



JULY 2025



THE CAPTAIN GENERAL'S VISIT

# GUNNER

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When using abbreviations in an article, please write the abbreviation in full, followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

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**Gunner Publications**  
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Royal Artillery Barracks,  
Larkhill, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire,  
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# GUNNER



## JULY 2025

Registered Charity Number 1122002

## CONTENTS



His Majesty King Charles III accompanied by Brigadier Glendenning  
Image taken by Bombadier Ben Watson, RA RHQ Photographer

## FEATURES

- 4 Guest Editorial The Deputy Regimental Colonel
- 5 A message from The Master Gunner St James's Park
- 6 A Royal Visit from His Majesty King Charles III
- 8 A Royal Visit - View from the sidelines
- 10 Rededication of The Royal Artilleryman
- 11 King's Birthday Honours
- 12 4th Regiment Royal Artillery
- 16 Multi-Battery effort across 3 Regiments
- 18 Young Officers' Course 235
- 24 Blackpool Assembly

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## REGULARS

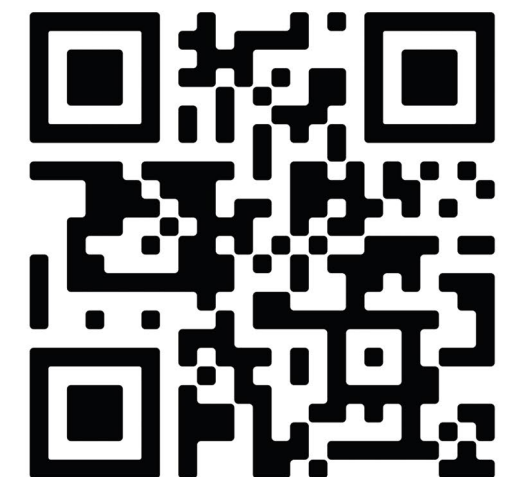
- 26 Royal Artillery Charities News
- 34 Forecast of Events
- 35 Obituaries & Death Notices
- 42 Notices

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**Colonel Philip Haigh**  
**Royal Artillery Deputy Regimental Colonel**

The echoes of a gun salute rolled around Larkhill on 6 June as King Charles arrived for his first visit to the Royal Regiment of Artillery as Captain General.

His Majesty spent around two hours meeting and chatting with a wide variety of personnel and inspected his Colours arranged to the front of the RA Mess. This visit marked the culmination of many weeks of work by many people, led in detail by the Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, WO1(RASM) Alfie Lightfoot.

Perhaps the highlight was His Majesty firing a Light Gun, something he appeared to delight in and a picture that made the front page of The Times the following morning.

I was pleased to witness the day as Deputy Regimental Colonel. This is a reservist position that I assumed in January after a career that started with 105 Regiment in Edinburgh in 1989 and culminated with Command of 101 Regiment in North East England.

Away from uniform, I've spent the last 25 years working as a journalist covering the rail industry. So an event at Salisbury station a week before the Captain General's visit neatly dovetailed both halves of my working life.

Stations are unlikely venues for an honour guard, awaiting review by the Master Gunner of St James's Park, particularly when he's carried into the station by a special train.

But so it was on 30 May as Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Gregory alighted in frock coat and medals. Also awaiting his and the train's arrival were a sprinkling of retired gunners and employees of Network Rail and South Western Railways, many of them veterans themselves.

Thus Sir Andrew peeled back the curtain to reveal a gleaming nameplate, The Royal Artilleryman.

That's a subtle distinction. Many of these locomotives were named after regiments but 'ours' is one of named after people. Those who served and serve.

When British Rail bolted The Royal Artilleryman nameplates to the side of its new locomotive back in 1962, it did so with no ceremony. But the name and capbadge would have been familiar to many passengers, coming only 20 years after the Royal Regiment's zenith of having a million men and women under arms in the Second World War.

So we gave their memory due regard with this ceremony at Salisbury yet those nameplates apply equally to our soldiers today.

But let me take you briefly away from the ceremony of the rededication. As the guests dispersed, there remained a gaggle of railway enthusiasts, mostly teenagers, eager to grab a photo of the locomotive.

Whereupon the Master Gunner produced a masterclass in engagement, holding this group in thrall as he explained what we Gunners do. He asked and answered questions. And I had to smile when one lad identified Sir Andrew's rank as lieutenant colonel - he was half-right!

The wider point is that it falls to all of us to explain what we do to outside audiences. Perhaps not with fanfare - I'm no natural salesman! - but when the opportunity shows itself.



**A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER GUNNER ST JAMES'S PARK**  
**LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR ANDREW GREGORY KBE CB DL**  
**ARTILLERY DAY – 26th MAY 2025**

I wish to extend my personal greetings and best wishes to all 'Gunners' of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and members of the Commonwealth artilleries, serving and retired, and their families, across the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth on this year's Artillery Day, 26th May 2025.

The announcement last month by the Royal Regiment of Artillery and the Brigade of Gurkhas of the formation of The King's Gurkha Artillery (KGA) is splendid news. I am immensely proud of our diverse people, trades and equipments, all with a long and rich history of service around the globe. The formation of the KGA is the exciting next chapter in that history. Delivering Close Support batteries, the KGA will offer fresh opportunities to the soldiers of the Brigade of Gurkhas and add even greater depth and diversity to the Royal Regiment of Artillery. It is a fitting blend of two historic organisations that will offer the British Army, and future coalitions, ever-greater fighting power.

We remain one extended Regimental family, and for those struggling for whatever reason, this is when our Regimental charitable networks come to the fore. It does not matter how long somebody has served; the timeless adage, *'Once a Gunner, Always a Gunner'* drives our welfare support and we must all look after the whole of our family when difficulty or crisis looms.

I therefore wish all Gunners, serving and retired, home and abroad, and their families, my very best wishes for Artillery Day on 26<sup>th</sup> May. Keep your guard up, stay safe and continue to honour our motto, *'Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt'* – 'Where Right and Glory Lead.'





## His Majesty King Charles III visits his Royal Regiment of Artillery



Soldiers from Larkhill Regiments lining the route

The Gunners had not had a visit from the Captain General since Queen Elizabeth II conducted the tercentenary review on 26th May 2016, as part of the wider celebrations to commemorate 300 years since the formation of the Royal Artillery. So, when it was announced His Majesty King Charles III would be visiting on 6 June 2025 a feeling of excitement across the Gunners built.

### Larkhill, 6 JUNE 2025

In a historic and deeply meaningful moment for the Royal Artillery, His Majesty King Charles III visited Larkhill as Captain General, marking his first formal engagement with the Regiment in this capacity. Soldiers and officers from all 21 Royal Artillery regiments gathered in an extraordinary display of unity, professionalism, and pride to welcome the sovereign and showcase the full breadth of their capabilities.

The King's arrival was marked with all the ceremony and tradition befitting the

occasion. A resounding 21-gun salute, fired by The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, echoed across the garrison, formally announcing His Majesty's presence. As the royal convoy made its way to the RA Officers' Mess, the route was lined with cheering children from Larkhill Primary School, alongside soldiers, officers, and staff from across Larkhill Garrison, creating an unforgettable and heartfelt welcome.

### Extensive Preparations and a Turn in the Weather

The event was meticulously prepared over several weeks, involving the Garrison Management Team (GMT), Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), key contractors, Sodexo, and a tireless work party of service personnel and staff. Despite relentless rain and challenging conditions in the lead-up, including heavy downpours during the final rehearsal, the team's determination paid off. In a stroke of



poetic fortune, the clouds parted on the day itself, revealing glorious sunshine and near-perfect conditions for the ceremony.

### A Stunning Display of Tradition and Capability

The Officers' Mess was a spectacle of outstanding military music, colour, history, and regimental pride as all Royal Artillery colours were presented. From seasoned veterans to new recruits, everyone stood proudly as the King interacted with the Royal Regiment. The sense of occasion was visible.

His Majesty was warmly welcomed by the Master Gunner St James's Park Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL and the RASM WO1 J Lightfoot before proceeding to take a Royal Salute from the honour guard, comprising of soldiers and officers from 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery. Taking time beyond the formalities, the King engaged personally with soldiers, officers, families, and supporting staff. His informal, genuine approach left a strong impression, reinforcing his deep connection to the Armed Forces.

One of the day's most memorable moments came as the King took his place behind the L118 Light Gun. Led by Sgt Mitchell and under the guidance of expert gunners, His Majesty fired a round with precision and composure, an act that resonated deeply with those present, symbolising his enduring commitment to the Regiment he now leads. For His Majesty's fine gun drill, he was presented with a 105mm cart case by Gnr Durrant.

### Showcasing Our Present and Future

Throughout the visit, a series of capability stands demonstrated the Royal Artillery's current technologies, operational roles, and training initiatives. These included cutting-

edge targeting systems, uncrewed platforms, surveillance equipment, and demonstrations from deployed personnel through equipment stands and detailed briefings. The King received a comprehensive overview of how the Royal Artillery continues to evolve to meet the demands of modern warfare, while maintaining the core values and traditions that have defined the Regiment for over three centuries.

A heritage display provided a rich historical context, tracing the journey of the Royal Artillery from its origins to its current global operations. The exhibits paid tribute to generations past and highlighted the resilience and adaptability of the Regiment through times of war, peace, and transformation.

### An Inspirational Day

His Majesty's visit was not only ceremonial; it was also deeply inspirational. His genuine interest in the Regiment's work, its people, and its families left an unforgettable mark on all who were present. For many, the King's warmth and approachability were just as impactful as the grandeur of the day.

As Captain General, King Charles III assumes a role held by many of the Royal Family previously, this visit reaffirmed that the Royal Artillery continues to enjoy a strong and meaningful relationship with the Crown, a bond forged in loyalty, shared service, and mutual respect.

The 6th of June 2025 will be remembered not just as a ceremonial milestone, but as a day when the Royal Artillery stood proud in the presence of its Captain General, showcasing the very best of what it is, what it does, and what it represents for the future.

by WO1 James Lightfoot  
Royal Artillery Sergeant Major





## View from the sidelines



His Majesty King Charles III speaking to the crowds gathered to greet the King

On Friday the 6th of June, we all witnessed a momentous, historic visit from the Royal Regiment of Artillery's Captain General, King Charles III. For most of the service and civilian personnel present, attendance was in the form of a supporting role, even so, it certainly felt like something special. Whether we lined the route through camp or eagerly awaited a chance to see the King up close, it was a day to remember with pride.

Standing attentively in anticipation, we were positioned along the wooded Bell Road. As our royal visitor passed by, most of us caught only a brief glimpse through the open windows of the black BMW. Once the two-car entourage had driven on, we followed down and looked across from the spectators' cordoned-off area.

This sat to the side of the officers' mess from where we could watch the visit progress.

After emerging from the main mess building for an official reception and photographs, the King was walked through an equipment demonstration, including a notable moment when His Royal Highness fired an L118 light gun, to the obvious delight of himself, the assembled onlookers and media personnel. Engaged in conversation and getting to grips with various bits of kit, the King's enthusiasm was obvious. Coming to a natural conclusion, the visit culminated with a presentation of an RA guard and retired Service standard bearers, accompanied by the National Anthem, all under the Royal Household



colours. The whole ensemble looked an impressive sight under a bright blue June sky, punctuated with just the occasional cloud.

A murmur of anticipation went around our assembly - which had thinned a little but was still in good numbers - as a suited protection officer indicated where His Royal Highness would walk past and depart from, stopping on the way to exchange a few words.

As the King approached, looking relaxed in the light-coloured tropical dress uniform of the Captain General, his jacket bedecked with ribbons, the assemblage pressed gently forward and shuffled for a closer view. After half-heard conversations and laughter from up the line, King Charles came into immediate view. The first thing I noticed was his robust and healthy features, along with a generous air that immediately put people at ease. He laughed and talked

and joked his way as he walked, taking time to stop and chat at length with many of the welcoming audience. He seemed to talk with everyone who offered words, to shake any proffered hand. One of his longest conversations was with a group of employees from Sodexo, of which he obviously had some prior knowledge, and was genuinely interested in what they did on camp. The King proved to be a master at this, but he also listened and replied with interest and understanding, to questions and comments from the gathered crowd.

And then, with a heartfelt thank you and goodbye, this whirlwind of engagement was over as the King reached the open door of his gleaming black carriage. He deftly stepped in and was whisked away from a successful visit, leaving behind a buzzing, appreciative audience.

by Dr Sean Fitzgerald  
Royal School of Artillery Training Plans  
Headquarters Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill



His Majesty King Charles III speaking to spectators





## Unveiling of the new plaque for the refurbished and rededicated Royal Artillery Locomotive, the Royal Artilleryman



The Very Reverend Nicholas Papadopoulos blessing the Artilleryman

On the 30 May 2025, 24 (Irish) Battery deployed to Salisbury train station, with a mixture of recruits and instructors in number 2 dress. We were there to take part in the remarkable unveiling of the new plaque for the refurbished and rededicated RA Locomotive, the Royal Artilleryman. Formed up on the platform the Battery marched into position as the train arrived. Awaiting the arrival of the Master Gunner St James's Park, all members of the battery stood tall before presenting a general salute. After an inspection from the Master Gunner St James's Park, the members of the parade and on lookers listened to the remarkable journey the train has seen so far. This occasion marked two centuries of the modern-day railway, a period during which there has been a close bond between the railway and the military.

The Royal Artilleryman plaque was unveiled for the 80th anniversary commemorating the 626 lives lost during the war from the Railway service. It was an honour being apart of this day. And talking to all the members of the Southwest Railway team, many of whom were previously Gunners themselves. The Salisbury area is one of the many military communities served by SWR, and during Railway 200, its especially fitting to celebrate and deepen the connection between SWR and the Royal Artillery. After the unveiling of the plaque, the Master Gunner St James's Park then presented the Regiment with a replica plaque which will be displayed in Larkhill Garrison.

by Bombardier Westbrook  
24 (Irish) Battery



The Royal Regiment wishes to congratulate the following:

### MBE

Major Luke William Turrell JP RA

Major Tom Paterson Watson RA

Captain (now Major) Jonathan Matthew Marsay RA

Warrant Officer Class 2 Stephen Alan Jones

### MSM

Warrant Officer Class 1 Jonathan Colvan-Graham

Warrant Officer Class 2 Philip Logan

### CGS Commendation

Major M J Martin RA

Warrant Officer Class 2 J T Fox

Staff Sergeant J G Wright

### CFA Commendation

Major R D Keane RA

Sergeant M S Namisi

Sergeant N T S Guest

Sergeant S Richards

### Ops List - CJO's Commendation

Major Andrew George Tulett RA





## Exercise TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 Deploy to Georgia



James Air Troop at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, USA

In January 2025, Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) from 4th Regiment Royal Artillery (4RA) deployed to Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, USA, for Exercise TEMPO THUNDER 25.1. Conducted in close partnership with United States Air Force (USAF) units, this demanding continuation and evaluation exercise enabled members of 4RA's James Air Troop (call sign TEMPO) — the dedicated JTAC and Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) troop of The 7th Light Mechanised Brigade—to enhance their tactical proficiency in a high-fidelity, multinational environment. The exercise also directly contributed to readiness in support of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) [VJTF(L)] in 2025.

### Interoperability at the Forefront

4RA's JTAC capability is delivered by a joint-service team of British Army and Royal

Air Force personnel. Their core responsibility is precision air-to-ground integration in joint operations—coordinating and directing aircraft in support of ground forces. With a focus on close air support (CAS) and offensive air operations, JTACs manage dynamic airspace, mitigate the risk of fratricide and collateral damage, and ensure air-land integration is seamless and effective.

Exercise TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 was a vital component of 4RA's JTAC continuation training cycle, designed to maintain certification, qualification, and evaluation standards across the cadre. The deployment focused on controlling multiple aircraft in complex airspace, enhancing mental resilience in high-pressure environments, and strengthening UK-US interoperability. It also provided critical training for TACP signallers, helping to identify and develop



future JTACs while refining joint tactics, techniques, and procedures with USAF partners.

### Integration with the USAF: Realistic Scenarios, Tactical Depth

Hosted by the USAF's 23rd Wing, 4RA JTACs trained alongside the legendary 74th and 75th Fighter Squadrons (operating A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft) and the 41st Rescue Squadron (flying HH-60 Pave Hawks). From the outset, UK JTACs fully embedded with their US counterparts, attending mission briefs, coordinating directly with aircrews, and rehearsing live-fire missions.

Training took place across three primary range areas:

- **Grand Bay Range** – Equipped with live-fire targets including urban complexes, SAM sites, and radar threats, supporting realistic complex battlespace management.
- **Fruitlands and Lakeland Ranges** – Expansive dry-training areas offering diverse open terrain mixed with urban backdrops for permissive and non-permissive scenario execution.

To ensure maximum training value, mission scenarios for Ex TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 were developed by 4RA JTACs in close coordination with simulated ground force commanders from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards. Designed to challenge the team across both permissive and non-permissive environments, these scenarios focused on refining JTACs' ability to deliver effects in a complex, multi-domain battlespace.

Each mission followed a deliberate and professional cycle, including detailed planning, pilot pre-briefs, and structured debriefs. This rigorous approach ensured

every training serial delivered clear tactical lessons, benefiting both JTACs and their aircrew counterparts while reinforcing the essential collaboration required in joint fires operations.

### Combat-Ready Collaboration

The first week of Exercise TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 saw 4RA JTACs controlling A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft across live and dry ranges—by day and night—against a series of demanding delay and defend tactical scenarios. These were designed to sharpen CAS skills in any environment.

Operating in a fast-paced, high-stakes setting, the JTACs practised rapid decision-making under pressure, synchronising kinetic effects across multiple platforms and maintaining precise control of live ordnance in congested, contested airspace. The A-10Cs conducted intensive sorties throughout the week, with JTACs directing strafing runs, simulated laser-guided bomb strikes, and suppression of enemy air defences—reinforcing the high standards expected of UK JTACs on the modern battlefield.

To underline the importance of multinational cohesion, 4RA's Commanding Officer, Lt Col H Waller RA, visited Moody AFB to observe training, engage with USAF partners, and reinforce the Regiment's commitment to NATO readiness and professional excellence, as a gesture of camaraderie and enduring partnership, he presented engraved crystal decanters to the Commanding Officers of the three squadrons – a moment that symbolised mutual respect and friendship.

### Honouring Partnerships and the Fallen

In addition to tactical training, the deployment also included a poignant





commemorative event honouring the four fallen crew members of a 'Jolly II' USAF HH-60 Pave Hawk that tragically crashed during a CSAR mission in Afghanistan in 2003. The physical training tribute paid respect to their sacrifice and underscored the enduring bond between 4RA's 'TEMPO' JTACs and the 41st Rescue Squadron.

Following this act of remembrance, Air Troop had the privilege of joining the flight line for a series of familiarisation activities. This included in-depth training with the HH-60 Pave Hawk, reinforcing the crucial link between ground-based terminal attack controllers and the aircrew responsible for rescuing downed airmen and wounded personnel in contested environments.

Armed with twin .50 calibre machine guns, the Pave Hawk not only enables recovery operations but also delivers CAS that JTACs can coordinate from the ground. The training culminated with a visit to the 75th Fighter Squadron, allowing JTACs to get hands-on with the A-10C Thunderbolt II. These engagements offered valuable insights into allied capabilities, strengthening NATO interoperability and ensuring 4RA's JTACs remain agile, informed, and combat-ready.

#### Elevated Complexity and Realism

As the exercise progressed into its second week, scenario complexity intensified. JTACs transitioned into supporting simulated attack missions, coordinating closely with ground commanders. Rotary-wing integration included live serials with the HH-60, employing live fires on Grand Bay Range.

A highlight was the planning and execution of a full-spectrum CSAR mission involving A-10s, C-130s, HH-60s, and pararescue jumpers. Operating in a hostile, denied environment, UK JTACs played a critical role in coordinating the recovery of isolated downed pilots—replicating a key battlefield capability under realistic conditions.

#### Final Salute: Warthog Farewell

Exercise TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 concluded with a memorable "fini" flight, as 4RA's TEMPO JTACs controlled a three-ship of A-10C Thunderbolt IIs during a live bombing and gunnery range serial—marking the final sortie for three close USAF colleagues and friends of the team.

Soon to begin new roles as F-35 instructors in Arizona, the pilots went out in style, delivering a sharp, coordinated display under JTAC direction for gathered friends and families. One aircraft from the 23rd Wing featured a striking heritage livery honouring the 1st Pursuit Squadron, complete with shark's mouth, worn green paint, and symbolic nose art—a nod to the squadron's lineage and a fitting send-off before its retirement to Davis-Monthan's "boneyard."

The event showcased the professionalism and mutual trust at the heart of the coalition CAS community. For 4RA JTACs, it was a powerful finale to a high-tempo exercise—underscoring both technical excellence and the enduring personal bonds that make joint operations so effective.

#### Training Outcomes and Strategic Impact

Over the course of Ex TEMPO THUNDER 25.1, 4RA JTACs executed 261 controls



across a range of complex tactical profiles. Beyond statistics, the exercise reinforced procedural discipline, rapid decision-making, and interoperability with NATO air platforms.

This deployment validated the UK's ability to integrate seamlessly into coalition CAS ecosystems and demonstrated the operational credibility and readiness of 4RA's JTAC Air Troop.

#### Conclusion

In modern warfare, air-ground integration is not just a force multiplier—it is a decisive capability. Continued investment in JTAC training, paired with international partnerships like those seen at Moody AFB, ensures that 4RA remains at the forefront of delivering joint fires with precision, confidence, and reliability.

As the iconic A-10C begins its phased retirement and new technologies emerge, exercises such as Ex TEMPO THUNDER 25.1 remind us that true capability lies not in platforms alone, but in the professionalism, currency, and composure of those who employ them. This exercise brought partners together, honoured the fallen, trained the living, and sharpened the spearpoint of NATO's ground-air integration.

The TEMPO JTACs of 4RA once again proved that, when the moment comes, they are ready.

by Captain T A Robinson RA  
Adjutant  
4th Regiment Royal Artillery



The 4th Regiment Royal Artillery JTACs Ex TEMPO THUNDER





## Exercise ABU MONS sees Mixed Gunners team complete loaded 26.2 mile march in New Mexico



Each member had to carry a 16kg bergen with enough food and water to sustain themselves

Ex Abu Mons saw a team of 6 Gunners depart for the USA to conquer the Bataan Death March. It was a multi-battery effort across 3 regiments with 2 soldiers from 176 (Abu Klea) Bty, 26RA taking the lead, whilst being supported by 3 soldiers from E Bty 1RHA and 1 soldier from 137(Java) Bty, 12RA. The event itself is a gruelling 26.2 mile march across the New Mexican desert, on the famous White Sands Missile Range. By midday temperatures were reaching close to 28°C of direct sunlight however, this wasn't the only component that makes this event particularly arduous. When factoring in the combination of length, heat and distinct unforgiving terrain (Composed of a mixture of soft sand and dusty gravel) it is very quickly evident why this event has such a demanding nature. Something the team found particularly prevalent in this year's route. As unlike previous years, the course this year took participants through the infamous 'sandpit' not once but twice. Arguably the hardest part of the course that consisted of a 2 mile stretch through soft sand which not only physically drained the team but also required a high level of mental resilience from every member.

If a marathon across a hot, sandy desert isn't already challenging enough, the team entered themselves into the military heavy category to make it a true challenge. This now meant that each member had to carry a 16kg bergen with enough food and water to sustain themselves throughout



the duration of the event. Only adding to the relentless conditions of this testing march whilst making it that little bit more rewarding.

Finishing this marathon wasn't the only rewarding aspect, it was also a great opportunity to raise money for charity. The charity that was decided on was CALM (campaigning against living miserably). A men's mental health charity dedicated to improving quality of life and supporting those that have sadly fallen victim into losing loved ones. Through sponsorship and generous donations from family, friends and colleagues over £2000 was raised for this great charity.

In order to make sure everyone was adequately prepared to attack this marathon, a 2 week acclimatisation package had to be undertaken. Once arriving in the USA the team were kindly accommodated by 47RA in El Paso, Texas. Which allowed a period of familiarization to the hot climate and terrain. A crucial part in the final build up prior to the event. It involved weighted mountain walking, long slow runs and the use of Fort Bliss's training facilities. This proved to be a key element for success on march.

Training wasn't the only focus of the trip. After completion of the marathon the team earned some well deserved rest and recovery. This was a great chance to explore and see Texas before heading back home to the UK. A world famous rodeo a particular highlight as well as a baseball and NBA game were just a few things they got to enjoy as well as seeing Dallas and Austin. A great experience and ending for the guys making it something they truly won't forget.

Why take on such a challenge? Not only was it a chance to visit a different country/state, which the likes of some members of the team had never had the chance to previously visit before the trip. It was an excellent opportunity to really test individual mental resilience and physical fitness as for every member of the team it was the singular most demanding physical and mental event that they would have had to endure. Mental resilience was only one of the major benefits to the event. For the junior ranks on the team it was a great insight and learning piece to see what goes into executing such a trip. Skills they will be able to take back and implement back in their own batteries. Additionally it was a good representation for the RA as a whole. Implementing with partner nations and showing off good activity that the regiment gets up to overseas.

Such an experience was only possible through the support of the batteries, regiments and organisations. Thanks to 1st Trust, Army Sports Lottery, The Round table, GB Railfreight, Stitch-a-logo, Trailfinders and Keela. As well as the personal support from colleagues, friends and families back home.

by LBdr Jacob Dawson  
E Battery  
1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery





## Expeditionary Young Officers' Course 235



YOS' Course 235 in France using the French Caesar artillery system

Earlier this year members of the YOs' course had an incredible opportunity to venture outside the confines of SPTA and Thorney Island during their Special to Discipline (StD) phases. This saw six young officers fly to the Falkland Islands, whilst six others travelled to the South of France.

In March 2025, five members of the Young Officers' Branch and a Troop Commander from the Air Defence Troop RM embarked on a 10-day visit to BFSAI as part of their Special to Discipline GBAD module. There were various training objectives to be met, but the primary purpose of the visit was to learn more about Sky Sabre and to gain a greater appreciation for the sacrifices made by our predecessors during the Falklands War.

Our first exposure to the G-AMB and NLC elements of the Sky Sabre system gave us a good insight into the operation of the equipment and how it all fits together.

We then had the chance to go out on a recce to start exploring some of the challenges associated with the kit, particularly regarding issues such as camouflage and concealment, terrain, and reloading the launcher. Once we had gained a little bit of knowledge on this process, we were tasked with producing a site data proforma of our own which would be judged by the BK and DCs against pre-existing ones. This was a good opportunity to try and think creatively and start applying the lessons learned. The trip culminated in a morning spent going around and seeing the deployment process of the entire system, from the loading of the launcher to the setup of the G-AMB and SAMOC, which was a really useful experience.

We also were able to learn a lot of lessons that are useful from a Troop Commanders' perspective. We spent a day with the REME workshop and the MT in which they briefed



us on their roles and what they expected from us during weekly and monthly checks. Visits to the Troop houses at Mare Harbour and Poon Hill were interesting as we were exposed to some of the command challenges of keeping morale high and limiting friction within a troop on long deployments. To enable us to add some value when we arrive at our units, we were delivered the SQ3 qualification allowing us to run HVM/LMM ranges, a particularly useful competency to have at this stage of our careers.

Over the course of our time at BFSAI, we were taken on two excellent battlefield studies. The first, led by the BK Capt Jennings RA, took us up Mount Harriet along the same route taken by 42 Commando in their miraculous assault on that position, followed by an overview of the surrounding battles at Two Sisters, Tumbledown, and Longdon. The second, led by Lt Preston RA, covered the Battle of Goose Green all

the way from the initial recce to Colonel Jones' tragic end, to the final surrender of Argentine forces on the isthmus. A particularly poignant moment came on the last day of the trip during a visit to Sambles beach, named after a Royal Navy sailor who was killed on 8 June 1982 when HMS GLAMORGAN was struck by an Exocet missile. One of the Young Officers' fathers was best friends with Mark Andrew Sambles at the time, and so it was fitting that his son would visit the beach named after him and take time to pay tribute to him.

During the deployment, we also found time to enjoy ourselves. Highlights include getting shown round a Typhoon by the resident RAF pilots, being hosted by the junior soldiers in their bar, completing the most southerly Parkrun in the world, and seeing all kinds of wildlife including elephant seals, penguins, and dolphins.

Given that this has been the first ever iteration of the trip as part of the YOs



YOs' Officer Course 235 with their French counterparts





course, it was really well put together and delivered largely thanks to Capt Jennings. We all found it extremely informative and enjoyable, and hope that it will continue to be a fixture of the GBAD course at Larkhill.

At the same time, but back in the northern hemisphere, six YOs undertaking the Special to Discipline Close Support module deployed to the French Artillery School and Regiment in Draguignan. Facilitated by the BLO Collective Training (South), Lt Col Chris Lovick RA, this was an opportunity to integrate and learn how French YO training is delivered, and how their capabilities are deployed.

The group was received by Lt Cottin and began with a camp orientation and guided tour of the Musée de L'Artillerie, providing an opportunity to examine the historical development of French artillery and compare it with British systems. This was followed by an interaction with French artillery lieutenants, fostering professional discussions on shared military practices. The following day commenced with an 11-kilometre run alongside French counterparts through the mountainous terrain. Following this, the course visited the Rhone American Cemetery and Memorial in Draguignan, which commemorates the U.S. Seventh Army's advance through the Rhone Valley during the liberation of southern France. The visit provided an opportunity to gain insight into the manner in which different nations design and maintain their military memorials, as well as an understanding of the personal journeys of those who are remembered at the Rhone American Cemetery. The course then went on to pay their tributes at a further memorial: Memorial Du Mitau, commemorating The Dragoon Operation

on August 15th, 1944.

We then deployed to Camp Canjuers, the principal training area for French artillery live-fire exercises. The group was introduced to the field rations used by the French Army during exercises before engaging in discussions with French lieutenants regarding fire mission procedures. Notable differences in methodology were observed, including the French use of a colour-coded system to prioritise information transmission. The group proceeded to the exercise area to observe French forward observation posts in operation. The first demonstration involved an orders brief outlining the mission parameters and the manual and digital tracking methods employed. The subsequent position featured the Command Post vehicle, an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) known as the Véhicule de l'Avant Blindé (VAB), where the delegation observed the use of long-range cameras and digital mapping software. The final position displayed the latest armoured asset in the French arsenal, the Griffon, a six-wheeled armoured vehicle equipped with a remote-controlled .50-calibre weapon system. Its most notable feature is an advanced camera system, designed to provide high-resolution surveillance data. While technologically advanced, its operational practicality in a conflict scenario initiated an interesting debate.

The final day proved to be a significant moment for the Young Officers, as they had the opportunity to fire their first live rounds using the French CAESAR artillery system. The CAESAR is a 155mm 52-calibre self-propelled howitzer, mounted on either a 6x6 or 8x8 chassis, with a capacity of 18 rounds.



It is typically operated by a crew of five but can function with a reduced team of three if required. The system boasts a range of 42km when using an Extended Range, Full Bore shell and exceeds 50km with rocket-assisted ammunition.

As part of a tactical exercise serial, and alongside General Pierre Marchand who commands the Artillery School, the YOs' observed the rapid deployment and firing process of the CAESAR system, which can be swiftly repositioned after engaging a target, crucial capability in modern warfare. Comparisons were drawn with the British Archer artillery system, which, while similar in function, features fully automated ammunition loading and firing capabilities, allowing for even faster deployment.

The visit concluded with a formal farewell hosted by the French Artillery personnel which featured a selection of traditional French cuisine and discussions on the importance of continued cooperation between British and French Artillery Officers.

The exchange of experiences and ideas throughout the visit reinforced the value of maintaining and strengthening this vital international alliance. It provided valuable insight into the operational procedures and equipment of the French artillery, and an opportunity to observe training methods, engage in professional discussions, and compare methodologies that has strengthened understanding and professional ties between our two organisations.

by 2Lt Jack Bareau RHA, 2Lt Cam Brown RA and 2Lt Will Percival RA  
Young Officers' Course 235



Members of YOs' Course 235 visit the Typhoon in Falkland Islands



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## Blackpool



The Assembly gather



103rd Regiment Royal Artillery Lancashire Artillery Volunteer Band



Mr William Morrison, Edinburgh Branch



Scottish Region



Standard Bearers Inspection



Inaugural recipients of the Royal Artillery Association committee gold award



Colonel P R Bates, Chief Executive Charities



Standard Bearers Competition



Gala Dinner





## Annual Royal Artillery Assembly Blackpool 2025

Over the weekend 16-18 May members of the Royal Artillery and their families came together in Blackpool for the RA Assembly, the Royal Regiment of Artillery hosted over 345 Gunners, both serving and retired, along with special guests to join them in Blackpool at the Norbreck Castle Hotel for the RAA AGM, RA Assembly and Grand Gala Dinner.

The Friday evening provided the time for informal initial catch ups across our serving and veteran communities and a couple of formal events took place; the RHA Association gathered for their AGM and the National Executive Committee came together with other key guests for the Master Gunner St James's Park Dinner, which also saw a number of first time attendees representing a couple of our National Branches; including Old Comrade Associations and Interest Group Networks.

The program and running order of the event is now firmly established, having undergone several changes over the last couple of years. The Standard Bearers inspection and subsequent competition kicked off the main events for the day. One of the most rewarding and at times humbling elements of being your Association Secretary, is my regular work with our Standard Bearers, turning out in all weathers, often at short notice, they provide visible support to both serving soldiers, veterans and their family's at a variety of events up and down the country, ranging from services of remembrance, military parades, to family funerals and memorial services. In so doing, they bring a degree of flair, dignity and respect that is admired and appreciated by all in attendance. The inspection was very well supported, and the competition was a close-run event with Mr William Morris from Edinburgh Branch displaying a quality of drill and bearing on parade that marked him out from his fellow competitors, securing both the best turn out (Abu Klea trophy) and the drill competition for the second year in succession.

The Assembly began with an address from the Master Gunner, Lt Gen Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL, the Master Gunner always

capturing the topics of the day and the general overview, he spoke about some of the challenges the Gunners face but this year there was a real positive feel to his presentation, including both our equipment development and workforce growth, in particular the formation of the King's Gurkha Artillery (KGA). He also acknowledged the strong numbers of both past and present members in attendance at the Assembly.

The RAA AGM was chaired by Brig Mark Pountain CBE who delivered his Chairman's Report focused on RAA events and activities over past 12 months, the Chairman was assisted and supported by the Regimental Secretary Col Paul Bates (in his role as Chief Executive Officer of the Gunner Charities) who during his address focused on this year's financial report. On completion the Regimental Secretary moved to the business of the AGM Resolutions, during which the delegates voted and confirmed the RAA Regional and District Representatives, which this year included some regional boundary changes and he recommended to the RACF (as the single corporate trustee of the RAA), the RAA 2024 Accounts and the Auditor's Report.

The Regimental Colonel, Col PR Farrell OBE ADC gave an interesting, informative and engaging presentation that gave a general overview that acted as a current Gunner update covering, Operations, Workforce, King's Gurkha Artillery and Capability. Col Paul Bates then delivered his first presentation to the Assembly as Regimental Secretary which focused on the work that has been ongoing in the development of the Association and outlining the fundamental differences across the charities, highlighting his understanding of the separate areas; Organisation RAI, Individual RACF, Community RAA, emphasising how they dovetail and support each other. Of note he also delivered a very personal presentation, documenting his own family's story and demonstrating why he feels in such a privileged position to be our Regimental Secretary.

The final presentation was an enthralling, funny and passionate address from Mr Dereck Hardman who is the founder of the Armed Forces and Veteran Breakfast Club. I had the



pleasure of meeting Dereck in Hull towards the end of last year whilst visiting our RAA Hull Branch and it was clear that his message of returning to 'The Tribe' is one that very much chimes with our own RAA ethos, Gunners attending AFVBC, gaining comradeship from other military personnel in our communities and yes... possibly finding and linking into more Gunners in our regions to grow our own membership base can only be a win' win for both of our organisations, we were privileged to have him take the time to attend our assembly, and I know that he as a Sapper, was welcomed and found friendship and comradeship amongst the Gunners.

The annual awards this year were presented by the Master Gunner St James's Park. Each year various awards are presented to individuals as well as the Branch/Regiment for outstanding service and support to the RA Charities. There were many winners this year and we would like to send our warmest congratulations to the recipients of all the awards. Of note it would be remiss not to highlight a couple of very notable awards; Royal Artillery Association Medal was awarded to Mr Alan Wilkinson Shoeburyness & South Essex District Branch thoroughly deserved and well received and acknowledged by the gathered audience. The prestigious Mansergh Memorial Award was presented to the then Gnr Griffiths JS (now LBdr) 4th Regiment Royal Artillery, his lifesaving actions were truly remarkable and everyone in the assembly were in admiration of a truly deserved award to a remarkable young man who is a credit to his family, his regiment and to us all in the Gunner family.

The evening program began with the Sunset Ceremony, which as always was a spectacular event, we as Gunners are truly blessed to be able to call on the Lancashire Artillery Volunteer (LAV) Band, who were immaculately turned out, and it is with sincere thanks to 103 Regt RA who not only support with the band but also supply displays, workforce, and equipment throughout the weekend. The LAV Band also routinely provide an opening set for the Gala Dinner, but I have to say this year they out did

themselves with a magnificent musical program that entertained the Gala Dinner well into the evening and we all look forward to seeing them at several events including the RA Service of Remembrance, held at the National Memorial Arboretum on 5th July 2025 and throughout the year.

It would be remiss of me to write this report without specific acknowledgment to all those who made this year's Royal Artillery Assembly such a resounding success, particularly the RAA Asst Sec Cas Thoburn who all of you will have been engaged in all the planning, preparation and delivery of the Assembly, the RASM and his team who this year were also supported by RSM 12 Regt RA, along with a whole host of individuals both serving, veterans who all add to the detail. Finally, we must not forget the outstanding support the management and the team at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, who all come together to make the weekend such a worthwhile and successful event.

So, a huge 'Thank You' to you... The Association Members, Veterans and Serving Soldiers from across our Regiments who turned up and supported. The weekend completely exemplified the strong comradeship within the whole Gunner community and 'esprit de corps' that this and occasions like it seek to promote.

Look forward to seeing you next year, We'll Meet Again Date – 15th – 17th May - RA Assembly 2026.







RAA Medal Winner, Mr Alan Wilkinson



Mansergh Award LBdr Griffiths 4 Regt RA

2024 TROPHY WINNERS

AWARD	WINNER
MANSERGH MEMORIAL AWARD	Gnr J S Griffiths, 4th Regiment Royal Artillery
RA ASSOCIATION MEDAL	Mr Alan Wilkinson Shoeburyness & South Essex District Branch
CERTIFICATE OF MERIT	Miss Nicholla Brunt, Kingdom of Fife Branch
	Mr James Sharp, Tayside Branch
	Mrs Anne Knowles, Wrexham Branch
	Mr Frank Mills, Coventry & Warwickshire Branch
BURTON CUP Most money per capita to Heritage	Mr Ted McKenzie, Biggleswade Branch
ARTILLERY HOUSE CUP Most money raised overall by a Branch for RACF/ RAA	Kingdom of Fife Branch
CATERHAM CUP Runners-up to Artillery House Cup	Norwich Branch
EIRE CUP Most effort & support to its branch throughout the year	Plymouth Branch
RA ASSOCIATION CUP - Regimental Action or achievement of particular merit	Shoeburyness & South Essex District Branch
RA ASSOCIATION KERR CUP - Battery Action or achievement of particular merit	19th Regiment Royal Artillery
RA ASSOCIATION ABU KLEA TROPHY Best turned-out Standard Bearer	212 (Highland) Battery
STANDARD BEARERS' COMPETITION	Mr William Morrison, Edinburgh Branch
RA ASSOCIATION PRIZE FOR YOUNG OFFICER	Mr William Morrison, Edinburgh Branch
	2Lt Markey RA



Canterbury Branch

At the May meeting children from Fox Class (Year 2) St Stephen’s Primary School visited the Branch to entertain the members with several songs and a dance routine. The visit was enjoyed by all present.

The School is one of three, where links have been made, forging bonds between generations which the Branch feel is very important.



Believe the Hype

On the 30th May 2025 the RAA Sec visits this year’s Eire Cup recipients: Shoeburyness & South East Essex District Branch.

Having already had the pleasure of visiting the Branch on previous occasions, most notably aligning myself to them during their Normandy 80 activity last year, where they were supporting several events in the region. In the case with all good branches there is always a reason to return and having been awarded the Eire Cup at this year’s RA Assembly, there seemed no better time. What I hope to do below is to deliver a somewhat abridged version of my most recent visit.

The day begins early in Shoeburyness and I arrive at the Hungry Hut for their Breakfast Club, every Friday members of the Branch meet here for a truly exceptional egg banjo and cup of tea (served in Gunner mugs), before they embark on their collective mornings work. I am quickly beginning to learn it is the infectious and enthusiastic nature of all the Branch members that brings their community together demonstrated by how much they not only support, but how in return they are supported. As we settle into some initial chat and banter, I was intrigued as I observe Steve Kilcoin (Branch Standard Bearer) being approached by a truck driver passerby who happened to notice their Gunner emblazoned coveralls and introduced himself as a veteran and that “he had seen them there previously and was intrigued to find out more”. I thought to myself at this early point - whatever this group are doing it is working...

From here we move to the MOD Shoeburyness for an induction video and sign in before I enter just one of the branches best kept (not so) secrets, the Gun Park. As I step inside, I am immediately hit by the smells and sounds so familiar to all of us, those of any Gun Park. John Fulton starts to introduce me to the team and their equipment. I am confronted by two of the most cared for 25 Pounders I have seen in many years, I saw the Gun’s fire at the Living Arboretum during the Normandy 80 events but to see them here being oiled, polished and greased by a dedicated



REGULAR  
To  
RESERVE  
'The Offer'





and volunteer workforce - who to their own admission, know more about Guns now than they ever did when they served, was humbling. The splendor of the Landover towing vehicles, one of which is probably the rarest in the country was also unbelievable and at the back of the garage their current project, another 25 Pounder broken down into its constituent parts, starting its long and loving process of restoration. To be clear this is not a vanity project, and all the hard work and dedication then translates into a diary of support, funerals and memorials, parades and events that is simply incredible – follow socials for detail.

Another mug of tea down the range (they love a brew) I am now accompanying David Hadjicostas to the Heritage Centre in the Old Garrison. The truth is we could do a whole Gunner edition covering the amazing work David has achieved with the support of his professional partners and... you guessed it, the support of the wider Branch. This has not been an overnight success and in truth is still only halfway through what will be the finished project, I am aware that there will be significant changes and developments at the Heritage Centre that will be hopefully completed by Spring next year, so I feel it is only right for me to keep my powder dry at this stage acknowledging what has been achieved, but also that there is much still planned to do. The fact is, it is still not officially open and whilst the retail element has proven viability and concept, the next stage is the continued development of the museum element. I am certain we will re-visit this intriguing story in the near future – What is worth highlighting at this stage is amongst the already curated elements is the display and exhibits aligned to 'Sergeant David Nelson'. One of the 'Three VC's before breakfast' awarded at the Battle of Nery, the display goes on to record his subsequent life as a Commissioned Officer at the Shoeburyness Gunnery School and I would recommend a visit by members of L Nery Battery in the near future.

Finishing the visit at the Heritage Centre, we sat down in its wonderful café and as we sat under the bolted beamed handy work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, it was time to reflect on the visit so far. I will not lie, I could sit a listen to David

for hours, his work life balance, his projects, his passions, his other volunteering, he is a true force for life... this said, he is surrounded by an equally engaged and passionate team and supporting membership, and it is the collective that makes this Branch and all its sub-projects great.

The final serial in my visit was a dinner, band and disco event at the Branch's home - The Naval and Military Club Southend-on-Sea. It was the end to a great visit and an opportunity for me to present the first of a RAA newly established award, the award is a Certificate of Appreciation that is awarded to a club, pub, establishment whose support to one of our branches is above and beyond and it was amazing to be able to present this inaugural award to the management and team at the Naval and Military Club. Demonstrating that this was most definitely not hype, every aspect of the Branch, yes the support they receive, but the support they give to our Gunner family in South Essex, the local community and the events and program they provide for their Membership makes them truly deserving recipients of the Eire Cup.

A final thank you to the whole team for looking after not just myself but my wife Julie and we both look forward to visiting again soon... If you'll have us. For anyone interested in joining, supporting or simply visiting the Branch, please do contact us via our office and website or the Branch directly via email and socials.



## RAA Battery Grants

One of the charitable objects of the Association is to promote comradeship, fostering esprit de corps and preserving traditions. Each year the Association makes funds available to Batteries in the form of annual grants to help fund Battery events, improve conditions for members of the Battery and their dependants.

Find out more information from carla.brawn100@mod.gov.uk or through your chain of command.

## 31 (Headquarters) Battery, 47th Regiment Royal Artillery

The Annual Battery Birthday Celebration is a cherished tradition that commemorates the journey, achievements and the dedicated individuals who have contributed to the Battery's success.

The Battery Birthday is more than just an annual event it is a reaffirmation of the values, traditions, and collective spirit that define the Battery. Through every historical reflection and every shared moment of joy, the Battery reaffirmed their dedication to upholding a legacy of excellence, innovation, and teamwork, ensuring that the Battery's legacy continues to thrive for generations to come.

## The Chestnut Troop, 1st Royal Horse Artillery

On the 7th March 25, The Chestnut Troop celebrated its 232nd Foundation Day. This is a day where past and present members of the Battery get together to celebrate the history and people that make The Chestnut Troop so special.

The first activity of the day was a medals parade. Members of the Battery were presented the King's Coronation Medal by Major General Neil Marshall OBE. The parade was successful one with the band of the Coldstream Guards providing the







music throughout and keeping the families and friends entertained during the inspection phase of the parade. The post-parade coffee and cake also gave the families of serving members talk to the colleagues and friends of their loved ones.

The next event in the day's programme was the Chris Manley Memorial Trophy, an inter-troop football competition. This is hotly contested, and even more so this year as a past members team was entered in addition to the troop teams. After a round robin of hard-fought matches, the past members team emerged victorious. It is not yet confirmed whether they shall be invited back next year! The event was light-hearted and enjoyed by serving members as well as by family and friends who enjoyed a BBQ kindly put on by the RCWO and his team, which added to the enjoyment of the event by all. Thankfully, the weather held up too.

The final event of the day is the Foundation Day dinner. Past and present members gathered in the Campbell VC Officers' Mess to dine and celebrate the past year. A great evening filled with merriment and reunions of old friends. Speeches were made by Maj Gen Neil Marshall OBE and Maj Rob Wills RHA, BC CHTP. The BC spoke to the success of the previous year and the promise of the year to come. The 'Best Gunner' award was presented to Gnr Nainima and the inaugural 'Spike Ellis Sword' was awarded to Lt K Johnson RHA. This event allowed The Chestnut Troop to come together again after a year of split deployments and challenges of operations. It would not have been possible without the kind support of the Royal Artillery Association, who have the heartfelt thanks of all the members of The Chestnut Troop, past and present.



### 34 (Seringapatam) Battery, 14th Regiment Royal Artillery

On the 14th of May 2025, 34 (Seringapatam) Battery, part of 14th Regiment Royal Artillery, proudly celebrated its 227th birthday in a fitting tribute to its long and distinguished history. The event brought together serving members in a vibrant evening of camaraderie, tradition and celebration. All ranks were warmly welcomed into the 14 Regiment Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, where a formal dinner was hosted to mark the occasion. The evening's proceedings reflected the unit's deep-rooted heritage, celebrating and honouring the service and commitment of its soldiers through the centuries. Guests enjoyed a carefully curated menu, speeches by the Battery Commander, Battery sergeant Major and presentations from members of the Battery on the history of the organisation. Following dinner, the Tigers moved through to the Bar where a commemorative cake was cut to a chorus of 'Happy Birthday', followed by music and socialising late into the evening.

This year's celebrations were made even more special thanks to a generous grant from the Royal Artillery Association (RAA). Without this support an all ranks dinner of this scale, in the historical and culturally important setting on the Central Mess, would simply be impossible.



### RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

Or

The RACF to date has provided 182 Gunners help with household goods, bereavement costs, annual grants and other essential items. The RACF has provided £194k in help this year alone. Can we help you or someone you know? Reach out to us so we can help our Gunner family. Unfortunately we cannot help with needs such as private medical or legal fees.

Call SSAFA on **0800 731 4880**, the Royal British Legion on **0808 802 8080** to get a case up to us.

#### Thank You's

*"Thank you for the very generous support shown at this very, very difficult time. It is very much appreciated and has had an enormous positive impact on the family." Thank you! - Serving Soldier*

The team is here to help and we can be contacted by email: [RARHQ-RACF\\_WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RARHQ-RACF_WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk), or via our website RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association ([thegunners.org.uk](http://thegunners.org.uk)). We aim to respond in 3 working days. We can signpost you and discuss the next step to help. Our office number is 01980 634309 if you would like to speak to someone or leave a message. If your serving pop in and see your UWO for help and advice.

*"I am deeply grateful for the financial support you have provided. Your generosity will play a crucial role in helping me achieve one of my personal goals this year and that is obtaining British citizenship before December. I am sincerely thankful for your assistance and will always appreciate your support." - Serving Soldiers family*

## RA Historical Society 2025 Programme

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close
19-21 September History Field Tour (HFT25)	History Field Tour	Planning and Preparations for D Day in the Solent Area 1944	Maj Philip Ventham and distinguished lecturers	To be notified
Friday 24 October 1030-1600 hrs	Shrapnel Lectures, Artillery Centre, Larkhill	<b>Wolseley and the Ashanti Expedition 1873-4</b> <b>Napier and the Abyssinia Expedition 1867-8</b> <b>Kitchener and the Sudan Campaign 1898</b> <b>Constructing the 1914 British Expeditionary Force</b>	Dr Stephen Manning Dr Christopher Brice Dr Keith Surridge Dr Spencer Jones, RA Regimental Historian	Friday 10 October

These events are open to all Gunners. To register please email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary: [richard.clayton312@gmail.com](mailto:richard.clayton312@gmail.com) by the dates shown

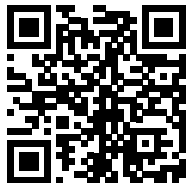
All Gunners are eligible to join the Society. Please contact the Secretary for details.





Date	Event	Location
2025		
02 Jul	Master Gunner's Committee	Larkhill
05 Jul	NMA Service	Staffordshire
17 Jul	HM The Queen's Birthday Salute	London
25 Jul	YOs' Dining In	Larkhill
08 Sep	Accession Salute	London (KTRHA)
18 Sep	RACF Welfare Committee	Larkhill
02 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
08 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
15 Oct	RA Awards Dinner	Larkhill
24 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
06 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
09 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
14 Nov	HM The King's Official Birthday Salute	London (KTRHA)
26 Nov	RA Board of Management	Larkhill
27 Nov	Sports Awards Dinner	Larkhill
05 Dec	YOs' Dining In	Larkhill
07 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
11 Dec	Master Gunner's Committee	Larkhill

RA Ceremony of Remembrance, Hyde Park  
Corner - Sun 9 Nov reserve your tickets



LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Richard Mulcahy April 2025  
WO2 Alan John McNeill 9 May 2025  
Wilfred Michael O'Mara 20 May 2025  
Maj Gen Brian Pennicott June 2025  
Lt Col Pat Stacpoole June 2025

**BOLTON** - Lt Col (Retd) Dick Bolton, a Gunner for 32 years (1957 to 1989) died at home in Canterbury, on Thursday 29th May 2025, at the age of 87. Dick, a Man of Kent, was born near Dover and his formative years during WW2 were spent as an evacuee in Devon, and on Tyneside. He was educated at Dover Grammar School for Boys and at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (1956-1957), before being commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1957. His military career took him to many corners of the World including on operations in Aden and Cyprus in the 60s and in Northern Ireland in the early days of 'The Troubles'. He served in several Regiments including 2nd Regt, Junior Leaders Regiment, 40 Regt and 42 Heavy Regiment. His later staff jobs included as BMRA in 2 Division (Lübbecke, Germany) under General Frank Kitson and in Bovington, setting up the forerunner to CAST, then called Battle Group Tactical Training (known to all as BAGTIT)! A period in SHAPE (Mons, Belgium) was followed by time at the Royal Armaments Research and Development Establishment (RADRE) at Fort Halsted and his final posting in the Inspectorate of Establishments which took him all around the Globe. His interests were many and varied but his passion was for all things artistic; he was never seen without a sketch book in hand and when serving, had a regular



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cartoon spot in the Gunner Magazine in the 50s, 60s and 70s signing off as "Dik". Since then, he has gone on to produce very credible illustrations of Historic Buildings and can even claim a few Kentish pub signs in his portfolio. After leaving the Army he worked as the Administrative Officer running the East Kent Magistrates Courts. In retirement, he spent much of his time, guiding and lecturing in a wide range of subjects including on Churches of East Kent, Stained Glass, Edward Lutyens and even Bricks; He became known in some circles as 'Dick the Brick'! His guiding life started when stationed in Belgium where he ran several WWI battlefield tours for colleagues, family and friends. Dick died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family. He will be remembered by them, his friends, and colleagues with love, affection, and respect. His wife of 60 years, Dorothy, predeceased him. He leaves behind his sons, Anthony (QUEENS / PWRR) and Robin (also a Retired Gunner), his daughter Alison and 9 Grandchildren.





## Major William Tudor Phillips TD 1930-2025



Tudor Phillips

Tudor Phillips died on the 20th March 2025 at the grand age of 94 years. The funeral was conducted by the Reverend Doctor Angela Cooper and the Reverend Alan Kettle at Holy Trinity Church Llandow. The Last Post and Reveille sounded over Tudor's interment in the graveyard and a small contingent of retired Gunners attended to pay the Royal Regiment's respects.

Tudor was born in Cross Keys, a village in the South Wales coalfield in 1930. His father Levi was General Manager of the Ocean Coal Company. Welsh readers of *The Gunner* will understand why his known name of Tudor was placed after

rather than before William. Initials are important and no way was Tudor going to be known as "twp".

After Llandaff Cathedral School Tudor attended Bromsgrove School, only to find the whole school evacuated to Llanwrtyd Wells, back in Wales, during the War. Tudor studied Agriculture at King's College Newcastle (part of Durham University) but had to cut short his practical instruction at Usk Agricultural College. Great House Farm in Llandow in the Vale of Glamorgan had been bought by his father as an investment after the war and in 1955 the tenant died. Tudor had to take over the running of the farm at short notice and he remained until the last few years of his life.

On the military side, Tudor's National Service began in November 1949. He soon passed RCB and went through Mons before being commissioned in August 1950 – not a widespread occurrence for National Service soldiers. His first posting was to 65 Heavy Anti Aircraft

Regiment at Seaton Barracks in Plymouth. He later served in 534 (Mixed) HAA Regiment RA (Swansea) which merged into 282 HAA Regiment in 1955 with its HQ in Cardiff and Batteries in Cardiff, Caerphilly and Pentre. As part of the 1961 re-organisation of the TA Tudor moved to 638 Light Anti Aircraft Regiment with its HQ in Brecon where he remained until further re-organisation in 1967 resulted in 282, 638 and 444 Regiments merging to form 104 Light Air Defence Regiment. These Regiments were equipped with 3.7 inch and then 40mm Bofors guns. With the posting of the Commanding Officer of 638 before the merger was finalised Tudor was promoted from Battery Commander to serve as Acting Commanding Officer but the reduced opportunities resulting from severe cuts precluded advancement beyond Second in Command of 104 Regiment. In addition to being a very capable Gunner Officer Tudor was a more than



proficient middle order batsman in his regimental teams. On leaving 104 in 1969 Tudor joined the RA Specialist Pool of Officers based in Woolwich before retiring in 1972. He was a proud recipient of the Territorial Decoration with a bar and was a well-loved President of the South Wales Royal Artillery Officers Association, based at Raglan Barracks in Newport.

One of the most memorable events during Tudor's time in the Territorial Army was "Aberfan". On the 21st October 1966 one of the worst disasters ever to happen in Wales saw 116 children and 28 adults die when 150,000 tons of coal waste slid down a hillside into the village of Aberfan in the Merthyr Valley. Only two and a half feet of the top of the local school was visible with the slurry 12 feet deep. Local TA units were called in to help. Tudor was there with a party from 638 Regiment whose military organisation, mining skills and Meadows generators proved invaluable in pulling the dead and survivors from

the hellish scene which they encountered and would never forget.

Tudor was a well-known character in the Vale of Glamorgan. He was an active member of Llandow Community Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Society, still stewarding at the Vale Show at the age of 90. Tudor was also an enthusiastic sailor out of Swansea, recruiting crew from his old Regiment, and he became a significant fund raiser for the RNLI.

Tudor's wife Kay predeceased him, but he is survived by his children Jonathan, Caroline and Susan, three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.



A steady hand  
A watchful eye  
Beneath the ever changing sky  
Through storm and through calm  
Through fire and through rain  
The colonel marched,  
endured the strain  
No trumpet sought, no boast was made  
Yet history echoes where he stayed  
His voice called rally, hearts to stand  
A quiet power, a guiding hand  
In heavy boots or polished shoes  
He knew the weight that few surpass.  
To lead not just with rank or might,  
But with resolve to do what's right,  
He bore the burdens others fled,  
He chose the front when others said  
"Let someone else, the risk is grave"  
But Colonels rise to serve, not save.  
His name may fade, his deeds may blend, with countless others who defend.  
But in the hearts of those he led,  
The Colonel's light still burns ahead.

Poem by **Miss Millie Walker**

Granddaughter of Andrew Michael Walker who served 22 years in The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery as a Bombardier.





## Lieutenant Colonel Larry Smith MBE 1948-2025

Larry joined AAJLR in September 1963 along with Sandy Smith, John Smith, Mick Lewis, Joe Castle, Barry Mallet and Trevor Leggett who were all from the same school in Harwich, Essex. Sandy and I were J/CSM half company commanders on the Dec 65 Graduation Parade. On 8 January 1966, he was posted to 14 Fd Regt RA in Dortmund, West Germany. He was employed as a Driver Operator in the Regimental Command Post and represented the Regiment at Football. He attended the All Arms Outward Bound School in Kristiansand, Norway and attained a pass (Bloody Freezing). He passed a JNCO's Cadre Course and gained promotion to Lance Bombardier in May 1967. He moved with 14 Lt Regt RA to Weeton Camp, Blackpool in May 1967 (Great Posting). In March 1968 he was promoted to Bombardier (favourite rank) at the age of 19 and was sent on the regimental advance party to Malaya to attend a Jungle Warfare Course at Kota Tingi, Johore Bahru. Whilst in the Far East he was a regular representative of the 28th Commonwealth Brigade Football Team. He was one of two overseas players, during 68/69 that played football for Malacca State in the Malayan Premier Football League. (Bloody good skive) – The other chap was Sgt Bob Smith (2LI). He returned with 14 Lt Regt RA to Weeton Camp, Blackpool in October 1969. His first tour of Northern Ireland was March 1970 in Belfast with 5 Bty, 14 Lt Regt. A spell in Canada followed on Exercise POND JUMP WEST. It was during 1970 that he captained the Royal Artillery Football Team. He married Barbara on 23 January 1971 in Blackpool. 14 Lt Regt RA disbanded in June 1971 and he was posted to 28 (ANZUK) Fd Regt RA, serving with 1st Bty in Nee Soon Barracks, Singapore. His son Carl was born in June and accompanied the family to the Far East. He was promoted to Sergeant in December 1972 and was posted to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst as an AL Instructor in September 1973. His daughter Tracy was born in June 1974.

He moved in September 1975 to 16 Lt AD Regt in Soest, West Germany as a Bty AI Sigs of a Bofors 40/70 battery. In 1976, during one of the hottest summers on record he deployed with 30 Bty to the Bogside area of Londonderry in Northern Ireland. He was involved with source handling during the tour and this led to recovery of weapons from the PIRA. In October 1977 he returned to the UK with 16 Regt, occupying Rapier Barracks, Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincolnshire. The tour in UK included Fire fighting in Sheffield, conversion to the Rapier air defence system and a tour in Armagh, Northern Ireland as TSM of the Close Observation Troop.

A move to Dortmund then followed as BSM 30 Bty. The tour in Dortmund included an operational deployment to the Falkland Islands with 30 Bty equipped with the Rapier AD system. He was awarded a GOC BFFI's Commendation for outstanding service on his return to BAOR. Promotion to Warrant Officer Class 1



then followed with a move to Lippstadt as RSM 27 Regt RA in August 1983. During his time in Lippstadt he managed the BAOR RA Football team and guided the team to successfully winning the BAOR Championship on two occasions. He moved to Topcliffe, North Yorkshire in March 1986. He was commissioned in August 1986 and joined 94 Regt RA, in Larkhill, as Battery Captain, 5 AMF (L) Bty RA. Exercises in Norway, Denmark, Turkey and Belgium followed and after the trip to Belgium we managed to deploy the guns and fire a salute in France in the village that the Bty fought so bravely exactly 70 years before.

In May 1989 he moved to Sennelager, Germany taking up the appointment of QM (T) 39 Regt RA. He deployed with the regiment to the Middle East and fought in the Gulf War. His son Carl also fought in the Gulf war as a member of artillery FOO party with the Royal Scots Battle Group. He was awarded the Commander Artillery's Commendation for

outstanding service in the Gulf war. In 1992 he moved across to take over as QM, promoted to Major and was awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List. He ran a very successful Anglo German Paderborn United Football Team. The team hold the German Cup goal scoring record of 32-0. He was posted to 5 Regt RA in June 1993 and moved back to Catterick in North Yorkshire and over a 3 year period was responsible for the conversion of RAF Catterick into an Army barracks for two regiments (5 RA and 8 Regt RLC).

He was posted to HQ Land Command as SO3 Arty Log in April 1996. He was a member of the implementation team that was responsible for the reformation of two artillery brigades. In April 1997 he was appointed SO3 G4 in 7 AD Bde and was double hatted for the remainder of his tour. He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in January 1999 and assumed the appointment of SO1 Relocation at DPA Abbey Wood from February to June 1999. A move to Northwood

Headquarters followed and for his last three years in the forces he was employed in the Joint Support Unit as Resources Manager, SO1 Contingency Planning, CO Army Personnel (Discipline), SO1 Business Continuity and Families Officer. In November 2002 he was awarded the RA Medal, the Gunners top honour, for outstanding contribution to the Royal Artillery over the years. He lived in Sutton-In-Craven, near Skipton. He tried Spain and it wasn't his cup of tea – too many Brits! He spent time looking after the interests of veterans through old comrades associations and the odd game of golf and travel. In summary after failing his 11 plus and not destined for a managerial career he believed Tonfanau was the making of him, he was lucky to have had the chance to go to Tonfanau. He put his successful career down to having a supportive wife and when 'wheeling and dealing' not getting caught!! Retirement was bliss!!





## Major John Brian Corrigan KSG Captain of Invalids (No 6 Company) 17th May 1929 - 16th May 2025



Brian enlisted as a Gunner in Leicester on 19th August 1947 and joined the Depot of the Leicestershire Regiment at Glen Parva Barracks for recruit training. In October 1947 he was posted to 17 Training Regiment Royal Artillery at Newcombe Lines, Larkhill for Artillery Training. Joining Intake 3 at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in January 1948, was promoted to Cadet Corporal and Commissioned into the Royal Artillery as 2nd Lieutenant in July 1949. After a Young Officers course at Larkhill, Manorbier and Plymouth he was posted to 71 Heavy

Anti-Aircraft Regiment Artillery at Ty Cross in Royal Artillery in Fayid on Anglesey, responsible for the the Suez Canal in January building and testing of the 1950. In January 1953 missiles fired during trials. he was posted to 40 Field In August 1962 he took over Regiment Royal Artillery in as Company Commander of Dortmund British Army of the Goodbody's Company the Rhine but this regiment in the Junior Trademens was on the move to Cyprus Regiment at Troon, in so he was transferred to charge of training Driver/ 45 Field Regiment Royal Radio Operators. Artillery also in Dortmund. In January 1965 he In January 1956 he was was posted as a Troop posted to 166 Amphibious Commander to 19 Field Observation Battery Regiment Royal Artillery in Malta Aden and whilst supporting Royal Artillery in Malta George Cross, which was 2 Coldstream Guards as responsible for directing Forward Observation Officer Naval Gunfire Support. was wounded by a terrorist Supported 45 Royal Marines mortar attack. In January Commando as a Forward 1966, 19 Field Regiment Royal Artillery returned Observer at Suez and also to Colchester and in July served in Cyprus during the Ethniki Organosis Kyprion 1967 moved to Dortmund British Army of the Rhine. Agoniston troubles. In August 1967 he was In January 1959 posted posted as Instructor in to School of Anti-Aircraft Gunnery to 2 Army Group Artillery, Manorbier as Royal Artillery in Chester where he was responsible for a student on the Long Territorial Army regiments Gunnery Staff Course in Liverpool, Northern (Guided Weapons). In July Ireland and Scotland. In February 1970 he was 1960, on qualifying as an Instructor in Gunnery (Air Defence), he was posted to posted as Air Defence the Trials Establishment the Trials Establishment Advisor to the Kuwait



Army and remained there training Staff car and until July 1973 when he HGV Drivers. On the 11 returned to the Army School November 1987 he retired of Languages to study from Army School of Arabic. The final 6 months Mechanical Transport to of the course was spent in work in the Ministry of Beirut and on qualifying as Defence, after a total service an Interpreter, in February of 40 years and 3 months. 1975, found himself without After retiring, he was an Arabic speaking job! employed by the Ministry He was posted to the Royal Air Force as the Army's Liaison of Defence in London as a Officer responsible for a Retired Officer, initially as Electronic Warfare. This was a Grade 2 and then promoted to Grade 1. He worked within at their Support Command Army Training and was Signals Headquarters at responsible for Foreign and Medmenham near Henley. Commonwealth students attending military courses at In December 1976 he was UK training establishments. as Range Controller in the In April 1992 he became a Outer Hebrides. In January Captain of Invalids at the 1979 returned to the RAF, Royal Hospital Chelsea. this time at RAF Benson He retired in 2000 aged 70 where the Electronic Warfare yrs old to become a full time establishment had moved to. Grandfather and moved to In August 1983 he was Swindon. posted as the Officer Commanding of the British Contingent in the Multi-National Force in the Sinai until February 1984. Instead of retiring, he was posted to the Army School of Mechanical Transport at Leconfield near Hull as a Divisional Commander



### Ubique

There is a word you often see, pronounce it as you may -

'You bike,' 'you bikwe,' 'ubbikwe' - alludin' to RA

It serves 'Orse, Field, an' Garrison as motto for a crest,

An' when you've found out all it means I'll tell you 'alf the rest.

Ubique means the long-range Krupp be'ind the low-range 'ill -

Ubique means you'll pick it up an', while you do stand, still.

Ubique means you've caught the flash an' timed it by the sound.

Ubique means five gunners' 'ash before you've loosed a round.

Ubique means Blue Fuse1, an' make the 'ole to sink the trail. 1extreme range

Ubique means stand up an' take the Mauser's 'alf-mile 'ail.

Ubique means the crazy team not God nor man can 'old.

Ubique means that 'orse's scream which turns your innards cold.

Ubique means 'Bank, 'Olborn, Bank - a penny all the way -

The soothin' jingle-bump-an'-clank from day to peaceful day.





## INFORMATION

## BESPOKE WALKING STICKS

Mr David Roberts - King's Troop RHA Veteran who suffers with PTSD and has done for many years has been making bespoke walking sticks to assist with his symptoms. David has made them for fellow service Veterans and also many celebrities including Philip Schofield, Sir Michael Palin, Martin Clunes and Bear Grylls. If you would be interested in owning your own personalised stick - please contact David on Tel 01646 279716, or email droberts8641@gmail.com or visit <http://bespokesticks.art>

## REUNIONS

1 RHA REUNION DINNER  
14 NOV 25

The 73rd 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery Officers' Mess Reunion Dinner will be held at the Royal Artillery Mess, Larkhill on Friday 14th November 2025. Would any former officer of the Regiment who wishes to attend and who has not received details of the dinner by 1st October 2025 please contact the Dinner Secretary, Major R D Wills RHA on Robert.Wills814@mod.gov.uk

Young Officers' Branch Centenary  
Dinner

YOUNG OFFICERS' BRANCH  
CENTENARY DINNER

The first of a long series of young officers courses assembled at the School of Artillery on 2nd February 1926 under the command of Maj Wyndham Greene DSO MC, assisted

by Maj Ambrose Pratt MC. To celebrate 100 years of the establishment of the first Young Officers' Course, a Centenary Dinner supported by the MGStJP will be held in the RA Mess, Larkhill on **20th February 2026**. The event is open to all former Chief Instructors, Senior Instructors, Adjutants, IGs, MGs, SMIGs, QGIs and civilian staff that have worked within the YOs' Branch. If you are interested in attending, please submit your initial interest by completing your details using the QR code below or emailing WO1 (MG) Mostert on [adele.mostert559@mod.gov.uk](mailto:adele.mostert559@mod.gov.uk) Further information will follow toward the back end of 2025.

THE 35TH REUNION OF THE  
ROYAL ARTILLERY BOYS AND  
JUNIOR LEADERS' ASSOCIATION

The 35th reunion of The Royal Artillery Boys and Junior Leaders' Association will take place at the Holiday Inn Coventry M6 Junction 2 on the 2nd-5th October 2025. Full details and booking form will be published in the January 2025 edition of "Trumpeter", or by contacting the Secretary, Ted McKenzie by email only on [exboysra.tm@gmail.com](mailto:exboysra.tm@gmail.com)

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS'  
ALANBROOKE LUNCH  
THU 2 OCT 25

The next Royal Artillery Officers' Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 2 Oct 25 at the Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, Regular and Reserve whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £75 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after lunch. The dress code for this event is lounge suits or equivalent. To attend the lunches you must be a member of the Alanbrooke Club. There is an annual membership fee of £10 but this is waived for serving officers. Members wishing to attend this lunch should make a bank transfer for £75 to the Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund (Sort code 30-11-75, Acc number 00568858) annotating your transfer with your initial and surname or send a cheque made to 'Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund' to the Regimental Secretariat Officer, Mrs Carla Brawn. If you make a bank transfer please email the Royal Artillery Secretariat Officer on Carla. [Brawn100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Brawn100@mod.gov.uk) to say that you have done so. Do spread the message amongst your Gunner friends, and of course you may bring a guest (who may be non-military) should you wish, or bring a group of friends you served with. Commanding Officers are asked to encourage and facilitate attendance by their officers.

To purchase tickets please use the QR code



**RAA CARLISLE BRANCH**  
Calling all gunners in the North of England scottish borders region RAA Branch Carlisle needs your support. Please contact RAA Secretary [richard.davies557@mod.gov.uk](mailto:richard.davies557@mod.gov.uk)

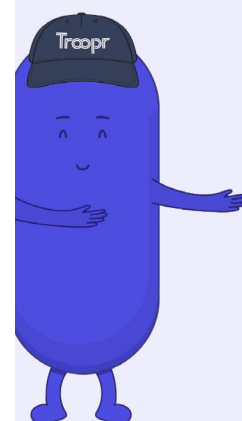


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## DO YOU NEED OUR HELP?



Since its inception in 2010, the Aaron Lewis Foundation, fuelled by the spirit of volunteerism, has dedicated itself to uplifting the lives of serving personnel, veterans, Regiments and Service Associations across the UK.

Our mission is propelled by a simple yet profound promise: to leave no one behind. From essential equipment to life-enhancing resources, we've answered the call of those in need, transforming lives one project at a time. Whether it's aiding with mobility through wheelchairs, enhancing training with hand weights, or empowering through education with 1st Aid courses, we adapt to the unique needs of our heroes, often collaborating with fellow charities to fulfil our commitment.

### Are you, or someone you know, in need of support?

The Aaron Lewis Foundation is ready to help, guided by a few key principles:

- We assist serving personnel, veterans, or initiatives that directly benefit them, such as equipment for sports teams or community projects.
- Our assistance focuses on providing physical items that have an immediate impact on recipients' lives, as opposed to a pool of funds.
- We prioritise requests that address needs not met by MOD or statutory provisions, including match-funding request.

To explore how we might support you or your cause, please contact us at [info@aaronlewisfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@aaronlewisfoundation.org.uk) for an application form.

### About the Aaron Lewis Foundation

Lieutenant Aaron Lewis, of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, was killed in action in Afghanistan on December 15th, 2008. He was just 26 and on his first operational deployment.

Aaron wanted to make a difference in the world, bringing help to those in need. It was that belief which gave him the courage, hope and enthusiasm to deploy to Afghanistan.

Two years after his death, the Aaron Lewis Foundation was established by his family and friends to continue to make a difference in his memory. With unity and teamwork at its core, Aaron's family, friends and former service colleagues work together to raise funds for causes close to Aaron's heart, providing access to sport and wellbeing for all, while at the same time furthering his legacy.

'Unity-Honour-Heart'



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Medical & Communications 1 week

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Send Annex A to APC.  
Attend our preparation course.  
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**HOW?**

**Mentee Form**

**Mentor Form**

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