and Buckingham Palace had been mapped out for us to give a realistic rehearsal space.

To accommodate the final rehearsal for over 7,000 marching troops and musicians taking part, we travelled to RAF Odiham to make use of their runway and surrounding service roads as our rehearsal area. It was quite a site seeing all the marching troops setting off for their start positions led

only by a bass drumbeat. During our day at RAF Odiham, we completed two full rehearsals of the Coronation Procession, marching over 16km.

We had one overnight dress rehearsal in London, where we travelled to London by train and I'm sure it was quite a sight for the public seeing thousands of troops arriving at Waterloo Station. From Waterloo Station we marched over Westminster Bridge, passed Big Ben, and onto Wellington Barracks. At 3am we stepped off from our start position at Admiralty Arch, down The Mall, and onto Buckingham Palace. On the day of the Coronation, we had another early start at 2am! Unfortunately, it was raining on the day but that didn't dampen anyone's spirits and we all had an amazing experience (and sore feet!) that we will never forget.

It was not just the few of us in London that were taking part in the Coronation celebrations, the remainder of the Lowland Band were at Edinburgh Castle to provide musical support for the 105 Regiment Royal Artillery Gun Salute in honour of the coronation.



Edinburgh Castle Esplanade the King and Queen Consort Gun Salute



Wellington Barracks London for the King and Queen Consort Coronation Parade

Aberdeen Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE)

This year our ADE was in Gordon Barracks, Aberdeen. We were joined by the Highland Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland for a joint camp where around 35 musicians from both bands combined for a musical training and performance period. While in Aberdeen we had arranged to play at a few venues, The Gordon Highlanders Museum, Beacon Green Arbroath and a concert in St Machar's Cathedral. On our first full day we supported Aberdeen's Armed Forces Day with a Beating Retreat at Gordon Barracks to the assembled guests, veterans, and their families. On another sunny day we headed across to the Gordon Highlanders Museum and played some music for veterans and visitors attending the museum.

We also invited a group of veterans from the Aberdeen branch of the British Legion Scotland down to Gordon Barracks to hear us play a few marches and watch our marching display. After, we all had lunch together prepared by our chefs and listened to a few of their stories from 'the good old days'.

While we were in Aberdeen, we headed down to Arbroath to support the 212 (Highland) Battery open day. To finish off our ADE we held a concert

6 SCOTS



in St Machar's Cathedral where we performed to the assembled audience the music we had been rehearsing throughout our ADE. The concert was well attended by the public who were very appreciative of the band's performance.



Veterans Visit to Gordon Barracks

Other Engagements

Despite the busy start to the year, there was no let-up and the Band had a busy close to the year. Six members of the band, led by Director of Music, Capt Alex Knox, headed down to Huddersfield to take part in a concert which included other Reserve Bands from within 19 Brigade for the 19th Light Brigade Festival of Remembrance. We also provided musical support to the Remembrance Parade in George Square, Glasgow. This is always a big day for us, and again the Parade was well attended by both serving military, veterans, emergency services and the local community.



Remembrance Parade, Glasgow

Towards the end of November, the band were once again proud to lead the Diwali Parade along George Street, Edinburgh, with street performers and bands following. Another great spectacle and opportunity for us to support community engagement during this important cultural Festival of Light.



Diwali Festival of Lights, Edinburgh

The band is very versatile, often providing small ensembles for dinner night engagements and church services throughout the year. In January our Folk Group played at Edinburgh Castle for the General Office Scotland's Burns Night. Our Brass Quintet played at the 15th anniversary dinner for 5 Military Intelligence, and in December we were honoured to provide a small ensemble at the Scottish National War Memorial, Edinburgh Castle, for the service of celebration for the formation parade of 215 Scottish Multirole Medical Regiment.



Ensemble Group outside Scottish National War Memorial

We finished off a busy year playing a very special carol concert to the veterans and staff at Erskine Edinburgh Home. This was a thoroughly enjoyable day and appreciated by all that were in attendance.



Erskine Edinburgh Home

In Other News

We continue to recruit new members and this year we welcomed on percussion Gareth Kennedy, from the SCOTS Band. We also welcomed WO2 John McQuat, another transfer from the SCOTS Band, who joins our saxophone section.

Cpl Bellett, LCpls Marshall, Kerr and Stirton all completed their British Army Leadership Development Programme, allowing them to substantiate their well-earned promotions and continue their further career development. Cpl Knox and LCpl Castledine both attended the Noise Assessors course in Gosport, both successfully passing the course. Again, this is a vital course and ensures the band remain compliant with control of noise at work regulations.

All the members of the band would like to congratulate LCpl Lynsey Stirton who earlier this year married Piper Byron Stirton. We also bid farewell to LCpl Rachael Kerr who has relocated to Northern Ireland and is now attached to the Band of the Royal Irish Regiment. Finally, LCpl Elizabeth Naumova and her husband Nikita welcomed their daughter Aleksandra, and Musician Neil MacDonald and his partner Melanie welcomed the daughter Orlagh. We wish them all the very best.



EXERCISE SAVA STAR 23

September saw 6 and 7 SCOTS deploy to Croatia for Ex SAVA STAR 23, on the 10th annual iteration, of the now famous multinational exercise which saw the Jocks partner with Croatian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel from the 2nd Mechanised Battalion, 7th Guards Brigade, better known as the 'Pumas'. The build up to the deployment saw the Jocks undergo significant training, focusing in on honing basic infantry skills and developing urban operations knowledge.

SAVA STAR 23 kicked off with an intense Reception Staging and Onward Integration package to ensure we were physically prepared for the arduous two weeks. This seamlessly switched to the training package with the Jocks undertaking reservist led urban clearance drills in CAF facilities, section attack lanes, theoretical Tactical Exercises Without Troops and Fighting in Woods and Forest (FIWAF) serials. Despite scorching temperatures, nothing could dampen the reservist's resolve, resulting in an efficient deployment into the field. The exercise phase saw a dramatic shift in the weather, with torrential rain adding to the challenge already presented by the lush Croatian bush. Persevering, the Jocks performed exceedingly well on a number of serials whilst enthusiastically taking away lessons to build upon. FIWAF and Raids proved to be particularly challenging serials that required clear communication and control.

The final few days of SAVA STAR saw reservists support our Croatian counterparts with a demonstration to their senior officials. The event was attended by His Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia - His Excellency Simon Thomas OBE, Director of Reserves - Major General Simon Graham (CB, VR), and 19 Brigade Commander - Brigadier Lyttle (MBE, TD, VR). The day was an overwhelming success with the event being broadcast across Croatia by their national broadcaster. After a busy two weeks, the Jocks enjoyed a rest and recuperation break to the city of Osijek and a farewell ceremony with our Puma comrades.



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CO

Lt Col Doug Watson

RSM

WO1 Brad Warwick

XO

Maj Paul Colville

2IC

Maj Ian Bunce

QM

Maj Malcolm Morrison

OC A

Maj Harry Hood

OC C

Maj Malcolm Dalzel-Job

OC D

Capt Andy Cross

OC HQ

Maj Brian Cooper

Everyone starts a Newsletter with "It's been a busy year" but in 7 SCOTS case this year, that has been particularly true. This year saw the Battalion deploy troops on operations, and on overseas exercises to Sicily, Mont Blanc and Croatia. While 7 SCOTS soldiers have been deploying on exercises around Europe, we have also been conducting routine training and community engagement activities throughout the year. All of the above does not include the normal day to day activities that keep the wheels greased and the Battalion running smoothly.

In March we deployed 14 personnel on Operation INTERFLEX - the multinational mission to train Ukrainian forces in

the UK. These troops formed part of a fully Reserve sub-unit as part of the 2 RIFLES/4 LANCS Battlegroup. Most of the troops deploying have completed a variety of instructional courses and qualifications in preparation for deploying, and they have been putting these skills to good use throughout the year. By the time they de-mobilise they will have helped train 1200 Ukrainians, and they will return to 7 SCOTS with more knowledge, experience and skills that will greatly enhance our training in years to come. We should also have several newly qualified LCpls who will return to lead their troops.

To be able to deploy our soldiers on Exercises and Operations we need to ensure they are properly trained. This has meant a series of challenging training weekends on areas across Scotland, building up their Basic Combat Syllabus (BCS) skills so we were ready to deploy on our Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE). These weekends covered basic individual skills, urban skills, fireteam + section level training, and patrol skills, which all culminated in a challenging platoon attack weekend on a very damp Garelochhead training area. This did however put the troops in a good place when we eventually did deploy on ADE, which was an overseas exercise in Croatia, Exercise SAVA STAR.



Patrols training weekend on Castletlaw Training Area



Preparing to cross the Line of Departure



Assaulting the position

Exercise SAVA STAR deployed in the last two weeks of September, on the Gascini Military Training Area in the west of Croatia, training alongside the Croatian Armed Forces 2nd Mechanised Battalion "Pumas" from the Guards Armoured Mechanised Brigade. This high-profile exercise in the Croatian Armed Forces' calendar proved to be a challenging exercise for 7 SCOTS (along with 6 SCOTS, 3 SCOTS, Royal Anglian, Royal Irish, REME and RLC). They conducted some urban operations, raids and Fighting in Woods and Forests (FIWAF), culminating with a Battalion attack onto an enemy position. This was observed by numerous dignitaries from the Croatian Armed Forces: The British Ambassador to Croatia - Simon Thomas, and the Director Reserves - Major General Simon Graham.

This Exercise took an enormous amount of planning and coordination to get to the start line, from all members of the battalion. There was a significant

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Fighting in Woods and Forests on Ex SAVA STAR

amount of staff work and coordination with the Croatian Armed Forces before we deployed. The QM dept had a significant road move through several European countries to get all of the kit and equipment to Croatia and back. At the end of the day, the exercise was a success and a lot of experience

and training value was gained by all ranks, even if some of that was just how resilient they can be in arduous conditions living out of your bergen in atrocious weather, where we went from high 30s and sun splitting the pavement to 36 hours of torrential rain on the first day of the field exercise.

In August, 16 soldiers from across the battalion deployed on Exercise NORTHERN HIGHLANDER, a summer mountaineering expedition following the world-famous Tour Du Mont Blanc trail through France, Italy and Switzerland. Starting in Les Houches, the expedition led by WO2 Sammy Woods, covered a total of 170km over 9 days, staying in various campsites along the route, supported by a small G4 team led by the RQMS - WO2 Steve Lawrence. This was no small undertaking and the soldiers on the expedition had quite a bit of build-up training before they deployed, not least taking part in the Cateran Yomp (more on this later). The troops thoroughly enjoyed the exercise despite the weather not always being great and issues with one of the vehicles meaning some significant adjustment to movement plans, but these were overcome and the expedition recovered to Scotland in good order.

We deployed 24 more troops overseas in March on Exercise HUSKY HIGHLANDER, a Battlefield Study to Sicily to look at Operation HUSKY, the allied invasion of Sicily during World War 2 and in particular the part the 51st Highland Division played in it. Organised by the Battalion Second in Command, Maj Ian Bunce, the study stayed in Catania and travelled daily to various battle sites on the eastern edge of the island, looking at various actions conducted during the operation. While the memory of Operation HUSKY is important to Sicilians (they actually have a very interesting museum in Catania dedicated to it), there are several locations where fortifications and defences are still visible, due to civil development many other sites now bear little resemblance to the way they were in 1943. The study packs provided images from the campaign but a bit of imagination was required to see what the combatants actually had to contend with. The study was very well received by the troops deployed and sparked some interesting debate about how the



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operation was conducted then versus how we would go about the same task now. We were ably supported by Major (Retd) Bob Darby ex 3 PARA and a veteran of the Falklands War who now leads Battlefield Studies over the globe – so a big thank you to him for delivering the study.

The Cateran Yomp is a challenge held in the Perthshire hills in the month of June. Organised by the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) to raise funds for their very noble cause, this event is a 54 mile yomp over the hills, to be completed within 24 hours, and competitors come from all over the world to take part. As mentioned, the troops on Ex NORTHERN HIGHLANDER took part in the yomp as part of their build up training. That however was not our only involvement: the Allied Forces Foundation (AFF) is a charity that was established “to unite wounded, ill, and injured service people and veterans as well as caregivers from US, UK, and allied nations forces in wellness and healing”. The AFF brought a group of approximately 70 service men and women recovering from injuries and trauma from the US, the UK, Canada, Denmark, France, Georgia

and many other allied forces including a team of Ukrainians to take part. They had a couple of days to visit some culture in Scotland, including Stirling + Edinburgh Castle and a distillery tour. Once the yomp was over, a chance to let their hair down arose, with a Highland Games (and a couple of beers) on the shores of Loch Tay. This is obviously a serious undertaking, and 7 SCOTS provided the real-life support (food, accommodation and transport) for them while they were in Scotland.

Community Engagement is vital to keep the Army (and wider Armed Forces) in the minds of the public, to ensure we are viewed as relevant in the local community as well as on the wider national stage. This has meant that Companies have been involved in numerous events all over Scotland, sometimes on our own and often with other units and services. The Energy Festival in Perth was an Energy Sport & STEM Festival aiming to encourage positive health and wellbeing, by providing taster sessions in a wide range of activities. We were in attendance with the Regular Army and The Royal Navy to promote the armed forces as a positive

career choice. A Company also spent some time in the Gordon Highlanders Museum, helping them maintain their World War 1 Trench exhibit and turning it into a Defensive Operations lesson.

7 SCOTS have had a particularly busy year and next year shows no sign of slowing down. Planning has already started for our annual training exercise next year. 19 Brigade is a new formation brought back into existence specifically to command a large portion of the Army Reserve Combat units. They are running a Brigade exercise in Germany next year where there will be a full Reserve Battalion of 3400 Reservists drawn from all the units in the Brigade, conducting Operations on the Bergen Hohne training area. This deployment will be part of a multi-national exercise that will have ~16,000 personnel from the UK across 11 different countries as part of a NATO exercise.

EX HUSKY HIGHLANDER

Battlefield Study to Sicily

The Bn 2IC was tasked with organising a Battlefield Study trip, known as Exercise HUSKY HIGHLANDER. The Battlefield tour was to the island of Sicily, to look at Op HUSKY - the allied invasion of Sicily in 1943.

The trip consisted of 23 members of the Battalion and Major (Retd) Bob Darby, ex 3 PARA who would lead the study.

Op HUSKY was one of the major allied operations in WW2 involving nearly 500000 men in two armies, the US Seventh and the British Eighth, which consisted of 4 Divisions including the 51st Highland Division. We were to look at the Eighth Army's battle for the island focussing on the 51st Highland Division's actions but we would also look at some of the other notable actions leading up to the battle at Gerbini on the Catania Plain.

Due to the fact 7 SCOTS personnel live all over the North of Scotland, everyone was sent a study pack to read into the Operation before the study deployed, and we then mustered in Perth for a brief on what the study on the ground would look like as well as health protection and security briefs followed by an early night before a ridiculously early (0200) departure for Glasgow airport for the flight to Catania where we would be staying for the duration.

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The flights out went without a hitch, we collected the hire vehicles (or at least the 3 out of 4 that were ready) and got settled into the hotel, meeting up with Bob Darby in the airport as his flight came direct from Heathrow.

The next day we boarded the transport early in the morning to head to the 1st location we were looking at that day. As the sites were all in the east coast of Sicily, from the landing beaches on the south coast, right up to Messina in the northeast we would be doing a lot of driving and credit must be given to the drivers who ferried us around.

We started at the landing site of the 51st Highland Division on the beaches near Pachino in the southeast, where we talked about some of the planning and preparations for the invasion, including Operation MINCEMEAT, the deception plan to convince the Germans that the actual invasion would be in Greece. Standing on the beach and looking at some historic images I started to get an idea of what the actual scale of the invasion was.



The landing point of the 51st Highland Division on Sicily

There is a great deal of history to look at when considering Op HUSKY and the few short days we had on Sicily did not give us time to look at every action in the month long campaign, so a few of the more significant actions were looked at in some detail and then discussed at length trying to put a modern context spin on the problems both sides faced.

Of particular note was the action at Primosole Bridge where 1 Para Brigade were to land in gliders on either side of the river, to take and hold the bridge until the advancing 30 Corps could relieve them. We spent some time looking at this action discussing what was planned and what transpired.

The final actions we looked at in detail were the 51st Highland Division assault on Gerbini and then the Sferro Hills where the Memorial to the 51st Highland Division now stands. This action again highlighted another difficulty we had, which was finding some of the battle sites and then seeing what both the attackers and defenders went through as the terrain has changed considerably over the last 80 years. The Sicilians hold the memory of the campaign in high regard and have a very interesting museum dedicated to Operation HUSKY in Catania. While you can easily see many of the fortifications put in place during the war, the inevitable march of time means there are others (like Gerbini and Primosole bridge) that are now all but inaccessible as they are now farmland or have been built upon.



Visiting the Memorial to the 51st Highland Division overlooking Gerbini in the Sferro Hills Sicily



The group in the Op HUSKY Museum in Catania

Of course, as is only fitting during a tour looking at previous battles where many perished it was important to us to visit some of the War Cemeteries on the island to pay our respects and lay some wreaths and Poppy Crosses. As you would expect, all of the Commonwealth Graves Commission site we visited were immaculate and the time we spent in them was quite sobering. We also visited the German cemetery at Motta San Anastasia where the dead are remembered in a different but no less respectful way, again a sombre experience.



CSgt Dearden laying a Poppy Cross on the grave of an antecedent soldier in Catania War Cemetery

This was the first Battlefield study of this scale the Battalion has conducted in a number of years and was very well received by all. There was great discussion about the various actions we looked at in the syndicate vehicles between each of the stops, including some very insightful observations from some of the more junior soldiers. All in all, a very good Battlefield study and one that is highly recommended if you get the chance.



EX NORTHERN HIGHLANDER

Expedition leader
WO2 CSM Woods

"Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains; They crown'd him long ago on a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds, With a diadem of snow." Lord Byron

EX NORTHERN HIGHLANDER (NH) was a summer mountaineering expedition following the world-famous Tour Du Mont Blanc (TMB) trail in an anti-clockwise route starting in Les Houches, France, covering a total of 170 km over a 9-day trek through France, Italy and Switzerland. The 16 soldiers from the Battalion consisted of at least two from each company and a G4 element, led by WO2 (RQMS) Lawrence and EXPED leader WO2 Woods.

The aim of EX NH was to complete the 170 km in 9 days of trekking with a rest day halfway through the trek. Friday marked the beginning of EX NH, with expedition members from all over the county attending at Perth ARC. Kit and admin checks complete, vehicles were loaded and set off. Morale was high and the excitement of the task ahead was at the forefront of everyone's mind. After the 25 hours of travel, the team arrived in Chamonix and were welcomed by the advance party of WO2 Lawrence and CSgt Twine, who had set up camp in 40 degrees of sweltering French sunshine.

The first full day involved lessons for the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification, delivered by Maj Ware and Pte Christie, with kit prep all under the stunning views of the surrounding, snow peaked, mountains. This admin day covered preparatory tasks and a visit to the local town of Chamonix for supplies. Glacial rivers flowing through chalet streets made a picture-perfect backdrop as expedition members enjoyed the weather, engaging with the locals and sampling the regional cuisine.



At the start point in Les Houches

Day 1 Trek - Les Houches to Les Contamines – Distance 15.5 km – 850m ascent

Tuesday was the first walking day of the expedition and required each member to cut their teeth into the imposing mountains. With temperatures reaching 31 degrees, and some significant altitude gain, the troops were tested under the strong alpine sun. Steep slopes lead to picturesque villages perched in lavish green valleys, providing stunning views and ice cold well water.

Day 2 Trek - Les Contamines to Les Chapieux – Distance 19km – 2443 ascent

Troops were up early to break up the camp and make a start before the temperature started rising. The first leg of the journey saw the trekkers pass through the Notre Dame de la Gorge, the spray from various waterfalls was welcome as it didn't take long in the day for it to get warm. Passing through

various mountain huts and villages, we ascended through the amazing Alpine scenery to our last mountain hut of the trek sitting at 2443m, Refuge de la Croix du Bonhomme and onto our campsite at Les Chapieux.

Day 3 Trek - Les Chapieux - Les Courmayeur – Distance 30km – 2512 ascent

Leaving Les Chapieux at 0730, we were moving along the road, passing a war memorial Les Combats Our La Liberation, then continued onto Refuge des Mottets for a welcome break. This stop had great significance and had a memorial for those who died in the nearby B17 Bomber crash in 1946, also marking a remembrance for the Bataille des Alpes in June 1940. The trail continued up along to the Col De La Seigne (Italian border and also our highest point in Italy). Choosing the next stage to Courmayeur, with an expected walk time of 3hrs 50 minutes, was not taken lightly but the team agreed it



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would be worth the extra effort and opportunity to see more glaciers and scenery.

Day 4 Trek – Rest Day

Recovery day was spent adjusting kit and completing personal admin prior to 5 days walking. A briefing was passed to the team on the next mountain day which would be the biggest mountain day completed on the trip. Pte Christie gave the campsite some tunes from the bagpipes and amassed a crowd of confused Italians.

Day 5 – Trek - Les Courmayuer - La Fouly – Distance 30km – 2410m Ascent

The longest leg of the TMB was completed an hour and a half before the scheduled 10 hour estimated time due to several factors, not least the steadfast head down tab-it-out dedication of the teams, now split into the racing snakes and the slow and steadies. The weather deteriorated at a massive rate as the clag hit, and by the time the summit was reached at the crossing point into Switzerland the rain was torrential, with visibility down to 20m, unfortunately spoiling any opportunities for admiring what would have undoubtedly been stunning scenery. Once through the worst of the weather as the descent came into the valley, suddenly the clouds disappeared and the sun burst out, showing Switzerland in all its cow-bell tranquil beauty.

Day 6 - La Fouly – Champex – Distance 15.5km – 510 Ascent

The consistent rain and the rolling haar couldn't fully smother the stunning mountains which we tabbed into. Today's journey reversed the normal formula and began with a gentle descent through the valley floor. Winding through postcard villages such as Issert and Braz du Fort. Some tasty ascents lead to mushroom trails and slate mines, all eventually leading to Champex (Lac), with the Lac revealing itself as a crystal-clear mountain lake.

Day 7 – Champex - Col de la Forclaz – Distance 15km – 850m ascent

The team awoke to rain battering the tents before we set off towards Champex d'en Haut accompanied by some good old Scottish weather. Due to the heavy rain fall, the team had to tackle a fast-flowing river that crossed a path, some members coming through the other side better than others: wet boots = unhappy faces!

Day 8 - Col de la Forclaz - Tre-le-Champ – Distance 14km – 1000 ascent

From Trient the route descends to Le Peuth campsite before the epic ascent begins. Refuge du Col de Balme sits at 2191m with a winding, at times zig zag, path leading relentlessly to the border. Leaving Switzerland brought welcomed relief from the rain and cold weather. Heading for Aiguillette des Posettes (2201m) we followed the well walked path around the valley.



Descending to the pick-up point on day 8

Day 9 - Tre le champ - Les Houches – Distance 28km – 1500 ascent

The route started from Tre Le Champ and immediately started uphill. A steep ascent eventually led to a series of ladders connected to the cliff face. This was one of the highlights of the trip with

a steep area of group being covered with some precarious climbs up these ladders. Some of the support team travelled up the gondola to Le Flegere and met with the walkers bringing Pte Christies bagpipes. With the majority of the climb complete, the rest of the walk was a steady descent into Les Houches. The group arrived in Les Houches where the world famous Ultra TMB marathon checkpoint is based at the end point of the route. Well-earned refreshments were taken on board and a successful end to EX NORTHERN HIGHLANDER.

This is quite an ambitious and arduous exercise, the total distance walked was approx 190kms and 9700m of ascent, over nine days. The scenery and mountains are truly breath-taking, and no phone camera do it justice. Valuable mountain experience was gained in a totally new area by all who attended.



ALPHA COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj D Hood

Company Second-in-Command

Capt L Hawke

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer

Capt R Graham

Company Sergeant-Major

WO2 L Penrice

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt McGregor

Regimental Mentoring Support Officer

Sgt Robertson

Permanent Staff Instructor (Dundee/Kirkcaldy)

CSgt Watt / CSgt MacKinnon

Permanent Staff Instructor (Aberdeen)

CSgt Wilson

It is only fitting that I open these notes with an image which sums up the ethos and determination of the Army Reserves perfectly; 46-year-old Private Petrie, leading from the front, alongside Private Gordon, on a weighted stretcher casualty evacuation, across a windswept and rain sodden Otterburn Training Area in late October. Both soldiers were students on the UNION Divisional Training Team Potential None Commissioned Officer (NCO) Cadre and did not look out of place beside their Regular counterparts. I will expand on this later.



Ptes Petrie and Gordon on PNCO Cadre

As the year began, the Company hosted a very successful visit from Brigadier Tim Seal, Deputy Commander (Reserve) of 1st UK Division during Exercise HIGHLAND STALK, a patrols weekend held on Castlelow Training Area. This exercise gave the Junior Command element of the Company (Coy) and wider Battalion (Bn) the chance to practice and develop their patrolling and navigational skills via a series of Recce, Standing and Fighting patrols. It also presented the perfect opportunity for Brigadier Seal to formally recognise and bid farewell to Colour Sergeant Gordon McKenzie on his last ever training weekend after 38 years of loyal service.



Brigadier Tim Seal visits Alpha Company on Ex HIGHLAND STALK



Cpl Laing delivers a lesson on Ex HIGHLAND STALK

Sergeant Naughton, Corporal Gough, and Privates Farquharson, Grant, McLean, and Whitlow formed the core of the Bn shooting team which competed in the Divisional Operational Shooting Competition in Thetford, achieving some very credible results, including first place in the Section attack and re-organisation shoot, and fifth place overall. This achievement should not be underestimated given the frictions and complexities regarding limited range time and availability of the team to get together due to external work commitments prior to the start of the competition. Private Whitlow returned from working overseas to link up with the team as they travelled on the Friday night.



Shooting Team

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Exercise SAVA STAR in Croatia saw 7 SCOTS train alongside the Croatian Armed Forces as part of the Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) which provided an excellent opportunity for the Company 2iC, Captain Hawke, to put into practice all that he had learned after achieving an outstanding report on his Intermediate Command and Staff College Course in his role as Operations Captain within the combined HQ. His natural exuberance and enthusiasm clearly left an indelible impression on his Croatian counterparts. The experience of operating and working with a NATO partner force can only be a retention positive factor and an essential component for gaining experience for every rank within the Coy.



Working with the Croatians on Ex SAVA STAR

It was extremely pleasing to see WO2 (CSM) Penrice, Privates Donachie, Gordon, Mitchell and McPherson all volunteer to mobilise and deploy on Op INTERFLEX, delivering training to their Ukrainian counterparts to assist them in preparing for operations. The experience gained over the last 6 months will be invaluable in shaping and enhancing Coy training events in the coming year to ensure currency and development of sub-unit tactics.

As always, it is fitting to recognise individual achievements within the Company and congratulations are in order for Privates Edwards, Gordon, McKay, McPherson, Petrie, and Whitlow who all attended and successfully passed Potential NCO Cadres run by 19 Brigade and UNION Divisional Training Team. Special mention must go to Pte McPherson who finished 2nd out of 34 candidates on his cadre. These soldiers now form a strong cohort of Junior NCOs within the Coy and I look forward to seeing them develop over the next training cycle.

Sergeant Robertson continues to mentor, encourage and guide the next generation of recruits through the elongated and at times frustrating recruit training pathway. Travelling hundreds of miles, and working long hours, he ensures the life blood and future of the Coy is secure through his sterling efforts and unwavering dedication.

A Coy would like to welcome CSgt Mackinnon, who has been posted in as SPSI, and Lt Nicol, who has transferred from 6 SCOTS to become Platoon Commander in Aberdeen. At the other end of the spectrum, as these notes go to print, the Company will bid farewell to our military chef, Corporal Billy "Hutch" Hutchison who has racked up almost 38 years of Reserve service. We also bid a fond farewell to CSgt Watt, as he has completed his posting to A Coy as the Senior Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI), and moves to his next posting. We wish them both all the best for the future.



Sergeant McKenzie drops in for a visit



Bidding Farewell to Cpl Hutchison



CHARLIE COMPANY

Company Commander
Maj Dalzel-Job Malcolm

PSAO
Capt Peter Marshall

Coy 2ic
Capt Cowie

CSM
WO2 CSM Colin Smith

CQMS
CSgt Andrew Braid

SPSI (Inverness)
Sgt Kristopher Hart

SPSI (Elgin)
Sgt Richard Morton

In January, C Company were once again tasked with the delivery of the Battalion Burns Supper, this time in person in Queen's Barracks Perth. Planned and orchestrated by Capt Pete Marshall, with support from mostly C Company actors, readers and singers, the combined Mess event was well-attended, with the Honorary Colonel, James Cosmo MBE, even reading a poem himself, A Man's a Man for A' That. Corporal Derek Cruickshank was, as usual, hard at work providing the food for the evening.



At Burns Supper

In March members of the Company attended the inaugural SCOTS Rally in Edinburgh: the main events being the SCOTS Association (all ranks) dinner at Murrayfield Stadium and the Muster, March and Remember on the Royal Mile.

Two soldiers deployed on Op INTERFLEX, training Ukrainian soldiers across England's training areas from March to December 2023. Cpl Steven Macintyre and LCpl Alan Glen volunteered to become instructors and have contributed to the training of 34,000 Ukrainian recruits. LCpl Glen was selected for promotion while deployed and became a Corporal in June.

Ex HUSKY HIGHLANDER saw members of C Company deploy to Sicily on a battlefield study following the in the footsteps of the Highland Division. This was a thoroughly enjoyable week where everyone learnt a massive amount. Sgt Stewart was in his element supporting the exercise with his immense knowledge on the actions of the Highlands Division.



Sicily Pay Respects To The Fallen



Sicily Piper Christie On Beach

Four from C Company provided the Battalion's Colour Party on Op GOLDEN ORB, the military support to the King's Coronation in early May. Lt Angus Lapslie, WO2 Colin Smith, CSgt Andrew Braid and CSgt Nick Dearden headed to London after a couple of weekends of preparation to play their part in this truly memorable occasion. This was also the only wholly Reservist colour party on parade.



4 Colour Party

The Army Engagement Group (AEG), 51 Brigade and HRFCA Engagement held an engagement event in Stornoway in May, aimed at school children and key community leaders.

Cateran Yomp was attended by members of the Company using

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the yomp as preparation for their deployment on the Tour of Monte Blanc. A fantastic event raising funds for ABF the Soldiers Charity. WO2 Smith (CSM) did especially well when it came to fundraising making the top ten of fundraisers.



C Coy 5 Catern Yomp

In the summer the Company hosted a team building day where the troops took a break from training to test their skills at 10 Pin Bowling. This was also used as an opportunity to say farewell to a couple of long serving members of the Company: including Cpl Paul Kellett, retiring from the Army Reserves at the age of sixty. Paul has the claim to fame of being the only soldier in the Company who served in the Falkland Islands in 1982. The Company also said goodbye to a couple of Caithness legends: Cpl Roddy Mackay and Pte Angus Mackay. Both retire having reached the age of 55. Both had long distinguished careers with one of the highlights including OP TELIC. We also said goodbye to WO2 Colin Marshall and Pte Chris Dickinson.



Farewell To Legends

During the summer the Company also welcomed back ex PSI, Sgt Brian Taylor as a Reservist having completed his full regular career. Brian will take over as the Drum Major for the Battalion and support Elgin PI in a PI Sgt role.

In August members of the Company took part in the Tour de Mont Blanc expedition. The 170km trek around Mont Blanc took the team just over 7 days to complete. This was a hugely memorable event for everyone who took part.

September saw the Bn deploy on the Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) to Croatia on Ex SAVA STAR. C Company had a couple of personnel stand out during the exercise. LCpl Barry and Pte Hall both being awarded a Commanding Officer's Coin. For LCpl Barry, this was for his performance in the field where he stood out from his peers. Pte Hall was rewarded for his hard work and efforts when working with the Unit Aid Post. A popular soldier in C Company who has put in a consistently high level of commitment over the year.

October was an extremely busy month. The Company saw promotions for Sgts Ball and Marsden both promoted to CSgt. CSgt Marsden taking over as the Reserve CQMS with CSgt Ball taking over a Watchkeeper/LO role in the Company. CSgt Ball attended the Res AAPT course which he passed with ease. He had the honour of being promoted to CSgt on the course where he was awarded in front of the course by the Chief Instructor.

The inaugural LGBTQ+ Defence Awards took place on 17 October, with an Awards Ceremony & Gala Dinner held in the Grand Hall of the Grand Connaught Rooms in Covent Garden, London where Cpl James Flanagan was selected as a finalist. Attracting more than 250 nominations from all corners of Defence, LGBTQ+ Defence Awards was the first time the broad spectrum of

UK Defence came together to celebrate, showcase and promote the power and importance and power of Diversity and Inclusion.

Cpl James Flanagan, C Company 7 SCOTS was nominated as a finalist in the category of "Outstanding Achiever of the Year". Although missing out on an award Cpl Flanagan it was a huge achievement for him to be selected as a finalist.

November saw the Company attend their local Remembrance Parades across the Highlands and Islands. This was well attended with members of the Company parading in, Inverness, Stornoway, Wick and Thurso, Elgin and a number of smaller local parades. The Company also welcomed two new officers to C Company: 2Lts Hall and Toms both commissioned into 7 SCOTS they will take over as PI Comds in Elgin and Inverness respectively.

December saw the Company welcome the battalion to the Highlands for the Christmas weekend. This saw the troops take part in a series of team building tasks throughout the day. The Bn then retired to Inverness ARC where the Officer and Warrant Officers served up Christmas Dinner, where the meal was provided by Cpl Cruickshank and Cpl Hutchinson. Cpl Cruickshank has been a long serving member of C Company, and this was his last event with the Bn. Both Chefs were recognised for their service with the presentation of a CO's Coin. On the night CSgt Dearden was promoted to WO2 (taking over as CSM), the current CSM, WO2 Smith moves to RQMS (Res). The night finished with an inter-Company games night with various games including a "bush tucker trial". Our newly promoted CSM found out he didn't like 1000-year-old eggs much to the amusement of all in attendance. A hugely enjoyable weekend and a fine way to finish the year's training for 2023.



DELTA COMPANY

Officer Commanding

Maj N McPherson

Coy 2ic

Capt A Cross

Company Sergeant Major

WO2 S Kelly

Company Quartermaster Sergeant

CSgt L McDowell (FTRS) & CSgt G Cameron (Res)

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer (PSAO)

Capt M Robb

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI)

CSgt Docherty

Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI)

Sgt M Tulley

Upon reflection, after the continued tempo of 2022, it would have been naive to think 2023 would slow down. Op INTERFLEX was high on the agenda from the start, both on the news but also within the Coy. To support this, two of our Jocks volunteered to deploy, to help with the training being undertaken. As we returned to our normal training rhythm, we said goodbye to our PSAO, Capt 'Mac' McKenzie, exercising his right to a well-earned retirement after nearly 50 years service before the Colours.

The last weekend of the training year fell to Delta Company to deliver. To support those heading for Op INTERFLEX, a weekend of shooting and fitness was planned. An Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) was on the cards for some of us, whilst a pistol competition took place for others. This gave the day an added edge and was

keenly contested. The overall victor was Pte French-Leith, much to his surprise and everyone else's applause. No long after, our volunteers for Op INTERFLEX were deployed in good order and went with our best wishes and plenty of words of encouragement.

Not one to miss an opportunity, the Junior Officers in attendance, took an opportunity to do some training of their own. This included a visit to the Officer's Mess at Fort George, and we were gratefully hosted by some of friends in 3 SCOTS.

As the new training year took over, the focus turned very quickly to Ex SAVA STAR in Croatia. The permanent staff were busy in the background ensuring everything was prepared, whilst we as a Coy focused on getting those deploying to the right start state. This would be the main focus for all concerned.

As we progressed with this focus, we were further strengthened within the Company with the appointment of Maj Niall McPherson to OC, and Capt Mike 'Tich' Robb taking over as PSAO, both very welcome additions.

During the summer, Cpls Cleland and MacLean took the opportunity to go trekking around Mont Blanc. The pictures, and stories of their experiences had one or two in the Coy a little jealous.

Ex SAVA STAR proved to be hard work, but extremely rewarding for all involved. With opportunities to train with a Croatian armoured unit, this was certainly going to give them a level of complexity which our Jocks had not encountered before. It is easy to say, it was found to be a very worthwhile and golden training opportunity for those deployed.

Post SAVA STAR, our focus switched to a more urban concept. The Coy had a weekend in Garelochhead to look forward to, with use of blue bolt for our offensive operations serial. Glasgow UOTC accepted our invitation to join in and jumped at this opportunity. By using blue bolt, this not only gave a new level of complexity to the experience but allowed for those taking part to get instant after-action feedback from the instructors.

This year has been another busy one for both career and self-development. With the introduction of the new structure for the Company, Assault Pioneering has been reintroduced. Within the Company, we have had two more people complete the Assault Pioneer Basic Course, with another three heading off in early 2024. Cpl McInnes also completed the Pioneer Sgt Course in December, meaning we are really building our capability in this area. Continuing the journey of self-development, Cpl Gordon has also been busy, adding All Arms Skill at Arms (AAST) to his CV. A skillset which is very welcome within the Company.

Moving on to new challenges, CSgt Mumford has taken up a role with the 51 Brigade in the Cadet Training Team (CTT), where he will be an excellent addition to their team. We have also been bolstered by the return of Cpl Lee from 2 SCOTS, Sgt Blair from the 51 Brigade CTT and Sgt Cooper from the Mercians, post-retirement from regular service. Their return to/joining the Company brings a great deal of knowledge and experience which can only be a benefit to our junior soldiers. We would like to finish by congratulating the following on very well-deserved promotions, Pte Burns to LCpl, Sgts Cameron and Hartland to CSgt, and Lt Cross to Capt. We are in no doubt that each will continue to work hard and will be successful in their new positions.

7 SCOTS



Cpl Mcfarlane extracting from the Harbour on Ex SAVA STAR



HEADQUARTERS COMPANY

OC

Maj Brian Cooper

2IC

Capt Mike Dunnigan

PSAO

Capt Stevie Rae

CSM

WO2 Sammy Woods

SPSI

WO2 Ofa Hiagi

CQMS

CSgt Jon Twine

AO

Paul Swan

This year saw a lot of challenging but rewarding training, soldiers deployed on Op INTERFLEX and the usual mix of new faces and departures.

Starting with training, the Battalion's focus this year was on our Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) Exercise SAVA STAR. This was a two-week Overseas Exercise in Croatia working alongside the Croatian Armed Forces in September. But before we got there, we had to conduct a significant amount of pre deployment training to ensure everyone was at a suitable standard to get the most from the training on offer in Croatia. All the companies in the battalion took the lead on various tactical weekends throughout the year and HQ Coy's was a patrol exercise on the Castletlaw training area in Edinburgh, culminated with a fighting patrol to clear an area on the Sunday morning. Between this weekend and the ones run by other companies, the troops

deploying had ample opportunity to get up to speed with platoon tactics.



Troops leaving the harbour area on Castletlaw

There was not just training to be conducted before we deployed, there was also a significant administration burden to ensure everyone's documentation and records were up to date. This included ensuring everyone's travel documents were valid, their personal details were all recorded properly and were medically ready. This on its own proved to be an epic task. Ensuring everyone had managed to book numerous appointments at Leuchars Med Centre for audiometry checks and a long list of vaccinations that required multiple doses to ensure their effectiveness. A thanks must go to Capt Rae the PSAO and Paul the AO for keeping on top of this "herding cats" task. As next year's ADE has been confirmed as another Overseas Exercise, this time in Germany, hopefully a lot of that work will pay dividends as most of the usual suspects who will deploy to Germany went to Croatia so will already meet a lot of the start state requirements.

When we deployed to Croatia, HQ Company were well represented filling the usual list of important jobs to make sure the Exercise ran smoothly. The OC led several PSIs on an epic road move through several European countries to get the bulk of the kit and weapons

to the exercise area while the troops were flown out by charter flight. The return move was obviously completed in reverse meaning for those on the road move their two-week exercise turned into nearly four. As for the exercising troops, the RAF supplied one of their Voyager aircraft for the flight meaning there was plenty space for everyone.

The Exercise itself was challenging and while I said many HQ company were deployed in roles in the Battlegroup HQ and Ops Room with the Croatians, we also deployed several Privates and Junior NCOs as part of the exercising Company. These troops had to face extremely testing conditions from hot sun and 30° C temperatures during the acclimatisation exercises to torrential rain for 36 hours as soon as they deployed on the Field Exercise phase, which really pushed the limits of their endurance and taught a few valuable lessons about field administration in adverse conditions. In typical Jock fashion they came through with smiling faces in the end and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

While in Croatia we were also visited by Soldier Magazine who interviewed a load of the troops on the exercise for a write up in the magazine, Private Whittle even made it onto the front cover of the November edition.



7 SCOTS



Pte Whittle on the front cover of Nov 2024 Soldier Magazine

While the core of the company was focused on ADE we also have a very keen cohort of trainees going through Phase 1 and giving a very good account on themselves through it. Ptes Hawksworth, McIntosh and Smith completed their Phase 1 Battlecamp in Ballykinler in August, returning just as we all deployed to Croatia, and Pte Copas completed his course in Grantham in November. As this is written all 4 are booked to attend their Phase 2 Combat Infantryman Course in April so hopefully a couple of them will be able to join us on ADE in Germany.



Pte Copas Centre with Ptes Strachan Vannet and Thomson from A Coy and Pte Melvin from D Coy at their Pass Out Parade in Grantham

All of this training must lead somewhere, and for the Army Reserve that usually means mobilisation and deploying on operations, and 4 of the Company did exactly that this year. LCpls O'Mahoney-Magee and Topping and Ptes Walker and McGregor all mobilised in May and spent the year on Operation INTERFLEX, the mission to train the Ukrainian Armed Forces on UK soil. This meant a lot of build-up training and gaining a lot of new qualifications, were put to very good use and will stand all of them in very good stead when they return to the Company in early 2024 so congratulations to all of them and welcome back.

Of course, tactical and military training are not the only activities the company were involved in. In March the Battalion 2IC, Maj Ian Bunce organised and led Exercise HUSKY HIGHLANDER, a Battlefield Study to Sicily to look at Operation HUSKY, the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943 and the part that the 51st Highland Division played in the operation. The Coy 2IC, CSgts Bradford and Twine, Cpls Chambers and Prowse and Ptes Gairoch, Walker and Paterson joined 16 others from the Battalion including the RSM and the RQMS who all deployed on the study. This crammed a great deal into a few days on the island, visiting the landing site near Pachino on the south coast and battle sites all the way up the west coast to Messina in the northwest where the Axis forces withdrew from the island. The visit also included holding a small memorial ceremony at the 51st Highland Division Memorial in the Sferro Hills overlooking Gerbini on the Plain of Catania where the 51st fought their last action of the campaign. A moving experience and a fitting tribute to our forebears who created the fine reputation the 51st Highland Division still has.



Ex HUSKY HIGHLANDER Party paying their respects at the 51st Highland Division Memorial near Gerbini on Sicily

WO2 Sammy Woods was also responsible for another overseas trip this year when he planned and led a two-week Adventure Training expedition, Exercise NORTHERN HIGHLANDER, to the foothills of Mont Blanc in August where the party walked the 160km Tour De Mont Blanc route through France Switzerland and Italy. This taught him more than a little about planning and leading such an expedition and the troops that deployed with him including CSgts Twine and Bradford, Cpl Foxcroft, LCpl Stewart and Pte Macrae from HQ Coy, all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. There is a separate article with more detail specifically on this Exercise elsewhere in this Journal.

Finally, time to say welcome WO2 Hiagi who took over as SPSI in May 2023 at the height of planning for Exercise SAVA STAR which he was immediately immersed in. This involved amongst other things, writing the communications plan and sourcing the extra equipment we required in Croatia to allow communication not just with the 7 SCOTS Company on the ground, but between us and the Croatians. A not inconsiderable amount of work and a proper baptism of fire. WO2 Hiagi took over from CSgt Chas Ross who has now left the Army. We wish him well in his future endeavours.



THE HIGHLAND BAND

Bandmaster

Warrant Officer Class 1 R K Brill

Band Sergeant Major

Warrant Officer Class 2 G Blamey

Band Permanent Staff Instructor

Colour Sergeant A Pratt

After two years in which the pandemic shaped the working environment, 2023 was an historic one, with many highlights, where music once more proved a binding thread bringing people together as individuals, communities, and cultures.

After returning from a well-earned festive break the focus for the early part of 2023 was ensuring that the band was prepared for the many events that were to be undertaken both on a local and national stage. In April, the Highland Band (along with Lowland Band) undertook a 4-day training programme at Redford Barracks rehearsing and refining mission specific training.

In May, four members of the Highland Band travelled to London to take part in the OP GOLDEN ORB, the Coronation of HM the King and HM the Queen Consort, as part of The Royal Regiment of Scotland Band, who were an intrinsic part to the Coronation Procession. The Coronation for the monarchs of England and Scotland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom can be traced back for more than one thousand years, with the coronation procession being the final part of the coronation. Dating back to 1902 this was the largest military procession for 70 years (seven thousand troops), with a full spectrum display of unique and historic uniforms, flags from across the Commonwealth, supported by twenty different military bands and regimental music groups, displaying

the absolute best of the Armed Forces. There is no doubt that the experience of taking part in such an historic event is something that will not be forgotten for many years to come. The members of the band who were unable to take part in the coronation joined forces with the Lowland Band and provided musical support to the Royal Gun Salute in Edinburgh.



Highland Band- Taking a well-earned drink during the Coronation Procession Rehearsals



7 SCOTS

Throughout the year the band often provide musical support for veterans and their charities. In June, the band provided musical support to the Allied Forces Foundation. The foundation is a British/American non-profit organization which brings together wounded veterans from the United Kingdom and United States. A series of outdoor peer-led events provides an opportunity for veterans to forge new friendships and meet with like-minded people with shared experiences.

The Annual Deployment Exercise, Exercise NORTHERN NOTE took place at the beginning of July at Gordon Barracks, Aberdeen. For the first time for many years the band amalgamated with the Lowland Band for this training period. Throughout the exercise the bands were able to rehearse, consolidate new repertoire and marching displays, playing at events arranged prior to deployment. Events included Armed Forces Day, an informal concert at the Gordon Highlanders Museum, entertainment supporting the 212 Highland Battery Royal Artillery Open Day and an afternoon concert in the wonderful setting of the St Machars Cathedral, Aberdeen. Music so naturally unites us all, with all events being well attended and appreciated by all who witnessed them.

The band's schedule continued to be busy towards the end of the year delivering bespoke ensembles for unit events, affiliated service charities and the Diwali Festival of Lights. In addition, a large volume of engagements was in support of commemoration events. The Band of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment has performed a Festival of Remembrance in Huddersfield Town Hall since its inauguration in November 2014. As part of the 19 Brigade, four members of the band, along with pipers from 7 SCOTS were able to take part in this musical celebration of service, unity and camaraderie reflecting the Nation's admiration for our Armed Forces.



Highland Band- Concert at St Machars Cathedral during ADE Highland Note

On returning from Huddersfield, they joined the rest of the band in musical support for the National Day of Remembrance at St Georges Square, Glasgow.



*Highland Band-19X Festival of Remembrance
Huddersfield*

The final engagement of the year saw the band travel to Edinburgh in partnership with the Lowland Band to provide some festive cheer and to the residents of the Erskine Home who have provided support and care for our veterans since 1916 and continues to provide essential care to many veterans. In 2023 the band welcomed CSgt Alan Pratt as the Permanent Staff Instructor and Musn Elizabeth Donner as a flautist.

The band look forward to utilising their corporate and musical skill in the future. Music continues to be a valuable and flexible asset to the broader effectiveness of defence. It provides a binding thread through ethos and traditions, bringing people together as individuals, communities, and cultures. The Highland Band very much looks forward to further using its collective skills as a source of soft power to achieve the best possible effect.



UNIT AID POST (UAP)

Regimental Medical Officer

Maj AA Gilmour Royal Army Medical Corp RAMC

Medical Sergeant

Sgt H Brownless RAMC

2023 has been another extremely busy and productive year for the 7 SCOTS UAP as we transition from a group of RAMC-capbadged individuals into a comprehensively trained and assured clinical capability. We continue to be healthily staffed, with soldiers transferring into the team both from within the Battalion and from the wider Army Medical Services (AMS). Whilst the main effort for the UAP this year has been deploying on Ex SAVA STAR to Croatia in September, we have also supported wider Battalion activities with medical cover and casualty care teaching, trained with our regular AMS counterparts, and we continue to send medics on career and trade courses in order to improve our deployability.

The highlight of the year for the UAP was our Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) to Croatia: this is the first time in recent years that a 1 (UK) Division Army Reserve UAP has deployed complete on an Overseas Exercise (OTX) having completed all Pre Deployment Training (PDT) and met the required clinical assurance start states organically. This did not happen without a huge amount of time and effort from the Combat Medical Technicians (CMT's) and resulted in them being able to assess and treat real casualties in a military Role 1 facility – a huge shift from training on mannequins and in the classroom. For many this was a first-time experience and the culmination of years of training. We also welcomed medics from 6 SCOTS, 3 R ANGLIAN and 2 R IRISH into our team, allowing them



Ex Sava Star

clinical exposure often not available to medics in smaller UAPs.

As with previous years we remain indebted to our sister SCOTS Battalions for supporting us with training and access to medical equipment: 2 SCOTS for allowing us places on their Defence Train The Trainer course, a necessity for attendance at the CMT1 course; 3 SCOTS for the loan of medical equipment for SAVA STAR; and 4 SCOTS for providing a valuable clinical shadowing opportunity on Op INTERFLEX.

Looking ahead to 2024, we must now maintain the momentum created by SAVA STAR in order to fulfil our task of providing the Real Life Support medical cover to Ex RHINO HEART, the 19 Brigade OTX to Germany in June. Whilst providing care to over 500 soldiers will inevitably challenge the UAP staff, I am sure they will relish the opportunity to build on the knowledge and skills developed over recent months.



7 SCOTS

QUARTER MASTER (QM) LOG DEPARTMENT

QM

Maj Malky Morrison

RQMS

WO2 (RQMS) Steven Lawrence

ES MTWO

WO2 Rab Gilmour

Armourer

SSgt Alex McKenzie

VM

Colin Bruce

QM Clerk

Lindsey Sutton

MT

LCpl Michael McRobbie

The past year has been another extremely busy period for the logistical support branch of 7 SCOTS. Like any other Battalion (Bn), 7 SCOTS conduct the same level of assurance activity that takes a massive amount of time and effort, especially as reserve units have fewer workforce to facilitate. The team have done exceptionally well, especially having the QM post gapped for 6 months! 7 SCOTS logistic team also enabled and assisted the successful hand over of Meadowforth and Oliver Barracks, with the Commanding Officer now Head of Establishment (HoE).

The team consists of Civil Servants, Full Time Reservist Service (FTRS) and regular service personnel within the department. As mentioned above, we recently saw the quartermaster post change, with Capt Scott Shaw moving to the Regimental Operations Support Officer (ROSO) post and Maj Malky Morrison assuming the role as QM in August.

The main event of the year was the Annual Training Deployment (ADE), where the Bn deployed to Croatia, supported with attachments from 3 SCOTS and 6 SCOTS. The logistic team assumed the task of driving from Perth all the way to Croatia, no mean feat! With only a few road bumps on the way, the team proved that with detailed planning then extended road moves through Europe is very much achievable.

The Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant (RQMS) and Company Quartermaster sergeant (CQMS) Head Quarter Company supported the expedition to Mont Blanc, sporting their lederhosen to provide meals for the exhausted exercising troops, lifting spirits and maintaining morale.

As the QM I would thoroughly like to thank the 7 SCOTS logistic team for their support during this busy period as we now plan another ADE to Europe, although not as far as Croatia this time.





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REGIMENTAL SPORT



REGIMENTAL SPORT

REGIMENTAL BOXING NIGHT



Fus Donaghy (red) v Pte King (blue)

The Best Boxer award went to Fus Caleb Donaghy from 2 SCOTS who was “over the moon” and showed real determination during his bout, and the most Courageous Boxer award went to Hldr Kieron Hodge from 4 SCOTS. Both winners were congratulated by Major General Robin Lindsay CBE, on behalf of the Colonel of the Regiment – Lieutenant General Sir Nick Barton KCB DSO MBE.

“Boxing is the ultimate challenge. There’s nothing that can compare to testing yourself the way you do every time you step into the ring.”

Sugar Ray Leonard (2011)

The Royal Regiment of Scotland hosted its biannual Regimental boxing event on Thursday 30 November at the Oriam Sport Performance Centre, Edinburgh. 3 SCOTS had the honour of the planning and delivery of the evening, which led to a lot of hard work from Maj Chris McRobbie, WO2 (CSM) Arnie Martin, CSgt (CQMS) Scott Mackie and SSgt Rona Smith to name but a few.

This was the fifth iteration of the event, which was first tested in Meadowbank Stadium, Edinburgh in 2014. This year the event drew an audience of around 500 people from the Regiment, the larger Regimental family and invited guests.

In preparation for the event, all participants had undergone a six-week, centralised training camp in Glencorse Barracks to ensure they had the best fighting chance. The training was overseen by head coach WO2 (CSM) Scott Pew and the Regiments resident boxing SME, Maj Tony Ronaldson, both from 2 SCOTS.

The night kicked off with some inspiring music from the Pipe Band of 3 SCOTS which got the crowd excited for the gladiatorial sceptical to come. There were 10 bouts with soldiers from the SCOTS, 1 RANGER, The Royal Anglian Regiment and The Royal Yorkshire Regiment all competing.



SCOTS Boxing night



REGIMENTAL SPORT

THE COLEMAN CUP

In mid-August, 4 SCOTS held a football match between the Sergeants' and Corporals' messes, competing for the inaugural Coleman Cup, in memory of Sgt Jamie Coleman.

The players were led onto the pitch at The Nest, Hellesdon, by a 4 SCOTS Piper playing Scotland the Brave, before starting what was a highly contested match, ultimately resulting in the Sergeants winning 1-0. The match was well attended and the Coleman Cup was presented to the winning team by Sgt Coleman's mother and sister.



Sgt Coleman's family with Sgts and Cpls from 4 SCOTS
source: Norwich City Community Sports Foundation



Lt Col Muir in attendance for the Coleman Cup competition
source: Norwich City Community Sports Foundation



The winning Sgts celebrating
source: Norwich City Community Sports Foundation



3 SCOTS GOLF SOCIETY – EX BIRDIE HACKLE 23

As 3 SCOTS golf society had not been on tour since 2019 it was unanimously agreed that a week away was long overdue. The tour was open to golfers, seasoned and novice alike, with the intention of reinvigorating the Battalion Golf Society. The committee were nominated, and a week was booked from Mon 28 Aug to Fri 1 Sep. The location, the home of golf obviously! Five of the finest courses in Fife (and the world) over a five-day period.

With Fife seen as the location for the tour, it made perfect sense for Leuchars station to be chosen as the firm base for the week. After an early start and a commute down the A9, we took over our accommodation and headed straight to the first event. Our luck was in as the weather in Fife during the week was warmer than Spain. Shorts were a necessity. The makeup of the tour would be daily competitions at each location with a continuing scorecard that would see an overall winner at the end of the week.

Kirkcaldy GC was chosen as the first event of the week. The last of the Old Tom Morris courses certainly proved a worthy opponent and set the bar for what was to be a challenging and competitive week. The day ended with Sgt Peter Muir and Capt Danny Hillan tied in first place.



Group Photo

Ballumbie GC was chosen as the location where SCOTS golfers could compete to win the prestigious Ahluwalia Cup. An honour that had not been fought for since 2019. Another challenging GC that relied upon old school judging distance that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Especially Cpl John Cavin who particularly enjoyed the scenery and sandy bunkers. This year's winner was CSgt James Muir.

Day 3 saw the return to Fife with another Tom Morris course - St Michaels GC based in Leuchars. One of the lower scoring days and there were certainly some questions raised over handicaps at this point. The day was won by SSgt Steven Mutch.

The final part of the competition was held at Drumoig GC where after a gruelling round on a tough course Capt Danny Hillan came out on top winning by one point. Ex BIRDIE HACKLE allowed the creation of a new award for 3 SCOTS golfers to compete for, The Marshall Spoon. This award is given to the golfer that got value for money by playing the most golf shots over the week. This honour was given to Pte Murray Taylor and was presented to Pte Taylor at the soldier's lunch, prior to going on Christmas Leave.



Pte Taylor

Before the long journey back up the A9 there was time for one final round of golf at Glenrothes GC. A casual team better ball event saw the week end with everyone looking forward to going home.



Final day



REGIMENTAL SPORT

RUGBY 7S

LCpl Raivou

I had the wonderful opportunity to represent 2 SCOTS RFC and the wider Battalion and Regiment when we travelled to Denver, Colorado to play for the Infantry and Army 7s teams at the Denver 7s tournament.

The team played really well through the initial stages of the competition and won a hard-fought quarter-final. Facing Supernova 7s team in the semis, we were unfortunate to lose to a very strong side.

Being a part of the one-week tournament was an incredibly valuable experience for the whole team. It provided all of us with the chance to compete against international players, which was both challenging and rewarding. I am grateful for the privilege and opportunity I was given to be a part of such a prestigious team, and to represent The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

I believe that experiences like this play a significant role in personal and professional growth and provide entirely new experiences that are of huge benefit to everyone who takes part. The skills and knowledge gained during the tournament will have a lasting impact on me. I am confident that my participation has helped me become not only a better rugby player, but a well-rounded individual and a more effective member of 2 SCOTS.

It was a genuinely fantastic experience and one that I certainly hope to take part in again. I would recommend it to absolutely anyone and everyone who wishes to represent the Army at rugby!





SCOTS

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SCOTS AT ERE



THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S ADVANCED STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM

By Colonel Rob Sandford



Colonel Rob, Service of Remembrance, US Army School of Advanced Military Studies

This article comes to you from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in the United States, and my home for a year since June 2023. After a career which has seen me serve alongside the US military on several occasions (I am reminded of The Black Watch battlegroup linking up with the US Marines after crossing into Iraq (2003), conducting Op BRACKEN south of Baghdad (2004), serving as an embedded staff officer in Multi National Corps Iraq Headquarters in Baghdad (2005/6), and the 4 SCOTS Manoeuvre battlegroup supporting the Marine Division draw down of Regional Command (South) in Afghanistan (2014)); it is a great honour for me finally to come to live in the United States and participate in their Army's professional military education.

Fort Leavenworth itself is home to among other things the US Army's School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), which runs professional development career courses equivalent to the British Army's Intermediate, and Advanced, Command and Staff Courses (ICSC / ACSC). In addition, the School also runs the US Army's PhD programme and, my reason for being here, a War College-level course called the

Advanced Strategic Leadership Studies Program (ASLSP).

While Kansas, part of America's Mid West, is for some condescendingly considered "fly over country" (the area you fly over when you are travelling somewhere worth going to), SAMS stands out for American Officers as the location you aspire to come to if you have the potential to work at formation and above. You will find SAMS graduates in key SO2 and SO1 planning appointments in Corps, Combatant Commands and Pentagon staffs. ASLSP is an annual 12-month course for 18 post-command Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels / civil servant equivalent from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps and a civilian agency, plus international students from Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom. Before heading on to Brigade command, the Army Officers spend the year following the course as seminar leaders for the SAMS Majors.

In contrast to other US War College programs, the small cohort size allows ASLSP to undertake an extensive field studies schedule which takes in all the US military's 11 Combatant Commands, both geographic (7) and functional (4), the Departments of Defense (the Pentagon) and State, NATO Headquarters and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), and several US ally and partner nations. Highlights have included, US Space Command, in Colorado; US Strategic Command, responsible for America's nuclear arsenal, in Nebraska, US Special Operations Command in Florida, US Africa and US European Commands in Germany and US Indo-Pacific Command, in Hawaii. Reflecting the present US administration's National Security Strategy emphasis on strengthening alliances and partnerships, the welcome and insight provided to me, and my international colleagues have been exceptional.

At a time of seemingly ever-growing threats to the international system, the reality, that only through a strong network of allies and partners sharing the same democratic values can that system be preserved, pervades the US defence community. Global security is a collective effort, and it is genuinely recognized that alliances provide a point of strategic advantage that potential adversaries cannot match. The chance given to international students to participate in US professional military education courses is a small part of reinforcing that advantage.

The privilege of engaging directly with the American operational commands responsible for managing geostrategic challenges day-to-day is enhanced by the history, theory and strategy studies which form the rest of the ASLSP curriculum. Together, these modules impart a comprehensive academic foundation with which to interpret the complexity of the strategic environment from an American perspective. Given the scale and global reach of the US military, the course offers an overwhelming reminder of the interconnectedness of events from Europe through the Middle East to the Indo-Pacific. The course's other great advantage is the opportunity to spend a year in the United States and get behind the social and cultural veneer of the country enshrined in popular culture. Although I have had to live with detachment from the Ashes, the Six Nations, the Premier League, having a back-to-back Superbowl winning American football franchise (the Kansas City Chiefs) as your local team has been a small source of recompense, and even, much to my daughter's delight, introduced me to Taylor Swift.

I should be returning to the UK in June and look forward to catching up with Regimental friends when I do.



BRITISH FORCES GIBRALTAR

Maj Daniel Reed

The SO2 Plans role is the lead coordination node for the HQ of current operations and the development of contingent and future military plans. It is a role that routinely liaises with Joint Force Command, STRATCOM, the Government of Gibraltar, and other agencies across all three services. The command is here to demonstrate the sovereignty of Gibraltar, to ensure the security of the Forward Mounting Base (including APOD and SPOD) and provide support to UK or coalition routine and contingent operations.



Bay of Gibraltar Sunset

Living in Gibraltar is an incredible opportunity to explore the wider Mediterranean lifestyle including our Moroccan neighbours. The Rock itself has a bustling atmosphere but the ability to project into the wider region gives you an extraordinary adventure. The Gibraltarian culture, like the Spanish, is very family orientated but insular at times, making it difficult to break into the community. This can be frustrating, but 15-minutes across the border takes you into a whole different world.

Looking ahead to 2024 a team from the HQ will be traveling to Eastern Morocco conducting a motorbike enduro adventure into the deserts over 10-days. An excellent occasion to get away from the daily grind, which is not so insignificant with the limited staff capacity on the Rock. A small team that is driving the Forward Mounting Base concept supporting operations in Mali, Libya, Morocco and now the Middle East.



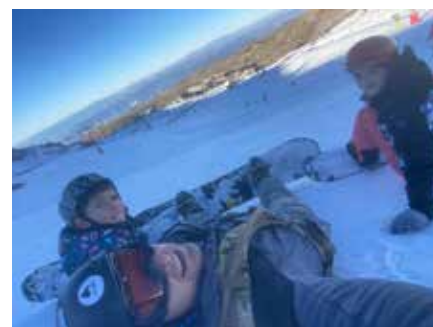
Devil's Tower Camp

This year I was fortunate to have some time post the Loan Service role in Jordan, which allowed for an extended period exploring the Southern/Eastern Spanish coast and escarpment. Traveling from Estepona to Barcelona using the guidebook, Wild Guide to Andalusia, to find some hidden gems along a road forged by Moorish, Roman and Spanish Empires. The children probably did not appreciate the history lessons nor the month-long camping experience, but I believe snorkeling the San Jose nature reserve or 'tombstoning' into freshwater lakes in Caminito del Ray or Roman hot springs in Alhama de Granada made up for it.

Gibraltar remains an interesting posting in a beautiful part of the world. There are certain nuances to living in a small community inside a small community that take some getting used to, but the 5-minute walk to the beach makes things easier.



Family visiting HMS FORTH



Snowboarding - Sierra Nevada



DEFENCE SCHOOL OF INTELLIGENCE



WO2 D Bradley

WO2 D Bradley SCOTS

Senior Instructor
Templer Company
Defence School of Intelligence (DSI)
Defence Intelligence Training Group
(DITG) UK STRATCOM Chicksands

Having somebody such as myself on a Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) post within the Defence School of Intelligence (DSI), raises the profile of the wider Regiment across Defence Intelligence network. I am currently in post as the Senior Instructor/course leader/wing WO of a hybrid team, of Regular Soldiers, FTRS, & Army Reservists that are posted into us. This was a newly stood up unit, named the Military Intelligence Reserve Enabling Team (MIRET). Here we trade train all Intelligence Corps Reservists, delivering both officers and soldiers for the four military intelligence reserve battalions for the Field Army.

At the time of writing, I have been directly involved in training over 850 soldiers and 150 officers. Quite a number of both cohorts have gone on to join the Regular Field Army, whilst many have deployed on operations, with a number gaining Honours & Awards.

As in any training environment, the work is very intense, and the time passes quickly. 2023 was a high tempo, where we delivered 8 full courses; however, I work with a talented team, and we of course rose to the challenge.



Sgt W Natui

Sgt W Natui

Instructor Holding Section
Templer Company
Defence School of Intelligence (DSI)
Defence Intelligence Training Group
(DITG) UK STRATCOM Chicksands

Within Templer Company there is another SCOTS SNCO, Sgt Waisake Natui (Nats). His current job is raining Holding Section Instructor. He is in charge of the trainees that been back squadded from the phase 2 training, or trainees who wish to transfer to another cap badge.

Sgt Natui will finish his regular Colour Service in January 2024, but has been offered a role through Senior Soldier Continuity Post (SSCP) and will remain at Chicksands.



SCOTS

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TRAINING



THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST



*OCdts and Permanent Staff of RMAS marking the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.
Tempest Photography © tel: 01276686956*

Permanent Staff 2023-2024

Maj A Campbell
A/Maj CP Duncan
Capt MM Hill
WO2 A Van Niekerk

Cadre 22

CSgt G Brown
CSgt D Bannis
CSgt G Lilley
CSgt J McFarlane
CSgt A Tavaga

Cadre 23

CSgt R McLelland



*20Cdt and Permanent Staff of 13 Platoon,
The Somme Coy. The Sovereign's Platoon. Tempest Photography © tel: 01276686956*

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst continues to attract the top SCOTS SNCOs, having a battle-winning effect on the recruitment of Young Officers to the Regiment. Chosen on the arduous Sandhurst Instructor Aptitude Cadre (SIAC), they can expect to spend equal time with their own Platoon as they do supporting training for other Platoons and Companies. This year our permanent staff have been on exercises across the UK and Germany, supported Defence Engagement in Saudi Arabia, and spent countless hours instilling discipline and high standards in Officer Cadets through the medium of drill.

Throughout 2023 we bade farewell to CSgts Marr and Smith, who take up roles respectively as CQMS B Coy, 4 SCOTS, and CQMS A Coy, 4 SCOTS. Maj Robertson also left the Academy on promotion to Lt Col. WO2 Van Niekerk will leave us in 2024 having been successful with his LE Officer Commission, while Maj Duncan and Capt Hill will leave for ICSC(L) upon promotion on BeL 2025.

The undoubtable highlight of the year was the first Sovereign's Parade to be inspected by His Majesty King Charles III. The OCdts of CC222 marched up the steps of Old College to begin their careers, while the voices of SCOTS CSgts on the square battled with the band. Not only was this an exceptional career highlight for all those involved, but the number of kilts on parade left all observers in no doubt as to the strong representation we have at the Academy.

TRAINING



November saw the final exercise for CC231, on Grafenwohr and Hohenfels training area in Germany. Accompanied by a Slovenian Platoon, CC231 culminated their Officer training in style, through live fire and arduous blank training, culminating in a Battlegroup Attack on Kittensee village, made all the more challenging by the Bavarian weather. Announced at the end of the course was the most prestigious accolade in the Academy, The Sovereign's Platoon. Once again led by one of our own, 13 Platoon, The Somme Coy (CSgt G Brown) proved themselves to be the best in the intake. 3 of the last 4 Sovereign's Platoons were led by SCOTS Permanent Staff – a record unmatched by other Regiments.

Recruiting the next generation of SCOTS Officers continues to be a huge privilege and a focal point for our instructors this year. With the vast majority of OCdts showing interest purely on the interactions they have had with our CSgts, we have a rich pool to choose from and have welcomed some top class 2Lts into the Regiment this year. Four from CC222 (2Lts Beale, Donovan, Ritchie, and Steven), six from CC223 (2Lt Bever, Gillespie, Richardson, Rowsell, Stephens, and Turnbull), and 3 from CC231 (2Lts Coutts, McKell, and Thomas).

While a fast-paced posting, the calibre of permanent staff makes RMAS an enjoyable place to work. Witnessing and influencing the transition of OCdts from civilian to commissioned officer makes for a rewarding time, both on exercise and in camp, especially while recruiting the best to join the SCOTS.



OCdts and Permanent Staff of CC231 on Ex Dynamic Victory in Germany, Nov 23



THE INFANTRY BATTLE SCHOOL

Developing the future leaders of the Infantry

Headquarters

Capt D Spencer – Adjutant

2023 marked a year for change. HM King Charles III was presented with the Honours of Scotland, Finland became the 31st ally of NATO, and The Infantry Battle School introduced their new final exercise, COMBINED WARRIOR. In the build-up to this summative assessment, troops from all cap badges underwent a gruelling tactics course to prepare them for the demands of leading soldiers at all levels. All were tested to their mental and physical limits and were taught to seize the initiative with Sergeant Crawford – 2 SCOTS, proving himself the top student on the Platoon Sergeants Battle Course (2302). The SCOTS were also well represented, with instructors and support staff across the school. They worked tirelessly to ensure those from all cap badges were fit to lead troops at all levels within the British Army.

Platoon Commanders' Division

Colour Sergeant S Alexander –
CSgt Instructor
Colour Sergeant L Eager –
CSgt Instructor
Colour Sergeant R Miller –
CSgt Instructor

In 2023, 14 SCOTS students arrived from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to attend the Platoon Commanders Battle Course. The course is the Infantry Officers' phase two training, focussing on platoon-level tactics in the company context. The young Platoon Commanders spent three-weeks encompassing infantry section and platoon-level skills. Subsequently, the students completed the new CAMS package, focusing on manoeuvre, survivability and lethality. They were also introduced to and had to master the integration of Company and Battlegroup level assets. Finally, before being released to the Field Army, they had

to complete the demanding, Ex COMBINED WARRIOR. The students from all three divisions combined and formed two mixed companies. The young officers are now exposed to experienced Junior NCO's throughout the final exercise. Students combined everything they learned, including synchronising assets and making decisions in complex, contested and constrained environments. Twelve officers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland passed the course last year and two were unfortunately injured; however, they will be completing the course in 2024. A special mention goes to 2Lt Turnbull and Captain Dodd, who achieved an instructor recommendation on course 2302. The Division starts in 2024 with CSgt Miller and CSgt Eager ready to train the Regiment's next instalment of Infantry Officers.

Senior Division

Colour Sergeant M Barr –
Company Quartermaster Sergeant

The Platoon Sergeants Battle Course is the Corporals career course to become eligible for promotion to Sergeant. The course tests the students ability to administrate a platoon during offensive and defensive actions, care for casualties under fire and plan and conduct safe evacuation. The new CAMS package is a fantastic opportunity for the budding Platoon Sergeants to learn and practice their new trade in a multitude of environments. The nature of the role requires students to think about what the environment has to offer, how best they can support the platoon and how they can optimally prepare their platoons for future operations; all these factors combined will enable the platoon to successfully stay in the fight and achieve the higher-up's main objectives. In 2024, The Regiment will be represented by CSgt Barr in the role of CQMS, sustaining the troops throughout their exercises and providing them with a wealth of knowledge and experience along the way.

Junior Division

Captain C Martin –
Capt Instructor
Colour Sergeant S McFadden –
CSgt Instructor

In 2023, eight individuals from the Regiment successfully passed the Section Commanders Battle Course. The Section Commanders Battle Course is the Lance Corporals' promotion qualifying course to become Section Commanders. This course is broken into two separate phases. Firstly, conducting IITC which is an eight-week course delivered by the Infantry Weapons Division. During this, they will learn how to teach infantry weapon systems and how to plan and execute static ranges. Newly introduced, they will also conduct a one-week remotely piloted aviation system (RPAS) package, qualifying them to operate and teach this equipment within the Regiment. Students will then conduct an eight-week specific tactics course delivered by the Junior Division, learning how to manage and operate at the Section level within a Company context. The new format of the IBS Course structure allows the Section Commanders to focus on Section level tactics during Ex Battlecraft and then specific types of operations during the lethality to build a solid working understanding of their role before engaging in platoon-level actions during the manoeuvre and survivability weeks. The skills they have learned throughout the course were then assessed in their individual command appointments on Ex COMBINED WARRIOR. During this phase, all students trained in a realistic contemporary fighting environment, bringing together all the arms and assets that IBS and the Combat Manoeuvre Centre offers. Throughout the Section Commanders Battle Courses, Captain Martin acted as the in-role Platoon Commander and Colour Sergeant McFadden instructing. Colour Sergeant McFadden was the lead instructor for the combat estimate and orders process during all courses conducted in 2023.



THE INFANTRY BATTLE SCHOOL

The Infantry Battle School and the Future

The Infantry Battle School is continuously evolving on the global battlefield. 2023 saw the introduction of the new Ex COMBINED WARRIOR, better preparing its future leaders in combined arms and modern warfare. The courses, however, mature with each rotation, integrating new capabilities as well as holding what's dear to the infantry, defeating the enemy through close combat. 2024 looks to be an exciting time at the Infantry Battle School, and the SCOTS in Brecon will lead the way for this change as "it's just what we do."





INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE CATTERICK



Major General Lindsay CBE visiting the training staff at ITC Catterick and 2Lt Barrie also visiting from 3 SCOTS

Throughout 2023 the SCOTS permanent staff remain a cornerstone of the Infantry Training Centre. The new CMS Future Soldier Basic Training programme is now in use by both training battalions and sees the time recruits spend in the field on green soldiering increase from ten days to sixteen days. As well as administration in the field, recruits now touch on Section attacks, Urban Ops, CBRN and defensive actions during basic training leading to a higher start standard of soldier at the start of phase two training.

As part of the transition to Soldier Academy North, recruits destined for the Royal Armoured Corps now complete Basic Training at the ITC in alongside their

Infantry counterparts with each intake of two or three infantry platoons having an RAC troop attached. The Armour Centre Bovington has been impressed with the quality of troops trained by infanteers. Engagement from the regiment with recruits has been particularly strong with recruits getting the opportunity to visit 4 SCOTS during training and see what life at regimental duty is really like, thus massively boosting retention for SCOTS recruits. Visits from Lieutenant General Sir Nick Borton, Major General Lindsay and CO 2 SCOTS, Lt Col Dunn, in the last twelve months show that SCOTS permanent staff posted to ITC are invested in and the future soldiers of the regiment remain a priority.

Having taken a knock during the Covid years, sport is on the up at ITC once again. SCOTS Permanent Staff regularly turn out for the football team and made up eight of the starting fifteen in ITC's first rugby match in four years against the Scots Guards. In a hard-fought loss on a quagmire of a pitch, Cpl Toroki captained the team which had representation from every battalion in the Regiment. With future matches lined up and potential tours to Cyprus and Edinburgh on the cards the team looks to go from strength to strength. Late March will see the inaugural SCOTS permanent staff dinner night in the ITC Officers' Mess looking to boost the already strong regimental bond across the ITC.



TRAINING

THE ARMY TRAINING CENTRE PIRBRIGHT

RCMO

Capt (now Maj) G McQuade SCOTS

Validation WO

WO2 P Gordon SCOTS

Sect Comd Jackson Coy

Cpl D Burns SCOTS

Sect Comd 1 Sqn

Cpl Spiers SCOTS



Major McQuade and WO2 Gordon outside the Army Training Centre Pirbright

Life as a Phase 1 Sect Comd/Instructor:

The Army Training Centre Pirbright (ATC (P)), based in Pirbright Surrey is the largest Phase 1 Training establishment in the British Army where all cap-badges (less Infantry) have their recruits come to complete Phase 1 Training.

At the heart of Phase 1 training lies the transformation of civilians into soldiers. It's a journey fraught with physical demands, mental fortitude, and the forging of bonds that will endure the rigors of military service. As a SCOTS instructor in a multi cap-badge establishment, one becomes not just a teacher but a mentor and a guide to those going through the first crucible of military life.

The day begins early for most of our Phase 1 Instructors in full flight of a CMS (Common Military Syllabus), with the echoing sound of boots hitting the parade ground or rushing to get to the next lesson. Discipline is instilled from the outset to these recruits from our instructors, with drills and exercises designed to instil unity, precision, and obedience. But beyond the rigidity of routine lies the opportunity to inspire, to impart not just knowledge of tactics and weaponry, but the British Army's core values of courage discipline, respect for others, integrity, loyalty, and selfless commitment.

Instructors must possess not only technical expertise but an understanding of human psychology. They must recognize the individual strengths and weaknesses of each recruit, pushing them to their limits while providing the support needed to overcome the many obstacles that these young recruits will inevitably face. It's a delicate balance between tough love and unwavering support, a balance that can mean the difference between success and failure.

Throughout the initial Phase 1 training process, our instructors serve as role models, embodying the ideals of the British Army. They are at the proverbial "coal face" and must lead by example, demonstrating professionalism, integrity, and dedication in all they do. Whether conducting SAA (skill at arms) in the classroom or on the live firing range, leading from the front in numerous field exercises in all conditions, they remain steadfast, inspiring confidence in those recruits under their charge.

But perhaps the greatest challenge lies not in the physical or technical aspects of training, but in the emotional investment required. To witness the transformation of raw recruits into

disciplined soldiers is a profound experience, one that carries both pride and responsibility. Our instructors form bonds with their charges, bonds that endure beyond the confines of training, shaping the future of the British Army as a whole.

As the sun sets on another day of training for our SCOTS instructors, the echoes of commands fade into the night. But for the Sect Comds who stand on the front lines of Phase 1 training, the work never truly ends. They carry with them the memories of those they've trained, the knowledge that they've played a vital role in shaping the Soldiers of tomorrow. And as they prepare to face the challenges of a new intake when one passes off the square, they must do it all over again, their professionalism remaining steadfast to ensure we send the next batch of Soldiers onwards to their Phase 2 and ultimately into the field Army.



THE ARMY FOUNDATION COLLEGE HARROGATE

The Army Foundation College Harrogate is the only Junior Entry Establishment in the British Army. Recruits, between sixteen and seventeen years of age, attend the College in North Yorkshire where they undergo one year of Basic Military Training in addition to completing educational and personal developmental courses, which will set them in good stead for life in the service and beyond. The College takes two intakes of Junior Soldiers (JS) each year, who are separated into the College's training companies on arrival.

17 September saw many prospective SCOTS soldiers begin their military journey. After swearing the oath of allegiance to His Majesty The King they were assigned to their section rooms and so began the administration of ironing, cleaning, folding, etc, ready for their inspections the following morning with Section Commanders, including Cpl Meechan (formally 3 SCOTS). Once the Section Commanders are content with the turnout of the JS, their rooms and equipment, the day's training can commence. The training programme varies daily, with the JS exposed to a multitude of new experiences and activities. Within the first six-weeks they have passed their weapon handling tests – including live firing on the ranges, learnt to march + passed off the drill square and experienced living in the field for the first time. All of the above happens concurrently with their progression in academics – with every JS completing academic modules in English, maths & IT that will ultimately be rewarded with civilian qualifications.

Outside of the classroom, parade square, and harbour area, the JS are encouraged to take part in a range of extra-curricular activity. Sport & skill activities run at least twice a week, with every sport from football, judo, boxing and cross-country, to name but a few, made available to the JS.

JS Haury, a 4 SCOTS hopeful, has earned praise as one of the College's top performing athletes, having previously competed at a national level in boxing. JS Scott-Exley, 3 SCOTS, has also excelled as a Piper in the College's P&Ds, performing at numerous College events and the Great Yorkshire Show.

As the course progresses the complexity and intensity of the training amplifies. Now in their intermediate term, the JS of have already conducted Platoon Level manoeuvres and implemented their new skills in CBRN warfare and night navigation on exercise. The opportunities for personal development continue, with the JS due to travel to Normandy for their battlefield study, focusing on the D-Day Landings, followed by some AT in the Black Forest, Germany. This AT trip will also contribute towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

As the JS work towards their Graduation Parade in the summer, each and every one of them can be extremely proud of their achievements up to this point, and feel confident that their experience here will stand them in good stead for success as they attend ITC Catterick and join their respective Battalions.



1 RANGER



COMMANDING OFFICERS FOREWORD

The last twelve months have seen the Battalion moving forward once again in our exciting role as part of the Ranger Regiment. Since January 23, 386 Service Personnel have deployed from 1 RANGER across the globe, supporting a range of projects, short term training requests, trawls, adventurous training opportunities and sport. Throughout, the focus has remained on continuously developing our capability as a special operations capable force operating in complex high threat environments, providing operational level insights and effects to counter violent extremist organisations and hostile state activity. The RANGER concept has progressed favourably this calendar year, taking critical steps towards various levels of NATO SOF individual validation. The Battalion continues to be persistently engaged alongside West African partner forces, whilst also contributing to UK based training activities in support of a tumultuous global picture.

There is much to be proud of this year, and appropriate recognition must go to the stalwart headquarter company for facilitating steadfastly. Further, it must be noted with thanks the strong support provided by the families of the Battalion and the patience with the demanding strain of separation from loved ones.

2024 is set to deliver many of the same challenges and opportunities. Already off to a raring start seeing over half of our service men and women deployed to Salisbury plain to support Exercise Apollo Sabre, the validation exercise of the RANGER Regiments. Over 12 days, each RANGER Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) will be tested on their ability to operate at reach fighting in the deep. B Company will continue their mission critical training in preparation for an April shift to the Operations Company. D Company is aligned to operations and will return

at this point for some well-deserved leave and realignment to “Operations 2” supporting emerging tasks across the globe.

Excitingly, April will see A (Krithia) Company's entry to the Operational Readiness Mechanism (ORM). This is a reinforcement of a Company of Gurkha soldiers, proud to take their place as part of 1 RANGER. The historic bond between Scottish and Gurkha soldiers dates back 200 years to 1814 where many Scottish Officers served in the Gurkha Regiments that formed after the Anglo-Nepalese war.

I remain humbled to command and serve alongside such a team of talented and dedicated soldiers, NCOs and Officers. Proud of our heritage and antecedent achievements, the golden thread of our Scottish antecedence is ever present.

1 RANGER



EX DRAGON RANGER



In September eight personnel from 1 RANGER deployed to Malta on the Battalion's Sub-Aqua Diving Expedition, Ex DRAGON RANGER. The expedition was made up of two instructors and six students with varying levels of diving experience.

Starting off slowly, the instructors ensured that vital rescue drills, in water and on land, were rehearsed and understood by all. During the first week the students dived in a variety of conditions building confidence and ability before increasing the depth and progressing to entering complex

wrecks. The second week saw students complete the required British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC) diving qualification to enable further depth progression. In increments of 25 meters the expedition dived to 40 meters on the last day with some decompression stops required in order to avoid decompression illness, known to divers as 'the bends'. At the end of the expedition all divers received a civilian recognised qualification. Five students gained the Sports Divers qualification and one qualified as a Dive Leader. All divers also received the Oxygen Administrator qualification.



HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL VISIT

On 24th May 2023 Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal visited the 1st Battalion, the Ranger Regiment, as their Royal Colonel. Her affiliation to 1 RANGER dates to 1983 when she was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Scots. The Princess Royal continued this relationship by accepting the Royal Colonelcy of 1 SCOTS, upon formation, in 2006 and 1 RANGER, upon redesignation, in 2021.

During the visit The Princess Royal received an update on how the Battalion has evolved since her last visit in 2016. In this time the Battalion has re-roled to a Specialised Infantry unit before taking its place within the Army Special Operations Brigade. Her Royal Highness was introduced to the new weapons equipment and capabilities the Battalion has received since redesignating to 1 RANGER, and The Princess Royal also witnessed a demonstration showcasing Army Special Operations Brigade TELEMED equipment including a live feed to the Battalion's Team deployed in Cameroon. The visit concluded with The Princess Royal meeting 1 RANGER personnel, their families and the families of those who are currently deployed.

1 RANGER is proud of its antecedent history and privileged to continue the strong relationship with the Royal Family. The Battalion are thankful to Her Royal Highness for taking the time to visit and offering her continued support.



1 RANGER



BOXING

The Royal Regiment of Scotland's bi-annual boxing event took place on 30th November. Keen to keep the SCOTS golden thread alive, 1 RANGER had representation at the event with LCpl Vuki enduring the six-week training camp, alongside the Jocks, at Glencorse Baracks. Throughout training LCpl Vuki impressed the boxing trainers with his fitness, determination, and skill.

On the evening of the event, LCpl Vuki took to the ring and did 1 RANGER immensely proud by not only putting all of his training into practice, but by going on to successfully win his bout.

LCpl Vuki was cheered on by the Jocks as one of their own, with 1 RANGER as much a part of the Regimental family as ever.



LCpl Vuki (black kit) against opponent Highlander Hodge (4 SCOTS)



WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

A busy year for the Engine Room (WOs' & SGTs' Mess) with deployments in West Africa, courses to upskill our people and support to various task lines across the Army Special Operations Brigade (ASOB). The first social event for the mess was Burns night, an opportunity for us to invite the partners of our mess members and Officers to enjoy the life and works of Robert Burns. A great night was had by all, and the guests enjoyed some fantastic renditions of Burns poetry from the Cronies, led by WO2 Rankin (CSM A) as Chief Cronie. This was also a chance to say farewell to current and ex members of our mess; CSgt Gibb on SSCP posting, CSgt McGinley, Maj Corkill MBE and Maj McDougall on their transition to civilian life post 24+ years in the SCOTS & Ranger Regiment. The RSM also hosted a BBQ for the Warrant Officers in his garden which meant a cooking lesson from the Unit Catering Manager was most required!

The Battalion hosted HRH The Princess Royal, who had agreed to continue as our Royal Colonel. It was an opportunity to show The Princess Royal the capability and where we are in our journey as part of the Ranger Regiment. The day was finished off with a lunch in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess along with the families of our service persons and finally a joint Officers' and Sgts' Mess photograph.

We had our summer 'Messtival' organised by WO2 McCrae (CSM C). The dress code seemed to get lost in translation, with mess members in a mix of Hawaiian theme and something out of 'T in the Park'. It was a low-key event due to ROTO 10 and movements of SNCO's, with Ex APOLLO SABRE and other commitments. It was most enjoyable and an opportunity for the mess to get together in a social environment, away from the hustle and bustle of a busy Battalion.

After a well needed few weeks summer leave, we were back behind our workstations and ensuring that everything was in order around the Battalion. With summer a distant memory and with the normal resumption of cold, dark, and rainy nights setting in. The focus turned to the PMC planning our Christmas function. We also had a 1 RANGER boxer fighting in the SCOTS boxing event (which he won) and it was a great chance for some of our mess members to catch up with our friends from across the SCOTS.

The PMC and RSM had a lot of planning and preparation to deliver on key events in the calendar. Redesignation Day provides an opportunity to reflect, celebrate and look forward to how we can drive our capability forward in the coming years. The day went by with no issues which was remarkable considering there was an all-ranks football match. With the exciting prospect of a Gurkha Reinforcement Company arriving in February, the Battalion participated in their first Doko Challenge – the start of a new tradition. The day finished with a family event and the Officers' and Warrant Officers' Dinner Night. It was a fitting end to a busy and enjoyable year for our mess members. We look forward to the coming year and the challenges it brings, but importantly, to making new memories that will stay with us for the remainder of our lives.

WO1 (RSM) R Robertson

1 RANGER



OFFICERS MESS

In 2023, 1 RANGER answered the age-old question; “How many Captains and Majors does it take to procure a Caricature”, the answer for those wondering is seven. After months of sketches, re-drafts, handovers and numerous questionnaires, the Officers’ Mess was proud to be able to unveil a new addition to the wall of history commemorating our first year as a RANGER Bn. Separate from the character assassination debates surrounding the caricature, the reinvigorated mess FOE was in full flow. A newly implemented Commanding Officer’s Lunch was utilised as a rare opportunity to see the QM(T) out of his natural habitat of a hanger, whilst the monthly ‘happy hours’ continued to be enjoyed by all, showcasing multitudes of themes and a seemingly bottomless fancy dress box in the Welfare Office.

The first since pre-COVID, the Intelligence Officer planned and executed a very well received families day and dinner night, offering him the opportunity to create arguably the most comprehensive risk assessment seen in years; allowing all the chance to miss targets from 25 meters on the pistol range whilst the RMO looked on anxiously.

The RAO continued his pretence of being popular, bringing two full tables of guests to both the Summer “Orient Express” themed train-ride-extravaganza ball, and subsequently the black-tie contemporary winter ball. The highlight of the summer ball shared by all was the normally stern-faced Adjutant breakdancing seemingly to a different song everyone else could hear in the middle of the ball room.

In January, 1 RANGER LE officers conducted an educational, cohort cohesion and mental wellness day with a visit to the Co Antrim towns of Bushmills and Ballymoney. The aim of the visit was to enhance the 1 RANGER LE unity by providing an opportunity to engage as a cohort outside of the working environment. It also improved the understanding of the Northern Ireland motorcycle road racing culture. The impact of death within the sport can be related to the loss of service personnel. A visit was conducted to the memorial of Sgt Robert Quigg who was awarded a VC for his actions at the battle of the Somme. This was followed by a visit to the Dunlop memorial gardens in Ballymoney, a quiet area of reflection for three members of the same family who have lost their lives to motorcycle racing. No visit to Ballymoney would be complete without a visit to the legendary Joey’s bar, which is a living memorial to the current Isle of Man TT record winner holder. At the bar the team had the chance to engage with Donna McLean, the daughter of Joey Dunlop, and discuss and relate to the impact of loss. The opportunity was also used to sample some Irish whiskey at the Bushmills Distillery, to enhance the Officers’ mess whisky collection!



SCOTS

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PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC



PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC

THE ARMY SCHOOL OF BAGPIPE MUSIC AND HIGHLAND DRUMMING

Director Army Bagpipe Music (DABM)

Maj G Rowan MBE SCOTS

2IC

Capt R McCrindle SG

Senior Pipe Major

WO1 Pipe Major C Simpson SCOTS

Senior Drum Major

Drum Major R McCutcheon 1 SG

Pipe Major

CSgt Pipe Major J Harvey SCOTS

Pipe Sgt

Sgt R Rai QOGLR

Piping Instr

Cpl A Park SCOTS

Cpl C Dorman R SIGS

Cpl McWhinnie SCOTS

Drumming Instr

Cpl R Tamang RGR

Cpl P McEntee SCOTS

Admin Officer

Carol Marshall

Storekeeper

Colin McCart

Dancing Instr

Jacqueline Small

Last 12 Months

Over the last 12 months we have continued to train and develop students from across the Field Army, both regular and reserve, delivering an impact to the future sustainability of unit Pipes and Drums.

September saw the passing out parade of AA Class 3 course 2301. The parade successfully took place on 105 Royal Artillery's (RA) parade square and the inspecting officer was Lt Col Dunn, Commanding Officer of 2 SCOTS. Luckily, the weather was ideal for the parade.

2023 thankfully saw an increase in external piping and bugling tasks, which allowed many of the instructors to support key such as mess dinner nights, Remembrance parades, STTT's and many more. The Capt John MacLellan memorial competition was successfully held in October with some of the world's top competing pipers entering.

The AA Class 3 Course 2302 will Pass Off on 06 March 2024, students have now started the difficult process of preparing for the parade. This is a critical part of the course where the students learn how to march with their instruments and also learn the Drum Major's signals on parade and Pipe Band parade drill. The final parade is the culmination of what the students have learned an intense six-month syllabus. This will allow them to return to their respective units as trained Pipers, Drummers, Buglers and Dancers. Alongside this the AA Class 2 Elementary and Intermediate Pipers Course starts in January 24 with 15 students who will pass out at the same time as the Class 3 and will receive a PDQB SQA level 4 certificate.

HM King Charles' III Coronation

On the day of HM King Charles' III Coronation, a spectacular display of pomp and pageantry unfolded as 112 Massed Pipes and Drums assembled to honour the occasion. The thrilling sound of bagpipes and drums echoed through the streets as the impressive procession made its way from Waterloo train station to Buckingham Palace. The marching contingent, comprised

of the Colour Party, Standard Party, Duidons Party and Trunccheon Party, all of whom added a regal and ceremonial air to the event, with their precise movements and magnificent uniforms a testament to centuries of tradition and discipline. Once the procession reached Buckingham Palace we waited for HM The King. Upon his arrival the Massed Pipes and Drums played a new tune composed specifically for the occasion by Findley Johnstone, filling the air with the grand and majestic melody. The crowds gathered from far and wide and erupted into cheers as HM King Charles III emerged, glowing in his coronation regalia. The combination of the stirring music and the sight of their new monarch created an unforgettable and deeply moving moment, one that would be etched into the annals of history.

Midlothian Schools Project

2023 was the third year of a five-year project of tuition for many pupils from several schools around Midlothian, led by instructors from ASBM&HD. The project aspires to provide weekly opportunities for young people across Midlothian to access free tuition in Piping or Drumming, something that many may not otherwise have engaged. The vision, as set out when the project was launched, is to establish a fully-fledged Pipes and Drums by the end of the five-year cycle. This fantastic opportunity continues to be an inspiration for many young people in Midlothian to engage with Piping, Drumming and traditional music.

AA Pipe Major's Course

The AA Pipe Major's Course near completion, with 7 students from across the Field Army hone their skills in March, Strathspey & Reel (MSR), Hornpipes & Jigs and Piobaireachd, as well as theory, music writing and history. The seven months course is very intense with the students receiving a new set



PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC

monthly, alongside having to sit weekly exams in theory. This is all to prepare them for becoming future Pipe Majors, whilst ensuring Army's legacy of high standards of Pipe Majors.

Senior Drumming Courses

Between the Class 2 Elementary Drummers, the Class 2 Intermediate Drummers and the Class 1 & Drum Majors' Course, we have successfully trained a total of 20 students within the past 12 months. These three courses cover a variety of different but demanding range of requirements; from some students learning their very first March, Strathspey and Reel (MSR), to the more senior drummers who study and perform advanced MSRs as well as Hornpipe & Jig sets. Students that attended each of the three courses also managed to gain a civilian drumming qualification after being assessed on PDQB Levels 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

Currently, the Class 1 & Drum Majors Course is nearing the end of the Class 1 Drumming phase. Once their assessments are complete, they will move onto the Drum Major phase, before being assessed on parade. The parade itself will contain a series of Highland Drum Major movements, all under the watchful eye of the Senior Drum Major and the Director of Army Piping. The Class 3 Course will also be in attendance, providing musical support for the parade.



AA Class 3 Pipers & Drummers 2301 final tune up before getting changed for their Pass Out Parade



Senior Pipe Major & Drum Major on the Kings Coronation



DABM Maj Rowan and Senior Pipe Major Simpson playing at the Ghillies Ball in Balmoral for HM King Charles III



THE BAND OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Officer Commanding

Maj Brenden Wheeler

Band Sergeant Major

WO2 (BSM) John Govan

Bandmaster

WO2 (BM) Christopher Brown

Band SCOTS Poppy Scotland Tour

Musn Malachi Taylor

One highlight of our year is the PoppyScotland concert tour, where The Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland gathers to embark on a musical odyssey. This series holds a special place in the hearts of both performers and audiences alike, as it weaves together the rich tapestry of music and remembrance.

The PoppyScotland concert tour, is an annual event held in the weeks around Remembrance Day and is a testament to the band's commitment to honouring those who have sacrificed for their country. Each year, the band produces a repertoire that captures the solemnity and gratitude associated with remembrance. The repertoire often includes a mix of classical compositions, military marches, and poignant pieces that resonate with the themes of sacrifice and gratitude, as well as featuring the popular Scottish folk singer, Alan Brydon.

One of the unique aspects of the PoppyScotland concert tour is its outreach value. Beyond the grand concert halls, the band takes its music to diverse community venues. This brings the essence of remembrance directly to peoples' doorsteps, fostering a sense of community and shared reflection.



Poppy Scotland concert tour. CSgt Beaumont playing the trumpet

The tour unfolds against the stunning Scottish landscapes, adding a touch of natural grandeur to the performances. From the bustling streets of Edinburgh to the serene lochs of the Highlands, each location becomes a stage for the band to weave its musical magic. The haunting melodies of bagpipes and the precision of military drumming reverberate through the air, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of those who witness the performances.

The PoppyScotland concert tour culminates in a grand Remembrance concert, a poignant finale that brings together the entire community in a collective moment of reflection. As the band plays the familiar strains of "The Last Post," there's a palpable stillness in the air—a moment of silence that speaks volumes.

In the end, being a musician in the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland is not just about playing notes on a page. It's about weaving a musical tapestry that honours the past, connects with the present, and inspires hope for the future. The PoppyScotland Concert Tour is more than a series of performances; it's a powerful tribute to the spirit of remembrance, a reminder that through the language of music, we can pay homage to those who have given so much for the cause of freedom.



Remembrance parade on the Royal Mile, Edinburgh. Drum Major signalling to cut the band off



SCOTS BAND

A Royal Display with a Twist LCpl Jack Hunt

In a dignified showcase of musical prowess, the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Band SCOTS) recently presented a regal performance for His Majesty King Charles III, during his annual visit to Balmoral. While the weather may have been sombre, the musical display held its own, marking a significant moment in HM The King's first Balmoral visit since ascending to the throne.

Against the backdrop of low-hanging clouds and the characteristic Scottish mist, the Band took centre stage after a great set from 4 SCOTS Pipes and Drums. The music list consisted of traditional Scottish tunes which will have stirred the heart of anyone, and the atmosphere was lifted further when we were joined by the Pipes and Drums for a rousing rendition of 'Highland Cathedral,' a tune I'm sure we're all very familiar with!

Having put in a fair shift with the Royal Corps of Army Music (RCAM) my feeling of nerves prior to a gig has been reduced to 'pre-performance excitement' at most, but the anti of this Beating Retreat had been upped by being on a relatively new instrument, the trombone. As a euphonium player, disregarding soring countermelodies of course, marching band is typically a case of following the person in front; however, being on the trombone presented a new challenge - there's no one to follow! But this was a challenge that wasn't taken lightly and was, in fact, welcomed. I'd be lying to say anything other than 'it's the smartest instrument in the band,' although I'm sure the horns would beg to differ.

As the final notes dissipated into the misty Balmoral air, the audience responded with applause, offering a collective salute. Band SCOTS had succeeded in elevating the atmosphere, turning a potentially sombre day into



The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland at HM King Charles' III Coronation

a musical triumph. In this Balmoral visit, the band's performance stood as a testament to the enduring power of music, leaving a lasting impression on those present for HM The King's first post-coronation visit.

HM King Charles' III Coronation Cpl Gladstone

On 06 May 2023 the world's eyes were on London to watch the magnificent Coronation Ceremony and Procession of Their Majesties King Charles III and the Queen Consort. The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Band SCOTS) were proud to lead the commonwealth contingent on the Coronation Procession. Every Band in The Royal Corps of Army Music (RCAM) were represented over a very special and significant weekend in history which will be remembered for many years to come.

On 05 July, Band SCOTS took part in a very unique and poignant ceremony at St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, where Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla were presented with the historic Scottish Crown Jewels. The Jewels, which have been used in Royal

Ceremonies over the last five centuries represented The Honours of Scotland which Their Majesties were bestowed, marking their coronation in Scotland. Band SCOTS joined a tri-service Guard of Honour including soldiers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS) and The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment to provide an immaculate display of pomp and pageantry to commemorate The Sovereign's special link to Scotland and monumental place in history.

Band SCOTS joined 2 SCOTS Pipes and Drums to perform a selection of Scottish melodies and regal pieces which provided the perfect musical accompaniment to the grandeur of the ceremony.

Op SCEPTRE (as it was known) was an extremely proud day for the Band, particularly for me being a Scotsman. The Monarchy has always had special links to Scotland and our heritage, to be stood on parade on this historic occasion is a career highlight I will never forget.



REGIMENTAL MASCOT

CPL CRUACHAN IV



Cpl Cruachan and his companion Nightcap

2023 has been a busy year for our beloved Mascot Cruachan IV, his companion Nightcap, and their new handler Pony Major Cpl Rory Stewart (myself). Delivering output across the UK has included everything from Regimental Freedom Parades to the Royal Windsor Horse Show, which has become an annual commitment for the ponies. We also participated in the Turriff and District Show and The Shetland Pony Stud Book Society Breed Show.



Pony Major – Cpl Stewart and Regimental Mascot – Cpl Cruachan participating in a SCOTS Freedom Parade

The first half of the year saw us travelling all over Scotland and further afield to Catterick and Windsor. Following Cruachan's participation in a Pass-Out Parade at ITC Catterick, The Colonel of the Regiment (CoR) came to visit the boys later that week and checked out their stable museum. Cruachan was so excited to see him he gave the CoR a kiss!



Cpl Cruachan kissing the Colonel of the Regiment

The following months saw us at Edinburgh Castle for the Regimental History Day, opening the Ideal Home Show at the SEC, taking part in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) Pass Off Parade at Kelvinside Academy and the Regimental Freedom

Parades. One of the biggest highlights was participating in Op SCEPTRE – HM The King's Coronation celebrations in Scotland. During this time Cruachan and Nightcap had some special neighbours in the form of the Household Cavalry, taking up the parade square in Redford barracks with their stables, and our stables, housing their Farriers with the Forge and their Vets. Cruachan made sure everyone knew he was the boss around here despite the other horses being slightly larger.

After a couple of weeks of summer leave in Aberdeen, it was back to work for the boys, travelling down to Melton Mowbray for the Defence Animal Centre Open Day which saw us reunited with the other Regimental Mascots and their handlers, to take part in a Mascot parade. Once that was over, it was back to Aberdeen for another well-earned rest before competing at Turriff and District show, where Cruachan, Nightcap and the team from Clothie came away with 7 awards between them! We then returned to Melton Mowbray for a Mascot Handler Training Week.



Cpl Cruachan, Nighcap and the team from Clothie at the Turriff Show

REGIMENTAL MASCOT



Cpl Cruachan greeting HM King Charles III at the Arrivals Parade, Balmoral

Finally, towards the end of the year, we took part in the Lord Mayor's Show in London with the Pipes and Drums of 2 SCOTS. To date, this is the longest parade Cruachan has participated in – which caused some initial concern; however, as soon as we set off on parade, Cruachan was showing off as usual!

Cruachan is very appreciative of all the support he gets from the SCOTS family and hopes to continue to meet you around the UK, on duty or off duty. If you happen to be passing through Redford Barracks, the Pony Major is always keen to facilitate any visits to the stables for those wishing to have a personal audience with Cruachan IV and Nightcap.

Two visits to Balmoral included welcoming His Majesty King Charles III as part of the Arrivals parade at the front gate of the estate, as well as taking part in the New Ballater Colour Presentation Parade, presented by His Majesty. This was unfortunately also attended by a horde of midges! Escaping from said midges, we headed to the Black Isle for The Breed Show where between Cruachan and Nightcap, we came away with 5 awards!

2023 saw Cruachan and I learning to driving a cart together, adding another way to keep Cruachan and Nighcap's fitness levels maintained. Look out! You might us buzzing around Redford, using our new skills!



Cpl Cruachan and Cpl Stewart cart driving



MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Regimental History Day

Our year kicked off with the inaugural Regimental History Day in March – a Castle-wide partnership event – years in the planning thanks to lockdown delays. The brainchild of our Learning Officer, Sharon, the event raised awareness of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and the wider military history of our home at Edinburgh Castle. Visitors were treated to a variety of themed activities including tours, craft sessions, a meet and greet with Cpl Cruachan IV and musical performances from 2 SCOTS Pipes and Drums and The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. A team from 2 SCOTS came with an array of current-issue equipment and uniform, which perfectly complimented the historic showcase of the Scots at War re-enactment group located in the Royal Scots part of the Museum. In a truly collaborative effort, the Scots at War offered visitors snapshots of life in the Royal Scots during the First and Second World Wars through a series of talks and handling sessions, followed by a firing demonstration of historic arms off the Half Moon Battery. Visitors were further regaled by re-enactor Alan Larsen's retelling of Ensign Ewart capturing the French Eagle at Waterloo – complete with Scots Grey horse, Monarch! Opposite Monarch, history was brought up to date with a jackal armoured vehicle which provided a unique photo opportunity.

Spreading further across the Castle, the Scottish National War Memorial and the National War Museum were also involved in running 'behind the scenes' tours and special object handling sessions. We were delighted to see so many military families from Penicuik, Leuchars and further afield come along to enjoy the day at a special discounted rate offered by Historic Environment Scotland. The event was a resounding success, reflected in positive feedback from staff and visitors alike.



2 SCOTS taking questions from young visitors during their equipment and weapons handling session on Regimental History Day

Museum and Collection

The Museum collection continues to grow, and this year changes to our background operations have made it easier to identify the particular gaps that we currently have in our story. A switch in collections management systems will continue to occupy our Curator's time for many months to come but will allow the Museum to make more of its collection accessible to public, either through physical display or digitally via our Learning Hub. One of the initial ways we've looked to do this is through the digitisation of our newspaper archive; this collection of cuttings and articles was boxed up in the office and never used, but thanks to the hard work of a student placement from the University of Glasgow, it is now a useful research resource for enquiries to the Museum.

In 2023 the museum acquired a number of significant items, including presentation gifts given to the Regiment following the bestowal of the Freedom of South Lanarkshire, battle-worn items such as combat vests from members of the Regiment involved in various Op HERRICK campaigns, and a Regimental flag flown at the Company Command Post in recent deployment by 2 SCOTS to Mali. Further items of interest are correspondence regarding the death and funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II, including the final photograph taken with Balaklava Company

as Royal Guard at Balmoral in summer 2022, and a complete example of mess dress worn by one of the Regiment's first female Platoon Commanders.



The Wishtan Cross

Although many of the objects in our collection come to us in near-perfect condition due to their age, occasionally we encounter an item which requires some TLC. Conservation work was undertaken in October to preserve the oak memorial cross formerly housed at FOB Wishtan, Afghanistan. The cross was first built while the Regiment was stationed in Wishtan in the late 2000s. It is one of a number of examples built by various regiments during this period and became a focal point for members of 1 SCOTS who formed part of the 3 RIFLES Battle Group during Op HERRICK 11. The cross remembers Corporal Johnathan Moore and Private Sean MacDonald, both killed in an IED explosion in Helmand Province in February 2010.



MUSEUM

Having spent so long exposed to the elements in the desert climate before being transferred to the Museum in Edinburgh, the base of the cross had begun to rot and become brittle. It was becoming a worry to store and almost impossible to display as small fragments of wood would drop off regularly. We enlisted the expertise of a team from the Scottish Conservation Studio, Hopetoun, to preserve this important item; through careful treatment a resin coating was added which stabilised the base and will prevent future loss of the oak structure. Aware of the regimental significance this cross has to those who served in Wishtan, we hope to introduce this to our permanent museum display in 2024.

Learning and Engagement

While the Museum welcomed nearly 500,000 visitors in 2023, we also met many others as we ventured across the country as part of our ongoing engagement programme. The Regiment undertook the first of a series of Freedom Parades across the year which enabled the Museum Team to set up stalls in the local communities where events were taking place. We have thoroughly enjoyed taking our collection beyond the Museum walls, especially whilst hearing the stories of military connections from the communities we've visited. Spending the day in the sunshine during the summer months was an unexpected bonus too!

In addition, two local authorities hosted our temporary exhibition, Great SCOTS. The displays served as an introduction to the Regiment for the general public and featured highlights from our collection which are not usually on show in our museum. This has been a fantastic opportunity to display some of our newest acquisitions and enable those who wouldn't typically visit us in Edinburgh to enjoy our fascinating stories.

We were delighted to welcome ten new Learning and Engagement volunteers to our team this year to support our growing learning programme. The team were recruited due to an unprecedented but positive increase in demand for our facilitated school sessions in the Museum. After receiving their initial training, the volunteers began to get stuck in during the Autumn term with delivery of activities including object 'speed dating', morse code messaging and understanding rations. We've been blown away by the energy and enthusiasm they've brought!

In further response to this increase in interest in our sessions, and with thanks to funding from the Regimental Trust, we have implemented a new booking form on our online Learning Hub. This cuts down staff time dealing with enquiries and makes the booking experience much easier for teachers, and despite being implemented late in the year is proving to be a very useful tool.



Cruachan overseeing the craft activities during a visit to the Museum

After the success of his appearance at Regimental History Day we welcomed Cpl Cruachan IV back to the Castle for October half-term. While he greeted visitors outside the Museum, we deployed our new volunteers to facilitate pony-themed crafts inside – which got the seal of approval from Cruachan himself! We look forward to more visits from Cruachan and the team in 2024.

One of our biggest learning projects in 2023 was the design and delivery of a bespoke series of learning sessions to support the Royal Scots Remembrance 2023 exhibition held at Dalkeith Palace in early November. We hosted six sessions with Midlothian primary schools on the theme of remembrance, where pupils explored primary source material from the Royal Scots archive relating to a soldier stationed at often-overlooked Archangel during the First World War, and contributed to their own class 'keepsake bear' as they learned about why and how we remember those who served (and continue to serve) our country. The keepsake bear activity was inspired by a new long-term loan to the Museum from the family of Sgt Jonathan Mathews, which includes a teddy bear in Royal Scots uniform sent home to his partner before their marriage. The project also gave the opportunity to collaborate with PoppyScotland, who provided staff members, handling items and activities for learners to discover more about the poppy and its enduring significance.



Members of the new volunteer team with a keepsake bear following sessions at Dalkeith Palace



OPERATIONAL TOURS

Since its formation in 2006 The Royal Regiment of Scotland has been deployed on many operational deployments across the globe from warfighting to United Nations missions to Military Support to the UK Government. The Ministry of Defence use a codeword to describe each operational theatre or task and those to which the Regiment has been deployed are described and listed below.

Op BANNER	Northern Ireland Emergency which ended on 31 Jul 07
Op TELIC	Iraq
Op HERRICK	Afghanistan
Op TORAL	Successor to HERRICK – Kabul Protection Unit
Op TOSCA	Operations in Support of the United Nations (UN) in Cyprus
Op VOCATE	UK based Training Mission for Libya
Op ELGIN	Bosnia deployment as part of EUFOR
Op GRITROCK	Force Protection Mission to Sierra Leone
Op COMET	Military Support to the Commonwealth Games
Op SHADER	Regional Training Mission (Cyprus, Kuwait and Iraq)
Op TRENTON	Force Protection Mission in South Sudan
Op NEWCOMBE	United Nations Mission in Mali
Op INTERFLEX	UK based Training Mission for Ukraine

1 SCOTS

Op BANNER	Mar 06 - Jul 06 (KOSB Bn/SCOTS)
Op TELIC 11	Nov 07 - May 08
Op HERRICK 10	Mar 10 - Sep 10 (Minden PI att to 3 SCOTS)
Op HERRICK 11	Sep 09 - Apr 10 (B Coy att to 3 RIFLES)
Op HERRICK 12	Mar 10 - Sep 10
Op TOSCA	Oct 12 - Apr 13 (PI Strength)
Op HERRICK 17	Sep 12 - Mar 13
Op ELGIN	Jun 14 - Aug 14 (A Coy)
Op GRITROCK	Oct 14 - Mar 15 (B Coy)
Op TOSCA	Sep 15 - Mar 16 (Bn (-))
Op TORAL	Apr 16 - Dec 16 (B Coy)

2 SCOTS

Op HERRICK 8	Mar 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 13	Oct 10 - Mar 11
Op HERRICK 18	Apr 13 - Sep 13
Op TORAL 2	Aug 15 - Apr 16 (Bn (-))
Op TOSCA	Sep 17 - Mar 18 (FSp Coy (+))
Op SHADER 6	Dec 17 - Jun 18 (Bn HQ, B and C Coys)
Op TRENTON 4	Jan 18 - Jul 18 (A Coy)
Op TORAL 11	Sep 20 - May 21
Op NEWCOMBE	Oct 22 - Mar 23 (C Coy)
Op SHADER	Dec 23 - May 24 (Bn (-))

OPERATIONAL TOURS



3 SCOTS

Op BANNER	Mar 06 - 31 Jul 07
Op TELIC 9	Nov 06 - Apr 07 (A Coy)
Op TELIC 10	Apr 07 - Nov 07 (13 Pl att to 2 R WELSH)
Op HERRICK 10	Apr 09 - Nov 09
Op HERRICK 15	Sep 11 - Mar 12
Op COMET	Jul 14 - Aug 14 (Coy (-))
Op VOCATE	Jun 14 - Nov 14 (Bn (-))
Op TOSCA	Mar 14 - Oct 15 (Bn (-))
Op SHADER 6	Nov 17 - Jul 18 (Bn (-))
Op TORAL 12	Apr 21 - Jun 21
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Nov 22 (A Coy)

4 SCOTS

Op TELIC 7	Oct 05 - Apr 06
Op TELIC 12	Mar 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 8	Mar 08 - Sep 08 (B Coy att to 5 SCOTS)
Op HERRICK 14	Mar 11 - Oct 11
Op HERRICK 19	Sep 13 - Jun 14
Op SHADER 4	Apr 17 - Jul 17 (Bn less FSp Coy)
Op ORBITAL	Jan 17 - Aug 17 (FSp Coy)
Op TORAL 10	Apr 20 - Sep 20
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Oct 22 (Sp/B Coy)
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Dec 23

5 SCOTS

Op HERRICK 4	Jul 06 - Oct 06 (Coy and Recce Pl)
Op HERRICK 8	Apr 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 13	Oct 10 - Mar 11

BKA Coy – (5 SCOTS reduced to Coy strength in 2013)

Op TORAL 2	Dec 15 - Apr 16
Op TORAL 12	Apr 21 - Jun 21 (Pl (-) att to 3 SCOTS)

6 SCOTS

Officers and soldiers of 6 SCOTS have provided individual reinforcements to Regular Army Bns for most operational deployments.

7 SCOTS

Officers and soldiers of 7 SCOTS have provided individual reinforcements to Regular Army Bns for most operational deployments and a formed Coy for an operational deployment listed below.

Op TELIC 9	Nov 06 - May 07 (Alamein Coy)
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REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS' APPOINTMENTS

COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

Mar 06	Maj Gen WEB Loudon CBE (Regimental Colonel Commandant)
Mar 07	Lt Gen Sir AJN Graham CB CBE
Mar 14	Maj Gen JMC Cowan MBE DSO
Jul 16	Maj Gen RB Bruce CBE DSO
Nov 19	Lt Gen Sir NRM Borton KCB DSO MBE

REGIMENTAL SECRETARY

Mar 06	Maj (Retd) CA Campbell
Jan 18	Lt Col (Retd) KM Potts MBE
Oct 20	Lt Col (Retd) JD Tink



Portrait of Colonel of the Regiment - Lieutenant General Sir Nick Barton KCB DSO MBE.
Artist - Nicholas J Smith.



SCOTS COMMANDING OFFICERS – 2006 >

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	FROM	TO
1 SCOTS				
Lt Col	RB	Bruce MBE	Mar 06	Feb 08
Lt Col	CLG	Herbert OBE	Feb 08	Oct 10
Lt Col	BMA	Wrench	Oct 10	Jul 13
Lt Col	ME	Munro	Jul 13	Aug 15
Lt Col	NM	Wight-Boycott	Aug 15	Feb 18
Lt Col	AD	Watson	Feb 18	Oct 20
Lt Col	FS	Reeves MBE*	Oct 20	Dec 21
2 SCOTS				
Lt Col	PK	Harkness MBE	Mar 06	Dec 07
Lt Col	NRM	Borton DSO MBE	Dec 07	Jan 10
Lt Col	DSG	Graham	Jan 10	Oct 11
Lt Col	RRE	Lindsay	Oct 11	Jul 14
Lt Col	GC	Wearmouth OBE	Jul 14	Jul 17
Lt Col	DC	Close	Jul 17	Sep 19
Lt Col	OPB	Dobson MBE	Sep 19	May 22
Lt Col	J	Dunn	May 22	
3 SCOTS				
Lt Col	LR	MacDuff	Mar 06	Mar 08
Lt Col	SJ	Cartwright	Mar 08	Mar 10
Lt Col	EA	Fenton	Mar 10	Sep 12
Lt Col	AP	Reilly OBE	Sep 12	Jan 15
Lt Col	AFL	Steele	Jan 15	Oct 16
Lt Col	RSJ	Hedderwick	Oct 16	Feb 19
Lt Col	G	Sefton	Feb 19	May 21
Lt Col	M	Hayton	May 21	
4 SCOTS				
Lt Col	JMR	Hopkinson OBE	Mar 06	Dec 06
Lt Col	J	Campbell	Dec 06	Mar 09
Lt Col	AJ	Aitken MBE	Mar 09	Dec 11
Lt Col	JC	Roddie MBE	Dec 11	Jun 14
Lt Col	LJ	Drummond MBE	Jun 14	Jul 16
Lt Col	NKG	Tomlin	Jul 16	Feb 19
Lt Col	TJJ	Draper	Feb 19	Jun 21
Lt Col	AJL	Hempenstall	Jun 21	Aug 23
Lt Col	GW	Muir MBE	Aug 23	

SCOTS COMMANDING OFFICERS – 2006 >



RANK	INITIALS	NAME	FROM	TO
5 SCOTS/BKA COY				
Lt Col	SR	West OBE	Mar 06	Nov 06
Lt Col	DC	Richmond	Jan 07	Sep 09
Lt Col	AWA	Griffiths MBE	Sep 09	Jul 11
Lt Col	NA	Den-McKay MBE	Aug 11	Jun 13
Maj	OPB	Dobson	Jun 13	Jul 14
Maj	JA	French	Jul 14	Jun 16
Maj	CM	Wood	Jun 16	May 18
Mar	J	Thompson	May 18	Feb 20
Maj	CK	Law	Feb 20	Jun 22
Maj	RC	Weir	Jun 22	
6 SCOTS				
Lt Col	SW	Burns TD	Mar 06	Jul 08
Lt Col	CA	Coull	Jul 08	Jun 09
Lt Col	CE	Platt	Jun 09	Oct 11
Lt Col	AJ	Fitzpatrick MBE	Oct 11	Jan 14
Lt Col	DG	Stimpson TD	Jan 14	Jul 16
Lt Col	J	McElhinney	Jul 16	Jan 18
Lt Col	J	Anderson	Jan 18	Jun 21
Lt Col	RJ	Stuart MBE	Jun 21	Dec 23
Lt Col	LJ	Curson	Dec 23	
7 SCOTS				
Lt Col	CH	Campbell TD	Mar 06	Mar 08
Lt Col	DW	Hay	Mar 08	Feb 10
Lt Col	EC	The Viscount Chelsea	Feb 10	Aug 12
Lt Col	PM	Little OBE	Aug 12	Jan 15
Lt Col	PGB	Strudwick	Jan 15	Jul 17
Lt Col	DM	Sheldrick	Jul 17	Jan 20
Lt Col	DDJ	Mackinnon	Jan 20	Jun 22
Lt Col	DID	Watson	Jun 22	



SCOTS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS – 2006 >

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	FROM	TO
1 SCOTS				
WO1	RJ	Stuart	Jul 06	May 07
WO1	WC	McAuley	May 07	Jun 08
WO1	D	Tait	Jun 08	Jun 10
WO1	P	Wood	Jun 10	Dec 12
WO1	A	Falconer	Dec 12	Jul 14
WO1	S	Boyle	Jul 14	Jan 16
WO1	J	Corkill	Jan 16	Jun 16
WO1	S	Burns	Jun 16	Apr 18
WO1	CH	Docherty	Apr 18	Apr 20
WO1	A	Duncan	Apr 20	Nov 21
2 SCOTS				
WO1	JK	Law	Mar 06	Apr 06
WO1	WGA	Hunter	Apr 06	Apr 07
WO1	WR	Barrie	Apr 07	Apr 09
WO1	MJ	McNally	Apr 09	Jun 11
WO1	W	Garrick	Jun 11	Nov 13
WO1	A	Russell	Nov 13	Sep 15
WO1	M	Gallagher	Sep 15	Aug 17
WO1	J	Fraser	Aug 17	Mar 19
WO1	SL	McNally	Mar 19	Aug 21
WO1	RD	O'Neill	Aug 21	Jun 23
WO1	S	Paterson	Jun 23	
3 SCOTS				
WO1	M	Robb	Mar 06	Jun 07
WO1	LI	Campbell	Jul 07	Apr 08
WO1	L	McDougall	Apr 08	May 10
WO1	MG	Duffus	May 10	Sep 11
WO1	S	Shaw	Sep 11	Jun 14
WO1	P	Marshall	Jun 14	May 16
WO1	KJ	Stacey	May 16	May 18
WO1	KJ	Pedder	May 18	May 20
WO1	M	Gray	May 20	May 22
WO1	A	Ferrier	May 22	
4 SCOTS				
WO1	R	Smith	Mar 06	Apr 07
WO1	H	Wilson	Apr 07	Apr 09
WO1	A	Moore	Apr 09	Sep 09
WO1	G	Law	Sep 09	Feb 11
WO1	EG	Philbin	Feb 11	Nov 13
WO1	S	McQuillan	Nov 13	May 15
WO1	IG	Cordiner	May 15	Jul 16
WO1	MG	MacLean	Jul 16	May 19
WO1	CS	Taylor	May 19	Aug 21
WO1	AR	McLellan	Aug 21	Jul 23
WO1	G	Allison	Jul 23	

SCOTS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS – 2006 >



RANK	INITIALS	NAME	FROM	TO
5 SCOTS/BKA COY				
WO1	S	Rae	Mar 06	Mar 08
WO1	D	Campbell	Mar 08	Feb 10
WO1	D	Park	Feb 10	Jul 12
WO1	R	Louden	Jul 12	Jun 13
WO2	D	Carter	Jun 13	Mar 15
WO2	KJ	Pedder	Mar 15	Jun 16
WO2	N	Diciacca	Jun 16	Oct 17
WO2	S	Gibson	Oct 17	May 19
WO2	R	McCready	May 19	Nov 19
WO2	GW	Waugh	Nov 19	Apr 20
WO2	M	Robb	Apr 20	Mar 22
WO2	S	Cox	Mar 22	
6 SCOTS				
WO1	SG	Cochrane	Mar 06	Jul 08
WO1	M	James	Jul 08	May 10
WO1	PC	Marshall	May 10	Jun 12
WO1	PD	Colville	Jun 12	Jun 14
WO1	G	Main	Jun 14	Apr 16
WO1	M	Morrison	Apr 16	Sep 17
WO1	S	Main	Sep 17	Jun 19
WO1	SG	Parker	Jun 19	Jun 21
WO1	J	Thompson	Jun 21	Apr 23
WO2	S	McKnight	Apr 23	
7 SCOTS				
WO1	A	Stewart	Mar 06	Jun 06
WO1	AG	McAleney	Jun 06	Apr 07
WO1	G	Wallace	Apr 07	Jun 09
WO1	D	Yarrick	Jun 09	Jul 11
WO1	SR	West	Jul 11	Sep 13
WO1	JJ	Dickson	Sep 13	Jun 15
WO1	MJ	Fairweather	Jun 15	Apr 17
WO1	D	Carter	Apr 17	Aug 19
WO1	IL	Carlisle	Aug 19	Aug 21
WO1	J	Knox	Aug 21	May 22
WO1	B	Warwick	May 22	Dec 23



OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD	THEATRE	RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD	THEATRE
2006					2010				
Lt Col	JM	Donovan	MBE	Iraq	Brig	JM	Cowan OBE	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	JMR	Hopkinson OBE	QCVS	Iraq	Lt Col	SJ	Cartwright	OBE	Afghanistan
Maj	RL	Coutts	MBE	Iraq	Lt Col	RC	Cole-Mackintosh	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Maj	PGB	Strudwick	QCVS	Iraq	Lt Col	AJ	Halliday	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt	SD	Ford	MiD	Iraq	Lt Col	AD	MacGillivray	MC	Afghanistan
WO2	NM	Davis	QCVS	Northern Ireland	Maj	EJA	Murphy	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq
2008					Maj	AFL	Steele	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt Col	NRM	Borton MBE	DSO	Afghanistan	Maj	GC	Wearmouth	QCVS	Afghanistan
A/Lt Col	AJ	Fitzpatrick	MBE	Afghanistan	Lt	AJ	Phillips	MC	Afghanistan
Lt Col	CLG	Herbert	OBE	Iraq	WO2	PD	Colville	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	JC	Roddis	QCVS	Afghanistan	Sgt	TA	Lowe	MiD	Afghanistan
WO2	PRJ	Dargavel	QCVS	Northern Ireland	ACpl	SC	Binnie (awarded posthumously)	MiD	Afghanistan
ASgt	SW	McLeod	MiD	Iraq	Cpl	SN	Boila	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	NG	Calder	MC	Afghanistan	Cpl	R	Clark	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	NA	Den-McKay	MiD	Afghanistan	Cpl	PD	Innes	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	TGS	Perkins	MBE	Iraq	Cpl	CS	Reynolds	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	AMcL	Rennie MBE	QCVS	Iraq	Cpl	DJ	Roy	MiD	Afghanistan
Capt	BA	O'Neill	QCVS	Afghanistan	Cpl	R	Sharp	MC	Afghanistan
Capt	DID	Watson	MiD	Afghanistan	Pte	CJ	Brotherston	QGM	Afghanistan
Lt	JP	Adamson	MiD	Afghanistan	2011				
Lt	DMcL	Robertson	MiD	Afghanistan	A/Col	CLG	Herbert OBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
2Lt	ABC	Barclay	MC	Afghanistan	Lt Col	DSG	Graham	QCVS	Afghanistan
2Lt	SAC	Du Boulay	MiD	Afghanistan	Lt Col	AWA	Griffiths MBE	OBE	Afghanistan
2Lt	CJ	Hesketh	MiD	Afghanistan	Maj	AMcL	Rennie MBE	QCVS	Rest of World
Cpl	DS	McMenamin	MiD	Afghanistan	Maj	PGB	Strudwick	QCVS	Afghanistan
Cpl	S	Whitehead	MC	Afghanistan	Maj	N	Wight-Boycott	QCVS	Afghanistan
LCpl	JJ	Newlands	MiD	Afghanistan	Capt	AJA	Akerman	QCVS	Afghanistan
Pte	AR	Irvine	MiD	Afghanistan	Capt	IR	Curren	MC	Afghanistan
Pte	RS	MacLellan	MiD	Afghanistan	AWO2	CG	Muir	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	LD	Verity	MiD	Afghanistan	ASgt	SJH	Cox	MiD	Afghanistan
2009					Sgt	EW	Wilson	MiD	Afghanistan
Brig	GE	Lowder MBE	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan	Cpl	P	Buchanan	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	EG	Jones	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq	Cpl	SIS	Gall	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	CA	Ramsay	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq	LCpl	CE	Burns	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt	JP	Adamson	MC	Afghanistan	LCpl	SH	Henderson	MiD	Afghanistan
WO2	AD	Ronaldson	MiD	Iraq	LCpl	J	Raduva	MiD	Afghanistan
Sgt	CJ	Marshall	QCVS	Iraq	LCpl	DR	Skinner	QCB	Afghanistan
					LCpl	CM	Sloan	MiD	Afghanistan
					Pte	B	Johnson	MC	Afghanistan
					Pte	JV	Tolutinikaono	MiD	Afghanistan



OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD	THEATRE
2012				
Col	AJ	Aitken MBE	OBE	Afghanistan
Lt Col	AM	MacNaughton	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Lt Col	EA	Fenton	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	GC	Wilson	OBE	Afghanistan
Maj	NKG	Tomlin	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	BD	James	MiD	Afghanistan
A/CSgt	D	Buist	MiD	Afghanistan
CSgt	IB	Smith	MiD	Afghanistan
Sgt	S	Leslie	MiD	Afghanistan

2013				
Brig	RB	Bruce	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	ALS	Boswell	NATO MSM	Iraq
Lt Col	BMA	Wrench	NATO MSM	Iraq
Maj	RJ	Connolly	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	AV	Cooper	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	AD	Lumley	QCVS	Afghanistan
WO2	RAK	Millar	NATO MSM	Iraq
Cpl	R	Cook	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	DR	Skinner	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	R	Houston	MiD	Afghanistan

2014				
Lt Col	DJS	Cochran	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	DR	Orr-Ewing	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	GC	Wearmouth	OBE	Somalia
A/Maj	RT	Boyd	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	GR	Brocklehurst	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	SP	Dallard	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	TJJ	Draper	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	GA	McGowan MBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
Cpl	CR	Grant	QCB	Afghanistan
Sgt	SN	Vono	QCB	Afghanistan

2015				
Brig	BWO	Russell MBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
A/Col	NA	Den-McKay OBE	DSO	Operations
Col	JC	Roddis MBE	DSO	Afghanistan
Col	CP	Wallace	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Maj	JF	Giles	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	G	Tait MBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	EP	Challis	MBE	Afghanistan
Capt	BSE	Davey	NATO MSM	Afghanistan
Capt	MI	Pemberton	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt	JE	Donkin	NATO MSM	Afghanistan
Cpl	C	Myers	QCVS	Afghanistan

2016				
Maj Gen	RB	Bruce DSO	CBE	Iraq
Maj	JC	MacLellan	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Capt	TJ	Towler	QCVS	Afghanistan
CSgt	IG	Gallagher	MID	Operations
CSgt	JE	Mckenzie	MC	Operations
Sgt	J	McKenna	MID	Iraq

2017				
Cpl	KZ	Haig	QCVS	Operations

2019				
Lt Col	JM	Christie	OBE	Iraq
Lt Col	RSJ	Hedderwick	QCVS	Iraq
A/Maj	FM	Stark	QCVS	Iraq
Maj	DID	Watson	NATO MSM	Afghanistan

2020				
Maj	RAG	Adamson	Bronze Star Medal	Operations

2021				
Maj	DA	Mead	MBE	Afghanistan



NON-OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD
2006			
Lt Col	SR	West	OBE
Maj	HIM	Clark	MBE
Maj	JA	Scott	MBE
Maj	GTH	Tweedie	MBE
Maj	PJ	White	MBE
Capt	JB	Henderson	MBE
Capt	JEB	Kerr	MBE
Capt	JD	McCallum	MBE

2007			
Maj	D	Dobson	MBE
Capt	GA	McGowan	MBE
CSgt	E	Duff	MBE
WO2	SH	Dryburgh	MSM
WO2	ER	Stuart	MSM

2008			
Lt Col	CE	Price	OBE
Maj	K	Campbell	MBE
Maj	JJ	Haughie	MBE
Maj	TAW	Ingram	MBE
Maj	WG	Lee TD	QVRM
Maj	AM	Rennie	MBE
Capt	T	Henderson McBride	MSM
Capt	WGA	Hunter	MSM
Capt	JK	Law	MSM
Capt	SD	Samson	MBE
Capt	RJ	Stuart	MBE
WO2	DJL	Bruce	MSM
CSgt	WS	McDougall	MSM

2009			
Lt Col	BG	De La Haye	OBE
Lt Col	GC	Wilson	OBE
Maj	JC	Roddie	MBE

2010			
Capt	S	Mackenzie	MSM
WO1	RG	Hight	MSM

2011			
Col	AJN	Alderson MBE	OBE
Lt Col	JAJ	Calder	MBE
Lt Col	DR	Orr Ewing MBE	OBE
Maj	PA	Keetly	MBE

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD
2012			
Col	DC	Richmond	CBE
Maj	A	Aitchison	MBE
Maj	DEJ	Kemmis-Betty	MBE
Maj	CRA	Miles	MBE
Maj	SG	Wemyss	MBE
WO2	S	McAlpine	MSM

2013			
Maj Gen	JM	Cowan DSO OBE	CBE
Lt Col	PM	Little	OBE
Lt Col	BM	Ross	MBE
Maj	NDE	Arbam	MBE
Maj	LJ	Drummond	MBE
WO1	PD	Colville	MSM
WO1	C	Pirie	MBE
WO1	S	Shaw	MSM
CSgt	W	Bell	MSM

2014			
Col	NA	Den-McKay MBE	OBE
Col	R	Jefferies	CBE
WO1	C	Pirie	MBE

2015			
Lt Col	AP	Reilly	OBE
A/Maj	AM	Mack	MBE
Maj	N	Mackinnon	MBE
Capt	M	James	MBE
Capt	EG	Philbin	MBE
Sgt	P	Trickovic	MBE

2016			
Lt Col	KM	Potts	MBE
Maj	AT	Grant	MBE
Capt	AG	McEwan	MBE
CSgt	CG	Graham	MBE

2017			
Lt Col	TAW	Ingram MBE	OBE
Maj	FS	Reeves	MBE
Maj	SG	Small	MBE
WO2	A	McBroom	MSM

2018			
Brig	AJ	Aitken OBE	CBE
Col	NHDeR	Channer	OBE
A/Lt Col	OPB	Dobson	MBE
Lt Col	PGB	Strudwick	OBE
Maj	WG	Hunter	MBE



NON-OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

RANK	INITIALS	NAME	AWARD
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2019

Lt Col	NKG	Tomlin	OBE
Lt Col	NM	Wight-Boycott	OBE
Maj	NP	Colquhoun	MBE
Maj	RJ	Colquhoun	MBE
Maj	GW	Muir	MBE

2020

Lt Col	AR	Forsyth	OBE
Lt Col	AFL	Steele VR	MBE
Lt Col	AV	Wilson MBE	OBE
A/Maj	PD	Colville	MBE
Capt	CG	McRobbie	MBE

2021

Brig	RRE	Lindsay	CBE
Lt Col	TJJ	Draper	OBE
Capt	JS	Corkill	MBE

2022

Lt Col	CAM	Lane	MBE
Maj	AD	Steele	MBE
WO2	D	Buist	MSM
WO2	RG	Robertson	MSM
CSgt	PM	Leith VR	MBE
Cpl	JK	Vakacokaivalu	MBE
Maj	TH	Blair	MBE
Maj	GM	Rowan	MBE

2023

Lt Gen	NRM	Borton DSO, MBE	KCB
Col	AD	Watson	OBE
Lt Col	J	Campbell	OBE
Lt Col	JF	Giles	MBE
Maj	WC	McAuley	MBE
Sgt	T	Couper	MBE



SCOTS LAST POST

In memory of the officers and soldiers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland who died in 2023.

Lance Corporal Iain BRUCE	26 th February 2023
Fusilier Jake RENDALL	25 th April 2023
Sergeant David PIRIE	10 th June 2023
Major Nicholas COLES	4 th August 2023
Lance Corporal Lee HEADLEY	14 th August 2023
Highlander Jamie HUNT	14 th September 2023
Corporal Darren STEELE	19 th October 2023
Lieutenant Colonel Jim ARCHIBALD	24 th October 2023



REGIMENTAL COLOURS

KING'S COLOUR



REGIMENTAL COLOUR



The Battalions of The Royal Regiment of Scotland carry identical King's and Regimental Colours, differentiated only by a roman numeral battalion identifier, borne in the centre of the King's Colour and on the first corner of the Regimental Colour. These Colours were presented by the late HM The Queen to six of the battalions at Holyrood Park, Edinburgh in on 2nd July 2011. The late HRH The Duke of Edinburgh presented Colours to the 4th Battalion at RAF Kinloss on 3rd December 2011, who were deployed on operations in Afghanistan in the summer of 2011. The Royal Scots Borderers, 1st

Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland were redesignated to 1st Battalion The Ranger Regiment on 1st December 2021 and their Colours have remained with the new Ranger battalion for safe keeping. In time the Ranger Regiment will be presented their own colours, and The Royal Regiment of Scotland will then ceremoniously lay-up the 1st Battalion's old colours in their museum or in the Regimental kirk.

The 2nd Battalion carries an honorary third Colour presented by the Governor General of British India, Lord Mornington

- East India Company, in recognition of 74th (Highland) Regiment of Foot bravery during the Battle of Assaye in 1803. This Honorary Colour is not consecrated and is paraded alongside the Regimental Colours on Assaye Day.

Colours are incredibly important to any Army unit as they represent the spirit of the regiment. As armies became trained and adopted set formations, each regiment's ability to keep its formation was potentially critical to its success. In the chaos of battle, not least due to the amount of smoke, dust and



REGIMENTAL COLOURS

noise on a battlefield, soldiers needed to be able to determine the location of their regiment. Since it was formalised in 1751, each battalion of Line Infantry regiments of the British Army carry two colours - collectively called a stand. These are large flags mounted on a pike. They bear the battle honours and badges granted to the regiment in commemoration of the gallant deeds performed by its members from the time it was raised and as such have major significance for each and every soldier in that regiment. They record the proud history of each Regiment and are treated with reverence which includes always being guarded and escorted.

Both the King's Colour and Regimental Colour are emblazed with Battle Honours with the Regimental Colour also showing five Honorary Distinctions. A Battle Honour is an award of a right by a government or sovereign to a military unit to emblazon the name of a battle or operation on its flags ("colours"), uniforms or other accessories where ornamentation is possible. The Honorary Distinctions were generally awarded to mark a particular campaign, such as the Sphinx for the Egypt campaign against Napoleon in 1804.

The Royal Regiment of Scotland has amassed 339 Battle Honours. It is not possible to emblazon all of these Battle Honours on the Colours due to the physical limitations. Prior to the Colours being awarded to the Regiment, a Regimental committee selected the most appropriate Battle Honours to be borne by the Colours with these being conferred by Royal Authority and agreed by the Inspector of Regimental Colours. It is important to clarify that no Battle Honours have been 'lost'; all of them appear in the Army List. There is no order of precedence for Battle Honours, they are listed in chronological order, either in a single list, or in multiple even numbers of columns, reading left to right, and top to bottom.

The King's Colour is based on the national flag with the Regiment's insignia placed in the centre. Only Battle Honours from the Great War and the Second World War are permitted to be emblazoned on the King's Colour and the Regiment has 43 such honours on the King's Colour.

Regimental Colours vary in design across the Infantry; for The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as a Royal Regiment, the background is dark blue, with the Regiment's name and capbadge in the centre and includes the Regiment's motto: *Nemo me Impune Lacessit* (No one assails me with impunity). The crown on the cap badge is the Scottish Crown and these items are surrounded by the Union Wreath. There are 44 Battle Honours on the Regimental Colour; all pre the Great War and post the Second World War, the oldest of which was awarded to The Royal Regiment of Foot (The Royal Scots) at the Battle of Tangier in 1680 and the most recent being Iraq 2003 which was awarded to a number of our antecedents.

The Regiment also has 5 Honorary Distinctions on the Regimental Colours:

1. Centrally below the Tie on the Union Wreath is 'EGYPT' and the Sphinx.
2. First Corner, The White Horse with the Motto 'NEC ASPERA TERRENT'.
3. Second Corner, The Castle and Key superscribed 'GIBRALTAR, 1780-83 with the Motto 'MONTIS INSIGNIA CALPE'
4. Third Corner, 'INDIA' and Tiger.
5. Fourth Corner, an Elephant superscribed 'ASSAYE'

Even today, in most modern armies Standing Orders call for the Colours to be intentionally destroyed if they are ever in danger of being captured by the enemy.



SCOTS SHOP ONLINE

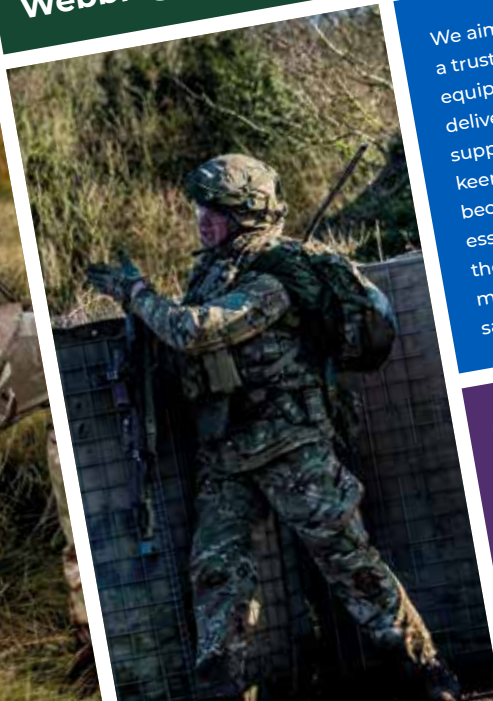
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THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND - FREEDOMS



A military 'Freedom Right' is normally granted by a Regional Council authority in recognition of the services of the Regiment, both in peace and war. Being granted a 'Freedom Right' is the highest civic honour that a Council can bestow on the Regiment.

In keeping with tradition dating back many years, a freedom award is normally the right to march through the streets with drums beating, bayonets fixed and colours flying. The parade gave the citizens of a region, city or town the chance to show their appreciation and high regard for the hard work undertaken by the Regiment and its soldiers. The parade also provides the Regiment the opportunity to show its gratitude for the support that it receives from the region and its communities.

Since 2006, a number of new freedom rights have been conferred on the Regiment and when invited to, the appropriate battalion will exercise these historically important links to the community in Scotland and elsewhere.

SCOTS FREEDOM RIGHTS GRANTED SINCE 2006

TOWN/REGION	DATE	ACCEPTED BY
County of Clackmannanshire Council (Alloa)	Jun-06	5 SCOTS
City of Aberdeen	01-Jul-06	4 SCOTS
Penicuik	24-Mar-07	1 and 2 SCOTS
Fife Council (Kirkcaldy)	21-Oct-06	3 SCOTS
Angus Council (Forfar)	15-Jul-07	3 SCOTS
Dumfries and Galloway (Dumfries)	07-Jun-08	1 SCOTS
City of Canterbury	07-Dec-08	5 SCOTS
Borough of Berwick-Upon-Tweed	28-Feb-09	1 SCOTS
City of Perth	08-May-10	7 SCOTS
West Lothian Council (Livingston)	28-May-11	1 and 6 SCOTS
The Borders (Melrose)	11-Jun-11	1 and 6 SCOTS
Renfrewshire (Paisley)	20-Jun-11	5 SCOTS
City of Stirling	10-Mar-12	7 SCOTS
East Lothian Council (Haddington)	19-Apr-13	1 SCOTS
City of Edinburgh	20-Apr-13	1 SCOTS
South Ayrshire (Ayr)	13-Nov-13	2 SCOTS
Highland Council Area (Inverness)	15-Oct-15	3 and 4 SCOTS
South Lanarkshire Council (Hamilton)	17-Jun-23	BJA Coy



ALLIANCES, AFFILIATIONS AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

On formation of the Regiment all the antecedent Affiliations, Alliances and Bonds of Friendship (BoF) were formally transferred to SCOTS ownership. These military associations were originally formed for the mutual benefit and to promote friendship between Regiments of the British Army and those of Commonwealth and foreign countries. The military associations can be defined as follows:

- Alliances are associations between British Regiments or Corps and those of Commonwealth countries (including British Dependent Territories) only.
- Affiliations are associations between Regiments and Corps within the British Army. In practice these are confined to links between Regiments of the Brigade of Gurkhas and other British Regiments.
- BoF are associations between British Regiments or Corps and those of non-Commonwealth countries. Bonds of Friendship may also be formed between British Regiments or Corps and HM Ships.

The Regiment is committed to retain these hard-fought military associations and to take them forward as a Regiment with assistance from each Battalion. The connection to the past is born from a united and shared heritage which all ranks should be fiercely proud of. There is a combined responsibility to promote and where necessary, re-energise these links and to make best use of professional opportunities that will come from a vibrant and mutually beneficial association.

Overall responsibility for maintaining these associations rests with Regimental Headquarters, but by the very nature of the associations, the links are best preserved at battalion level, with assistance and support coming from Regimental Headquarters. New associations can be proposed and the process for this is managed through Regimental Headquarters to the appropriate MOD department.



ALLIANCES, AFFILIATIONS AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

COUNTRY	UNIT	SCOTS BN	REMARKS
Australia	7th Bn The Royal Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	25/49th Bn The Royal Queensland Regt	tbc	Res INF
	The Royal Queensland Regt	3 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal New South Wales Regt	3/5 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal South Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	16th Bn The Royal Western Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
Canada	5th/6th Bn The Royal Victorian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Canadian Scottish Regt (Princes Mary's)	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal Newfoundland Regt	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	1st Bn The Royal New Brunswick Regt (Carelton and York)	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada	2 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada	3 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (Duke of Edinburgh's Own)	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	48th Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Toronto Scottish Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The A&SH Highlanders of Canada (Princes Louise's)	5 SCOTS	Res INF
Malaysia	The Calgary Highlanders	5 SCOTS	Res INF
	5th Bn The Royal Malay Regt	tbc	Reg INF
New Zealand	1st Bn Royal New Zealand Inf Regt	2 SCOTS	Reg INF
	2nd/4th Bn (Otago & Southland) Royal New Zealand Regt	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	5th/7th Bn (Wellington (City of Wellington's Own) and Hawkes Bay) Royal New Zealand Infantry Regt	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
Pakistan	11th Bn The Baluch Regt	2 SCOTS	Reg INF
	1st Bn (SCINDE) The Frontier Forece Regt	5 SCOTS	Reg INF
South Africa	Chief Maqoma Regiment (renamed in 2009)	2 SCOTS	Res INF
	Solomon Mahlangu Regiment (renamed in 2009)	3 SCOTS	Res INF
	Gonnema Regiment (renamed 2009)	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	Bambatha Rifles (renamed in 2009)	tbc	Res INF
Affiliations	2 RGR	4 SCOTS	2 RGR
Bonds of Friendship with HM Ships	HMS Sutherland	4 SCOTS	
	HMS Submarine Victorious	4 SCOTS	
	HMS Argyll	5 SCOTS	
	HMS Queen Elizabeth	tbc	
	HMS Montrose	3 SCOTS	
	HMS Gannet (Naval Air Stn)	6 SCOTS	
Bonds of Friendship with Non Commonwealth Countries			
France	1e Regiment d'Infanterie	3/4 SCOTS	Reg INF
France	27e Bataillon de Chasseurs Alpins	2 SCOTS	Reg INF



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SCOTS
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The following testimony is from a member of our SCOTS community:

“What I liked most about Leafyard was the science – the easy to understand delivery and the strategies that can be put in place to help yourself.

The main difference I noticed in myself after using Leafyard was a more positive / optimistic attitude. Less doom and more brighter thoughts. It has enabled me to overcome the darkness and given me more control over my thoughts. I am now less gloomy and able to look ahead. I’d recommend giving it a try.”

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SCOTS 2023

2023 has been a busy year for 2 SCOTS at home and overseas. The year began with C Coy deployed on the final rotation of Op NEWCOME, closing down the UK's contribution to the UN mission in Mali. The battalion experienced two short notice deployments: Ex WESSEX STORM and Ex STEADFAST JUPITER. The former being UK based, A Coy assisted 1 R IRISH and 2 RGR by providing enemy forces for their validation exercise, whilst the latter saw C Coy deploy to Romania to provide force protection for a NATO validation of HQ ARRC for the NATO Response Force in 2024. Much of the training and validation exercises throughout were in preparation for deployment on Op SHADER, with the first wave deploying in late 2023. Concurrently, 2 SCOTS have also taken position alongside international partner forces on Op INTERFLEX.

3 SCOTS have had a successful Re-ORBAT to Security Force Assistance (SFA) battalion and have deployed across the globe to numerous destinations including: Finland, the USA, The Republic of Korea, Japan, Brunei, Australia, Hawaii, and Mongolia, to name but a few. Episodic deployments are now in full swing in the Indo-Pacific given the battalion's regional SFA alignment. Whilst fulfilling in excess of 50 individual commitments from the wider Army and Defence network, the Bn ensured that cadres, promotion courses and adventure training continued, despite an increased tempo.

Similarly, 4 SCOTS had a busy year as they continued to re-role to a Light Mechanised Infantry Battalion, culminating in the validation phase on Ex WESSEX STORM. Early 2023 saw 4 SCOTS deploy on Ex WARFIGHTER in the USA, before Ex SPRING STORM (Estonia) and Ex MAPLE RESOLVE (Canada) in late spring, as part of a NATO Battle Group. The Bn then participated in Op INTERFLEX from June – December, where soldiers from the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) were trained in basic and mounted tactics, as-well-as leadership training from section level command, to platoon level command.

BKA Coy were once again on the world's stage, this time for HM King Charles' III Coronation celebrations: firstly on Op GOLDEN ORB, London, as part of the procession; followed by Op SCEPTRE, Edinburgh, by providing the Army's contingent of the tri-service Guard of Honour. The company played the leading role on the Regiment's summer Freedom Parades, exercising the Freedom of Dumfries and Galloway, Fife and Stirling and receiving the Freedom from South Lanarkshire. BKA Coy were honoured to deploy to Ballater for HM The King's first Royal Guard at Balmoral since the Coronation. While deployed to Ballater, the company also represented the Regiment at local highland games and community engagement events. 2023 was not only for ceremonial duties: BKA Coy also supported Ex WESSEX STORM alongside 4 SCOTS before deploying to Cyprus for the annual Aden Patrol Competition. Towards the end of the year the company also undertook their annual fieldcraft training, conducting low-level training and a LFTT camp in Barry Buddon.

6 SCOTS have experienced a year that has seen many people committed operationally and on many exercises across and out-with the borders of the UK. They have deployed people in support of Op TOSCA as well as delivering operational effect under a 4 LANCS commanded Op INTERFLEX task force supporting the training of Ukrainian soldiers. A Coy deployed to Croatia on exercise alongside reservists from 7 SCOTS on Ex SAVA STAR and the Battalion has undertaken many training opportunities with focus on baselining capabilities but also expanding in new areas such as Drone operators. Competitions have been a highlight and 6 SCOTS have been involved militarily in the driving arena as well as on Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL and in the Jocks sport, the Battalion football team were runners-up in the Army Reserve Football Cup.

7 SCOTS devoted much of their time and efforts to deploying on Ex SAVA STAR, Croatia, to work with the Croatian Armed Forces, specifically the 2nd Mechanised Battalion 'Pumas' from the Guards of the Armoured Mechanised Brigade. The battalion supported the Allied Forces Federation's involvement with the Cateran Yomp by providing real life support and transport for over 70 service people that are recovering from injuries and trauma from the US, UK, Canada, Denmark, France, Georgia, to name but a few. The battalion deployed to Edinburgh in July and contributed to Op SCEPTRE by supporting the military element of the Service of Dedication and Thanksgiving for His Majesty The King, and the people of Scotland.

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