



SEPTEMBER 2023

**GUNNERS LEARN LESSONS  
FAST IN FINLAND**

**Ex BEDOUIN CYPHER**

**GUNNER TUG OF WAR 2023**

# **GUNNER**

**#FINDandSTRIKE**

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## Gunner Rules

### Guidance on Submissions

We welcome articles and pictures on all Regimental matters these articles must be submitted through the chain of command, in accordance with the Gunner content framework.

Articles must be written in Microsoft Word. Photographs must be original JPEGs; at the highest resolution; (not embedded in the article).

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

Articles must be received by the 15th day of the month preceding the magazines publication. Please send to [RARHQ-Publications@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RARHQ-Publications@mod.gov.uk)

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# GUNNER



## SEPTEMBER 2023

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His Majesty the King  
our Captain General

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**Colonel M Bishop MBE**  
Royal Artillery Colonel Reserves

Assuming the role of Colonel Reserves RA, two things struck me immediately. The first was just how hard it is to be a “good” Reservist. Having been full-time for the previous five years on FTRS, I had forgotten how difficult it is to balance civilian work, family and the military. I have a constant gnawing sense that I am not giving any of them enough time and focus and therefore I am doing none of them justice. This frustration, which I know is shared by many, is a very personal battle faced by most Reservists and I would like to publicly commend all those who give up precious time and effort to fight that fight. It makes us all stronger.

In the ever-evolving landscape of modern defence the second thing that struck me was how the same problems I faced ten years ago as a CO are still unsolved, yet they remain the core components that shape the efficacy and future of our Reserves; recruitment, training and retention.

My initial disappointment was quickly dissipated by the evidence that what had changed, and changed significantly, was the understanding that these problems needed a collective resolution and were not just problems to be solved by the Reserve itself.

**Recruitment: Attracting the Best and Brightest**

The foundation of any successful military force lies in its recruits. Encouraging individuals to commit their time and skills to serve as part-time soldiers demands innovative strategies that resonate with current aspirations. The Reserve Artillery units have shown commendable efforts in attracting diverse and dedicated individuals who are committed to serving their country; but we all recognise there’s not enough of them. The recruitment process has adapted to the changing times, leveraging digital platforms and innovative campaigns to engage with potential candidates. By highlighting the technical, leadership, and teamwork skills gained through artillery service, we are drawing in a new generation. I look at #Team103, or The Northern Gunners on Facebook and can see visible evidence of progress. It’s a long war, but with eight commissions on the most recent Commissioning Course Short, I am heartened to see a new cohort of leaders who will reinforce that effort.

**Training: Forging the Bond Between Tradition and Transformation**

All our Reserve Artillery units are testament to a blend of tradition and modernity. Whether the HAC, tracking back hundreds of years or 104 Regiment rooted in the Glamorgan Yeomanry, all our

units are embracing the latest technologies and tactics to meet the evolving demands of the 21st century. CGS 4+1 focuses heavily on artillery assets as a result of lessons from the Ukraine. As the nature of warfare changes, so too does the role of artillery, demanding a fine balance between heritage and innovation. The Collective Training Event, planned with LWC and RSA, for September this year will usher in a new age of calibrated equivalence, offering Reservists opportunities for training designed for them, rather than lifted wholesale from the Regular training programme. A recent visit to 106 Regiment on a (wet) training weekend in Hampshire saw them embracing virtual simulations, advanced equipment, and scenario-based exercises allowing reservists to hone their skills in diverse and dynamic environments. I have seen with 105 Regt and 5 Regt how collaborative training with paired Regimental counterparts enhances interoperability and ensures seamless integration during joint operations.

**Retention: Nurturing Commitment and Longevity**

Recruitment and training is only the beginning; retaining skilled reservists, or attracting ex-regulars to Reserve service is equally crucial. The creation of a supportive and inclusive environment is paramount. To see the value in offering flexible work, career development opportunities, and avenues for reservists to contribute their unique expertise, one only has to look at what has been achieved in the Lancashire Artillery Band and NRHQ (100 Regiment).

Within these challenges lie remarkable opportunities for growth and impact. Army Reserve Artillery Units can serve as a bridge to bolster community engagement and foster a deeper connection between the military and civilian spheres. These units can tap into emerging technologies to enhance their capabilities. From advanced targeting systems to data-driven decision-making, embracing innovation can amplify their effectiveness on the battlefield. The journey ahead for the Reserve Artillery Units is one of immense promise. As they navigate the intricacies of modern warfare, it is incumbent upon us to recognize their dedication and provide the resources and support they need to excel.

As challenges and opportunities intertwine, Gunner Reservists stand poised to help shape the security landscape of the nation, guarding its legacy, while forging a brighter future. All we have to do, is get the balance right.



*The Master Gunner St James’s Park is delighted to announce that His Majesty King Charles III has been pleased to adopt the role and title of Captain-General of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, succeeding in the role from his Mother, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. His Majesty will also fulfil this role for the Regiments of Royal Canadian, Royal Australian and Royal New Zealand Artillery. This is a great honour and continues a tradition established by His Majesty’s Grandfather, King George VI, who expressed his desire to be Captain-General Royal Artillery rather than Colonel-in-Chief, a change in title effected in January, 1951.*

*The Royal Regiment looks forward to establishing a close relationship with our new Captain-General as the Gunners look to a brave and exciting future.*

**RA Historical Society  
2023 Programme**

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close	Cost per Head
Tuesday 26 September 1930 hrs	Webinar	Besancon: Bombing, Resistance and Liberation 1940-1944	Brig Jon Cresswell	Tuesday 22 September	Nil
Friday 20 October 1000 - 1600 hrs	Shrapnel Lectures, Newcome Hall, Larkhill with Coffee and a Buffet Lunch in the Tactics Lecture Room	<b>Theme:</b> China, Korea and Great Power Composition  <b>Lectures on:</b> • China today • The Chinese Maritime Sphere and Missile Defence • The Defence Policy of South Korea • The Peoples Liberation Army	Lt Col Peter Thompson	Friday 6 October	£10 for Morning Coffee & Buffet Lunch

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

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



## Gunners learn lessons fast in Finland after country is accepted into NATO



MLRS

When your weapon strikes its target at a whisker over Mach 2.5, the term “fast-moving” is a subjective one.

Just over three months ago, the Regular Army’s long-range precision fires capacity was doubled at a stroke when 3 Regiment Royal Horse Artillery retired their 105mm guns and joined 26 Regiment Royal Artillery as operators of the M270 multiple launch rocket system (MLRS).

This autumn, another landmark will be reached when both these units, as well as personnel from 101 Regiment Royal Artillery – the sole Reservist element to operate the platform – travel to Salisbury Plain to take part in Exercise SCORPION CYCLONE, the first physical roll-out of the 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team.

In addition, a hugely significant training package for the British Army’s MLRS capability has just taken place in Finland, one

that has sparked a major re-evaluation of the way it trains these specialist personnel.

Lightning Strike was the first multinational exercise the Finnish armed forces staged after the country was accepted into Nato – and the UK was one of just three member countries invited to take part.

But more importantly, this was the first time MLRS crews – in this case those from 26 Regt – had a taste of live-firing their long-range M31 rockets during a kinetic exercise featuring tactical manoeuvres.

“I can’t stress how vital the opportunity has been for us,” says Maj Stephanie Manning-Degobertiere, the regiment’s second-in-command.

“Not only did we establish a great working relationship with a new Nato member but, apart from on ops many years ago, this is the first time we’ve conducted live firing with the full bore M31 projectile outside of the White Sands missile range in the United States.



Maj Stephanie Manning-Degobertiere

“With M31 rockets, which have around an 80-kilometre range, the safety aspect is considerable. You have to take into account what’s in scope if, say, a fin locks out and the rocket goes rogue. And you must consider burst distance and air space as during our fires they went up to 60,000 feet.”

“But it was worth all the effort because, with our launchers bursting out of their hides and moving several hundred metres to their firing positions, this exercise provided very realistic scenarios which were of immense training value.”

“We were the only nation to live fire the M31s, and that was important for our crews’ readiness qualifications – that’s why we normally go to White Sands.”

“But developing our troops in Finland is superb because we are a high readiness unit and we’re operating in the type of environment where we could be fighting for real, and alongside nations we’ll probably be fighting with.”

### Tactical advantage

With M270s from the US, Finland and the UK working closely together on the exercise, plus troops from Norway and Sweden, coordinated strikes and manoeuvres against an “invading force” took place across huge,

densely-forested swathes of the Rovajarvi training area, around 120km from the host’s border with Russia.

Around 30 personnel and three platforms were sent from 26 Regt and the impact it had on the British contingent was huge.

“You gain so much more in a tactical setting – our junior personnel probably learned as much from their two weeks in Finland as they might in two or three years at home,” says Bdr Olivia Leather, an M270 detachment commander.

“Doing the tactical move from the hide to the firing point, and launching the M31 in a set time, was just the sort of challenge we need to be doing a lot more of.”

“All your work has to be absolutely spot on and it feels different, very real.”

“White Sands is great for developing firing drills but it’s static stuff only, and the crews simply jump in, do the live firing, and jump out.”

The British MLRS teams regularly practise tactical moves in the UK but can only fire practice rounds – which they also did an extensive amount of in Finland – due to space restrictions, explains SSgt David Grice.

“On Salisbury Plain we receive the mission from the command post and drive out to a designated firing point but we cannot live fire the M31 – and our practice rounds always have to be aimed at the same designated impact area so it never feels quite as realistic as it could,” the NCO adds.

“In Finland, however, the training quality was extremely high and the exercise area was so large the Finns could create different ranges within it.”

“The command posts and launchers were in hides, and we established points to reload from, so it was up to each detachment to move the live ammunition themselves, with safety teams looking on.”



“In my 19 years on these systems I’ve never conducted live firing of the M31 rocket in a tactical scenario like that.”

“Apart from White Sands, I’ve only ever fired them in Afghanistan but that was from fixed locations in bases.”

#### Winter warmer

The package in Finland also gave some of the regiment’s support personnel, such as REME technicians and ammunition specialists, the opportunity to see the long-range precision weapons in full flow.

“These troops never get a chance to go to America to see live firing normally, so it was brilliant they could do their job and see the end result for once – they all loved that,” adds SSgt Grice.



SSgt David Grice

“We’ll definitely be looking to make more of this exercise in the future if we can, build in some R&R or AT perhaps, especially if we come out on both editions as there’s another Lightning Strike package staged in the winter.”

Another reason to return to Finland is the heavily forested terrain, which closely resembles Estonia.

26 Regt have had an enduring commitment on Op CABRIT and 3 RHA are scheduled to deploy for the first time with MLRS this autumn – and the teams managed to pick up some valuable tips on camouflage and concealment from their Finnish counterparts.

“They had better cam nets for that environment,” explains SSgt Grice. “Theirs had a built-in thermal sheet, while ours is separate and takes longer to set up. Their version is also reversible, with white on the other side for use in winter, as well as having a closer mesh so it doesn’t catch on sharp angles and can be pulled over vehicles quicker.”

“We’ve already completed a procurement request for similarly designed nets so hopefully we’ll get those soon.”

#### Real Threat

Another unexpected bonus of participating in the exercise was the presence of two intelligence-gathering aircraft of unconfirmed origin (you can guess the suspected nation) flying along the border, attempting to photograph the manoeuvres and monitor communications between the various formations taking part.

“This definitely provided us with a huge training opportunity,” says Maj Manning-Degobertiere.

“On a standard exercise on Salisbury Plain we might be told an enemy drone is in the area but it doesn’t always change the way people behave.”

“However, when we were alerted to these aerial assets’ presence, the troops worked out ways of preventing an M270 launcher that was being repaired – and therefore not cammed up – from being identified from above. They generated great solutions themselves, thinking on their feet.”

“We’d already changed our signals posture as a result of our location but this incident



created a much greater buzz around camp and the chats among the crews were fascinating to overhear, revolving around what it was we wanted to show, if anything, how we should hide and how it altered how we were operating.”

“That level of thinking is just what we’re after and it was great to see the situation generating a proper combat response from everyone.”

#### Lightning Strike twice

The personnel of 26 Regt, and no doubt of 3 RHA and 101 Regt as well, will be hoping all the preparations and positive feedback from Finland will not be consigned to history but will lead to regular participation in the package.

“It’s been so successful we’ve put a case in through the 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team to go to Finland every year

and have also asked whether our two nations can sign a framework agreement permitting us to go there twice a year to train on both iterations,” says Maj Manning-Degobertiere.

Moreover, the exercise has had a major impact on the way the MRLS teams want to train their personnel.

“It has already triggered a rewrite of our training plan to include a Lightning Strike-type of exercise” adds the officer. “It provides our personnel with highly valuable experience and they gain their competency certifications in a combat setting – which is something we’ve long aspired to do.

“With two Regular regiments now operating the M270 system, the value of such a move would be colossal.”



Archer



## How does the Army's interim artillery system stack up with the outgoing AS90?

# Gun compare

How does the Army's interim artillery system stack up with the outgoing AS90?

WITH 32 AS90 guns gifted to Ukraine – and a permanent replacement not expected until the end of this decade – the UK has acquired Sweden's Archer system to plug the gap.

The first 14 platforms are due in service in 2024, promising greater range and packing more of a punch than their predecessor.

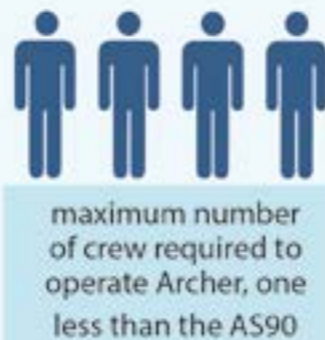
Working to a tight timeframe, staff at the Royal Artillery Trials and Development Unit are currently busy assessing how best to integrate them into the Field Army – with the first training package for personnel slated to start in the autumn.

Manufacturers BAE Systems Bofors designed Archer to "shoot and scoot" repeatedly for long periods, firing off rounds in quick succession before moving to avoid being targeted by the enemy.

Capable of firing all types of 155mm munitions, including extended range and precision anti-armour shells, it can also be fitted with a remote controlled weapon station – mounting either a 40mm grenade launcher, a 12.7mm heavy machine gun, or a 7.62mm general purpose machine gun.

And representing the next generation in wheeled artillery vehicles, it can travel some 200km further than the tracked AS90.

But how do the rest of the stats measure up?

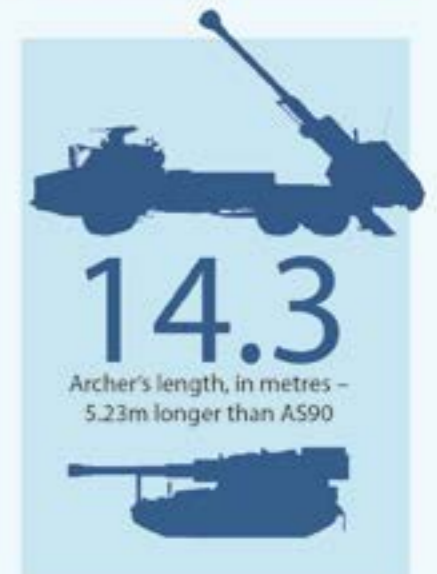


# SEVENTY

top speed of Archer, in kilometres per hour, versus the AS90's 53kph



152 calibre of Archer's fully automated, self-propelled howitzer – outgunning AS90's 39-calibre barrel





## Annual CIOR Military Skills Competition (Milcomp)



Gnr Turner tackling the crawl on the assault course

This June, officers and soldiers from 101 Regiment RA and 4 PWRR entered into the annual CIOR Military Skills Competition (Milcomp) – hosted this year by the newest member of NATO, Finland. Early on Saturday 17 June 23, we all made our pilgrimage to London Heathrow for the flight to Helsinki. On arrival, we were greeted by our hosts from the Finnish Reserve Forces, who took us to Santahamina Island, the home of the Guard Jaeger Regiment – and where we would be staying for the week, alongside our fellow competitors from: Estonia, Finland, Germany, The Netherlands, Romania, Switzerland and the United States. The Finns wasted no time at all in demonstrating their generous hospitality, as that evening, they broke out the BBQ smokers giving competitors from all the nations a chance to meet one another – with the help of genuine NATO branded beer (NSN TBC).

Day one started with a bang – quite literally, as we all received familiarisation on the Finnish weapon systems we would be using for the competition. Whilst the Glock 17 was familiar to those on the team who had shot pistol in the UK, the RK 62 was a different beast. Based on the Soviet AK 47, it fires a more powerful 7.62 cartridge than our rifles and with just iron sights, the practice shoots were a welcome chance to get our eyes in. Sunday also saw our new members of the team get a first look at the orienteering and obstacle courses (both land based and aquatic) they would be racing over later in the week.

Day two afforded us yet more range time, but now we were familiar with the weapon systems, it was done in the same format as the competition. Both rifle and pistol consisted of a precision fire shoot followed by rapid fire at smaller silhouette targets, with the pistol rapid fire requiring a magazine change part way



through. The day's practise was followed by the opening ceremony which was conducted in the centre of Helsinki – the presence of a Ukrainian delegation and the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, poignant reminders of the job beyond the competition.

Tuesday (day three) was where the competition got underway. The opening events were the pistol and rifle shooting, where all four British teams (two from the Artillery and two from the PWRR) put in solid performances. The conclusion of the shooting was followed by practise of the grenade throwing, range estimation and location which were all to be tested during the military orienteering march. The day was finished off with a well-deserved BBQ and introduction to the national past time of Finland – the Sauna.



Gnr Dobryzinski preparing for the rifle competition

Day four heralded the obstacle courses. The first being the land assault course. Tackled in the teams of three, the course consists of a 500-metre run with twenty obstacles spaced throughout. All the teams showed great physical resilience and teamwork as they helped one another through the challenging course. With no time for rest, it was straight onto the water obstacle course. A 50-metre swim in Finnish military fatigues over five obstacles. Again, this pushed the teams hard, but their determination and teamwork came through.

Day five as was the day of the orienteering march – an unforgiving ten mile run through the Finnish hills and forests relying solely on bearings and dead reckoning to find a path. The event started with a sprint ascent of a hill to be greeted with the range estimation and target location stands, with these warm ups completed it was on to the hike. The march itself was broken up by a few manned stands with tasks such as shooting and notably Nordic Roller Skiing (yes that is skiing on roller skates), all to culminate in grenade throwing at the end of the course. There were saunas waiting at the end of the course giving the competitors the chance to ease our weary bodies and take care of our battered joints. The day was finished with another BBQ and more NATO standard beer to celebrate, with the British discovering only hours before that a fancy dress costume was needed – our togas and wizard cloaks standing us in good stead with the other nations...

The last day was to be the combat casualty care assessment, but this was called off following the tragic and accidental death of one of the organisers during the first serial. At the closing ceremony later there was time taken to remember him and the impact that he had had on both CIOR and the teaching and assessment of combat casualty care within CIOR. The Gala dinner was held later that night in his honour.

The next day we rose ready for the journey back to the UK – although the UK had not won any medals, we had all greatly enjoyed the opportunity to compete against and alongside our NATO allies and non-NATO partners. Overall, it was a great experience – especially for the junior soldiers as for some it marked their first time out of the UK.

by Capt Kris Smith RA  
101st Regt RA



## Exercise BEDOUIN CYPHER



Sgt Luke Watson (left) and LBdr Tristian Mackenzie (right) from 3 RHA admire the view from atop a rock arch in Wadi Rum National Park

3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery recently completed Exercise BEDOUIN CYPHER, an adventurous training expedition to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The expedition provided a unique opportunity for soldiers from 3 RHA to challenge themselves in a different setting, learn new skills and engage with a new and to most of us unfamiliar culture. Like all good exercises it was broken down into several phases which allowed the progression that was essential to the success of the trip.

We arrived in Amman the Jordanian capital several days prior to the trek for a period of acclimatisation to the hot and dry climate. Unfortunately, Amman is at a high elevation and was barely warmer than the UK and it was raining heavily. The first day was spent visiting the ancient ruins of Jerash, an old Roman trading city with an

incredibly well-preserved amphitheatre. The next day the rain stopped, and our acclimatisation really began with a trip to the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth and a unique natural wonder. Our beach was in the no-man's land of the Israeli Jordanian border, which added an adventurous element to floating weightlessly in extremely salty water. Following the Dead Sea, it was back onto the painfully slow bus to take us up over the mountains and down to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Petra, one of the most significant archaeological sites in the world.

At this point we split up into the teams that we would conduct the trek in. We covered 18km without weight, testing our footwear and getting used to the teams and external instructors that we would be working with. Petra is an immense site



and has a rich history of over 2000 years of habitation. This cultural exploration helped soldiers gain a deeper understanding of the country they were visiting and the people who call it home.

The first phase of the Jordanian trail begins in Petra, so the following day we retraced our steps and met up with Mohammad, who would be our local guide for the journey. The next five days of the expedition were spent trekking from Petra to Wadi Rum. The first two days we hiked through rugged terrain, crossing mountain passes and deep canyons, while carrying our equipment and supplies. This was a challenging experience that tested the physical and mental endurance of all involved, especially as it was still so early in the expedition. We camped on the trail after each day's hike and witnessed some stunning desert sunsets. Mercifully the next three days were far less undulating, although we did have to contend with the heat that the lower altitudes brought, as we approached Wadi Rum.

After five days of trekking, the expedition arrived at a local Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum, where they spent a rest day. This was an opportunity for us to recuperate and reflect on the experiences we had faced so far. There was also the chance to engage with the local Bedouin community, learning about their culture and way of life. Those who were not too exhausted participated in a tour of Wadi Rum in 4X4 vehicles led by a local guide. We saw some immense rock features and drank gallons of "Bedouin Tea", a sweet tea that is served to visitors. It only rains 14 days a year in Wadi Rum, but that evening there was a

torrential thunderstorm during which we discovered that traditional Bedouin tents are not entirely waterproof.

The final four days of the expedition were spent walking to the Red Sea, where the Jordan trail culminates. The expedition continued to trek through the beautiful desert landscape, camping under the stars and pushing themselves to their limits. This final leg of the expedition was physically demanding, but it also provided a sense of accomplishment and pride as we drew slowly towards the end. The last day involved an arduous 1000 metre descent over just a few hours as we left the mountains and dropped down to the Red Sea. We enjoyed a well-deserved night in a hotel beside the beach before beginning the lengthy series of coach and plane journeys that would take us back to the UK.

Ex BEDOUIN CYPHER was a resounding success, providing soldiers with a unique opportunity to challenge themselves in a different environment, learn new skills and engage with the local Jordanians. The planning and preparation for the expedition ensured that everything ran smoothly, while the training and acclimatisation in the UK prepared soldiers for the challenges that lay ahead. The development of team cohesion and leadership skills was perhaps the most significant outcome of the expedition, highlighting the importance of adventurous training in the development of military personnel.

by Lt G P Muldowney RHA  
Battery Training Officer  
Battery Royal Horse Artillery  
3rd Royal Horse Artillery



## Very High Readiness Role for the Fighting Fourth



Ex WESSEX STORM

As part of 7th Light Mechanised Brigade Combat Team, 'The Desert Rats', 4th Regiment Royal Artillery, the 'Fighting Fourth', are on a training progression to stand up as NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) (VJTFL) from 1 January 2024. Part of that journey included deployment on Ex WESSEX STORM 5/22, a Collective Training Exercise on Salisbury Plain Training Area as part of the 4SCOTS Battlegroup. The exercise saw the 'Fighting Fourth' deploy the 3/29 (Corunna) Battery Gun Group to provide 105mm Light Gun support, the 6/36 (ARCOT 1751) Battery Tac Group to coordinate the delivery of Joint Effects and a Fire Support Team from 129 (DRAGON) Battery as part of Task Force Hannibal, the peer force acting as the adversary for the exercise. The exercise was split into two distinct elements: the Live Firing phase and the

Final Test Exercise (FTX), which combines the realism of blank firing and blends it with a simulated wrap supported by TES equipment. Both phases presented their own challenges and lessons learned.

From the Live Firing phase, a key element of training value came from the combined arms nature of this exercise, which provided a unique and rewarding experience for all who deployed. This was not just through the usual provision of Joint Effects to enable manoeuvre that is the hallmark of this sort of exercise: 3/29 Battery Gun Group also seized the opportunity to build upon the lessons learned from the conflict in Ukraine and trained and integrated with other force elements, such as the Royal Engineers, to develop and improve the survivability of the Gun Group. This culminated with the



RE plant operating between the 4RA guns as they live fired, digging the gun pits that were needed to defend against the peer force that was designed to out range and out match UK Artillery. The lessons learned here will be invaluable should the Regiment deploy as part of the VJTFL.

"Working with engineers provided a unique experience for learning how to operate the Light Gun during a CBRN serial in a gun pit. This presented a good learning curve, as we were able to bring a gun in and put it into action, experiencing the protection afforded by being fully dug in. The experience taught us how to work and live in a gun pit which was a valuable skill to acquire. We were able to operate at night as efficiently as we did during the day. Losing members or equipment did not affect our ability to operate at the same tempo. Overall, the experience was an excellent opportunity for learning and growing as a team, and we gained valuable skills that we could use in future situations." **Bdr Lee Felton – Gun Line**

Another key lesson borne out in the exercise for the 3/29 Battery Gun Group was the difficulty of sustaining artillery elements during high tempo operations at reach. The sustainment challenges that were faced during the exercise will be taken into 4RA's upcoming Regimental Exercise Ex SUNDERLAND DAGGER, which will see deployment of 7LMBCT logistic and sustainment elements to test and develop themselves. They have been developed specifically to address the issue of artillery sustainment at reach.

"The duration of Wessex Storm means that you must ensure your team can sustain

their operations. You are either fighting, maintaining your weapon systems, or conducting team and personal admin. If you're not on stag then you are in your bag became my favourite saying". **Lt Nick Kelly - Gun Position Officer 3/29.**

Moving from the live firing into the Final Test Exercise (FTX) allowed a blend of real and synthetic training, which allows the training audience to be put through some extremely challenging situations. At one point on the FTX the 3/29 Bty Gun Line were engaging with fire missions in support of 6/36 Battery whilst receiving counter bombardment fires, sustaining casualties, and fighting off a ground attack from a determined enemy. This gave our commanders multiple challenges and the team rose to them. Repelling the ground attack, completing the fire missions, treating and passing the casualties back through the evacuation chain whilst preparing and moving to their alternative gun position.

The success of 'Fighting Fourth' elements during this high tempo and arduous phase was due in part to the effort over the last year that the Regiment has put into the development of both Gun Group and Tac Group training. This provided soldiers with a handrail to assist planning and execution when the tactical scenario became increasingly complex, reducing the burden on the troops, enabling decision making and allowing them to maintain tempo throughout. This also facilitated commonality across all the Gun Groups and Tac Groups, which is an important step in integrating future structures and personnel when 4RA adopts its Future Soldier



structure. Furthermore, they will assist with reserve integration as all elements will be training to fight in a common manner. The adherence to this training will be essential to the successful support of 'The Desert Rats' in VJTF(L).

"Before deploying we were excited about the opportunity to build our muscle memory on the priorities of the pacing threat. Ex WESSEX STORM has provided us with an opportunity to push our newly revised Light Mechanised Brigade Combat Team Gun Group SOPs to the limit; they have served us well. They relieve the cognitive burden from our commanders and focus the whole team during times of pressure. They are robust and enable the full spectrum of our operations by day and night". BK 3/29



The exercise also allowed the various deployed elements of 4RA to operate and fight in contested environments that are not achievable without the infrastructure and exercise structure that this exercise brings. GPS Jamming was in force at various and unannounced times which forced the team to respond. CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) was at the forefront of the scenario and our teams conducted the full spectrum of their outputs whilst

in these simulated and non-permissive environments.

In conclusion, Exercise WESSEX STORM was a rigorous exercise that tested the skills and capabilities of the participating units, with 4SCOTS as the Battlegroup supported by 4th Regiment Royal Artillery. Their expertise and readiness were tested in various scenarios, highlighting the importance of maintaining a high level of readiness and capability in the British Armed Forces and setting up members of the Fighting Fourth to be ready to fight and win.



by Capt Ritchie Walton RA  
4th Regiment Royal Artillery



## Artillery Clerks' Association celebrates Silver Anniversary



As a vibrant and active branch of The Royal Artillery Association, the Artillery Clerks' Association reached a significant milestone in 2023 with a celebration of its silver anniversary.

The Association Committee started planning for this anniversary over two years ago; from the outset the Committee made a conscious decision to swap confetti and cake for a newly commissioned piece of silverware and creating lasting memories.

### About the Artillery Clerks

The designation of "the Artillery Clerks' Section" was first made under Army Order 54 of 1903 and remained in force until the establishment of the Adjutant's General Corps in 1992. Having proudly served the Royal Regiment of Artillery for 83 years, the cohort of Artillery Clerks were required to change their cap badge and allegiance, and

complete their individual service chiefly within the Staff and Personnel Support arm of the newly formed Corps.

All Artillery Clerks were enlisted primarily as Artillerymen before being selected to assume the vital administrative and personnel support duties within the various Headquarters, Field and Training Regiments of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. They served with loyalty and personal pride, supporting and sustaining others as enthusiastic members of the Gunner family around the world in peacetime and on active service.

From after World War II, the status of Artillery Clerk was only bestowed on soldiers in the Royal Artillery who attained the educational and clerical grades in the rank of Sergeant through to Warrant Officer Class 1, and this became the norm from the



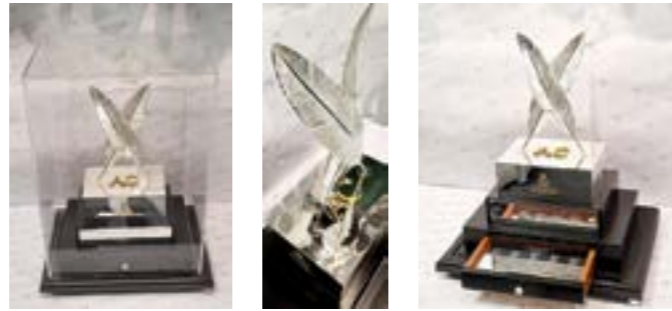
1950s. This unique privilege served to create a special bond which exists to this day.

The Artillery Clerks' Association was formed at the Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich Garrison, on 7th March 1998. Providing a focal point for its members, it is essentially an old comrades association of former Artillery Clerks, either serving or retired, promoting comradeship among its members as well as emotional and financial support to members and widows in need. Each year the Association holds reunions in the UK and Germany.

#### **The new silver centrepiece - from flash to bang**

At its AGM of 2022, the Association members unanimously decided that the most fitting way to provide a permanent and visible commemorative reminder of the Association and, at the same time, honour the service of the thousands of Artillery Clerks since 1903, would be to commission a silver centrepiece to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Association and 120 years since the inception of the Artillery Clerks' Section in 1903.

After collating all the ideas which flooded in from Association members, the Association Committee started to create a concept design. A small project team was formed, and an ambitious fundraising campaign targeting Association members, grant-giving trusts and foundations was launched. The project team took delivery of the new silver centrepiece on 11th June 2023, a few days before it was unveiled by Lt Gen Sir Andrew Gregory KBE, CD, DL, Master Gunner St James's Park, on 24 Jun 24, at the Association's annual reunion dinner held in the Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at Larkhill.



In his letter of thanks to the silversmiths, the Association Chair wrote: "The Association is indebted to you and your team – we have successfully worked together to create a centrepiece which has given the Association the wonderful opportunity of adding further to the heritage of the Royal Regiment of Artillery - something that is very close to our hearts."

#### **Reunion weekend**

On Thursday 22nd June, a small party of Association members decided to kick off the weekend of celebrations in London by meeting initially for pre-dinner drinks at the warm and welcoming Union Jack Club bar, close to Waterloo Station,

In contrast, a short distance away, in the heart of Covent Garden, the party adjourned for dinner at the iconic Sarastro Restaurant in Drury Lane, famous for its opulent décor and flamboyant food. The energising ambience encouraged several to 'throw some shapes' on the dance floor, which may have come as a bit of a shock to the other much younger patrons that evening (names of those involved have been withheld to protect the innocent!). The evening was rounded off with an obligatory visit to another pub in Covent Garden before regrouping at the convivial and somewhat cheaper bar at the Union Jack Club for nightcaps.



In line with the usual reunion weekend programme, the party reconvened the next day at the Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at Larkhill, joining forces with the majority of Association members who assembled to launch the weekend celebrations in earnest. Many had travelled from overseas to attend this unique anniversary weekend: Peter and Rose Gauci from Malta, Rich and Rikke Nichol from Denmark, Ian Constantine from Brittany, Steve Beard from the Isle of Man, and Ron Holmes and Hauke Michelson from Germany.

Friday night in the Mess is, for many, the highlight of the weekend as comrades enjoy the opportunity to catch up and chat as only old gunners can; to renew friendships going back many decades; to recount anecdotes of service life in the Sixties through to the present day. Marty Hester, one of the senior members, recalled at length his experience of service in the Korean war! As always, the Mess staff were very welcoming, friendly and courteous.

The absence of service accommodation in barracks due to a refurbishment project did not adversely affect attendance. Many stayed overnight in various hotels and guesthouses close to Larkhill. Roy Deal, the Reunion Secretary, earned his spurs by providing the 'recce' transport to and from the hotels with his usual efficiency and an ever-present smile.

Saturday morning was taken up by a guided tour of the Officers' Mess and Regimental Silver, expertly narrated by 2Lt Christian Hedicker RHA. It was a fascinating and highly educational, not to say entertaining tour, which kept everyone enthralled; Christian's efforts were very

much appreciated. Any future tours will ensure that a close eye is kept on Hauke after his attempts to reclaim some German artefacts from the silver collections.

#### **The unveiling**

The reunion dinner was preceded by the unveiling of the new silver centrepiece by the Master Gunner St James's Park. The Association Chair, Lt Col Joe Falzon, started by thanking the project team for their outstanding professionalism and the members and honorary members who supported the project with their donations. In particular, he highlighted the individual contributions of Maj Paul Corker (Treasurer), former WO1 (SSM) Andy Tibble (Secretary and Co-ordinator), former SSgt Robbie (AC) Astick (Trust Fundraiser) and former SSgt Leo Lyall (Artist and Designer).

The Association Chair added that the project team worked in close and harmonious collaboration with the creative team and professional craftspeople of Silver Lady to turn the original ideas, aspirations and vision into reality. Without a doubt, Leon Lyall takes full credit for the outstanding original designs which incorporated the many proposals from Association members. These designs were the foundation for what is now a striking and impressive centrepiece. The Chair concluded by highlighting the fact that the centrepiece, among other features, keeps alive the memory of several former Artillery Clerks.

The unexpected and much appreciated success of the fundraising appeal means that the Association was able to donate £1,000 from the surplus funds to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund – the Association's charity of choice.



Presentation of a cheque for £1000 by Mr Roy Deal to Col Matthew Carter RAA

The accompanying photographs clearly show that the silver centrepiece is quite simply stunning. This sentiment was echoed by our special guests: The Master Gunner St James's Park, Lt Gen Richard Nugee CB, CVO, CBE (Hon President), Lt Gen Sir Freddie Viggers KCB, CMG, MBE, DL (Past Hon President), Maj Gen Peter Currie CB, CBE (Past Hon President), Lt Col Andrew McDermott MBE (CO 14 Regt), WO1(RSM) Gemma Begley (RSM 14 Regt) and WO2(BSM) Ryan Zietsman (BSM 34 (Seringapatam) Bty – the Association's affiliated Bty).

The silver centrepiece now provides a permanent commemorative reminder of the Association and the service of its members, especially the value and high regard with which Artillery Clerks were held by their fellow Gunners, officers and soldiers alike. This singular historic flagship will be securely housed, displayed and maintained with other regimental artifacts in the Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at Larkhill.

### The dinner

Befitting the occasion, this was the first reunion dinner to which partners were invited. The ladies were most welcome and ensured conversation flowed freely on a whole range of topics. As we always expect,

but never take for granted, the food and wine supplied by the Mess staff during the evening was first class and reminiscent of many a Sergeants' Mess dinner night of the past. A special mention must go to the Mess staff both in front and behind the scenes who do so much every year to make our reunion weekends and dinners so enjoyable.

Our thanks also go to the Sandhurst Band Musical Quartet who played during the meal. They did an excellent job, providing a wide and varied programme of music, with a fantastic rendition of the post horn gallop as a particular highlight.

Following the Loyal Toast and toasts to the Ladies and Absent Friends, we were treated to some entertaining speeches from our Association Chair and the Master Gunner St James's Park before retiring to the bar to finish off a remarkable evening.

In all, a total of 62 Association members, guests and partners sat down to enjoy a splendid dinner which was a very fitting celebration of our 25 years as an Association and provided us with a night to remember for a very long time, with, of course, a spectacular silver centrepiece.

There were many highlights worth mentioning from the weekend:

Mike Hutchinson, a former member of the Rocket Troop in 2nd Fd Regt, particularly enjoyed his visit to the Congreve Room in the Officers' Mess. In one of the many coincidences we encounter so much in the gunner family, one of our Past Hon Presidents, Maj Gen Peter Currie, was also Mike's Commanding Officer when Mike was Chief Clerk 12 AD Regt; and a 2Lt when Mike was Gunner Clerk in 2 Fd Regt in the early Seventies.



front row Leon Lyall, Marty Hester, Joe Falzon (Chair), Dave Stotan, Dennis Norris; Michael Regan, Mick Grenham, Ron Holmes and Geoff Hyatt.

Finally, thank you to all the original members who created the Association for the indelible mark they left 25 years ago and for the values they instilled, which current members have kept true in their working and retired lives throughout these years.

We now look forward to the next 25 years of our Association and to Larkhill 2024 for our next reunion weekend.

The announcement that the Association Standard would be paraded at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on 11th November 2023 was the icing on the cake, confirming the high standing and prestige of the Association.

It was good to see nine of the members who attended the first dinner in 1998 gather again for a group photograph 25 years later

by Former WO1 (SSM) Mike Hutchinson and SSgt (AC) Robbie Astick



front row left to right WO1(BSM) R Zietsman, WO1(RSM) G Begley, Lt Col A McDermott MBE RA, Maj Gen APN Currie CB, Mr AM Tibble MVO MSM (Secretary), Mrs J Falzon, Lt Gen Sir Anthony Gregory KBE CB DL (Master Gunner St James's Park) (Guest of Honour), Lt Col JF Falzon OSJ BEM (Chairman), Lt Gen RE Nugee CB CVO CBE (Honorary President), Lt Gen Sir Freddie Viggers KCB CMG MBE DL, Mr RH Deal MBE (Reunion Secretary), Mrs M Deal, Lt Col RH Horner MBE second row Mr AJ Jones (Standard Bearer), Mr L Lyall, Mr C Nuttall, Mr M Hester, Mrs S Martin, Mr M Regan, Mrs L Straw, Mr C Shuter, Mrs J Shuter, Mrs R Gauci, Mr A Nugee, Rt Hon Sir Christopher Nugee, Mr J Nugee, Mrs D Norris, Mrs R Nichol, Mr RJ Nichol, Mrs J Corker, Maj P Corker (Treasurer) third row Mr SR Seymour, Mrs F Morgan, Maj DG Straw, Mr GO Hyatt, Mr JM Hutchinson, Mr MI Grenham, Mr P Gauci, Mrs S Norris, WO2(SMIS) C Norris, Mrs C Stotan, Mr D Norris, Maj IF Constantine, Mr K Lynn rear row Maj PA Headford BEM, Mr J Martin, Mr B Morgan, Maj DJ Cussell, Mr RJ Holmes MSM, Mr S Beard, Mr PG Butler, Mr J Lindlay, Mr D Stotan, Mr TC Cooper, Mr H Michelsen, Mr R Astick, Mr G Peggie



## King's Birthday Honours List



Congratulations to Captain Helen Jasper, of 104 Regiment Royal Artillery, who has been awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours list.

Helen was recognised for her "organisational skills, attention to detail and leadership" in delivering "faultless" Royal Gun Salutes in Wales during some of the most historic and high-profile events in the last year.

The King's Birthday Honours list recognises the achievements and service of people across the UK, from all walks of life.

Helen, a Permanent Staff Administration Officer with 211 (South Wales) Battery, based in Abertillery, spearheaded the delivery of Royal Gun Salutes to Wales to mark the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the proclamation of His Majesty King Charles III, as well as a "further impeccable" Royal Gun Salute to mark The King's first visit to Cardiff as Monarch.

These followed the similarly "flawless" delivery of a Royal Gun Salute to mark the death of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh in 2021.

She said: "I'm completely overwhelmed and absolutely delighted. It means a great deal to me, but I must also recognise the contribution of my amazing team.

"Rarely is anything we do in the military achieved in isolation and that is certainly true in this case. It takes a huge, combined effort to deliver to the standard we do and I

am beyond proud of every single one of my team."

Helen, from the Rhondda, joined the Army aged 21 and originally served with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, qualifying as a military training instructor and spending time as a section commander and then a Sergeant in the Army Apprenticeship College at Arborfield and Pirbright.

She then commissioned from Sergeant into the Adjutant General's Corps and attended Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) before serving with the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment in Tidworth, deploying to Kosovo and briefly to Iraq.

"I always had an interest in fitness and sport and considered joining the military after leaving school," she said.

"Unfortunately, my mum passed away when I was 17 and I didn't feel it was the right time to leave my Dad. Four years later my Dad was settled and a charity assault course reignited my interest and I made the decision to join."

"The sense of belonging, inclusion and support is like nothing I had experienced before. I immediately felt part of a huge family and I still feel that way today."

"I worked hard to gain promotion and was delighted to be selected to go to RMAS to become a commissioned officer. Being in a position to help my soldiers has given me huge



satisfaction. To be able to make a difference in someone's life is the best feeling in the world and it's what still drives me today."

"My family are extremely proud to find out about this award. They have always supported me, never judged me and been

there for me when I've needed them and, the times, have been many."

"I am delighted to have been recognised in this way, but know I would not have been were it not for the dedication, loyalty and commitment of my outstanding team."

### The Royal Regiment wishes to congratulate the following: Promotions in and appointments to the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire as Members

- Lieutenant Colonel Wendy Faux VR RA
- Major Paul John Ganuszko RA
- Captain Helen Jasper VR RA

### Kings' Volunteer Reserves Medal

- Warrant Officer Class Two Craig Blaney VR

### CGS Commendations

- Major J P Axcell RA
- Major T H G Hargraves RA
- Major K V Palastanga RA
- Major R D West RA
- Sergeant D Beveridge
- Warrant Officer Class One L Hartness
- Warrant Officer Class Two D H G Tingay

### Meritorious Service Medal List May 2023

- Captain Len Sanders RA
- Warrant Officer Class One (now Captain) Victoria Parker-Smith RA



## The Liverpool Gunners & A Troop The Liverpool Irish

Since its formation on the 4th April 1967 the Battery and its Pipes and drums have held a parade in honour of its A troop's predecessors The 8th Battalion the King's (Liverpool Irish) who formed originally in the BOAR Wars fighting in its major battles (The Battalions Memorial is housed in the batteries Reserve Centre in Aigburth) Returning to the City where the population thronged St Georges Hall Plateau to welcome them home. Their ranks were recruited from the ever-increasing Irish Communities which came to Liverpool escaping the famine in their home country. They settled in the Kirkdale and Bootle area's of the City.

At the outset of World War I The battalion was reformed in August 1914 and became part of the Liverpool Brigade, West Lancashire Division. In February 1915, they were transferred to the North Lancashire Brigade, which moved to Highland Division and was retitled as 3rd Highland Brigade. The trench raiding party Known as the 40 thieves led by Felix Baxter who in the spring of 1916 led the trench raid at Blairville in the Arrass front.

After seeing action in 1916 and 1917 at the Somme, Ypres and Cambrai, the battalion, after absorbing 2/18th Btn, it was transferred in January 1918 to 171st Brigade, 57th (2nd West Lancashire) Division.

World War II saw them re-established when the Territorial Army was expanded in March 1939, the Liverpool

Irish resultingly reformed as a duplicate of the 5th Battalion King's Regiment, The battalion was assigned to the 198th Infantry Brigade, for three years, the battalion trained and was assigned various duties across Britain, initially in Morecambe and Yorkshire. As the Allies made plans to invade occupied France in 1943, the Liverpool Irish was selected to form the nucleus of the 7th Beach Group. The group's objectives on an invasion beach were to maintain organisation, secure positions, and provide defence against counter-attack. Extensive specialist training occurred in Ayrshire and other parts of Britain.

The beach group consisted of 2,500 men of the Tri Services (Identifiable by a 50mm White band on their helmets) The Battalion being the infantry contingent. In mid-1944, the two battalions were moved from their camps to ports in southern England and embarked aboard troopships and landing ship tanks. Much of the Liverpool Irish embarked aboard the Ulster Monarch, a passenger ship that had served on the Belfast-Liverpool line before the war. After delays, the invasion fleet proceeded to Normandy on 5 June. Both King's battalions landed on D-Day, the 5th at Sword with the British 3rd Infantry Division and the Liverpool Irish at Juno with the Canadians. Two companies of the Liverpool Irish landed in the assault wave with the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Under intense machine gun and mortar fire, the landing of Major Max Morrison's "A"



Company proceeded well, allowing some to establish a command-post upon reaching the sand dunes. In contrast, in "B" Company's sector, the late arrival of the reconnaissance party and DD tanks exposed the landing infantry to heavy machine gun fire. The company's officer commanding, Major O'Brien, and the second-in-command were The battalion operated with the beach group for a further six weeks. While the severely depleted Liverpool Irish was disbanded in August.

*From General Montgomery to Lieutenant Colonel Humphries By the end of this Month we will be running short of infantry reinforcements, it is therefore with the greatest regret that I have decided that when the time comes drafts will be taken from the Battalion under your command to make good the deficiencies in divisional units. No one is more fully aware of the magnitude of the contribution made by your officers and men to the success of the operation ... Please convey to all my thanks for the special work they have performed during the assault and the days which followed.*

The 5th King's also was reduced to cadre strength. Disbandment was only avoided through the determination of Lieutenant Colonel G D Wreford-Browne, who argued that the 5th Battalion was nearly the most senior unit still active in the Territorial Army. The Title was later taken up by The Local LAD Unit and its to-day Proudly being in the custody of A Troop (Liverpool

Irish) 208 Bty RA Aigburth.

## A Troop (The Liverpool Irish) Memorial Parade;

And so it is today that the Battery continues this honour. This year's parade, which took place on the 18th March, and saw a combined effort between the Battery, Royal Artillery Association and the Pipes and Drums. The Caubeen was again present on the streets of Bootle keeping up this proud tradition, long may it continue.





Warriors All - #FINDandSTRIKE





## Uniting Forces on the Water



Breaking new ground and forging strong bonds, the inaugural Royal Artillery Wakeboarding Championships marked a historic milestone for the RA. This landmark event brought together soldiers from a number of regiments, including reservists from 103 RA, for a week of exhilarating wakeboarding, skill development, and unforgettable memories. The idea for the RA Championships originated from a shared passion for adventurous sports among a small majority of soldiers. With the support of leaders within the RA, this event was envisioned as a means of bringing soldiers together, cultivating teamwork, and providing a platform for personal growth outside the traditional military setting. In June 2023, this vision materialized, paving the way for wakeboarding development within the RA for years to come.

The week began with an early 0800 start at Box End Park near Bedford where everyone was met with bacon and sausage baps from the Cable Café. The chief instructor, Dale, and his team began the day with a safety brief before handing out the necessary equipment. For the beginners, all were given knee boards to get to grips with how the towing cable felt and most importantly, how to navigate the tricky turns. With most progressing quickly, just before lunch, it was time to try the easy up boards with the daring concept of standing up. By the end of the first day, the majority of riders were easily completing laps and ready for a more serious wakeboard.

As the first day's fun came to a close, it was time to set up the tents, head to the bar and enjoy watching the regulars showing us how it's done. During the week's progression,



participants gained and perfected their skills with everyone practicing hard, firmly setting their eyes on the competition scheduled for the end of the week. Determined to get their routines down and stick the landings, the riders really started to bond as a team, encouraging one another to push themselves further, and greeting successfully landed tricks with hugely vocal appreciation.

The entertainment for the week wasn't restricted to the wakeboarding with everyone getting involved with some friendly sports competitions in the evenings including ultimate frisbee, football and there were even some Top Gun vibes with volleyball and tunes. The real fun came on the final evening when everybody headed out to town, and everyone's 'best' singing voices emerging at Bedford's world famous Bandoke. It's safe to say no one will be releasing a follow up album anytime soon.

In typical British fashion, the weather on the day of the inaugural RA Championships started off with some grey clouds and spots of rain, but despite this, as the competitors donned their wet suits and Dale put on his questionable tunes, spirits were high and the competition was soon underway. This was to be a jam style session meaning each rider had a five-minute period to try and land as many tricks as they could. If you fall off, you better get running back to the dock to try again. The judges were thoroughly impressed with the skills on show with everyone demonstrating the huge progression they had all made from never riding before, to landing tricks and throwing flips.

Of course, there can't be a competition without a winner and first place went to LBdr Perkins (55 Bty, 26 Regt RA) for his impressive

display of skills with LBdr Huet (208 Bty, 103 Regt RA) and Bdr Williams (55 Bty, 26 Regt RA) finishing second and third respectively. As the prizes were given and applause was received, Dale had one last prize to give the Instructing Staff's 'wakeboarder of the week'. This went to LBdr Salim (132 Bty, 26 Regt RA) who, despite struggling early on, ultimately showed great levels of determination and grit to continue persevering throughout the week and in the final competition itself.



In conclusion, the Royal Artillery wakeboarding Championships was an exhilarating and unforgettable experience that blended the excitement of water sports with the camaraderie of military life. From the breath-taking stunts performed on the water to the shared laughter and support among colleagues, it was a week filled with adrenaline, skill, and team spirit. The event showcased not only the physical prowess of the Royal Artillery members but also their ability to come together and enjoy thrilling activities outside their usual military duties. The wakeboarding week served as a reminder that even in demanding and disciplined environments, there is always room for adventure and a chance to create lasting memories.

by LBdr Joshua Perkins  
All Arms Physical Training Instructor  
26th Regiment Royal Artillery



I was honoured to represent the Gunner's at the recent screening for friends and family of the Documentary Film: "The Sinking of The Lisbon Maru"

The special screening for relatives and selected guests was shown to a packed audience of 450 at BFI Southbank on 15 August. The audience sat in total silence throughout this moving and powerful film, after which they rose spontaneously to offer an emotional standing ovation. Chinese Ambassador Zheng Zeguang spoke to praise the film, stressing that it illustrated the wartime cooperation between China and the UK, and urging everyone to work together for dialogue and understanding to bring benefits to the peoples of our two countries.

Further screenings have taken place, mainly to military audiences over the following days including to members of the Royal Artillery at Warminster. The aim was to get professional feedback from the military to help in putting the final touches to the finished product.

For those who are not familiar with the events, on her final voyage, the Lisbon Maru was carrying 700 Japanese Army personnel and 1,816 British prisoners of war captured after the Battle of Hong Kong in December 1941. The POWs were held in "appalling conditions, the Gunner POWs at the bottom of the hold showered by the diarrhoea of sick soldiers above". Having been struck by a torpedo the Japanese troops were evacuated from the ship, but the POWs were not; instead, the hatches were battened down above them, and they were left on the listing ship. After 24 hours, it became apparent that the ship was sinking, the POWs were able to break through the hatch covers. Some were able to escape from the ship before it sank. The ladder from one of the holds

to the deck failed, and the Royal Artillery POWs who had been manning a hand pump which had kept the ship afloat could not escape the hold; they were trapped and last heard singing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" as the ship went down.

There will be an 81st Anniversary service which will be held at the National Memorial Arboretum at 12.00 noon on Monday 2 October.

If interested in the service or further information about the film project. Please contact myself; RAA Sec – Richard.Davies557@MOD.Gov.uk

**Founders Day 2023**

Members of the Association were invited guests at the Royal Hospital Chelsea for Founders Day. King Philippe of Belgium and his wife, Queen Mathilda reviewed the Parade of the Chelsea In-Pensioners. The Pensioners wore their vibrant scarlett uniforms adorned by oak leaves - this is a day steeped in tradition and celebration. Our members thoroughly enjoyed the occasion and meeting the In-Pensioners after the Parade.



**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 emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or through your chain of command.



3/29 Battery marked its 30th Anniversary of its amalgamation of 3 and 29 Batteries that took place on 1st April 1993 with an all ranks, friends and veterans dinner.



Members of 205 (3 DVA) Battery along with members of the 3DVA Association came together to commemorate 163 years since its formation on 14th March 1860.



The 20th July 2023 was a historic date for 6/36 Arcot 1751 Battery. Not only was it the first formal dinner night since the Battery resubordinated into a Gun Battery, having been a Tac Battery since 2012 but the evening also marked 70 years since the two Batteries of 6 and 36 Battery came together to form what the sub-unit is known as today.



HQ 7 AD Gp took part in Op TEAMWORK on Wed 12 Jul 23, with this iteration directed by 3XX. The TEAMWORK initiative is a whole force approach embracing empowerment, with participation from all staff, including civil servants and contractors. It's an opportunity for professional development activity to take place that will not only help identify the challenges faced in the workplace but set the conditions to generate shared understanding of the need to update and improve Army cultures and behaviour.



On Friday 23rd June 2023 9 (Plassey) Battery, 12th Regiment Royal Artillery celebrated the 266th Anniversary of their Battle Honour.

Plassey Week 2023 was enjoyed immensely by all members of the Battery – past and present - with special thanks to our friends at the Royal Artillery Association for their kind donations, without which such a diverse, engaging and thought-provoking week would not have been possible.



**RA Branches**

**Lewes Branch**

Members of Lewes Branch RAA joined their Affiliated Battery, 43 Battery (Lloyds Company) RA for their Battery Birthday Celebrations on Thursday 20th July 2023 in 47 Regt WO's & Sgt's Mess. A truly great evening with great company, great food and a perfect chance for the Branch to meet Members of the Battery including the new BC. It was a great opportunity to cement our affiliation and relationship with such a supportive Battery.



He is a remarkable man and has held many posts and roles throughout his career; the highlights of which, were being Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk and Equerry to her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the second. He is an inspiration and a role model to us all. I am in awe of his achievements and proud to call him a friend, as I pay tribute to him today."

Tribute was also paid to the longest-serving member, Mr Colin Thackery, who, over the years has also made a huge contribution to Norwich. Colin is now an In-Pensioner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and is very famous for being the winner of Britain's Got Talent in 2019. Despite being very busy, he always attends the functions held here and we are very proud to have him as a member of the Branch.

It was also good to welcome some new members and their wives to the event. The food was delicious and plentiful, it was a beautiful, sunny afternoon and everyone said they had enjoyed themselves, so here's to the next Centenary!

**Norwich Branch Centenary Celebration**

Members of Norwich Branch gathered together on 11th June 2023 for afternoon tea at The Old Rectory Hotel, to celebrate 100 years since its formation as Norwich Branch Royal Artillery Association.

Guests and members were welcomed by the new Chairman, Clive Johnson, who said he was very honoured to take up the role and wished everyone an enjoyable afternoon.

The Secretary, Herbie Slaughter then paid tribute to the former Chairman, Col Ian Makin TD\* DL, who sadly, due to ill health, had to stand down from the role earlier this year. Col Makin had been the Chairman for 51 years and last year, was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the members for being such an outstanding leader of the Branch, showing dedication and commitment throughout that time.

The secretary went on to say, "Col Makin has agreed to take up a new role as President of Norwich Branch and therefore remains at the very heart of Norwich. He is a remarkable man and has held many posts and roles throughout his career; the highlights of which, were being Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk and Equerry to her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the second.



**Bury St Edmunds Branch**

The Memorial Service to honour VJ Day was held in the Rose Garden Bury St Edmunds on Saturday the 12th of August.

The Branch new Standard Bearer Keith Hayes (ex WO2 of 29 Commando Regiment RA) had the opportunity to parade our Standard for his first time.

In the photos from left to right are myself, Keith Hayes and Major (Retd) Ian Tate RA the branch Chairman who laid the Gunner wreath during the service.



**Korea 70**

2023 marks 70 years since the signing of the armistice that brought about an end to military operations during the Korean War. 60,000 service personnel from across Britain and the Commonwealth saw action during the Korean War, with nearly 1,100 losing their lives. Veterans and families were invited by the RBL to attend this special event.

Mr Terry Cooper who is a member of the Artillery Clerks' Association attended the event at Horse Guards Parade with his daughter. Terry's late Father, Allan Cooper served with the Royal Navy during the Korean War aboard HMS Birmingham.



**Kingdom of Fife Branch**

Members of the Kingdom of Fife Branch RAA joined the BC and fellow officers of 212 (Highland) Bty at the Kingdom of Fife's Armed Forces Day flag raising ceremony in the city of Dunfermline followed by a civic reception hosted by the Provost, Mr Jim Leishman.





### Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance, National Memorial Arboretum 2023

The annual Service of Remembrance took place at the NMA on 22nd July 2023, the event attracted over 250 people: representatives across the serving regiments, our veterans and their families. The Honorary Chaplain of the Royal Artillery, the Venerable Stephen Robbins CB lead the service and the wreath laying in the Memorial Garden. The service took place in the Aspects Centre which for the first year was dedicated to the Gunners for the whole day, allowing for a more relaxed and structured all day event.



Colonel Matthew Carter, Royal Artillery Secretary read the lesson at the service who along with the Regimental Colonel, lead the wreath laying service, which saw a further 18 wreaths laid by Association branches and family. At this point I would like to highlight the support and dedication of our branch Standard Bearers who turned up and support, not only this event but represent us day in day out up and down the nation at events, funeral services, and commemorations throughout the year.



The service, wreath laying, and post event entertainment were all supported by the Lancashire Volunteer Band, who were outstanding, and I highlight as I do throughout the year at our Association events, on how lucky we are in the Gunners to be able to count the band within our number. A huge thanks must go to 103RA for their continued and most valued support, along with Army Bands for enabling their participation.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge how wonderful it was this year, to welcome a full spectrum of our Gunner family. From our newest Royal Artillery Combined Cadet Force detachment (pictured right) to the eight Royal Artillery Royal Hospital Chelsea Pensioners.

As mentioned, this was the first whole day event, and it served as a good planning experience. Next year the service will take place on Saturday 29th June, for reference this is the last Saturday of June and to ensure that we continue to have dedicated provision at the NMA going forward, this will be the future diary date for the service in years to come. I invite anyone with any comments on how we develop the afternoon activity, that sympathetically dovetails with the morning service, to contact me, as I am keen to look at all thoughts and ideas.



I genuinely look forward to seeing you all next year, which with several major work streams planned within our garden over the coming year should be one for us all to be looking forward to.



### RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

To date in 2023 we have helped our Gunner family by providing 464 grants.

**Just over £403,000 has been pledged to help those in need in 2023.**

If you have a concern about finding the money for something you need, please contact us. We cannot however help with private medical or legal fees.

Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it. Call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 to get a case up to us or contact us on either 0300 167 3998/0300 158 7035.

We can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF-WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk, RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association (thegunners.org.uk)

#### Thank You's

*"I would like to pass on the veteran's joy and relief at hearing the news of funding. In his wife's words 'this will change over lives' Thank you so much"*

*"I would like to send our heartfelt thanks for your kind donation... towards my mums new boiler she was delighted to have had a new one fitted. Without the help of yourselves and TRBL she would not of been able to afford to have it replaced. Mum is no longer panicking over it breaking down so again thankyou"*

*"Thank you to you and your team who turned the application around in the working day, enabling us to reassure the SP"*





Date	Event	Location
2023		
20 Sep	RACF Welfare Committee	Larkhill
04 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
05 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
12 Oct	RA Awards Dinner	Larkhill
17 Oct	Charities F&GP Committee	Larkhill
20 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
01 Nov	Charities Investment Committee	London
09 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
12 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
21 Nov	RA Board of Management	Larkhill
23 Nov	Sports Awards Dinner	Larkhill
03 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
08 Dec	YOs Dining In	Larkhill
13 Dec	Master Gunner's Committee	TBC
13 Jan	Ex SNOW STORM 24	Flachauwinkl, Salzburg, Austria
15 Feb	Royal Artillery Gold Cup	Sandown
06 Mar	Master Gunner's Committee	TBC
07 Mar	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
13 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill



REUNIONS

ATTENTION ALL EX-25 ERS

2024 will see the 40th anniversary of the demise of the best gun Regiment of its day. We have just celebrated the 38th disbandment reunion in the usual fashion, kind courtesy of 204 Battery at Kingston Park, Newcastle, with circa 120 in attendance. There is still an intent to run the same again next year (Fri 16 and Sat 17 Jun 23). The planning dates are therefore Mon 24, Tue 25 and Wed 26 Jun 24. Indeed Tom Robson has managed to secure a number of quality rooms at the County Hotel and the Vermont and will underwrite the accommodation for the period through his company as a charitable benefit. We have made provisional arrangements with Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral, for a commemoration/celebration service hopefully supported by the Newcastle Scottish Pipes and Drums with 25 pounder gate guards and uniformed ushers provided by 101 Regiment RA, for 1500 hrs Wed 26 Jun. We will also be providing live entertainment and a finger buffet all at no cost to those attending. So at the moment participants should arrive on Mon 24 for a free day. Tue 25 you have the choice of afternoon tea for the ladies and a pie and pint for the men or whichever way round you prefer! Wed 26 Cathedral Service at 1500 hrs and as mentioned above this would be followed by a reception for our guests and a party in the evening as the main event. Come on boys and girls none of us are getting any younger and to aim off for a 50th celebration might be pushing it a bit so this is the big chance for one memorable great reunion. Please sign in or request to join '25 Regt RA - 40th Anniversary' for further information.

1 RHA REUNION DINNER

The 71<sup>st</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Royal Horse Artillery Officers' Mess Reunion Dinner will be held at the RA Mess, Larkhill on Friday 10th November 2023. Would any former officer of the Regiment who wishes to attend and who has not received details of the dinner by 1st October 2023 please contact the Dinner Secretary, Major Alison Smith on 0300 1667279 alison.smith694@mod.gov.uk

7 AIR DEFENCE GROUP  
GROUND BASED AIR DEFENCE  
REUNION DINNER 2023

7 Air Defence Group will host the Ground Based Air Defence Officers' Reunion Dinner

2023, which will take place on Saturday 8th July 2023 in the Officers' Mess on Thorney Island. To register interest and receive a formal invitation please respond to the QR code below.



ALAMEIN DINNER

The Alamein Dinner 2023 will be held on Fri 20 Oct at the RA Mess, Larkhill. The dinner will take the form of a Regimental Guest Night with partners and is open to officers of the Royal Regiment, serving and retired, and their guests. There will also be some regimental guests. Dress for the serving officers is Mess Dress - Full Ceremonial Evening, (stiff shirts) decorations. For retired officers/civilians it is evening dress (white tie, long dresses) with decorations. The cost of the tickets will be £65 per head. For places apply to Jenny McGrath by email: jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk 01980 845788 and payment can be either: BACS: RAI, 30-11-75, 00957269 (Please prefix payment reference with AD23) Cheque: made payable to the Royal Artillery Institution. Please note a first come first served basis applies.

RA CEREMONY OF  
REMEMBRANCE

The RA Ceremony of Remembrance will take place on 12 Nov 23 at the RA Memorial Hyde Park. The event is open to all to attend. Anyone wishing to have reserved seats is requested to contact Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley, email: emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or post to: Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley, RHQ RA, RA Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 8QT. Please note seats will be reserved on a first come first served basis, tickets will not be issued. All retired members of the regiment who attend are invited at the end of the Ceremony to join the march past. All required to be seated at 10.30 am at the latest. In the event of wet weather, bring water proofs. There is no wet weather programme.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS'  
ALANBROOKE LUNCH  
THU 5 OCT 23



The next Royal Artillery Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 5 Oct 23 at The Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. Our guest speaker will be announced nearer the time. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, Regular and Reserve whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £65 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after lunch. 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 £65 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 Emma Pagan-Skelley. If you make a bank transfer please email the Royal Artillery Secretariat Officer to say that you have done so. Any excess of funds will be donated to the RACF at the end of the year. 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. If you wish to join us please contact the Regimental Secretariat Assistant Emm. Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk

# 7<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery

Readiness  
Opportunities  
Professionalism  
Challenge



Scan the QR code to start your journey, or  
email [7RHA-Recruiting@mod.gov.uk](mailto:7RHA-Recruiting@mod.gov.uk)



IN MEMORIAM

## LAST POST

### Notification of Death:

LBdr Christopher Beynon 13 June 2023  
Lt Col I H (Ian) Branton OBE 19 June 2023  
Dean Ashton June 2023  
Sian Sanders (nee Wills) 16 July 2023  
WO2 Tony Masters July 2023  
Bryan Sore July 2023  
Gnr John Robert Marshall 2 August 2023  
Frederick Till 20 August 2023

**MCNEE** - Lt Col McNee, Andy to all who knew him, died in Salisbury District Hospital on Tuesday 18 July, aged 79. Loving husband to his wife Patsy and his four children, Andy lead a full life in the Regiment. He took the Long Gunnery Staff and passed to be appointed as the Meteorology IG at the School. His Regimental Service in the UK and BAOR, included time with 94 (Loc) Regt RA, 42 (Med) Regt RA and 39 (Hy) Regt RA. Following his Staff College, his duties took him to BAOR and UK. After leaving the service Andy found work with a number of companies in the Defence Sector before eventually retiring to live at his home in Durrington.

**MOWAT** - David (Joe) Mowat sadly passed away at home on 25 June 2023. He joined the Junior Leaders Regiment RA before going on to serve many years with 40 Regiment RA, The Lowland Gunners, before being appointed RSM of 105 Regiment RA. He is sadly missed by his wife Lynn, family, friends and old comrades.

**POTTER** - WO2 (RQMS) Blair Potter died peacefully on 22 April 23. After completing basic training and P Company he served in 7 Para RHA, during that time he was posted to 289 Para Bty RHA as the RQMS. On leaving the army he re-enlisted into 289 Cdo Bty RA 29 Cdo Regt RA and completed the All Arms Command Course serving with 289 for some time as a WO2. He finally moved to Ipswich where he worked closely with the local church. The funeral was attended by many ex members of 289 Para Bty RHA along with the standard of Colchester Branch RAA. Blair will be sadly missed by his wife Sybil, friends and family.

**PRICE** - Denzil Malcolm "Taff" Price sadly passed away on 13 June 23. He joined the Junior Tradesman Regiment in Rhyl in 1964 at the age of 16 years old and then went on to join 47th Regiment Royal Artillery for the whole of his 22 year career, serving in 3, 31 and HQ Battery's, with deployments to Aden and Northern Ireland and postings to Barnard Castle, Newton Abbot/Yeovil, Hong Kong, Colchester, Gütersloh and Thorney Island. Playing Battery and Regimental football and became Regimental Team Manager in Germany. Rising to the rank of WO2 (RQMS). Started his second Army career, by going

into Recruitment on the Long Service List, working as Office Manager at ACIO Burton on Trent and finally at AFCO Stoke on Trent (Hanley), finally retiring after 39 years of service. Leaving behind his much loved wife Mary Price of almost 55 years, loving father to Stephen, Annamarie and Morwen and proud grandfather to Rhiannon, Rhys and Cerys.



**WALTON** - Bdr James Walton, Member of 73 Battery, 94 Locating Regiment Royal Artillery. Passed away 5 August 2023, Olching, Germany. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

## Subscription Price List

To addresses in the UK and BFPO:

The Gunner - £24

The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £10

The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £34

To addresses in Europe:

The Gunner - £39

The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £14

The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £53

To addresses in the rest of the world:

The Gunner - £49

The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £17

The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £66



## Major General Bill Cornock CB MBE



Bill Cornock was every inch the gentleman airborne officer whose natural and easy style of leadership made him a much respected and adored figure spanning several Gunner generations. To those most close to him, he was a loving husband, father and grandfather.

Bill was born on 25 April 1935 in Alvechurch outside Birmingham where he spent his wartime childhood with his mother and sister, while his father deployed to Burma and India for four years with the Royal Air Force.

War ended and the family was posted to Lüneburg Heath, Germany, and it was here that Bill attended King Alfred's School, Plön. Plön was unique: a co-educational, comprehensive, boarding school for children of servicemen working in post-war Germany. The Headmaster was Freddie Spencer Chapman, the highly decorated jungle SOE

agent, who ran the school on the same principles as Gordonstoun. Bill thrived at school, most notably as a young athlete. He ran a 23 second 200 metres, which was faster than the women's world record at that time. The Athletics Team, which he captained, enjoyed considerable success at White City regularly beating many higher profile independent schools.

After a spell as a Gunner in 4th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, Bill attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst where he was awarded the Sword of Honour. Thereafter he was quick to blaze a trail as a young officer in 33rd Parachute Light Regiment in Aldershot and Aden, followed by a tour with 1 RHA. It was here that he met Kay. They were a most wonderful match and enjoyed sixty years of marriage. They had two sons: Ian and James.

From 1 RHA, Bill was posted as an instructor to Sandhurst. Staff College and Brigade Major Royal Artillery of 3rd (UK) Division followed and then back to his much beloved 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Aldershot from 1971 to 1976 as Second in Command and then Commanding Officer. A time which was dominated by three emergency tours to Northern Ireland.

7 also took time to excel on the sporting field with countless successes at rugby, hockey, football

and cross country, whilst Bill also captained the Combined Services Hockey team and a few years later managed the England Under-21 Hockey team.

After command Bill rapidly progressed through various staff appointments and instructor posts at the Staff College, before returning to command as Commander Royal Artillery, 3rd Armoured Division.

In 1982 Bill was promoted again and became the Director Royal Artillery. During his time as Director, he saw the need for the move of his Headquarters from Woolwich to Larkhill, resisted at the time and only taking place some ten years later. In 1986, Bill's final posting was to Mons in Belgium where he commanded the multi-national operation LIVEOAK which managed military operations in support of Berlin. Bill often said he was fortunate enough to work for many military heavyweights: Generals Sir John Mogg, Tim Morony and John Akehurst, to name but a few.

On leaving the Army, Bill threw himself into life as bursar at Cranleigh School often seen haring around the school grounds on his motorbike. At the same time, he was the Honorary Colonel of 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery and as a Colonel Commandant he spent many years interviewing potential Gunner



## Lieutenant Colonel R C Chamberlain RA 5 March 1938 - 20 August 2023

officers at Sandhurst. There are quite literally hundreds of Gunner officers who remember with great fondness their interviews with General Bill.

Retirement saw Bill and Kay move to Jersey. When many would be content to retire peacefully, Bill undertook various roles on the Island: Commander of St John Ambulance, President of the Jersey Scout Association and a member of the Jersey Blind Society.

His sporting prowess continued well into his final years. He was a highly adept tennis player; still water skiing at 70 and snow skiing at 80 with his grandchildren. And no shortage of trips to La Moye for a game of golf, right to the end.

Bill's final years were marked by the onset of dementia which he, and Kay, managed with great courage and good humour. When asked how he was by a fellow retired officer at his final regimental reunion, he remarked, "Kay is looking after me wonderfully."

He always felt that the camaraderie of being an airborne soldier was exceptional and the leadership he respected so much was provided by outstanding officers such as Generals Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley and Geoffrey Howlett.

General Bill was a deeply content man who never wanted a fuss; he just wanted the best for others.



Colvin Chamberlain on the right

Colvin Chamberlain joined RMA Sandhurst in 1956, commissioning into The Royal Regiment of Artillery on 2nd August 1958. After his Young Officers' Course at Larkhill he joined 45 Fd Regt RA in Dortmund before a posting to Junior Leaders' Regiment Royal Artillery in Oswestry as an instructor, and then to I Parachute Bty (Bull's Troop) 7 Parachute Regt RHA as a Forward Observation Officer. Whilst with Bull's Troop he deployed to Libya to test parachutes following a run of deployment-failures and to Australia as part of the opposition force for an Australian Brigade completing its pre-Vietnam deployment training. He next served in 17 Trg Regt RA in Woolwich as Adjutant, before Hong Kong as

a Forward Observation Officer in 25 Fd Regt RA. Returning to Larkhill in 1970 he attended then instructed on the Long Gunnery Staff Course before returning to 25 Fd Regt as Second-in-Command in Catterick, arms plotting them to Munsterlager, before taking command of 54 (Maharajpore) Light Bty RA - a command which included a demanding Emergency Tour in Belfast in 1975. After another sojourn in Larkhill, this time as a staff officer, he was posted to Canada for a two-year tour as the exchange officer to the Canadian Artillery School in Gagetown, New Brunswick. This was to be the finale of his field gunnery career. During the 1980s he had back-to-back staff tours in the MOD in procurement, notably on the BATES and ADCIS system teams, which led to a final posting to Larkhill where he concluded his service in 1993. Colvin worked for several more years as a Retired Officer at Larkhill before retiring to Devizes.

He was predeceased in 2008 by Judith, his wife of 41 years, but is survived by his son Edward and daughter Finetta, as well as by his second wife Deborah.



## Colonel Raymond Alfred Taylor 1928-2023



Colonel Ray Taylor died in Cardiff on the 11th March 2023. He was born in Dorchester in 1928, the middle son of five siblings, the family moving on to Weymouth before being bombed out in 1942. As a boy, Ray played football, sang in the choir and was introduced to sailing at the local outward bound school. Sailing remained a passion all through his life and he sailed annually with friends in France and Turkey.

Having left Beaminster and Netherbury Grammar School with A levels and gained some military experience in the Home Guard, Ray went to Sandhurst in 1947 and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery. His first posting was to 76 Heavy Anti Aircraft Regiment at Albany Barracks Parkhurst on the Isle of Wight (equipped with the 3.7 inch gun), followed by the Training Regiment in Rhyl. In 1954 he moved to 19 Field Regiment in Dusseldorf and

was part of the advance party when the Regiment was sent to Korea for post Armistice service. Ray served as Adjutant in Hong Kong and Minden. There followed a year as Staff Captain for 5 Brigade in Iserlohn before attendance at the Technical Staff Course at Shrivenham between 1959 and 1961.

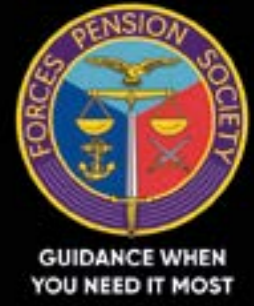
Ray had met Rose-Marie in Germany in 1954 and they were married ten years later at Woolwich. Their honeymoon was a five week trip to Germany, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Australia to see his mother and then Mumbai. Ray and Rose-Marie settled in Malvern and their daughter Tina joined the family in 1971.

During the 1960's Ray held Technical Staff Officer appointments in the Gun Design and Development Department and at the Royal Radar Establishment at Malvern, working on Rapier. He also returned to Regimental duty as a Battery Commander in 39 Missile Regiment based at Sennelager between 1964 and 1967. At the time 39 Regt was equipped with Honest John and M115 Howitzers.

Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1970 Ray was appointed GSO1 W at the RA Range in the Outer Hebrides, followed by a year in Australia and a year on the staff at Shrivenham. From 1977 to 1980 he served as a Colonel with the Ordnance Board before

concluding his long career as a Gunner as Superintendent and Military Commander at the Proof and Experimental Establishment Shoeburyness.

Ray retired from the Army in 1983 when the family moved to Cardiff. He studied for and was awarded a degree in mathematics and computing by the Open University. His was a long and fulfilling retirement during which he enjoyed spending time with family and friends, as well as gardening, sailing, skiing, golf and water colour painting. He involved himself with The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, the Decorative and Contemporary Arts Society and the National Museum of Wales where he was a Friend and Volunteer. Ray was well-known locally for the fund-raising barbeques and carol services with which he involved himself for twenty years as the ABF Secretary for Glamorgan.



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From 1st October 2023, the AFPS15 Remedy (McCloud) is being implemented. From that date, it's decision-time for many.

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Eligible members will all receive a Remediable Service Statement detailing their remedy choices, no later than 1st April 2025. Existing pensioner members and those retiring from the Armed Forces after 1st October 2023 with immediate benefits will be asked to make their election. Those with deferred pensions will be asked to make their decision before their benefits become payable.

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KooGa

19 Regt

BAR  
1911  
MEMBERSHIP  
2011

Photo credit: Bdr Watson, Regimental Photographer, 19 Regt RA

Gunner Tug of War 2023