



# The Thistle

Journal of The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)

Volume 45

Summer 2024



At The Royal Scots Memorial Garden, Lauriston Castle Estate for the memorial service to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Kohima.

l to r: Karalo Malumuvatu, Nick Edwardson, David Jack, George Lowder, Rev Dr Iain May, Bob Bruce, John Pennyquick, Jone Leweni, Stu Marshall and Benui Tawake.

## Foreword

**Brigadier G E Lowder MBE**

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

I hope that this finds you all well and that you have managed a summer break. It has been a particularly busy summer regimentally, with several additional anniversary and commemorative events where we were well represented, and which are covered later in this edition.

**Governance - Regimental (SCIO) Trust.** I and fellow Regimental and War Memorial Trustees are hugely grateful to the Investment Manager Procurement Panel comprising Alex Dockar, Nick Edwardson and Stuart Montgomery, ably advised by Keith Oliver for their extremely thorough procurement exercise to renew our Investment Manager, for both the Regimental and Club investments. We have been with our current Investment Manager for over 11 years, and it was appropriate to tender for this service. After careful consideration of 4 shortlist bids, Trustees unanimously opted to move from Brewin Dolphin to Evelyn Partners. Brewin Dolphin have served us well and our investments have performed broadly in line with expectations and our investment strategy, but in the current financial climate we must ensure that we are squeezing every drop of income from our investments by being as flexible and agile as we can be. Hopefully, as a charity focussed Investment Manager, Evelyn Partners will be able to do even more for us.

We continue to refresh our Regimental Strategy and I expect that it will have been reviewed by all our Trustees, Directors and Office Bearers by the autumn and signed off by the end of October. This will provide a firm platform for our next steps, continued consolidation where appropriate, prioritised activity and projects from now until 2040 and beyond.

**The Association and Associating.** We note that the Edinburgh Branch of the Association remains in suspended animation as membership dropped below a critical mass and no volunteers to be Office Bearers were forthcoming.

Members of the Edinburgh Branch have been welcomed into the East of Scotland Branch and Central Scotland Branch. Unfortunately, this is also going to come to pass with the Highland Branch later this year. There is an inevitability that this will happen over time and eventually we will likely consolidate into a single branch. It was super to see almost 100 former Royals come together at the end of May for the Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf. This event attracts great support and will be run again on Friday 30 May 2025 with the intention of the gathering continuing at Kingsknowe Golf Club after the prize-giving.

**Museum and Heritage.** Following further discussions with the Interim Chief Executive of Historic Environment Scotland and the new Colonel of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS), the RS Trustees and SCOTS Regimental Trustees and Museum Trustees met separately in May and June respectively. They agreed in principle to progress a plan for an "equitable partnership" in the Museum in the Castle from 2030. As you know, we will lose all remaining MOD/Government Museum funding at the end of March 2030. This funding does not currently cover our museum costs and an equitable partnership with SCOTS will allow us to retain an affordable foothold in the Castle for our Museum and Collection. Over the summer period Terms of Reference will be drawn up for a Joint Working Group to take forward planning. This is expected to be ambitious to make very best use of the available space. We will be represented on the Working Group by Dickie Donovan, as Chair of our Museum Committee and David Jack as Regimental Secretary. We are fortunate to have Allan Carswell as a Regimental Trustee, who will also bring his considerable expertise in this area to bear on the project. I also expect that grant funding will be applied for to fund the project, but that a significant fund-raising effort will be required to close any funding delta. We should have a plan with costs to present to RS and SCOTS Trustees by early next year. While this option remains in play, we will pause the development of alternative options for our Museum and Collection. It has also been agreed that further items on loan to 1 RANGER will be returned to us including the centrepiece and the Lammie Brooch.



On Saturday 25 May, we enjoyed fine weather at Rosebank Cemetery for the service to commemorate the Gretna Rail disaster. It is a moving and poignant service. As our Association Padre, Iain May was in the US receiving a PhD, for which many congratulations go to the Reverend Doctor, the service was taken by Padre Stephen Blakey who spent 6 years as the 1 RS Padre. So, thanks go to Stephen for standing in. It appears year on year that the Leith Community is getting a little more involved, which is great to see.

There was a good RS turnout for Armed Forces Day on Saturday 22 June. The route for those able to march has reverted to Charlotte Square to Saint Andrew Square, which is welcomed, as was the opportunity for refreshments and reminiscing afterwards. Please do think about joining us on Armed Forces Day as it presents a super opportunity for us to be seen in our city, reminding residents and visitors of our proud heritage.

This year was the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kohima. We marked this with a special service at the memorial garden in Lauriston Castle Estate on Saturday 29 June led by the Reverend Doctor Iain May and very well supported by the wider regimental family, including the Warrack family and the local community. It was a very moving service with the Royal Scots roll of honour being read by a mix of local children, relatives and Royal Scots. We are hugely grateful to the Friends of Lauriston Castle Estate who keep the memorial garden in top condition.

Museum Outreach in July was conducted with Heart of Midlothian FC showcasing our history from McCrae's Battalion to the 1991 Gulf War and our sporting prowess. We have since discussed how in future we will plan for and deliver Outreach, aiming to take a longer-term view of this activity with fully costed and budgeted proposals that are coordinated and deconflicted with all our other activity.

The annual service to commemorate the end of the Korean War was held on Saturday 27 July at the Scottish Korean War Memorial. Again, we were well represented, including one of our Korean War veterans. I am sincerely grateful to everyone who turns out for all these events to help maintain our profile and our heritage.

Trustees have agreed that the RS Monument in Princes Street Gardens will be updated with a bust of Her Majesty, the late Queen Elizabeth II. This project is progressing well under the Regimental Secretary's supervision, with volunteer help and the support and the City of Edinburgh Council. It is anticipated that this addition will be unveiled next year.

We are liaising with the Royal Norfolk Regiment regarding a permanent Le Paradis Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. It is anticipated that this will be unveiled and dedicated in September 2025.

**The Club.** The Club Constitution has been revised and brought up to date to reflect the Club's current organisation, governance and ways of working. This was approved at the Club AGM in April, and I am very grateful to all those involved in this work. We are now in the process of developing a Code of Conduct that will be circulated to Club Members shortly. The Club continues to perform well with a varied programme of events for Members, hospitality events and high room occupancy rates. The War Memorial Fund Trustees have recently purchased a property at 1A Dundas Street with the aim of adding a further 3 en suite rooms to 34A Abercromby Place. Once this project is complete then the Club will probably have reached maximum capacity with 34 bedrooms. We continue to consider the charitable status of the Club and have further aligned investment management, audit and treasury services with the RSRTC SCIO, all to deliver maximum coherence and alignment.

I look forward to catching up with you when our paths next cross.

Yours aye

*George*

## Association News – Northern Ireland Branch

As we did not submit a report for the last edition of The Thistle, this article covers a full year of our Branch activities. We continue to maintain an active membership and have plenty of events, the main one this year being a visit to Normandy, that will be covered separately. The Branch was invited to attend the Opening of the Garden of Remembrance last year and we were represented by Davey McKendrick. For Remembrance Day Dick Seve, Phill Hunter, Ian Laurie and Davey McKendrick joined 1st Battalion The Ranger Regiment (1 RANGER) in Palace Barracks, while Stevie Brown, Graham Hight and Derek Miller joined the Veterans' Parade at the Cenotaph in London. 2023 was rounded off with a very successful Christmas party attended by 90 members and guests.

This year Shug Wilson, Davey McKendrick and Phill Hunter supported the RHF at the annual memorial service at Whitbraes, and Ian Laurie represented the Branch at the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary service at Bangor. In August, I visited Palace Barracks with Graham Hight and Brian Mercer to check the condition of the memorials in the Garden of Remembrance and we can report that all are in satisfactory condition, although the general area needs tidying up. The will be done by Darren Owen, son of the former keeper and honorary branch member Albert Owen, with the help of OC HQ Coy 1 RANGER.



Davey McKendrick at the Opening of the Garden of Remembrance, Belfast.



Phil Hunter, Davey McKendrick, Ian Laurie and Dick Seve at the Memorial Garden in Palace Barracks.



Graham Hight, Stevie Brown and Derek Miller in London.



The Branch Christmas Party.

**Mr Colin (Maxi) MacDonald**  
Chair NI Branch

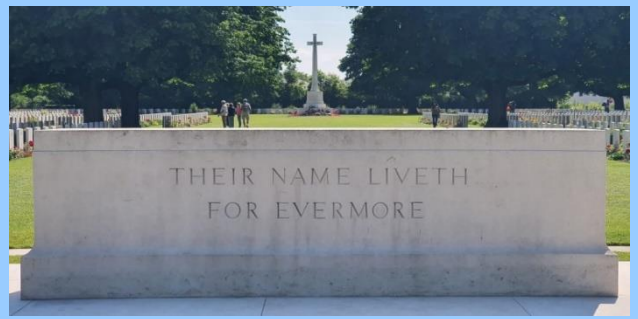


## Northern Ireland Branch Visit to Normandy

11 members of the NI Branch departed from Newtownards on 16 June 2024 on a visit to the historic sites of the Normandy D-Day landings. Our route took us via Dublin and an overnight ferry to Cherbourg and over the course of the next 5 days we managed to visit a number of operationally significant sites. Starting at the beach landing sites Gold, Juno, Sword, Omaha and Utah, each one with museums, war relics and points of interest. We also visited Pegasus Bridge over the Caen Canal and the slightly less well known Horsa Bridge over the River Orne, both secured by D Coy of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Airborne) Battalion Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry as part of Operation Tonga (6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division operations in support of Operation Overlord).



The church in Sainte-Mere-Eglise.



Bayeux British Military Cemetery.



At the Silhouettes. l to r: Ian Laurie, Kenny Boyle, Ben Taylor and Maxi MacDonald.



Maxi MacDonald dedicating a Royal Scots memorial cross to 8 RS which was part of the 15th Scottish Division.

We took the opportunity to stop in Sainte-Mere-Eglise, the first town to be liberated by the American 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, who famously parachuted into the town. The church has a dummy parachutist depicting Private John Steel who became stuck on the roof during the battle, suspended from his parachute. It can be seen at the front of the church although he was actually stuck on the other side. We also visited the Memorial Parachutiste, otherwise known as the Iron Mike Memorial, near the La Fiere Bridge over the River Merderet.



At the 15<sup>th</sup> Scottish Division Memorial at Tourville. l to r: Ben Taylor, Stevie Brown, Maxi MacDonald, Graham Hight, Alan Smurthwaite, Kenny Boyle and Ian Laurie.



The American cemetery in Colleville-sur-Mer.

Our tour also included a number of the magnificently maintained Commonwealth War Graves Cemeteries in the area where 89 Royal Scots of the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion are buried or commemorated. The Battalion landed on Sword Beach between 13 and 18 June 1944 and took part in the Normandy Campaign from 19 June to 23 August 1944. Of particular note is the British Normandy Memorial near Ver-sur-Mer where we visited the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary "Standing with Giants" silhouettes, where 1475 silhouettes mark the number of fatalities under British command on D-Day. Also at the site are the silhouettes of Sister Mollie Evershed and Sister Dorothy Field, both of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, who lost their lives during the campaign and are remembered for saving 75 wounded men from a sinking hospital ship. Both of whom were posthumously commended for brave conduct in the London Gazette 29 December 1944. At Tourville-sur-Odon we visited the memorial to the 15<sup>th</sup> Scottish Division where we laid our Royal Scots memorial cross to the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots. Overall, it was a most interesting and at times very moving experience.

Mr Colin (Maxi) MacDonald  
Chair NI Branch



## Blenheim 320



"Blenheim 320" was organised by the Southern Section of the Regimental Association to commemorate the 320<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Blenheim on the 13 August 1704 and was open to members of all Regimental Association sections.

The event saw thirty members of the Association congregating at Blenheim Palace on 13 August on a glorious day together with the Association Standard Party from Edinburgh.

The day commenced in the "Marlborough Room" with a short presentation on the Battle given by Brian de la Haye, who concentrated on the Regimental aspect and Paul Crompton, Associate member of the Southern Section, who explained the "big" picture.

The Battle of Blenheim was important from a Regimental perspective as the Regiment was the only one at the battle to field two battalions under the Duke of Marlborough.

The day continued with a march to the Column of Victory. A short commemorative service was conducted by the Rev Ros Trafford-Roberts halfway to the Column (*a restriction caused by the absence of a road all the way to the Column*) and following this, a wreath was laid at the Column of Victory. After this, it was back to the Palace for an extremely good lunch and the opportunity to tour the Palace in the afternoon. We were delighted to be joined by Pipe Major Ian Fleming of the Southern Section who led the "parade".

A more detailed account of the Battle of Blenheim follows this article.

### Lieutenant Colonel Brian de la Haye OBE



Paul Crompton and Brian de la Haye and explain the battle.



Ian Fleming led the parade.



The Association Standard Party ready to step-off.



Our march to the Column of Victory.





Rev Ros Trafford-Roberts led the service.



Brian de la Haye lays the wreath.



The Association Standard Party following the wreath laying ceremony. I to r: Stuart Aitken, Jamie Colquhoun, Tam Logan and Tam Douglas.



I to r: Mike Cran, John Sands, Edward Cowan and Robbie Scott-Bowden at the Column of Victory.



David Trafford-Roberts takes a break!



Enjoying our lunch.



The Association Standard Party and In-Pensioners. I to r: Andy Kay, Jamie Colquhoun, Stuart Aitken, Tam Douglas, Tam Logan and Vic Lucas.

## Scottish National War Memorial

All Pillars of the Regiment were represented at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission D-Day Memorial Service at the Scottish National War Memorial on 29 May 2024, at which there was a symbolic "passing of the torch" to the younger generation to keep alive the flame of remembrance of the sacrifice made for the freedom we enjoy today.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



I to r: David Jack, Dickie Donovan, Guy Richardson and George Lowder.



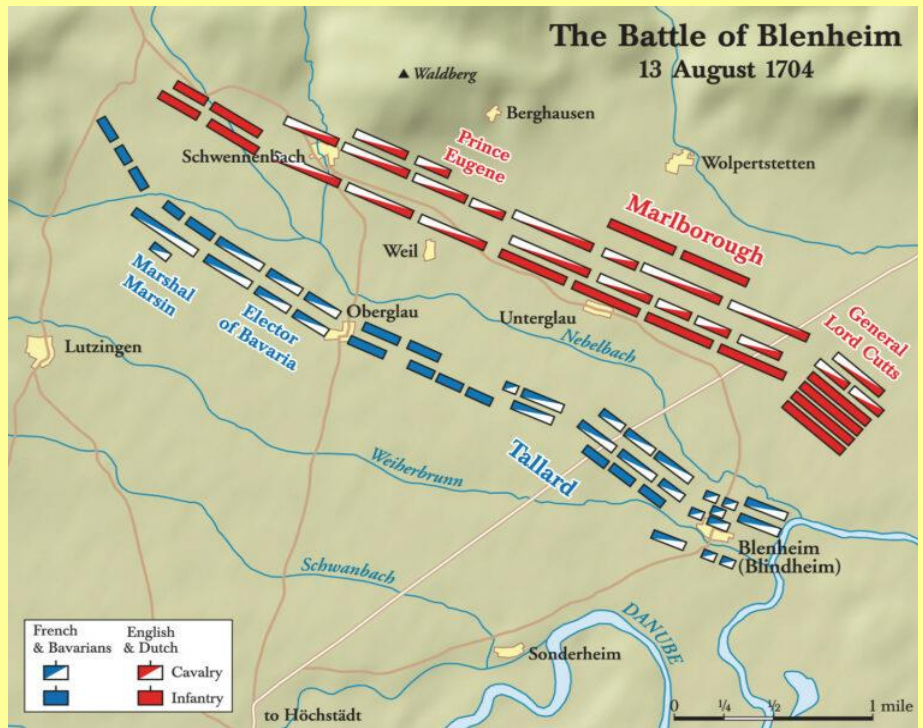
## The Battle of Blenheim – 13 August 1704

The Battle of Blenheim was arguably the most decisive battle of the Spanish War of Succession and possibly the most significant victory for John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough. The Royal Scots (known as the Royal Regiment at the time) were unique as the only regiment fielding two battalions (First and Second). The Regiment was also referred to as “Orkney’s Regiment” after their Colonel, Lord George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney, a particularly able soldier.

**Background.** The Spanish War of Succession (1701-1714) was a result of the death of King Charles II of Spain in 1700 when he bequeathed his throne to the grandson of Louis XIV of France. The prospect of a union between Spain and France so alarmed many European states that the “Grand Alliance” was formed with Britain, the Netherlands, Austria and Prussia who supported the Hapsburg Empire’s rival claimant to the throne, Archduke Charles.

John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough was appointed Captain General of the British and Dutch forces and responsible for the overall war strategy of the Alliance.

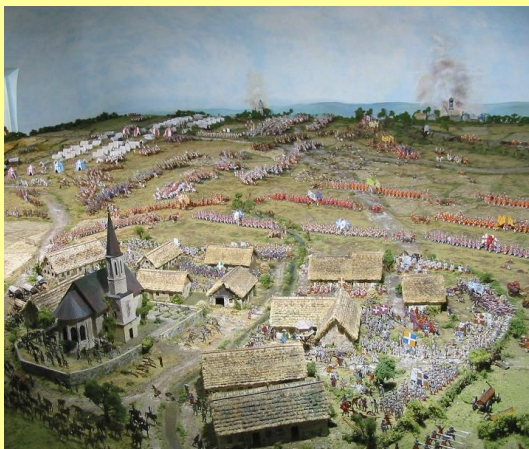
The initial stages of the war saw Marlborough besieging and capturing Venlo and Ruremonde (modern day Belgium) in 1702. Marlborough wanted to bring the French to battle but was frustrated on a number of occasions by prevarication of the Dutch Authority to whom he had to defer. In 1703, Bavaria changed sides and allied itself with France and Spain and in 1704, Franco-Bavarian forces threatened to capture Vienna and knock the Austrian Hapsburgs out of the war jeopardising the Grand Alliance. These dangerous developments prompted Marlborough to take matters into his own hands and embark on an audacious campaign that would switch operations from modern Belgium to the Upper Danube. The “March to the Danube” ensued with Marlborough’s Army consisting of 22,000 British, Dutch and German troops who were joined along the way by 19,000 Hanoverian, Danes and Prussians.



**Marlborough’s Army;**  
**The Second Battalion was under Lord Cutts on the left flank was ordered to attack Blenheim.**  
**The First Battalion, under Orkney, was part of the main assault in the centre.**

Marlborough’s army moved 250 miles in five weeks, an extraordinary feat of logistics, strategy and command. Marlborough’s Army now included the Austrian Army of Prince Eugene, another very able soldier who was to become Marlborough’s second-in-command for the remainder of the war. And then, on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, Marlborough stormed the Schellenberg Fortress, a swift but costly action in which the battalions of the Royal Regiment sustained 450 casualties.

**Blenheim.** Marlborough still wanted to bring the Franco-Bavarians to battle and tried to provoke a battle by burning some 300-400 villages after Schellenberg. On 5<sup>th</sup> August, the Franco Bavarians mustered 73,000 troops and under the command of Marshall Tallard were now ready to fight Marlborough, once they knew exactly where his Army was. It was Marlborough, however, who discovered the Franco Bavarians first, encamped near Blenheim on the South side of the small Nebel stream. At 1.00am on the morning of 13 August, Marlborough gives the order to move towards the Nebel. At 2.00am the advance commences. There is an uncharacteristic mist which shrouds movement over ground that has been prepared the day before. This mist will burn off as dawn approaches and it will be a warm sunny day. The First Battalion of The Royal Regiment are under command Colonel John White with 639 men in Major General Webb’s Brigade under Lord Orkney, their Colonel. They are in the centre of the Army with the main assault troops. It is the Second Battalion, however, that will be the first in action on the left flank against the Franco Bavarians defending the village of Blenheim itself. Under command Lt Col Andrew Hamilton with 577 men they are in Brigadier General Fergusson’s Brigade, one of four under Lt Gen Lord Cutts.



**The battle from the Franco-Bavarian positions in Blenheim looking towards Marlborough’s Army.**

At midday, Cutts is ordered to attack Blenheim. This is a ferocious battle requiring troops to cross the Nebel and attack uphill. Three assaults by the first echelon of troops were mounted and driven back and then Fergusson’s Brigade with the Second battalion were also driven back three times. The Regimental account reflects the furious nature of these assaults as follows: “... the French poured in a fire so murderous that no courage could be against it – and the storming party, after reaching the very palisades were driven back with the loss of almost all the superior officers and two thirds of the men.”

The aim was achieved, however, and the French Commander, so shocked by the ferocity of these attacks drew firstly seven and then the remaining eleven battalions of Tallard’s reserve into the village, without telling Tallard! The assaults were called off and Cutts was ordered to keep the French pinned down inside Blenheim while the main assault could commence in the centre. Twice the outcome of the main assault was in doubt and twice the Allies retrieved it. On the second, it was Lord Orkney marching forward with the First Battalion with cavalry on either side who forced the enemy to fall back. Finally, Orkney attacked the troops pinned down in Blenheim with eight battalions which resulted in a parley and surrender. The First Battalion had lost 42 killed and 145 wounded. The Second Battalion, 76 killed and 211 wounded. The second battalion were tasked to escort prisoners back to Holland and the First Battalion followed on later so both were back in Holland for winter quarters.



**Troops commence the attack on Blenheim.**





Marlborough signs the dispatch of his victory, reputedly on an old Tavern slip.

Whilst this article concentrates on the significant battle of Blenheim, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the Royal Regiment (Orkneys) were on continual operations from 1702-1711, a period of nine years during which they were to fight in eleven other significant battles including Ramilles, Oudenarde and Malplaquet.

The Blenheim battle honour is shown on the Regimental Colours of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

**Lord George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney**  
**Colonel of The Royal Regiment 1692-1737**



Lord George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney.

Born in 1666, he was clearly an early starter, he was appointed as a Captain and Company Commander by the age of 12! By 1688, at the age of twenty-two, he was a Lieutenant Colonel. After a spell as Colonel of the Inniskillings and the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers, he was appointed Colonel of the Royal Regiment in 1692 at the age of twenty-six. This appointment was as a result of his gallantry, having distinguished himself at the battle of Steenkirk. As Colonel of the Royal Regiment, he rose to the rank of General in 1711 and throughout the War of Spanish Succession, he continued to distinguish himself in all the actions the Regiment was involved in. At the close of the war he was a member of the Privy Council and Governor of Edinburgh Castle. He was made a Field Marshall and Governor of Virginia in 1736. He died in 1737.

NOTE: For detail of the remainder of the Regiment's involvement in the War of Spanish Succession, please see Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard, by Robert H. Paterson, Vol 1, pages 49 to 64.

Lieutenant Colonel Brian de la Haye OBE and Mr Paul Crompton

### The Lisbon Maru

#### Film

An account of the preview of the documentary film *The Sinking of the Lisbon Maru* was published in Volume 43 of *The Thistle* (Summer 2023). Subsequently the producer, Fang Li, has completed the film and the world premiere was screened on 14 June 2024 as the opening feature at the Shanghai International Film Festival, attracting some excellent reviews. It was selected as Best Documentary Film at the Silk Road International Film Festival in September and it has been submitted by China to the Academy Awards for the International Feature Film category. Fang Li is now considering options for the general release of the film in UK. The possibility of a UK premiere in Edinburgh has been explored and suggested, but Fang Li has not made any decisions yet. Details will be promulgated in due course once Fang Li has decided how he wishes to proceed.

#### Association

Most of the activity to commemorate the victims and survivors of the LISBON MARU tragedy has been inspired and coordinated by Maj Brian Finch, late The Middlesex Regiment and The Queen's Regiment, and we owe him a great debt of gratitude for his dedication to this cause. Seeking to ensure that this continues, he has suggested establishing an association. Thus a small group of relatives of those involved in the incident has created the LISBON MARU Memorial Association (LiMMA). This Association will keep alive the memory of those involved in the incident, principally through creating a forum for sharing information and holding a memorial service on 2 October each year at the LISBON MARU Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. The Regimental Trust will be represented in this Association by the Regimental Secretary, but anyone interested in joining or supporting the Association should get in touch through the email address: [limmauk@outlook.com](mailto:limmauk@outlook.com)



#### Memorial in Zhoushan, China

Following the unveiling of the LISBON MARU Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in October 2021 Mrs Denise Wynne, the daughter of the late Dennis Morley, 2 RS and the last survivor of the LISBON MARU, wrote to President Xi Jinping of China. She explained her late father's wish to have a memorial erected in China to commemorate the courage of the fishermen of Zhoushan in rescuing hundreds of British prisoners of war (POWs) and in so doing causing the Japanese to stop the slaughter and save hundreds more. In August 2022 she received a reply from President Xi to the effect that such a memorial would be built. This letter was delivered personally by hand of the Chinese Ambassador, Zheng Zeguang, and this led to the development of personal relationships between relatives of the POWs on the LISBON MARU and members of the Embassy, and more recently also with the people of Zhoushan, including descendants of the fishermen who had taken part in the rescue in 1942.

Ambassador Zheng has now written to confirm that the memorial will be finished soon and that the official unveiling will take place next year. He said:

"I would like to share with you the good news that the memorial in Zhoushan in remembrance of the fishermen rescuing British POWs during WWII is expected to be finished in the near future. After the construction work is done, the memorial will be open to the public. An official unveiling ceremony for the memorial is planned for 2025 to which the LISBON MARU families will be invited."

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



The 109<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gretna Rail Disaster was marked on Saturday 25 May 2024 by the annual memorial service at Rosebank Cemetery in Leith.

Representatives of the Regiment, descendants of those who died and the local community formed up behind the Association Standard Party and the Association Pipe Band to march to the memorial. The service was conducted by Rev Stephen Blakey, formerly padre of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, and included a reading by Mr Stewart Colquhoun and the laying of a Regimental wreath by Brig George Lowder MBE.



Rev Stephen Blakey (left) leads the service in front of the Memorial.



Lt Michaela Guthrie leads the contingent of Leith Sea Cadets.



l to r: Paul Robertson, David Milne, George Lowder, Rev Stephen Blakey, David Jack, Stuart Aitken and Jamie Colquhoun.



l to r: Stewart Colquhoun, Harry Wright, Rab Dickson, Mick McCann and Peter Mcfadyen.



The Association Pipe Band led the way to the Gretna Rail Disaster Memorial at Rosebank Cemetery 25 May 2024.



The Association Pipe Band, l to r: Rab Burns, Colin Scott, Vicky McLean, Sid Mclvor, Sean Pieres, Darren McLean, Lee Noon, Alastair McNeill, Greig McLean, Mike Pretsell and Torquil Corkerton.

The crash and the tragic loss of life, principally soldiers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots, is widely known but the story of the memorial perhaps less so. The memorial stands in the Western corner of the cemetery alongside the communal grave for the victims of the disaster. It takes the form of a Celtic cross, standing 15ft 6ins, made from Peterhead granite. There is an inscription and an explanatory plaque to the front and shields to each side, one bearing the Regimental Badge and the other bearing the Coat of Arms of the Burgh of Leith. To the rear, against the Cemetery wall, are two tablets, each with five bronze plaques which bear the names of 216 men of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion who died in, or immediately after the disaster. It was paid for by public subscription and was unveiled on 12 May 1916 by the Earl of Rosebery, Honorary Colonel of the Battalion. The Memorial and the grave area are now maintained by The Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Captain Nick Edwardson



## Contalmaison 2024

On Saturday 29 June 2024, we embarked the overnight ferry from Hull to Rotterdam on our yearly pilgrimage with the McCrae's Battalion Trust to Contalmaison in France.

On the anniversary of the start of the battle of the Somme offensive (01 July), we gathered at the cairn dedicated to the fallen of the McCrae's Battalion. The ceremony as always was a very sombre and moving affair and this year the event was attended by a bus full of school children from Essex. It was very nice to see them showing their respects.



**Association Standard Party with some others in front of the McCrae's Battalion Cairn. I to r: Two French Foreign Legion Standard Bearers, RWF reenactor, Paul Robertson, Jamie Colquhoun, Stuart Aitken, Tam Logan, Mike Pretsell and RWF reenactor.**

The Association Standard Party and wreath layers led by Mr Stuart Aitken were fully briefed and ready to go. After the ceremony, we retired to the bench dedicated to the late Lt Col Gary Tait MBE and Patricia Leroy, where we had a wee dram and shared some fond memories of both service and previous trips. A little later, the residents of Contalmaison laid on a hearty meal with refreshments on tap.



**The Association Standard Party on the Lt Col Gary Tait MBE Memorial Bench. Seated I to r: Pam Elliott, Mark Iveson and Lexi Colquhoun. Standing I to r: Paul Robertson, Tam Logan, Gerry Stryker, Mike Pretsell, Stuart Aitken, Stewart Colquhoun, Jamie Colquhoun and Rev Peter Sutton; Padre to McCrae's Battalion Trust.**

With the ceremonies ended we went on to visit several other Commonwealth War Graves Commission sites, concentrating on several personal graves that the historians had been researching but paying our respects to all the fallen.

On a lighter note, we spent several days and nights as a Royal Scots family having breakfast, lunch and some memorable dinners together.

As always, there is a story to tell. We had all purchased 3 polo shirts to wear on the trip that Jamie Colquhoun had arranged for us. They were handed out as we waited on the bus below the Burns Monument, except for big Stu Aitken, his tops were still in Wallyford. Luckily, he had packed extra tops because of his experiences on previous visits. Later in Arras Jamie admitted to leaving some of his good lady Lexi's Clothes behind, still hanging on the living room door.

Before heading home, we had our usual visit to Ypres and the picturesque Market Square for several hours, then off to Rotterdam and the overnight ferry to Hull and then home.

Many thanks to McCrae's Battalion Trust for putting up with us once again and planning a fantastic 5 day trip.

For further information on the McCrae's Battalion Trust please go to <http://www.mccraesbattaliontrust.org.uk> or scan the QR code.

Mr Paul Robertson







Rev Dr Iain May led the service in The Royal Scots Memorial Garden

The memorial garden in the grounds of Lauriston Castle Estate, Edinburgh, was the scene of a memorial service on Saturday 29 June 2024 to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Kohima and the Regiment's role in one of the defining battles of the Second World War.

Regimental records show that between 4 April and 22 June 1944 The 1st Battalion The Royal Scots lost a total of 89 men, with a further 200 wounded, many seriously, in the intense fighting around Kohima. It proved to be one of the most bitterly fought battles of the Second World War and a pivotal moment in the war against Japan in the Far East.

A Standard Party was formed by the Fijian Section of the Association and the service was conducted by Rev Dr Iain May, Chaplain to the Regimental Association. The laying of wreaths was led by Brig George Lowder, President of The Royal Scots Regimental Association.

Fittingly, the service included the Kohima Epitaph which was followed by "The Heroes of Kohima", the Regimental Retreat, played by Pipe Major Burns.

The memorial garden and stone commemorate the service of the 1st Battalion The Royal Scots and, in particular, its Carrier Platoon in Burma between 1943 and 1945. There are 14 trees planted in the grounds of Lauriston Castle Estate as individual memorials to the 14 members of that Platoon who were killed in Burma. Instrumental in the creation of this memorial in the 1990s were Royal Scots veterans George Rogers, Ian Henderson and Morren Warrack; descendants of Lt Col Warrack were amongst those who read out the names of the fallen during the service.

The Kohima Epitaph

*When you go home  
Tell them of us and say  
For your tomorrow  
We gave our today*

These words were inscribed on the memorial to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division which was erected at Kohima after the battle. The verse was originally composed by John Maxwell Edmonds (1875-1958) after the First World War. He is believed to have been inspired by the epitaph written by Simonides of Ceos to honour the Greeks who fell at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC. *"Go tell the Spartans, stranger passing by, that here obedient to their laws we lie"*

**Captain Nick Edwardson**



The parade included relatives and members of the local community.



The Association Pipe Band leads the parade to The Royal Scots Memorial Garden in the Lauriston Castle Estate.



Ashley Reid Hoyle and George Mallatratt of Davidson's Mains Primary School lay a wreath.



## Book Review – Hell in Paradise

Hell in Paradise by Peter Steward and John Head was published in 2024 by the Le Paradis Commemoration Group of Norfolk. It aims to offer a documentation of the events which occurred on that fateful day in May 1940, the stories of those involved on both sides of the conflict, and the accounts of their friends and families. As is outlined in the introduction of the book, this is not a compilation of war strategy, rather a story of the 'strength of the human spirit' (p.16). The society wishes to focus on the narrative of the people, to humanise an incident which was denied by the powers that be for various reasons (not limited to the required destruction of documents when a Battalion is about to be overrun) for quite some time, even after the end of the war. What started out as a small project to bring more attention to those men who stayed behind in order to enable the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk has become a huge repository of heartfelt knowledge, covering not only The Royal Norfolk Regiment, but also those other Regiments who had soldiers in the area, the next largest group being that of The Royal Scots. For those who wish to learn more, or would like to contribute to the project I would highly recommend visiting the website, [www.leparadis massacre.com](http://www.leparadis massacre.com) or scan the QR code to the right.



When we speak of Le Paradis it can apply to the larger area around the village itself in the Lestrem commune of France, where this major stand to delay the German forces and enable the evacuation at Dunkirk was taken. However, when we speak of the massacre of Le Paradis, we are discussing one specific event which occurred at approximately 1730Hrs on 27 May 1940 at Duriez Farm. It was here that ninety-nine soldiers consisting of members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots, and representatives of a number of other British Regiments, surrendered to Nazi troops. Unfortunately, unlike many of those who surrendered or were taken prisoner in the surrounding area, these troops were not with the general German Army (something which would contribute to the denial of the event by officers who were treated well on capture), but instead were members of the SS-Totenkopf led by Obersturmbannführer (Lt Col) Fritz Knöchlein.

On May 27th 1940, 99 soldiers from the Royal Norfolks, the Royal Scots and other regiments surrendered to the Germans in a small village in Northern France known as Paradise.

The *Massacre at Le Paradis* has gone largely unnoticed in the annals of British history, being overshadowed by the evacuation at Dunkirk. These brave soldiers were holding back the German troops to allow the evacuation to take place.

This book is the story of that massacre and also the story of those who died not only in the massacre itself but also fighting in and around Le Paradis.

It is the story of men who fought there and the families they left behind and the story of the steps being taken both in the United Kingdom and in France to keep their memories alive.

*Hell in Paradise* is written by two members of the *Le Paradis Commemoration Group* and features never before published diaries, photographs and drawings.

It is the story of bravery, determination and the men who gave their lives fighting in a village known as Paradise. It is also the story of the only two survivors of the massacre – Privates Bill O'Callaghan and Bert Pooley.



to who they are, but it has not been confirmed. So many family members went to their graves without knowing what happened to their loved ones, truly continuing this 'Hell in Paradise' far beyond the borders of a small French farm.

If you wish to purchase a copy of the book please go to the Regimental website <https://www.theroyalscots.co.uk/hell-in-paradise/> or scan the QR code above.

Amy Elliot  
Volunteer Researcher



# Hell in Paradise

Peter Steward and John Head



At his trial for war crimes on 11 October 1948 a defence was attempted, including accusing the British of using illegal ammunition (hence meaning they did not have to be treated as PoWs) and also of using the surrender as a diversion to attack from a different position, but no evidence has been found to corroborate these claims. Lt Col AP Scotland who was in charge of the interrogation centre (The London Cage) in Kensington, London when Knöchlein was interred there described him as 'a Nazi of the first order, the worst order, a German who dedicated himself to brutality, irresponsible in possession of power, ruthless in execution; a man who represented everything that Adolf Hitler desired in an officer serving the Third Reich' (p. 146). This then was the man who rather than treating these ninety-nine brave men as the PoWs that the law required, gave the order for them to be marched to a space in front of the large barn of Duriez Farm (following the initial group holding a make-shift white flag being shot on sight), have their dog tags removed, and be machined gunned into a pre-dug mass grave. Most survivors were then bayoneted or shot with hand guns in the pit. Miraculously there were two survivors, Private William "Bill" O'Callaghan, a signaller with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment, and Private Albert "Bert" Pooley, also with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment. These two men were instrumental in bringing the truth to light and both of their stories are covered in great detail in the book. It is in no small part due to their efforts that on 21 January 1949, after being found guilty of his crimes, Fritz Knöchlein was hanged in Hameln, Germany.

It is a depiction of Bill and Bert whom you can see in the photograph of the front cover of the book. This is actually a memorial on a roundabout in Lestrem and portrays them standing in a field of ninety-seven helmets. For myself, one of the hardest things to read in this work were the letters. These communications between the wives and mothers of soldiers, attempting to keep each other's spirits up as they await news (while we as readers are well aware of what has happened), alongside some from PoWs or repatriated soldiers, truly highlight what the denial of the events, and the delay in giving news, did to those left behind. I am not ashamed to say I shed more than a few tears reading these sections. Even today forty-eight of the ninety-seven men found in this mass grave are officially unidentified, there can be a reasonable inference as to who they are, but it has not been confirmed. So many family members went to their graves without knowing what happened to their loved ones, truly continuing this 'Hell in Paradise' far beyond the borders of a small French farm.





## Beating Retreat

Beating Retreat was held on Saturday 8 June 2024 on Abercromby Place outside The Royal Scots Club. Members of Club and their guests gathered in the gardens opposite for a reception and were then entertained to a fine repertoire of military music by the Combined Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, accompanied by some of the pipers of the Association Pipe Band. The principal guest was Lord Provost Depute, Lezley Marion Cameron, who took the salute at the end of the performance.



The Lord Provost Depute, Lezley Marion Cameron, takes the salute, flanked by George Lowder, Chair of the War Memorial Fund Trustees and Guy Richardson, Chair of the Club Members' Committee.



The Combined Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland perform on Abercromby Place.



Gathering in the Gardens.

## Armed Forces Day

Armed Forces Day 2024 was celebrated this year on Saturday 21 June, a week earlier than elsewhere in the UK, and is the annual opportunity for the City to show its appreciation to its Armed Forces community. A contingent of Royal Scots joined other veterans in Charlotte Square and then marched down George Street behind our Association Standards, past the dais outside the Assembly Rooms where Lord Provost Depute Lezley Marion Cameron took the salute, and on to St Andrew Square. Following an address by the Lord Provost Depute there was the opportunity to have some refreshments, listen to a varied programme of entertainment and catch up with fellow veterans from other regiments and corps. It was yet again well organised by Legion Scotland and proves a focal point in the year for veterans gathering together.



The Royal Scots contingent in Charlotte Square prior to forming up for the parade.



The Royal Scots contingent and Association Standards in St Andrew Square following the parade.



The Lord Provost Depute, Lezley Marion Cameron, addresses veterans in St Andrew Square following the parade.



George Lowder, leading the Royal Scots contingent, salutes the Lord Provost Depute outside the Assembly Rooms.



Veterans and families joined the local community on Saturday 27 July 2024 at the Scottish Korean War Memorial to mark the cessation of hostilities in the Korean War. The Memorial is located in Witch Craig Park which is a tranquil spot nestled in the hills between Bathgate and Linlithgow. The Memorial consists of an arboretum of 1,100 native Scottish trees, two mounds in the shape of the Ying and Yang on the South Korean flag and between the mounds a shrine in typical Korean style with the name boards of all those killed. It was unveiled and dedicated on 27 July 2000 and it is the only memorial in the UK dedicated solely to the Korean War that lists all the names of those killed. This peaceful and considerate national memorial offers a tranquil environment for taking a quiet moment to reflect. On a slightly blustery day the rain held off long enough for the service and laying of wreaths at the War Memorial. Members of the Association joined Mr Wellwood McCall who served in Korea with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion in 1953.

Lieutenant Colonel David Jack



Wellwood McCall lays a wreath.



l to r: Gerry Stryker, John Docherty, Wellwood McCall, David Jack, Paul Robertson.



## In conversation with Tony Reid

On the 11<sup>th</sup> April this year, surrounded by photographs, newspaper clippings and gleaming trophies, I sat down with WO2 Anthony Reid to hear the story of his career.

Many readers at home will be familiar with Tony and his time with the Royal Scots. From the streets of Northern Ireland in the 70s and 80s, to the ill-fated trip of a lifetime to Cyprus in 1974, and back home to the Barrack Block of Edinburgh Castle, Tony had a far-reaching career meaning he was a familiar face to many.

This was not the story I sat down to hear. What I heard was a tale of a burgeoning talent fostered in Granton, making world firsts in the army and international stage, and of being the only man who can claim he put a stop to the undisputed world middleweight champion, Joe Calzaghe. I am of course talking about his equally decorated career in the boxing ring.

Aged 10, alongside his younger brother William, classmate Mike Imrie and his classmate's older brother Tom Imrie, Tony was convinced to join the Buccleuch Amateur Boxing Club by Angus MacDonald. Here, we already start brushing shoulders with many famous individuals. Tom Imrie, introduced to us as a teen, became one of the most successful amateur boxers in the UK, winning a silver medal in the 1966 commonwealth games, and then a gold in the 1970 games held at Edinburgh's Murrayfield. Angus Macdonald, influential and leading member of the Granton community, had been instrumental in the founding of the Buccleuch club, having approached the Buccleuch family to see if there were any spaces available for such a club to be housed.

Those of you who are reading, and are familiar with the history, will have spotted the Royal Scots' link with the Buccleuch family. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch was founder of the volunteer and fencible regiments, which went on to form the Queen's Edinburgh Light Infantry Militia, later a regiment of The Royal Scots. His grandson, the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, was an owner of large amounts of land in the Granton area and built the Granton Pier in 1838 to coincide with the coronation of Queen Victoria. To support its construction, he additionally built homes and infrastructure in the surrounding area, later giving the houses built to the workers who supported his vision. It was through this fostered community a boxing club was formed.

Returning to Tony, in his youth he saw significant success, with his first two major wins. In consecutive years, aged 14 and 15, he won the Eastern District Youth Championship, earning him medals for both competitions. At a time where you were more likely to be awarded a tea set for winning than a medal, these trophies remain some of Tony's most prized memorabilia.

Soon enough, Tony left his childhood behind and entered the workforce. There was one profession calling him – the army. Inspired by his father, a member of the 7<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> battalion, and with several of his friends joining the same regiment, The Royal Scots felt like the natural fit for him. The fact it was a well-known sporting regiment based in Edinburgh also helped encourage the boxer.

The two life callings went hand in hand together. The long hours of training meant Tony was fit and ready for the physical demands of the army. The discipline meant he was ready and willing to take instruction from his Commanding Officers (although, one or two of his CO's may be out there now with a pen in hand ready to send a letter to the editor).

The army supported Tony throughout his career to continue with his passion for boxing. He recalled Lt Col Jimmy Bain MBE, who he would often spar with and travel through Germany and Holland to enter competitions. He also remembered Lt Col Jim Blythe with whom, whilst on active service and unable to continue with sports, he would run with in the Falkland Islands to maintain his fitness.

His boxing achievements are too numerous to be restricted to a single article in *The Thistle*, but there are a few highlights which cement Tony in boxing history, and one of the Royal Scots' Sportsmen whose story is bound to stand the test of time. Whilst a decorated boxer in his own right, many of his achievements came after he transitioned from boxer to referee and when he began, in his words, giving back to the sport for which he had such a passion.

In 1992, Tony qualified as a European Amateur Boxing Referee – he was the first in the army to do so and meant, at the time, he was the most senior boxing official in the ranks. He was asked to take on the role of secretary of Army Boxing Referees and Judges, which he did for 7 years, all the while helping to open the doors for fellow soldiers to advance their refereeing careers, organising courses and seminars to help train them up.

Throughout 1990-1995 he represented the Scottish Amateur Boxing Association, the Amateur Boxing Association of England and the Army and Combined Services Boxing Association numerous times. One of the standouts, however, was the Amateur Boxing Association ABA Championship of 1992, held in Newcastle and televised live on television. He was selected by Scotland to represent them as a referee, and it was at this time he officiated a match for the famous Joe Calzaghe.



The young boxer and eventual winner, Tony Reid, resting between rounds of the East of Scotland Youth Championship 1963.



Stealing the spotlight. Tony front and centre in the BAFTA nominated short film "Rabbit Punch".



Joe Calzaghe went on after the championship to become the undisputed world middleweight and super middleweight champion – in 46 matches over 11 years he was never beaten. Before his professional career however, in a boxing ring with Tony Reid, he would be stopped in his second round. Tony, recognising Calzaghe's opponent had sustained a significant hit to the head and concerned they might have received a concussion, quickly called the end of the match and announced Calzaghe the victor. He can't quite claim he defeated the undoubted champion, but he did stop him!

Tony continued officiating on the international stage and became recognised as a world-class, entering the list of the top 10 world referees at the time. He did not attempt to hoard his success, however. During this period, he trained up another 5 soldiers, and in 1999 Tony plus the five made an appearance in *Soldier* in 1999 following all five of them qualifying for the major England Amateur Boxing Referee panel.

Tony did not slow down following his army retirement and continued to make the news through his refereeing. In 2003 he was appointed the secretary of the Army Boxing Association, reportedly the first Warrant Officer in history to hold that role. After two years in post, he moved to take up the position of secretary at Leith Victoria Boxing Club. Another famous boxing club with a long Royal Scots pedigree, it is the oldest club in Scotland, having opened in 1919, co-founded by James "Tancy" Lee, a former Royal Scot who fought during the Boer War. Whilst there, the club was the first ever to be inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame, and Tony starred in a BAFTA nominated short film "Rabbit Punch", about two friends from Leith Victoria who go head-to-head in a boxing match.



To watch Rabbit Punch scan the QR Code or go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ndt-EwdDCjA>

Tony wanted his story recorded so that he could stress, and lead by example, the importance of giving back to your sport – once you are at the top you can then help others achieve the same. He did not set out in life to achieve any halls of fame, top tens or army firsts, these were accolades he achieved along the way through his passion for boxing.

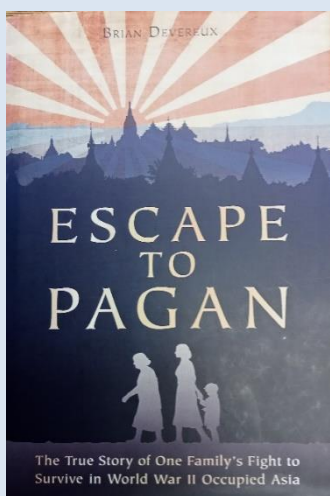
The full recording of "In Conversation with Tony Reid" is available for viewing at The Royal Scots Museum Archives. To arrange a viewing please contact the curator at [museum@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:museum@theroyalscots.co.uk).

**Ms Sophie Lenihan**  
Museum Curator



**Tony Reid, alongside Hearts hero John Robertson, telling his sporting story at The Royal Scots at Tynecastle Park Exhibition, 2024 (photograph by Malcom Ross).**

## Book Review - Escape to Pagan



*Escape to Pagan* by Brian Devereux, published in 2016 by Casemate Publishers of Oxford, follows two parallel journeys taking place within the timeframe of the fall of Hong Kong in World War II. What makes this book a little different from the many other publications which discuss this era of history, is that Brian himself was involved in one of the aforementioned journeys. He, his mother, and grandmother undertook the seemingly impossible task of getting out of Japanese occupied South Asia on foot. Brian was of course very small, a toddler, and their story is truly remarkable, especially the cunning and resourcefulness of his grandmother. The fact you know they must make it does nothing to lessen the terror, as each new event occurred my mind was attempting to calculate how they would find a way out of this latest peril.

The other journey is that of Brian's father, John Michael Devereux, 6284273, who was a Sergeant with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Royal Scots as well as a Regimental Sergeant Major with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Scots. As the book begins with a photograph of Sergeant Devereux which has his date of death (1962) under it, we also know that he made it out alive, but this is an even more extraordinary event than that of his family. While attempting to hold the, now infamous, Gin Drinkers' Line he received two injuries in quick succession either of which could have killed him. One a gun shot through the head, the other an attempted beheading via sword by a young Japanese 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. Both wounds would become infected and invested with maggots on more than one occasion, but ironically would also earn him extra treats or rations from the Japanese soldiers, once he had become a POW, who were mesmerised by the fact he would not die. However, these were in some way the least of his difficulties, as Brian writes: 'If Sergeant Devereux believed that his worst problems were over, he was greatly mistaken. The *Lisbon Maru*, the sharks of the South China Sea, the coal mines of Nagasaki and the atom bomb still awaited his presence'. Yes, he was involved in all of these events!

It is obvious that Brian devoted a lot of attention to trying to piece together his own childhood memories, alongside stories from his mother and grandmother, with factual research. In the appendix of the book Brian does explain why some place names may be hard to find, or why people may not have heard of them, the Burmese names are written phonetically as his mother had pronounced them to him. He himself has been unable to find all of the places which they travelled through when he was a child. The narrative is split between him and his mother (with her sections printed in a smaller case and headed by a lotus flower), it does jump around a lot and he loves utilising foreshadowing which can make you think you have forgotten someone or something before realising it will be explained later. In short, it is a book you need to devote your full concentration to.

One thing that did strike me was how even handed he is with his narrative. Anybody can be praised or called out regardless of where they are from, and that is something which can often be lacking in stories of this nature. For example, he does not shy away from the failings of the British Army which contributed to the issues, their ignoring of good intelligence due to it not being compatible with the racial assumptions made about the Japanese. Something which may be of interest to those who served with the Royal Scots is Brian's discussion of why the Regiment was denied the battle honour "Hong Kong" with its correlation to the, unjustified, nickname "The First to Foot it".

If you can stomach its graphic content, then the book supplies a very interesting perspective on these huge and well-known events. It is not often that first hand accounts of the smaller everyday occurrences during a war are found, especially when a war diary is not available. Brian and his family are able to fill in some of these blanks in a way that no official document of the time would have been able to manage.

**Amy Elliott**  
Volunteer Researcher



**Sgt John Devereux**



## Battlefield Tour - Waterloo

In April 2024 I was lucky enough to be included in a local group (10 pax) conducting their own battlefield tour of the Battle of Waterloo; an immense battle fought between Wellington's Allied Army and Napoleon's French Army in 1815 at which the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots fought courageously, with honour and success. For their outstanding role in the battle the Regiment was awarded the Battle Honour - Waterloo.



**Robbie Scott-Bowden standing next to a memorial on the forward slope of the left flank of Mt St Jean where Lt Gen Picton was shot dead leading his Division, which included the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots.**

Our group leader (ex-AAC), back in January, 2 months before departure, allocated various stands to groups of 2-3 people. Each group (a mixture of retired military, civilians, women and men) then set about preparing their short presentations, with an emphasis on telling stories about the key characters and including humour where possible. Day 1 was spent travelling, arriving at the 1815 Hotel, right next door to the battlefield, in good time for dinner. Day 2 involved setting the scene, visiting the excellent museum, alongside the impressive Lion Mound (with its 256 steps to the viewing platform). From the viewing platform you can see the entire battlefield.



**The body of Ensign James Grant Kennedy still holding the Colour being carried back to the lines by an unknown Sergeant.**

After a picnic lunch, we set off around the stands, starting at the famous Hougomont Farm, and then moving onto Wellington's left flank, where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion fought ferociously and gallantly under the command of Lt Gen Sir Thomas Picton. It was here that the Ensign Kennedy died while carrying the Colour; a sergeant attempted to take the Colour but could not disengage the officer's grip, so the sergeant threw the Ensign, still clutching the Colour, over his shoulder and returned back within the ranks. The French, in recognition of this remarkable act of gallantry, withheld their fire; sadly the sergeant is unknown. We loved such wonderful stories and much enjoyed discussing the use of muskets, rifles, cavalry, different types of cannon and other low level tactics, such as light companies, squares, and the leadership on both sides. On Day 3 we covered the Prussians arriving in the nick of time. We also visited the position of Napoleon's Grand Battery and discussed their tactics. In hindsight we should have visited Quatre Bras where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion initially fought magnificently 2 days before Waterloo having marched 20 miles from near Brussels. They had forced the French off Quatre Bras, but at a cost: 6 x officers and 20 soldiers killed, and 12 officers and 180 soldiers wounded. They then defended Quatre Bras until ordered to withdraw the next morning, in the pouring (almost monsoon) rain to Mt St Jean, near Waterloo.



**The Lion Mound and the 1815 Hotel.**

Waterloo is a fascinating and hugely significant battle. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion it was to be its final and most auspicious battle. The Battalion remained in France until March 1817, when it moved to Canterbury, where it was disbanded on 24 April.

Should you decide to organise your own battlefield tour I suggest that on Day 3 you depart Waterloo in the early afternoon and drive to Ypres to visit some of the World War I cemeteries and attend the poignant Last Post tribute at Menin Gate, conducted at 8.00 pm every night – strongly recommended.

**Brigadier Robbie Scott-Bowden MBE**



**The Regimental Museum connecting with the people of Edinburgh, The Royal Scots and Heart of Midlothian FC as part of the Club's 150<sup>th</sup> Celebrations**

Given the unique synergy between Hearts and The Royal Scots dating back to the outbreak of the Great War and McCrae's Battalion, the Club generously hosted the Outreach event at their Tynecastle stadium in the prestigious European Suite in July. Building on the success of the physical Museum's outreach from the iconic Edinburgh Castle to Dalkeith Palace last November the exhibition focused on the importance of sport and team working in the military, the Rolls of Honour and the impact of conflict on communities.



**Susie Hamilton, Scottish Veterans Commissioner (right), and Ann Park, Hearts FC Director Community and Partnerships open the Exhibition.**

960 people of all ages, including several of Hearts very supportive staff, experienced the interactive exhibition; the majority of whom were from the Regiment's former recruiting area, but there were visitors from as far afield as Aberdeen and Deal, and Berwick and Helensburgh. 176 research enquiries were made, with several families very grateful for information on the experiences of their Royal Scots forebears. The proud, enthusiastic Regimental volunteers of 'Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard' hosted and guided the visitors; and in addition Royals who had represented their countries at sport ensured plenty of engagement and interest.



**Lesley Marion Cameron and Ann Park with Pontius Pilates Bodyguard.**



**Tony Reid explaining his boxing career to visitors and Lesley Marion Cameron, Depute Lord Provost Edinburgh.**



**Andy Stewart explains about his Water Polo achievements.**



**Football meets Rugby Union. John Robertson (l) and Apolosi Satala (r)**



**Susie Hamilton, Ann Park and John Robertson with a few of the RS Hosts.**



**Andy Kay, In-Pensioner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea with visitors and some of Pontius Pilates Bodyguard.**

Planning is already well advanced to mark the 110th anniversary of the Gretna Rail Disaster, when 216 Royal Scots were killed, in May next year. The outreach exhibition to engage and connect with the local people will be at the former 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots Drill Hall in Dalmeny Street, Edinburgh. The bold Tynecastle outreach event and associated media coverage played an important part in keeping the unique 373 years of the First of Foot's story in the public eye.

**Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL**

**Photos by Malcolm Ross**



## Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf 2024

"Time spent on recce is seldom wasted." A very good point when it came to a securing a new venue for this year's Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf on Friday 31 May 2024. Moreover, because of that recce we found an absolute gem that was fitting to the event in the shape of Kingsknowe Golf Club right here in our capital city, Edinburgh. Preparations had been in full flight all year and a record 72 golfers had signed up as well as a healthy number of the hard working caddies. In all, 97 were expected to come along for a class day of golf, good food and banter in true "Royals" style; all in the name of Stewart Snedden. There was also the new banner with the new logo and photographs of Stewart displayed in the Club House with many attendees having their photo taken standing next to it.

The weather prior to the day put the event at risk as the whole of the UK was experiencing the wettest May on record. However, we need not have worried as the hard work from Kingsknowe's grounds staff had it all in hand ensuring the course and greens were in perfect condition to host us and many comments were made about the extremely high standard of the course.



The 2024 players, caddies and winners.

As usual, our current champion for a second year Ian Horribine was piped from the clubhouse to the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee Box by Allan McIntyre, who thought he was doing an ICFT blowing into his pipes and out his backside on route. Once the 1<sup>st</sup> balls were despatched on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> tees the competition was up and running. The banter was flowing between fairways, the Admin Mob were zipping around the course with Ray (not in focus) Thomson looking for a perfect photo opportunity and Charlie MacVicar ensuring everyone was refreshed with lager, water and soft drinks. Well done and thank you both. It was a very keenly fought day by some outstanding golfers, novice hackers and a scattering of players out to win the coveted bog seat for most golf played. However, without a shadow of doubt everyone enjoyed themselves and the company they were in. Lunch was served by our trusty catering team and everyone enjoyed the varied menu and of course the rolls, tea and coffee served earlier in the day. Huge thanks must go to Nicola and her catering team who once again ensured we were fed and watered to a very high standard.

Then to the prize giving. A new champion emerged in the shape of Brian McGeachie. A thoroughly deserved win with a great steady round against a very strong field of budding Tiger Woods wannabes. We would like to thank Jimmy McConnell for presenting the prizes.

<b>Winner</b>	Brian McGeachie	<b>Best Team</b>	Sandy Aitchison, Stu Simpson, Craig Surgeon, Brian de la Haye
<b>Runner Up</b>	Zander Russell	<b>Longest Drive</b>	Chris Paterson
<b>3rd Place</b>	Steven Gibson	<b>Nearest the Pin</b>	Derek Notman
<b>Best Dressed</b>	Paul Brash	<b>Most Golf Played</b>	Willie Garrick
<b>Best Gross</b>	Craig Surgeon	<b>Most Handsome Attendee</b>	James Stevenson

This year's charity was Rachel House CHAS. Spike Mulligan and Charlie MacVicar visited Rachel House and presented them with a cheque for £1130. Well done all.

As the day went by, the weather held and the sun even came out. Many commented that "Big Sneds" had obviously had a quiet word in someone's lug to give us the day we had. With the record number of attendees and various characters ensured that good humour and banter flowed all day. As the final group photograph was taken (out of focus) and the look forward to 2025 was announced, most people slipped off to gather in some of Edinburgh's finest watering holes to carry on the motion of spinning old stories and catching up with old friends. I hope that they remembered to mark their diaries for next year and do it all over again.

Huge thanks to the Kingsknowe Club Secretary Richard and his team for hosting us. A massive thanks to the Admin Mob; Spike Mulligan, Charlie MacVicar, Mark Renton, Ray Thomson and of course myself Eck Wind who put together the event at such a high standard. Thank you to Allan MacIntyre for his piping, and finally to Sneds brother Rab and family for supporting us. Last but not least, thank you to all of those who attended and supported this fantastic event.

Next year's event will take place at Kingsknowe on Friday 30 May 2025. Come on and join us. I know we can get over 100 to attend and remember Stewart. I am most certain that you will enjoy it.

**Mr Eck Wind MBE**

**The message below was received from Stewart's brother Robert (Rab) Snedden.**

Hi Spike, I thought I would get in touch regarding this year's (2024) Memorial Golf for our Stewart. It seems to be going from strength to strength. A testament to yourself, Eric & the rest of the organisers who put it together. (Apologies as I don't know all their names). For so many of Stewart's army colleagues & friends who still attend this event is truly remarkable. It shows how much he was respected and loved. I would personally like to thank the Admin Mob for presenting me with the engraved glasses and for the tartan top with the logo on it. That was a nice surprise. It was also nice to see various charities benefiting too with the raffle. My Gordon (Rab's son) mentioned to me he thought that was a nice touch getting Michael (Gizz) a few golf lessons. Looks like the camaraderie never leaves you.

Here's to next year.

**Rab Snedden pictured right with his new tartan top.**







**Winner Brian McGeachie (r)**



**Runner Up Zander Russell (r)**



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Steven Gibson (r)**



**Most Handsome James Stevenson (r)**



**Most played golf Willie Garrick (r)**



**Longest Drive Chris Paterson (r)**



**Closest to the Pin Derek Notman (r)**



**Winning Team l to r; Brian de la Haye, Jimmy McConnell (Prize giver) Craig Surgeon, Sandy Aitchison and Stu Simpson**



**Best Dressed Paul Brash (r)**



**Best Gross Craig Surgeon (r)**



**Stewarts brother Rab (r) receives glasses engraved with the Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf logo**



**Cammy Hastie (r) receives the Hunting Stewart tartan cap with the Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf logo**



**2023 Champion Ian Horribine piped to the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee by Allan MacIntyre**



**I think straighter clubs are in order for Eck Wind and John Millar (r)**



**Straight clubs work better. Stu Simpson (l) and Zander Russell**



**Kevin Murphy with David Milne spotting**



**Michael Grady**



**Malcolm Fearon**



**Billy Stewart with George Dickson watching on**



## The Pikeman Trophy Retained 2024

The Royal Scots Golf Club (RSGC) retained the Pikeman Trophy with a 3-3 draw at Harburn Golf Club on 02 August 2024. The Pikeman was retained due a convincing winning result of 4-2 in 2023 at Pumpherston Golf Club.

**History.** Major Adam Lothian TD who served in the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Royal Scots was a stalwart member of the Royal Scots Golf Club. After the war he served with the TA and was awarded Territorial Decoration. Adam was also a playing member of the Corstorphine 8:30 Golf Club.

In 1986 Adam proposed that the 8.30 GC play an annual match against the Royal Scots GC which gained unanimous approval from both clubs. The minutes of the first match read:

*"This inaugural match was held at Dundas Park Golf Club on 26th June 1987. There were some notable performances, including a hole in one by Russell Gourlay. Many new friendships were bonded, and the match was played in the spirit intended. The match was won by the Royal Scots Club by 4½ to ½. After the match we returned to the Royal Scots Club for high tea and the presentation of the magnificent trophy donated by Adam Lothian. It is hoped this fixture will continue for many years." (The trophy presented was a scale model of a special Locomotive, nowadays just called "The Train")*

In 1999 Adam presented the Pikeman trophy to the Royal Scots Golf Club as the prize for the return match against the Corstorphine 8:30 club. The trophies, the "Train" and the "Pikeman" form the centre point at the annual dinner, with cup and medal presentation held separately by both clubs. The losing team's representative had the very long walk to hand over the relevant trophy to the winning club. If a match is halved the previous year's winners retain the trophy until the next fixture.

### Summary of match results are:

1999 RSGC	2012 RSGC
2000 8.30	2013 8.30
2001 8.30	2014 Retained
2002 8.30	2015 8.30
2003 RSGC	2016 8.30
2004 RSGC	2017 8.30
2005 Retained	2018 8.30
2006 8.30	2019 RSGC
2007 RSGC	2020 Retained
2008 RSGC	2021 8.30
2009 Retained	2022 RSGC
2010 Retained	2023 RSGC
2011 8.30	2024 Retained



RSGC Summary	
Win	9
Retained	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>
Corstorphine 8:30 GC Summary	
Win	11
Retained	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

Major Arthur Frame  
Captain RSGC

The Winning Team. l to r; Cliff McAuley, Billy Young, Norman Gregor, Jimmy McConnell (President), Kenny Dow (kneeling) Arthur Frame (Captain), Larry Gilbert, Bobby Gill, Zander Russell, Ewan Campbell. Missing from Photo Brian McGeachie and David Milne.

## Sighting Report - When, Where, Who and What they are doing?

A large, well fairly large, crowd gathered today, 4 August 2024, in Inverness. Some of these handsome faces have not been seen for some time and a not so handsome face (3rd from the left) seen all the time!

Come on all, don't be forgotten. If you have a wee get together, a chance meeting or even a planned meeting with old Royals then send in a photo or two with a few lines of what you were up to for the "Sighting Report". Kindly send them to [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk) with subject heading clearly marked as **SIGHTING REPORT – Possible Article**. Please use high resolution photographs where possible and don't forget to put the names of those in the photo.



l to r; Mike Low MBE, Dougie Melville, Mark Mcleod, David Dickson, Bill Sutherland , Dave Busby, Andy Caine and Tam Cornwall.



## News from The Royal Hospital Chelsea

It is a while since our last note from "Down South" so this will be a bit longer, but I hope informative. We will start at the end of 2023 when the Hospital was fully in the Festive swing and one of the events is a Christmas Jumper Day. One of the few occasions that all three In-Pensioner Royals get together for a photo, finely decked out in our bright Christmas Jumpers.



Vic Lucas, Danny Dempsey and Andy Kay.

2024 and the RHC commemorated Robert Burns with a Supper held in the Great Hall. Victor Lucas was invited to "Address the Haggis" and I was asked to recite one of Burn's Poems and did "A Man's a Man for a' That". A great evening with good food, good company and some highland dancing – far too energetic for me! Although there are about 20 Scots in RHC, it is the Royals that are approached to keep up traditions.



Vic Lucas "Addressing the haggis".

As ever we welcome visitors from the Regimental Family at any time and this year we have been visited by Lt Col Gordon Rae, Lt Col Jim Blythe and Mrs Mhairi Blythe, and on Founder's Day by Col Peter Fraser-Hopewell and Mrs Clare Fraser-Hopewell. It is great to have these visits, bringing us up to date with Regimental news and general chit-chat. If anyone is in London, and has some time to spare, please do drop in. Our contact details can be obtained from the Regimental Office.



I to r: Andy Kay, Jim Blythe and Vic Lucas.



Andy Kay and Peter Fraser-Hopewell.

Founder's Day this year was held on 6 June, clashing somewhat with national D-Day commemorations, but nonetheless was supported by the Royal Family as usual. This year our Reviewing Officer was HRH The Princess Royal, our Association Patron. I was tasked with opening the car doors as they arrived, and opened the door for her husband Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence.

One of the great attractions of the hospital is the opportunity to go on visits and trips to many different locations, events and shows. For your author, these included this year alone trips to Edinburgh Personnel Recovery Unit in Gilmerton, the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Constitution Hill in London (up at 3am for that one!), and the Chelsea Flower Show where I had the pleasure of meeting the singer Katherine Jenkins who is also a good friend of the RHC. I also was invited to the Annual Service of the Knights Bachelor Society in St Paul's Cathedral and later to a reception at the Apothecaries Hall where I was able to have a chat with the actor Sir Ben Kingsley (what a name dropper!). Another of the opportunities that the RHC offers is to take in some 'kulchur' and I have been to several symphony concerts at Cadogan Hall, Brass Band Concerts at Westminster Abbey and to Holland Park Opera Society to see their performance of Gilbert & Sullivan's "Yeomen of the Guard". (We were audience, not participants!) This is just a small list of opportunities offered to In-Pensioners and there are many more available. I am due to visit the Cunard liner Queen Mary 2 for lunch and also to a black-tie event in East Midlands for a veterans' charity.



Andy Kay (I) with Katherine Jenkins at the Chelsea Flower Show.

Looking forward, our next main event at the Hospital is Remembrance. All three of us will be at Horse Guards for the March Past the Cenotaph followed by lunch in the East India Club as well as the events surrounding this period. Last year I was in Paris representing the Royal Hospital but was back in time for the lunch. Vic Lucas and Danny Dempsey paraded with the Regimental cohort. On Monday 11 November, the Hospital will be holding a Drumhead Service.



Andy Kay (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) at in Paris for Remembrance 2023.

All three RS In-Pensioners are members of the Southern Branch and Vic Lucas and I joined them at Blenheim Palace for the commemoration of the 320<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle, but that will be covered elsewhere by Lt Col Brian de la Haye. Danny Dempsey would have loved to have joined us but felt it was a bit too much for him.

I hope I have given an idea of what is possible at the Hospital. There is no pressure to do anything or take on anything but the hospital offers so much. In-Pensioners can do as much as they like or as little as they like, for instance both Vic Lucas and I are Museum Guides, taking visitor tours round our museum explaining the history of this extraordinary and unique place.

**Mr Andy Kay**  
In-Pensioner – Royal Hospital Chelsea



## News from Stockton-on-Tees

Some of you may know that I have lived in Stockton-on-Tees for many years and I am a regular at the Last Post Memorial Bar in my village of Thornaby. The bar is full of military memorabilia, which has been donated by serving members of the Armed Forces and Veterans. I recently donated a McCrae's Battalion scarf. The bar also contains a photograph of Colours that were presented to the Regiment by Queen Victoria on 26 September 1876 at Ballater.



For more information on the Last Post Memorial Bar scan the QR Code above or go to <https://www.facebook.com/julie.cooperbosslady>



John Grosvenor in the Last Post Memorial Bar

Mr John Grosvenor



The Last Post Memorial Bar



The Last Post Memorial Bar

## David Taylor

A small group hosted David Taylor for lunch in the Douglas Room of the Royal Scots Club on Tuesday 2 Apr 2024 to get him into some familiar surroundings and meet up with some well-kent faces.



Standing l to r: Yvonne Reynolds, Dickie Donovan, David Dickson, Gordon Rae, Patrick Faulkner and John Dent.  
Seated l to r: David Simpson, David Taylor and Robert Watson.



## Notes on serving Royals

Brig	Graeme	Wearmouth	DA Baghdad
Brig	Nick	Wight-Boycott	PJHQ (RMAS from December)
Col	Piers	Strudwick	DA Netherlands
Lt Col	Ross	Brookfield	APC
Lt Col	Toby	Bunney	Army HQ
Lt Col	Jeremy	Giles	Army HQ
Lt Col	Andy	Lumley	BLO Germany
Lt Col	Frank	Reeves	PJHQ
Lt Col	Sean	Semple	RAPTC HQ RAPTC
Maj	Billy	Garrick	ITC
Maj	Tam	Lindsay	MRTC
Maj	Zander	Russell	5 RRF
Maj	Dean	Fraser	1 RANGER
Capt	Stephen	Dawson	Army HQ

Capt	Steven	Gibson	3 SCOTS
W01	Steven	Paterson	2 SCOTS
W02	David	Williamson	Aberdeen UOTC
SSgt	Ray	Basalaia	INT CORPS Aberdeen UOTC
CSgt	Barry	McIntosh	A Coy, 6 SCOTS
Sgt	Peter	Paterson	A Coy, 6 SCOTS
Cpl	Euan	Jardine	SCOTS DG
Cpl	Viliame	Kama	1 RANGER
Cpl	Joeli	Raduva	2 SCOTS
Cpl	Steven	Thomas	1 RANGER
AS1	Thomas	Shute	RAF Lossiemouth

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



### Governor of Edinburgh Castle

We wish to congratulate Maj Gen Bob Bruce CBE DSO on his appointment as Governor of Edinburgh Castle, a role he assumed on 9 September 2024. A formal installation ceremony will take place in Spring 2025. The Governor of Edinburgh Castle is The King's representative in Scotland, who maintains a link between the Castle and Scottish soldiers. The appointment that can be traced back to 1108. Gen Bob joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion in Werl, Germany in 1987. He was the last Commanding Officer, having taken command in Iraq on the Battalion's final operational tour and was the first Commanding Officer of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion The Royal Regiment of

Scotland. He later command 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanised Brigade, including a deployment to Afghanistan as British Task Force Helmand. He was then Director Combat at Army Headquarters, after which he deployed again as Deputy Commander Joint Task Force Kuwait and then returned to Army Headquarters as Director Capability, and during this time he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Army Board. His final assignment was as Military Secretary and General Officer, Scotland. We wish Gen Bob a successful tenure as the Governor of Edinburgh Castle.

### Brig Nick Wight-Boycott OBE

We wish to congratulate Brig Nick Wight-Boycott on his next appointment in Dec 2024 as Commander Officer Training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS). This new position has been created following a review and wider restructuring of initial training within the Army, but it includes many of the responsibilities previously undertaken by Commandant RMAS. We wish Brig Nick success in this new position.



### The Royal Scots Regimental Trust SCIO

The process of governance streamlining has taken a number of years, but is now complete. The Royal Scots Regimental Trust SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) is a new charity, registered as a charity in Scotland with the registration number SC052009, and incorporates three of our Regimental Pillars – Benevolence & Welfare, Museum & Heritage, and the Association. There is one set of Trustees for the Trust and each Trustee has specific responsibilities. The Museum & Heritage functions are directed by the Museum & Heritage Committee, while the Association retains the Office Bearers; all of whom report to the Trustees.

#### Trustees

Brig George Lowder MBE	Chair
Maj Gen Bob Bruce CBE DSO	Vice Chair
Maj Norman Soutar MC	Club
Lt Col John Donovan MBE	Benevolence
Capt Alex Dockar	Finance
Capt Nick Edwardson	Communications
Maj Stu Marshall	Association
Mrs Jandy Stevenson	Governance
Mr Keith Oliver OBE WS	Legal
Mr Allan Carswell	Museum

#### Museum & Heritage Committee

Lt Col John Donovan MBE	Chair
Brig George Lowder MBE	
Col Martin Gibson OBE DL	
Lt Col Gordon Rae	
Mr Allan Carswell	
Lt Col David Goodacre OBE	Treasurer
Mrs Cathy Tucker	
Lt Col David Jack	Secretary

#### Regimental Association

Brig George Lowder MBE	President
Maj Stu Marshall	Chair
Mr Paul Robertson	Vice Chair
Mr David Milne	Secretary
Mr Jamie Colquhoun	Treasurer

### Your Obituary – Don't be forgotten

Most of us avoid talking about death but it is most definitely something that we cannot avoid. When reading each edition of the Thistle, it sad to see so many Royals heading to the "great re-org in the sky". However, what is really sad is the lack of obituaries!

We see people we knew mentioned in one line. **ONE LINE!** Not good enough, but really it's no one else's fault but our own. When we leave the Royals there is no real information recorded on who we were and what we did.

Please, come and join others by writing your own obituary. Then email it to [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk) clearly marked "My obituary and your name".

Some suggestions to mention;

- When and where born
- Childhood
- Education
- Why you joined
- Joined where and training
- Your career, Promotions, Tours
- Posting, Courses
- Funnies
- Sports
- People to thank, inspired, helped you
- When you left
- What you did when you left
- Family, pets
- What your hobbies were
- Favourite things to do
- Photo/s with caption/s
- Add any interesting things
- Survived by
- Relatives contact details so Admin can confirm that it is OK to publish your obituary.

Don't be a forgotten "Royal" and let us all live on forever. Get started now and get it sent in. Kindly let your family know that you have done an obituary and that the Regimental Office may be in touch to confirm they can still use it in the Thistle.



## Deaths

<b>Mr David Higgins</b>	11 Apr 2024 1 RS	<b>Mr Walter Wilson</b>	25 May 2024 8 RS	<b>Mr Norman Wigton</b>	30 Jun 2024 1 RS
<b>Mr Steven Crombie</b>	18 Apr 2024 1 RS	<b>Mr Robert Chapman</b>	05 Jun 2024 1 RS	<b>Mr George Wardlaw Geddes</b>	07 Aug 2024 1 RS
<b>Mr George Watson</b>	11 May 2024 1 RS	<b>Mr Lewis Nelson</b>	10 Jun 2024 8, 7/9 and 1 RS	<b>Mr Michael O'Connor</b>	27 Aug 2024 1 RS
<b>Mr William Burns</b>	13 May 2024 1 RS	<b>Maj Neil Homewood</b>	16 Jun 2024 1 RS		
<b>Mr Keith Christie</b>	22 May 2024 1 RS	<b>Maj Christopher Delacombe</b>	25 Jun 2024 1 RS		

## Obituary

### Major Christopher Delacombe

1 August 1942 – 25 June 2024

Christopher Delacombe, who has died aged 81, served in the Regiment for 21 years followed by a successful career as a company secretary, and was an inspirational Chair of the Southern Branch of the Association.

Christopher was born on 1 August 1942 at Egton, near Whitby, Yorkshire to Maj Rohan "Jumbo" (later Maj Gen Sir Rohan) Delacombe, who was second-in-command of the 7/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the time, and his wife Joyce. He was educated at Eton where he developed a passion for history and reading, and took full advantage of opportunities to ski, sail, row and play rugby and tennis. A life of adventure was clear from escapades such as those of the Dustbin Gang in 1960 which left dustbins on the school library which initially proved difficult to remove. On leaving school he entered the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst; while on leave in August 1961 in Berlin where his father was GOC he witnessed the erection of barbed wire that later became the Wall.

Commissioned on 4 August 1962 into The Royal Scots, he was posted to Tripoli where he joined A Company as a platoon commander. When the Battalion returned to Edinburgh he was part of a group who drove the 3,000 miles, visiting Tunisia, Italy, Switzerland and France on the route. In May 1964 the Battalion was deployed to Aden and A Company moved into the Thumier area with a few days of arrival and Christopher's platoon was soon in action as insurgents attacked the defensive positions. After a move to B Company and a short spell at the Depot at Glencorse as a training platoon commander, he returned to A Company, serving in Tidworth and Osnabruck in the mechanised role. He was Assistant Operations Officer for a tour in Northern Ireland in 1970 and then OC Command Company, OC Admin Company and second-in-command HQ Company in Tidworth in the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force (Land) (AMF(L)) and then Cyprus followed by Edinburgh. The tour in Cyprus was expected to be relatively quiet until the Turkish invasion provided some demanding situations. Christopher spent a year at the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College in 1976, returning to Scotland as SO2 Training at HQ Scotland from January 1977 to May 1979, followed by a further two years with the Battalion in Edinburgh before his final assignment in the Army as SO2 Manning at HQ Scottish Division. He retired on 20 July 1983 having participated in the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary parade at Holyrood Park.



Christopher qualified in 1983 as a Chartered Secretary and subsequently carved out a successful career as a company secretary. Initially based in Sussex he soon moved to Surrey where he became quickly integrated in the local community. A life-long committed Christian, he became deeply involved with the Parish, acting as Sidesman, Chalice Assistant and Crucifer, reading lessons, and serving on the PCC Finance Committee. He was a founder member of the St Lawrence Friends' Heritage Trust, which has done so much to preserve the fabric of the church. He was on the Gordons School Foundation, and volunteered his time for many charities such as The Arts Society Runnymede. He was appointed to the Royal Company of Archers in 1986 and he served as Chair of the Southern Branch of the Regimental Association from 2012 to 2022 providing the organisation of the Regimental participation in annual Remembrance events at Westminster and the Cenotaph, for which he was awarded the Regimental Prize in 2023.

He is survived by Lucy whom he married in 1970, daughters Caroline, Sophie and Katie, and granddaughters Rosie and Isabelle.

## A Letter from Canada

I was very sorry to hear of the untimely death of Christopher Delacombe on the 25 June 2024. We had been friends since Sandhurst and, possibly, knew each other even before that as our fathers were contemporaries and friends with, finally, General Sir Rohan commanding the British Sector in Berlin and my father commanding the British troops in BAOR. In addition, both were Colonels of their respective regiments. Interestingly General Sir Rohan's grandfather Captain William Delacombe had commanded the British troops on San Juan Island during "The Pig War" so already had a close connection to Vancouver Island.

Christopher and I were both in Intake 29 at Sandhurst and, although we were in different colleges, we were in many of the same academic classes and joined several of the same societies and thus became friends. Indeed somewhere I have a photo of the two of us dressed as "gentlemen of Japan" for the 1962 RMAS production of "The Mikado" each with a flask of whisky in our long sleeves!

After commissioning from Sandhurst in 1962 we went our separate ways to our fathers' regiments, in Christopher's case, The Royal Scots. So it wasn't until I left the British Army on Vancouver Island and joined The Canadian Scottish Regiment, Princess Mary's (CScotR), the allied regiment to The Royal Scots, that we reconnected. When I became CO Christopher was incredibly helpful in assisting me understand and connect with The Royal Scots. Also, whenever Jinny & I went to Sandhurst for Intake 29 reunions we stayed with Christopher and Lucy who lived nearby.



Captain William Delacombe and family at the Commandant's House English Camp, San Juan Island, 1872. Christopher's great grandfather is standing on the top step.



This assistance really came to the fore when I was appointed Honorary Colonel CScotR in 2012 having been away from the regiment since handing over as CO in 1976! In 2013 when I paid my obligatory courtesy UK visit to our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH The Princess Alexandra, and our allied regiment, The Royal Scots, during Remembrance Week Christopher went into top gear. He arranged for me to speak at The Royal Scots remembrance service in Westminster Abbey and attend the "Field of Remembrance" ceremonies with Princes Philip and Harry in the grounds of the abbey. Then, on Remembrance Sunday he arranged for me to march with The Royal Scots contingent past HM The Queen and the Whitehall Cenotaph (a spine-chilling experience with 10,000 veterans on parade) with their Colonel-in-Chief, HRH The Princess Royal, taking the salute before "falling out" at Horse Guards Parade. The day culminated with The Royal Scots annual lunch at the East India Club where, again, I was invited to say a few words. It was so typical of Christopher to be so thoughtful and hospitable!



Christopher Delacombe (r) and others chatting with HRH Prince Philip.

In 2015 I was able to reciprocate in a small way by inviting him to join The Royal Scots contingent to our Battle of Kitchener's Wood centennial commemorations at the Canadian memorial in Green Park followed by our reception at Canada House for HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and our own Colonel-in-Chief HRH The Princess Alexandra. Cameras were prohibited but many photos were taken by the approved royal photographers. One of my favourites is of Christopher talking to Prince Philip!

I'll miss him terribly!

**Colonel (Ret'd) Richard D. B. Talbot C.D., P.J.M.**  
**Honorary Colonel, The Canadian Scottish Regiment.**

For more information on The Canadian Scottish Regiment go to <https://www.cscots.ca/> or scan the QR code.



## Donations and Legacies

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

With the creation of a new charity as part of our governance streamlining process we now have new bank accounts. Further details can be obtained from the Regimental Office on 0131 557 0405 or [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk)

## Readers articles invitation – "Jock"anory

We would like to invite you, "The Royal Scots Family", to submit articles to your journal, The Thistle. Write a story of some event, a good time had or something funny you were involved in. If possible, support it with a photograph/s with name/s.

Please send them to [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk)

Kindly put **THISTLE ARTICLE** in the email subject heading.

## Winter Edition of the Thistle

The Winter 2024 edition of the Thistle (Vol 46) will cover events during the period 1 September 2024 – 31 March 2025. We aim to publish this edition by 30 April 2025. All items for inclusion should be submitted to the Regimental Office via [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk) no later than 4 April 2025, although it would be appreciated if contributions are submitted as soon as possible after events have occurred rather than leaving it to the last minute. **All photographs should be submitted in high resolution and accompanied by a caption, which includes names of all people in the photograph.**

Kindly put **THISTLE ARTICLE** in the email subject heading.

## Volunteers Required

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

## Association Details

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

### Highland

First Sunday of the month at 6.00pm at Raigmore Recreation Rooms, Inverness

Contact: Derrick Cameron  
[derrick1974@hotmail.com](mailto:derrick1974@hotmail.com)

### Edinburgh

Suspended animation

### The Royal Scots Association Pipe Band

Contact: Torquil Corkerton  
[torquil@corkerton.com](mailto:torquil@corkerton.com) or [contact@royalscotspipeband.org.uk](mailto:contact@royalscotspipeband.org.uk)

### East of Scotland

Last Saturday of the month at 7.30pm at RBL Prestonpans

Contact: Jamie Colquhoun  
[Jamiecolquhoun@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Jamiecolquhoun@hotmail.co.uk)

### Northern Ireland

First Tuesday of the month at RBL Ards

Contact: David McKendrick  
[davidsmck1@sky.com](mailto:davidsmck1@sky.com)

### Southern

No regular branch meetings, but events organised throughout the year.

Contact: Monty Stuart-Monteith  
[monty@shawsequestrian.com](mailto:monty@shawsequestrian.com)

### Central Scotland

First Sunday of the month at 2.00pm at Hillcroft Hotel, Whitburn, West Lothian

Contact: David Milne  
[david.milne3343@live.co.uk](mailto:david.milne3343@live.co.uk)

### Fijian

Quarterly Meetings  
 Contact: Peni Ravutia  
[bogiravutia0506@gmail.com](mailto:bogiravutia0506@gmail.com)

For more information contact:

### The Royal Scots Regimental Office

The Royal Scots Club  
 29 - 31 Abercromby Place  
 Edinburgh EH3 6QE  
 Tel: 0131 557 0405  
 Email: [admin@theroyalscots.co.uk](mailto:admin@theroyalscots.co.uk)



## Royal Scots Golf Club Details

**President:** Jimmy McConnell

**Captain:** Arthur Frame  
**Vice Captain:** Zander Russel

**Secretary:** David Morris  
**Contact:** [bampops1@gmail.com](mailto:bampops1@gmail.com)

## Forecast of Events

The Forecast of Events is published on the Regimental website and updated at the beginning of each month. Details of specific events can be found on the Regimental website on the Upcoming Events page at <https://www.theroyalscots.co.uk/forecast-of-events/> or scan the QR Code to visit the page.

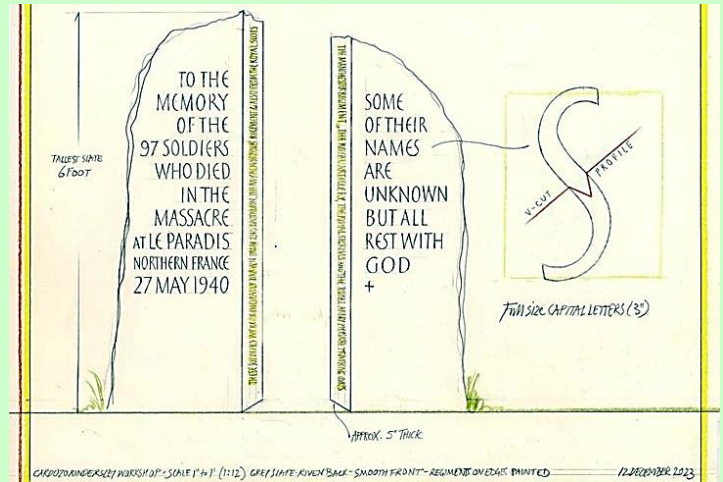
The two main priority events next year will be the unveiling of an addition to The Royal Scots Monument and the dedication of a Le Paradis Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. An outline of each event is shown below and further details will be published in due course.

Some other specific events for 2025 are listed below.



### The Royal Scots Monument

We have initiated a project to add a bronze figure-head of the late Queen Elizabeth II to The Royal Scots Monument. It is anticipated that this will be ready early in 2025 and we are planning for a formal unveiling in late Spring/early Summer 2025.



### Le Paradis Memorial

A proposal submitted by the Le Paradis Commemorative Group for a Le Paradis Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum has been approved. Detailed planning and fund-raising has been progressing over the last year. The Regimental Trustees have agreed to make a contribution and have provided advice on the proposed wording on the Memorial. It is anticipated that the Memorial will be dedicated in September 2025 and it is hoped that there will be a strong Royal Scots presence at the event.



Should you wish to make a contribution then please scan the QR code or visit <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/11138#!/DonationDetails>



### Museum Outreach Exhibition

The main Museum Outreach Exhibition 2025 will be held 20 – 24 May 2025 and will focus on the Gretna Rail Disaster and the Gallipoli Campaign. It will be centred around an exhibition in the Out of the Blue café in the former 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion drill hall in Dalmeny Street, culminating with the annual memorial service in Rosebank Cemetery.

### Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea

It is anticipated that Founder's Day 2025 at the Royal Hospital will be held on Thursday 5 June 2025. We expect to receive 3 pairs of tickets for this event. The Royal Hospital protocol office normally request names in early March, so anyone who wishes to attend this event should submit their bid to the Regimental Secretary no later than 28 February 2025.

### Armed Forces Day 2025

This is normally held on a Saturday at the end of June so we anticipate this taking place on either Saturday 21 or Saturday 28 June 2025. We are hoping for a strong contingent to join the parade.

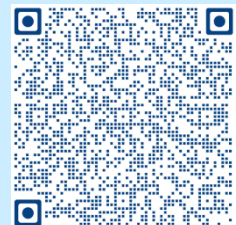
### VE and VJ Day

2025 will mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE and VJ Day. Specific activity will be arranged to support national events, but it is anticipated that a VJ Day memorial service will be conducted at The Royal Scots Memorial Garden in the Lauriston Castle Estate.

### The 2025 Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf

Should you wish to take part in the Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf on Friday 30 May 2025 then scan the QR to the right? This will take you to our "Booking Form", kindly read and fill it in. You can also send an email to [snedsgolf@gmail.com](mailto:snedsgolf@gmail.com) and you will automatically receive an email with a link to the "Booking Form". Kindly share this information with others who may wish to attend. Thank you.

We look forward to seeing you at [Kingsknowe Golf Club](https://www.kingsknowe.co.uk/), 326 Lanark Road, Edinburgh, EH14 2JD.



### The Admin Mob



Day/Month	Event	Time	Remarks
<b>Oct 2024</b>			
Wed 2	LISBON MARU Memorial Service	1200	National Memorial Arboretum
Sat 12	Fiji Day celebrations		
Tue 15	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Mon 21	Opening of the Garden of Remembrance, Princes Street Gardens	1030	Princes Street Gardens
Mon 21	Remembrance Service at Royal Scots Monument	1200	RS Monument
Mon 21	Veterans' Curry Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 22	The Royal Scots War Memorial Fund (RSWMF) Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 25	The Royal Scots Regimental Trust (RSRT) Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 25	Nagpore Dinner Night	1900	Royal Scots Club
<b>Nov 2024</b>			
Fri 1	Officers' Golf Match		TBC
Fri 1	Officers' Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
Sun 3	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 7	Opening of the Field of Remembrance Westminster	1030	Southern Branch
Sat 9	Remembrance Service at Glencorse Gates	1045	Glencorse Barracks
Sat 9	Regimental planting of crosses at the Field of Remembrance , Westminster, followed by a Remembrance Service in the Abbey Cloisters	1800	Southern Branch
Sun 10	Remembrance Sunday		
	Cenotaph	1030	
	City Chambers	1045	
	Canongate Kirk	1045	
	The Royal Scots Club	1200	
	Haymarket	1045	
	Peebles	1045	
	Whitburn	1045	
	Prestonpans	1045	
	Linlithgow	1045	
Mon 11 (TBC)	Remembrance Service at the Scottish National War Memorial	1045	The Castle
Tue 19	RSRT Executive Committee Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Thu 21	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Sat 30	St Andrew's Day Service	TBC	St Cuthbert's Church
<b>Dec 2024</b>			
Tue 10	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Tue 10	RS Club Trustees, Directors and Committee Christmas Lunch	1200	Royal Scots Club
Wed 11	RSRT Volunteers Christmas Lunch	1230	Royal Scots Club
Thu 12	RSWMF Trustees' Meeting	1400	Royal Scots Club
Fri 20	Regimental Office closes for the Festive period		
Fri 20	Regimental Museum closes for the Festive period		
<b>Jan 2025</b>			
Mon 6	Regimental Office reopens		
Mon 6	Regimental Museum reopens		
Tue 14	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Thu 23	Museum Committee Meeting	1030	Royal Scots Club
Sat 25	Association Burn's Night Supper	1900	Hillcroft Hotel, Whitburn
<b>Feb 2025</b>			
Sun 2	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Tue 25	RSRT Executive Committee Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Thu 27	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 28	Association AGM	1900	Royal Scots Club
<b>Mar 2025</b>			
Thu 20	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Tue 25	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 27	RSWMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 28	The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) Regimental Day		392 <sup>nd</sup> anniversary
Fri 28	The Royal Regiment of Scotland Formation Day		
Sat 29	Regimental Day Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
<b>Apr 2025</b>			
Wed 9	RS Club AGM	1900	Royal Scots Club
Thu 24	Museum Committee Meeting	1030	Royal Scots Club
<b>May 2025</b>			
Sun 4	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Tue 6	RSRT Executive Committee Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 23	RSRT Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Sat 24	110 <sup>th</sup> Gretna Memorial Service	1030	Rosebank Cemetery



Day/Month	Event	Time	Remarks
<b>May 2025</b>			
Sat 24	Le Paradis Commemoration		Le Paradis, France
Tue 27	Le Paradis 85 <sup>th</sup> anniversary Memorial Service		Norwich Cathedral
Wed 28	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Thu 29	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 30	Stewart Snedden Memorial Golf Match	0700	Kingsknowe Golf Club
<b>Jun 2025</b>			
Thu 5 (TBC)	Royal Hospital Chelsea Founder's Day	1000	RH Chelsea
Tue 17 (TBC)	Riding of the Marches Linlithgow		Linlithgow
Sat 22 (TBC)	Gallipoli Memorial Service	1030	St Giles's Cathedral
Sat 28 (TBC)	Armed Forces Day	1000	Edinburgh
Sun 29 – Fri 4 Jul	McCrae's Battalion Trust visit to the Somme		Contalmaison, France
<b>Jul 2025</b>			
Tue 22	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Sat 26	Korean War Memorial Service	1030	The Scottish Korean War Memorial, Witch Craig Park
Tue 29	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 31	RSWMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
<b>Aug 2025</b>			
Sun 3	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 15	VJ Day Memorial Service	1030	Lauriston Castle
Tue 26	Museum Committee Meeting	1030	Royal Scots Club
Sat 30	Association Summer Party	1900	RBL Prestonpans
<b>Sep 2025</b>			
Sat 13	Regimental Band Reunion Lunch	1230	Royal Scots Club
Thu 18	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Tue 23	RSRT Executive Committee Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
<b>Oct 2025</b>			
Thu 2	LISBON MARU Memorial Service	1200	National Memorial Arboretum
Sat 4	Association Autumn Dinner Night	1900	Royal Scots Club
Mon 20 (TBC)	Opening of the Garden of Remembrance, Princes Street Gardens	1030	Princes Street Gardens
Mon 20 (TBC)	Remembrance Service at Royal Scots Monument	1200	RS Monument
Tue 21	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Fri 24	RSRT Trustees Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 28	RSWMF Trustees' Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Fri 31	Officers' Golf Match		TBC
Fri 31	Officers' Regimental Dinner	1900	Royal Scots Club
<b>Nov 2025</b>			
Sun 2	Association Quarterly General Committee Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Thu 6 (TBC)	Opening of the Field of Remembrance Westminster	1030	Southern Branch
Sat 8	Remembrance Service at Glencorse Gates	1045	Glencorse Barracks
Sat 8	Regimental planting of crosses at the Field of Remembrance , Westminster, followed by a Remembrance Service in the Abbey Cloisters	1800	Southern Branch
Sun 9	Remembrance Sunday		
	Cenotaph	1030	
	City Chambers	1045	
	Canongate Kirk	1045	
	The Royal Scots Club	1200	
	Haymarket	1045	
	Peebles	1045	
	Whitburn	1045	
	Prestonpans	1045	
	Linlithgow	1045	
Tue 11	Remembrance Service at the Scottish National War Memorial	1045	The Castle
Tue 18	RSRT Executive Committee Meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 25	RS Club Members' Committee Meeting	1700	Royal Scots Club
Sun 30 (TBC)	St Andrew's Day Service	TBC	St Cuthbert's Church
<b>Dec 2025</b>			
Tue 9	RSC Management Ltd Board Meeting	1000	Royal Scots Club
Tue 9	RS Club Trustees and Directors Christmas Lunch	1230	Royal Scots Club
Thu 11	RSWMF Trustees meeting	1200	Royal Scots Club
Tue 16	RSRT Volunteers Christmas Lunch	1230	Royal Scots Club
Fri 19	Regimental Office closes for the Festive period		
Fri 19	Regimental Museum closes for the Festive period		