



DECEMBER 2021

Ex GUNNER GRAVITY 21

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IN INDIA AND BURMA

RA ROAD CYCLING TEAM

GUNNER

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GUNNER



DECEMBER 2021

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CONTENTS



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Regimental Artillery Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class 1 (RASM) Mealand

FEATURES

- 4 Guest Editorial The Master Gunner St James's Park
- 5 The Integrated Review
- 6 The Global Reach of the Royal Artillery
- 8 Remembrance Day
- 12 Gunner Sunday
- 14 The Gunnery Staff Course
- 16 1st Artillery Brigade
- 18 The Story of Stanley and Jill
- 22 A Gunner's Experience of World War II in India and Burma
- 24 30 years of Women in the Royal Artillery

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BOURNE AVENUE, SALISBURY

SPORT

- 26 Annual Inter-Corps Netball Championships in Aldershot
- 30 Ex GUNNER GRAVITY 21
- 32 The Royal Artillery Road Cycling Team

REGULARS

- 34 Royal Artillery Charities News
- 38 Notices
- 39 Obituaries & Death Notices
- 45 Competitions



THE INTEGRATED REVIEW

LT GEN SIR ANDREW GREGORY KBE CB DL MASTER GUNNER ST JAMES'S PARK

The Secretary of State for Defence has announced the conclusions of the Government's Integrated Review and outlined how it will affect the Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force. The Integrated Review has set the British Army on a course for radical transformation. Under the 'Future Soldier' programme, the Army will become more agile, more integrated and more expeditionary. In the future, we will operate on a battlefield that has evolved very rapidly. It will be harder to hide, and weapons will destroy with greater accuracy, lethality, range and precision. Identifying the challenges of this future operating environment, the 'Future Soldier' programme has placed the Gunners at the forefront of a transformed Army, with 'FIND' and 'FIRES' firmly at the centre of its force design and a clear shift from the 'Close' to the 'Deep' battle.

Even though the Integrated Review sees the Army reducing its current workforce by 11%, the size of the Royal Regiment will be maintained broadly as it is now; importantly there will be no loss of any units nor reduction in the number of batteries. We will, however, have to reorganise to facilitate new capabilities. The most significant organisational change is that the 1st Artillery Brigade will become the heart of the new Deep Reconnaissance and Strike Brigade Combat Team. This will be a formidable 'FIND' and 'STRIKE' capability, integrating the Surveillance & Target Acquisition capabilities of AJAX, Mini and Tactical-Uncrewed Air Systems, weapon locating radar, special observers, and pan-domain sensors with AS90, Multiple Launch Rocket System, electronic attack, and attack helicopter effectors.

Most of our regiments will remain unaffected in both geography, laydown and capability, but there will be some significant, singular changes at regimental and battery level. Changes to battery titles and roles will be informed by the Royal Artillery Heritage Committee and endorsed by my Committee for announcement in early 2022. In summary, the major changes are as follows, noting that all Regiments retain their headquarters batteries:

- 1st Regiment RHA will gain an AJAX tactical group battery.
- 3rd Regiment RHA will re-role to the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS), with two batteries equipped with M270 launchers, one of which also has a JACKAL tactical group. A third M270 battery will be provided by 101st Regiment RA on deployment.
- 7th Parachute Regiment RHA will gain a gun battery, including a tactical group, and a tactical group battery.
- 4th Regiment RA will gain a gun group, building on what is currently a tactical group battery.
- 5th Regiment RA will resubordinate to the Deep Reconnaissance & Strike Brigade Combat Team.
- 19th Regiment RA will gain an AJAX tactical group battery.
- 26th Regiment RA will become a three battery MLRS Regiment, with two batteries equipped with M270 launchers, one of which also has an AJAX tactical group, and an AJAX tactical group battery. A third M270 battery will be provided by 101st Regiment RA on deployment.
- 32nd Regiment RA will retain its third MUAS battery and gain a fourth MUAS battery.

There are also positive changes regarding our Reserve Regiments:

- 101st Regiment RA will now provide a formed battery each to 3rd Regiment RHA and 26th Regiment RA, having previously provided individual M270 detachments and reinforcements.
- 103rd Regiment RA will be aligned to Light Brigade Combat Team 2 and be expected to deploy as a fully constituted regiment, reinforced by 104th and 105th Regiments RA where appropriate.
- 104th Regiment RA will provide individual reinforcements to 1st Regiment RHA and 19th Regiment RA in the Deep Reconnaissance & Strike Brigade Combat Team.
- 105th Regiment RA will provide formed detachments as guns 7 & 8 in each gun battery of 4th Regiment RA who are supporting Light Brigade Combat Team 1.
- 106th Regiment RA will continue to provide individual reinforcements to 7th Air Defence Group.
- A Battery HAC will provide formed detachments as guns 7 & 8 in each gun battery of 7th (Parachute) Regiment RHA.
- Patrols Squadron HAC will provide Special OP patrols to the Army Special Operations Brigade and continue to provide patrols to 4/73 Bty RA.

You will note that going forward, our Reserve regiments will remain integral to the Warfighting capability of the Regiment. Significantly, the Integrated Review seeks to transform the Reserve by giving them a fully established Warfighting role. Force generating this capability will be challenging, but I am confident our Reserve regiments will respond to the re-invigorated purpose this provides.

As these changes are implemented, every effort will be made to minimise disruption to officers, soldiers and their families. When reassignment is necessary, we will endeavour to seek volunteers first and to ensure that adequate notice of posting is given.

In summary, we owe a debt of thanks to all of those from the Regiment involved in this review. The Royal Regiment has proven robust and resilient, and the Army has realised that it needs its Gunners, across all our disciplines, more than ever. As a Regiment, we will be ready to step up and deliver; I have every confidence that we can do that.

Andrew Gregory

25th November 2021

A SEASONAL MESSAGE FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEWYEAR FROM

LT GEN SIR ANDREW GREGORY KBE CB DL MASTER GUNNER ST JAMES'S PARK

I opened my 2020 Yuletide message to you, by remarking that "2020 will go down in history as a most unusual year", and I closed it with "fingers crossed for 2021". Covid has, as we all know, continued into 2021 so this year could never be described as 'normal', but we have thankfully recommenced important events that we had previously to cancel; they provide encouraging green shoots of a return to full Regimental activities.

The Royal Regiment has continued its support, in exemplary fashion, to the Civil Authorities and especially the NHS in the ongoing battle against the pandemic. Gunners have been embedded in NHS hospitals across the country, at no small risk to themselves, and have helped take some of the physical and mental strain off the normal NHS support staff, releasing them for tasks more closely associated with patient care. The typical Gunner cheerfulness and willingness to tackle almost any role asked of them, without question, was a real eye-opener and was frequently remarked upon, and their positivity and humour was a great tonic for tired NHS personnel during some very challenging moments. I congratulate all who have played their part during this National crisis. Concurrently, the Regiment has trained for and fulfilled its numerous operational commitments across the globe. I also commend our own Regimental Charities who have continued their essential work uninterrupted, providing support across the Regimental family, despite being forced to adapt and operate in very different ways. It has been truly UBIQUE!

As the COVID vaccination programme allowed other activities to resume, we were delighted by the arrival in the United Kingdom of a large contingent of fellow Gunners from the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery (RCA), including their Band.

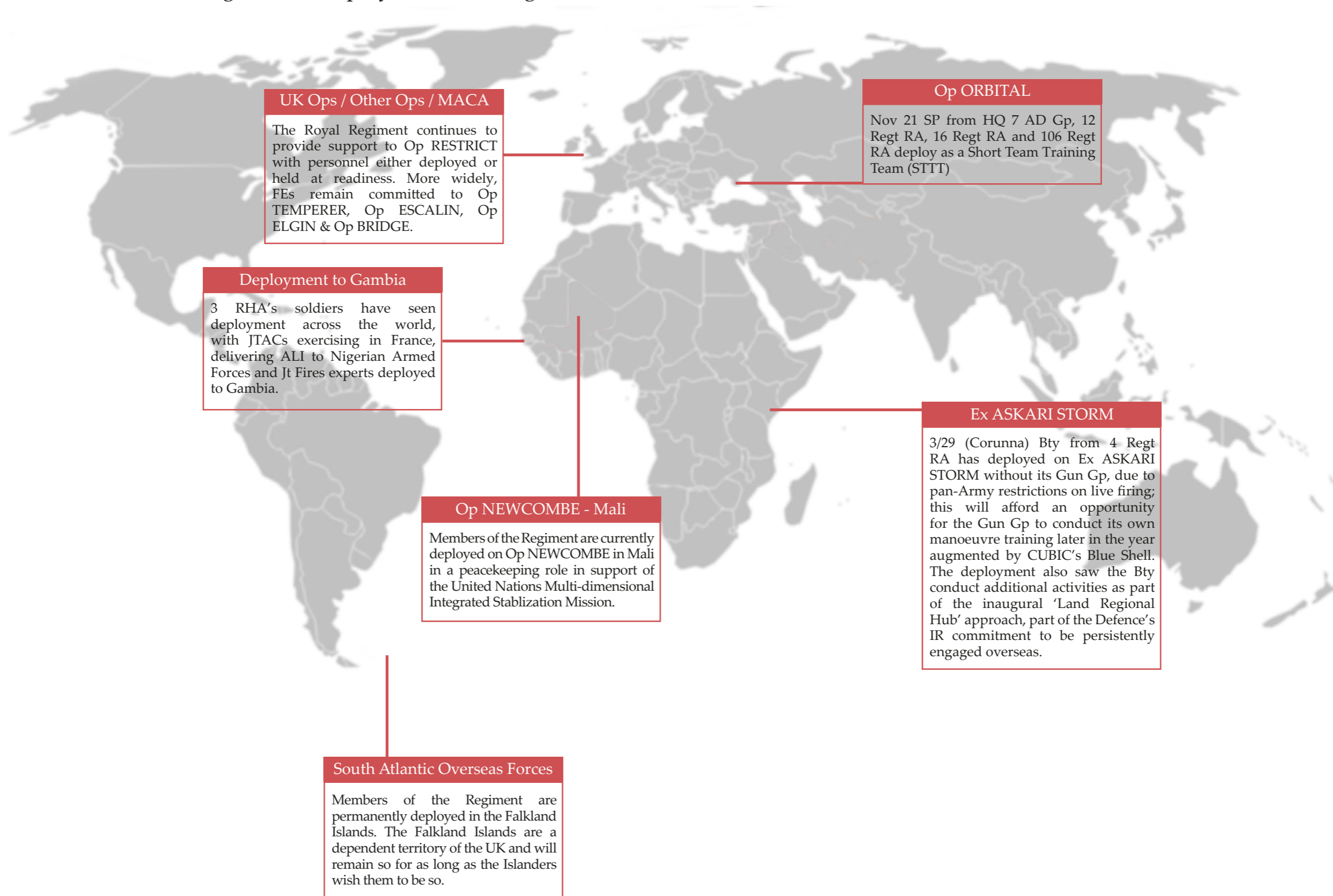
They conducted Public Duties, forming the guards for Buckingham Palace, The Tower of London, and Windsor Castle, as part of the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of their formation on 20th October 1871. Her Majesty The Queen, Captain General to both the Royal Artillery and the RCA, spent some time meeting their Colonel Commandant, Regimental Colonel and members of their Guard. The Royal Regiment took the opportunity further to cement our close ties to the RCA; two highlights were the Lancashire Artillery Volunteers Band joining with the Band of the RCA and Master Bombardier van der Post becoming the first Canadian ever, to ride on a Royal Salute with the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery on 15th November.

Sport is in full swing, dinners are being held again – including an excellent Regimental Awards Dinner that celebrated the outstanding achievements of some of our people in many different areas, and we are looking at how best to combine traditional means of communication with that which we have developed during the lockdowns.

At the time of this magazine going to print, the more detailed outcomes of the Integrated Review are still to be promulgated. While there will be some changes to regimental structures and roles, the overall outcome remains extremely positive for the Regiment, not least with a shift of emphasis from 'Close to Deep', the ascendancy of 'find' and 'fires' and major reinvestments in many of our capabilities, especially Air Defence. While we will need to ensure others understand quite how much we have to offer, the Gunners have an extremely strong foundation on which to build. The years ahead have the potential to be a most exciting time for the Royal Regiment.

To all Gunners, serving and retired, and to our families, keep safe and I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

The Gunners are currently engaged on over 10 overseas operations with formed units and individual augmentees deployed across the globe.





The Royal Regiment, serving and veterans, gathered at the Royal Artillery War Memorial on Sunday 14th November to remember all those who have fallen in service to the guns. 5th Regiment Royal Artillery provided the marching Troops and after the Master Gunner St James's Park laid a wreath on behalf of the Regiment, representatives of all Regiments laid a wreath. In the words of the Duke of Connaught at the dedication of the Memorial in 1925 'See to it ye that come after that their names be not forgotten'.



Minute gun fired by Gunners from 207 Bty RA, 105 Regt RA



Photo credit: Bdr Murray Kerr

Gunners from 105th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Scottish and Ulster Gunners) fire the minute gun at Ibrox Stadium - Sun 7 Nov 2021.

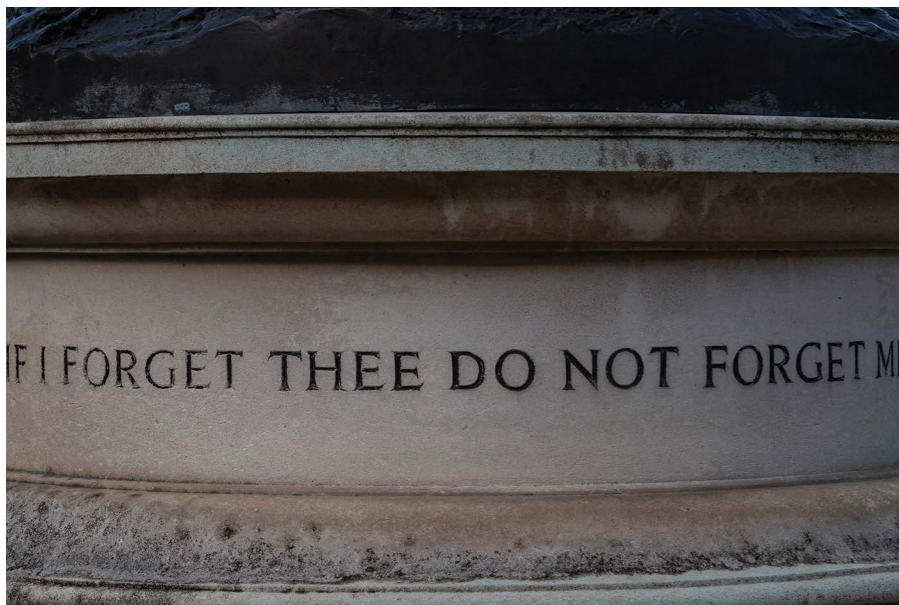
Reservist Gunners from 207 (City of Glasgow) Battery fired the L118 Light Gun to mark the beginning and end of the minute's silence before the game between Glasgow Rangers and Ross County. The minute gun fired by 207 Bty has been a regular feature at Ibrox for a number of years. 207 Bty has a proud lineage: its antecedent Battery – 4th City of Glasgow Howitzer Battery – carries the honour of being the last Battery to keep its guns firing during the 1915 Gallipoli offensive; covering the withdrawal of British, Australian, New Zealand & French forces. The guns were in action right up to the last safe moment and the last gun firing had its breech removed to deny it falling to the enemy. There was no time to evacuate the gun, such was the last minute nature of the supporting fire. 207 Bty celebrates Gallipoli day annually with a mess dinner, where the breech of the last gun fired takes pride of place at the top table.

The gun detachment was led by Bombardier Jenny Findlay who works as an Estates Co-ordinator for the state hospital during the week. Bdr Findlay deployed on Op HERRICK and was a Detachment Commander for the Saluting Troop of 105 Regt RA for FORTH BRIDGE marking the death of HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. Bdr Findlay said "I joined the UOTC in 2007 while studying at University and really got into the life, embracing the opportunities of a reservist Gunner, it's no exaggeration to say that being a Glasgow Gunner has played a big part in helping my civilian career."

Major Justin Auty, Battery Commander of 207 (City of Glasgow) Battery said; "Community engagement like this is a massive part of forces life, and once again the Gunners have done their city proud. Soldiers - either Regular or Reserve - like football supporters, are fiercely loyal and events like this reinforce our connection to the City of Glasgow."



Photo credit: Bdr Murray Kerr



On Sunday 24th October, the Regimental Colonel led a team from RHQ RA to the Royal Hospital Chelsea to join our Gunner In Pensioners for 'Gunner Sunday'. We were joined by a strong turnout from the serving regiment and from our veterans. Following the Governor's inspection, we joined the In Pensioners for Sunday Service in the chapel and then hosted a buffet lunch next door in the National Army Museum. Next Gunner Sunday is planned for 24th April 2022. All are welcome and details will be sent to RAA branches and regiments early in the New Year.



A New Beginning



Trainees on GSC 02 utilising the loading system of an AS90 at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

The Gunnery Staff Course (GSC) has adopted a new model of training primarily focusing on trade specific Qualified Gunnery Instructors (QGIs) which has seen the course duration shortened to seven months. Historically, the Gunnery Staff Course (GSC) has always been split with SNCO's attending the Gunnery Career Course (GCC) and Officers attending the Instructor Gunnery Course (IGC) over a twelve-month period. The course's new model includes a diverse mix of soldiers and officers from Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD), Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR), Joint Fires, Divisional Fires and Artillery Command Systems melded together to enhance all trainee's knowledge of the 'One Regiment'. GSC 02 started in September with a common module phase aimed at capitalising on their technical expertise and setting the baseline for future development within the 'Special to Discipline' phase.

One element of particular interest during the common module was being able to utilise

the facilities at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom based within Shrivenham. The Defence Academy delivers world class professional defence and security education to students from the Ministry of Defence, wider government, UK industry and overseas. The Gunnery Staff are fortunate to have a QGI based at the defence academy in WO2 (QGI) Williams who is the lead Royal Artillery expert to defence studies. His role includes lecturing on a broad variety of studies within defence and to defence industry partners, predominately gun design, procurement and multi domain integration. On the 20 September 2021, trainees made the journey to the Defence Academy to conduct a two-day capability package.

Day one comprised of an in-depth look at the special weapons armoury and an explosives effects demonstration. Initially, the armaments Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the academy gave a seminar on the different small arms capabilities that have been utilised within the ever-changing military operating environment,



using both historical and modern-day examples. He explained how the use of innovative ideas and continuous improvement, such as modifications of certain weapons systems have been at the forefront of how we improve our small arms capability to ensure we are the most effective on the battlefield. This gave the course an insight on what the future of small arms may look like. Trainees then transited to the Academy's explosive range where they were met by an Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Warrant Officer. The main focus was to give trainees an insight on the fundamentals of explosives and how they are utilised within a military context along with how to construct an explosive shaped charge to penetrate thick steel plating.

Day two saw trainees allocated capability briefs which saw them conduct presentations

on all in-service RA equipment. This gave the future QGIs an opportunity to give overarching briefs utilising their knowledge and experience within their discipline to broaden the technical understanding of the wider RA capabilities to their course peers.

The visit to the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom was enlightening for all who attended and enabled the Royal School of Artillery to better develop their future technical experts. The common module has proven exactly why the Gunnery Staff Course is at the forefront of technical and innovative training.

by Staff Sergeant Liam McEvoy
Gunner Staff Course 02



SSgt McEvoy delivering a Divisional Fires brief to trainees on GSC 02



Ex ARIES STORM



32 Regt RA conducting planning in support of the Divisional Artillery Group

“The Corps and Divisional Deep battle continues to be a rocket artillery, air and attack aviation fight; with the Division fighting at range to preserve precious combat power. This is an aggressive ‘manoeuvre to fire’ battle founded on fighting artillery logistics and manoeuvring platforms to ruthlessly execute the Effects Guidance Matrix. Rigorous use of intelligence-driven, deliberate FIND and Counter Fires assets is essential. The Joint Air Ground Integration Centre’s (JAGIC) integration of all Divisional Joint Fires is the GOC’s primary tool to shape the deep.”

Brigadier C A Hewitt, Commander 1st Artillery Brigade

Previously the opportunities for the Divisional Artillery Group (DAG – the Royal Artillery’s cannons and rockets) and Offensive Support Group (OSG – the collective lethal and non-lethal effectors TaskOrg’ed to the Warfighting Division) to train collectively were rare, non-tactical, coordination of fires (Joint Forces Command and FST) focussed, and

usually in support of other primary training audiences. September saw the first iteration of Exercise ARIES STORM, which sought to address the imbalance of training through testing and validation of the DAG Command and Control, tactical mobility and Artillery Logistics, alongside integrating critical OSG force elements from 1st Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Brigade, Watchkeeper Force and 101 Logistics Brigade on Salisbury Plain.

Once deployed onto Salisbury Plain, regiments conducted battle preparation and used this valuable time to collectively revise Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs) within the context of a modern threat (Unmanned Aircraft Systems, counter-fires and asymmetric threat) targeted at them. OSG validation saw a variety of missions which provided a ‘generational’ training opportunity; Regulars and Reserves learning unambiguous lessons as to the complexity of operating the ‘system of systems’ at scale, taking forward the appropriate parts from the past two



decades of the COIN fight but now with a focus of operating in a manner appropriate to a peer threat.

The exercise not only served to validate and dispel assumptions garnered from simulation training experiences such as CERBERUS and the US led Warfighter Exercises, it also provided a framework with which to focus on fighting the gun and launcher groups and artillery logistic echelons and a re-orientated towards the Deep fight over the Close. To remain in line with the 1 Arty Bde Lines of Effort (increased survivability, increased lethality, better processes and structures fit for purpose), the experimentation phase of the exercise proved extremely valuable, most notably the opportunity to trial varying survivability deployment postures and stress test command and control at every level.

Ex ARIES STORM provided a unique opportunity for generational learning, which has created a training foundation from which 1 Arty Bde can build upon. The exercise was the largest deployment of the DAG to date and provided a great opportunity for involvement and integration across the Army in support of 3 (UK) Div. Three weeks, 11 Royal Artillery Regiments, 200 vehicles and 1000 soldiers, the exercise involved a large scale deployment from across the Royal Regiment.

Looking forward, the Integrated Review’s privileging of the Deep over the Close fight provides a substantial opportunity for the Gunners. Previously, much of the DAG supported training instead of being the focus of training. Ex ARIES STORM has highlighted the requirement for the Royal Artillery to generate an honest understanding of capability from which to accurately inform future debate, exploit opportunities and address shortcomings. It has set the conditions for Ex ARIES STORM 23 which will train and validate the entirety of the OSG system-of-systems, remembering that 1 Arty Bde is only as good as the sum of its parts.

Author: HQ 1st Artillery Brigade



An AS90 platform awaits a fire mission





True Love in a time of Coronavirus



"You can't see it" said Stanley, his eyes glistening with the round, heavy tears of a long life ebbing and flowing through each breath. "You can't see it" he says again, gripping my gloved hand as those round heavy tears crash down into the crisp white linen, "but I'm travelling to Jill now!"

The clock has long since struck 8.00pm and the clapping has finished, and the wards are hushed. But this is Stanley's last night in hospital and his excitement cannot be contained. Pausing and reflecting mid-story (as he is prone to do), he asks "it's very late for you, isn't it?" in his rich country burr.

"Just in the nick of time, eh Stanley?" I reply, and we smile at each other from ear to ear.

It was not always this way.

The Senior Sister on duty in the Emergency Assessment Unit; Elaine, has called through to Spiritual Care. She describes a lovely man who has come in to EAU and is very sick. He is one of the many coming in suffering from Coronavirus, and he is asking to see a priest. He is Roman Catholic Christian on admission, but the building is in lockdown and no one from the outside can come in. "I've explained it all to him, he's called Stanley, and he just says he wants to see someone. Will you come?"

It is a nervous time donning Personal Protective Equipment. It takes time and concentration to layer up. First the gloves, then the gown, then more gloves, and goggles and hair net and crowned with a visor. A little wiggle checks that everything is in place and I laugh with

the nurse helping me. I am sure that I am not alone when I ask myself if this is the time I catch it too?

Stanley is in a C-Pap mask. He is gasping for air. He winces with the pain of breathing. Each breath is full of pain and effort and terrifying, and this will continue for weeks. The month is April, the day is Tuesday and the time is 1.00pm. As he breathes out, Stanley watches his own chest lower, and then forces his own lungs to re-inflate.

Walking into an aerosol-generating Covid ward is a disorientating experience. Already wrapped in layers, the goggles start to steam up and the visor is unclear. The standard visual metrics of height and breadth and length and depth are slowly disappearing as I walk towards the bed. The C-Pap completes the disassociation of space and time with the whistling noise of the air, and words spoken fight in the oxygen flow and float around each other inside the mask.

Stanley does not have the internet. He does not have a mobile phone. It doesn't matter however, because he does have something to say. He has a message for his wife of 59 years, and her name is Jill.

At his bedside, I make my introduction and a first apology. "Hello Stanley!" I say as cheerily as I can, "my name is Adrian and I am the Lead Chaplain. Sorry I cannot get a Roman Catholic in today, I'm Church of England".

"That's ok" he pushes out, "I just want to see the Padre".



I ask Stanley whether he has been in the Armed Forces now he is asking for the Padre. "Yes of course I was" he says, his excitement growing. He was a National Serviceman in days gone by. "I was in the Royal Artillery!"

"Well Stanley" I replied, "that's rather interesting, because I am a Padre to the Royal Artillery myself (in my spare time, that is)! Tell me what I can do for you".

Stanley tells his phone number to me which I scribble down. Now I am able to pass a message to Jill. Then he tells me Pat's number, and Pat is a supporter from the charity BLESMA and has been supporting Stanley for a long time. (Pat is like family, as I quickly learn all Stanley's friends are.) I have to leave the bedside as the desperate rasping draws air into his afflicted lungs. I cannot risk hurting him by asking for more. He takes hold of my gloved hand and asks for some prayer time, and we pray for the Doctors and Nurses and HCAs in the EAU, and for Pat and finally for Jill. Stanley has started to sob, but I give his hand a squeeze and encourage him to keep fighting it. And Stanley looks me in the eye and says

"I've never given up in my life – I'm a Gunner!"

And what message does Stanley have for Jill? Simply;

"I love you."

Jill is patient and calm and taking things in on the phone. She asks for descriptions because she cannot be there herself; of Stanley, of the room, and the staff caring for him. In her perfect matter-of-fact way, she says "I'm very worried of course". I describe the situation and the machine that pushes air into his lungs and she says "is that the C-Pap?" and reveals that she calls for an update every morning and every evening. Then she shares her pain with me as a matter of fact itself; "the hardest part is... I can't see him".

Jill has been with Stanley since forever. He suffered a compound fracture in 1956 in a motorcycle accident in the days he was working for the Forestry, she tells me. He planted the trees at Goodwood. His fracture could not heal and he lost his lower leg, and the relationship with BLESMA began. He retrained and worked until the age of 58, "which was amazing really", Jill says, with a hint of pride in her husband's achievements.

She pauses. A life, and a lifetime is hanging in the balance. We return to the trees.

"Stanley told me about the trees Jill. If he doesn't make it... I mean, if he dies that is..." and my eyes are full of tears now, "he wants his ashes to be scattered amongst those trees".

The next pause seems like an eternity.

"I did not know that", she replied.

"Do you have a message for me to tell Stanley?" I ask her.

"Tell him... he's my one" she said quietly, "he's my one."

Stanley has moved. From the EAU he has gone to Clandon Ward and a new clinical team to look after him. Clandon Ward, like all of Level C and Level D is looking after Coronavirus patients. The wards are full. For patients like Stanley, full PPE is needed at all times still. All the patients are closely monitored 24/7, tended, turned and cared for. At 85 years old, the statistical likelihood of beating this virus is low. Everybody knows it. This amazing team has come together from all areas of the Royal Surrey family; from research medicine, Gastroenterology, from outpatients nursing and from the central ward staff who are all expert in aerosol-generating procedures and treatments already. The grief and trauma rippling through all these Coronavirus wards is palpable now, and the way the staff have bonded to support, encourage and motivate each other is the most incredible thing. One member of the team comes up to me and whispers "Please, not Stanley, not another one".

Stanley wants a blessing. He doesn't need to know about the statistics, because he knows for himself that time, opportunity and chance are all tight. Today, because he doesn't want to face the wall, the physiotherapist Cas and the HCA Jamie have been forbidden from turning him unless the Padre is coming, and the staff have all said that he is. Nurses Reena and Foz seem relieved when the chaplain appears. But the excitement and joy and those round heavy tears return as the "I love you" returns to sender with "he's my one, he's my one" attached. Stanley receives the blessing he wants, and our prayers end with Jill.

Stanley has another message for Jill. He is struggling to breathe and today he asks for the mask to be taken off. He wants a cup of tea too. Dr Beth in the clinical team is the medical lead today, and allows for 15 minutes at most and instructs the HCA inside the bay in turn. "You have 5 minutes Stanley" I say, that risk of hurt for lack of oxygen and a few words, ever present.

Stanley is refreshed by the tea and half-human again now free from the C-Pap. His skin is sore from the rubbing. I ask him if he is feeling any better, and he smiles the biggest smile and colour rushes into his cheeks. So we seize the moment, whip out a phone to add to the decontamination procedures later, and take a selfie giving a 'thumbs up' for Jill. And in that photo is all of love and all of healing, and there's hope for Stanley yet.

A Letter to Jill with the photograph

Dear Jill...

This situation is turning many things on their head, many old certainties, and ways of doing, and of being, and of loving. I think I can be sure of this, however; Stanley does not need me as a go-between, in order to know that your love for him is complete and constant and unending. He has



no doubt about it. I think the pleasure he receives from me in his situation, is knowing that I know about your loving relationship at a deep level, and that my ears have heard the "I love you" and that I am able to repeat it.

Stanley was asking if you had the photo yet. "She'll love it!" he exclaimed. I said that I was on my way to deliver it to you today. "Tell her I love her!" he said to me first. "What are you waiting for?" he said to me next.

You and Stanley are in my prayers, and this comes with my love.

Jill is adamant; "he's not to know, he mustn't know". Jill is not well and the GP suspects Coronavirus for her too. She buries her fears, for his recovery. She places the picture of Stanley inside, and stands boldly for a socially distanced selfie to take back to the ward. I stand 2 metres from the door shouting messages of love at her, and wonder what the neighbours must be thinking. "Tell him I will have his jacket ready for him to come home in."

Stanley is over the moon happy. Would he be if he knew that she was ill too? We do not know where the illness will go with her. Silence governs this moment between us all.

In his hands is the photo of Jill from yesterday, freshly printed in the office, the first time he has seen his wife's face in 2 weeks of illness. Some round, heavy tears have fallen on the paper and are causing the ink to run. "Don't worry about that, there's plenty more copies to come".

The Clandon staff on duty have seen it, the staff in EAU will see it later, and we all root for Stanley and Jill. He hasn't given up, and knowing his Regimental Blazer will be ready gives him another boost. "Once a Gunner – Always a Gunner!" he tells me, reciting his old Army number again, and asks about Pat from BLESMA again, and we have prayer and blessing again, and we end with Jill. Always with Jill.

Stanley is getting better. He has turned the corner, and is improving every day. It is slow, but it is real. This man, who has wrapped us all in his love for Jill, will be going home after a period of rehabilitation in the community hospital. She has recovered too, and is waiting for him with afternoon tea and cake at the ready.

Joining the staff for a Clap for Milford Hospital one Thursday night, I hear that Stanley is going home in the morning. Dr Helen the consultant tells me he has been waltzing on the wards – quite literally.

Everyone has come to Milford to stand on the grass in the evening sun and clap. The Chief Nurse stands shoulder to shoulder with the most Junior Doctor, the Community Matron with the Health Care Associate. Those who have worked a full day stand exhausted with those who are about to work a full night. They are clapping the patients, they are clapping the shared vision becoming a reality in Milford Hospital, they are clapping each other's endurance and forbearance, acknowledging each other's sadness at the ones we have lost and driving on each other's hope. Gratitude ripples across the lawn. The walkie-talkie takes the sound inside to the wards and to the staff and patients there. Many neighbours have wandered over to support. The children are waving and clapping from the balconies of the flats, and display their NHS rainbows with delight. Eventually, the sound gently fades, as the pride in determined strength remains and glows in the hearts of those present. Final conversations, greetings and goodbyes are made, and, revived now for whatever tomorrow holds, they melt into the night.

"I'm not good with words" Stanley says, "so I want you to give a message to The Board for me." It is the night time and everyone else on the bay is asleep now. "The way they have looked out for me and cared for me and my wife since I lived in this part of the world, and here I am again, and thank you for saving my life. STANLEY ALBERT MORGAN"

Stanley wants prayer and blessing before we go our separate ways. We pray for the EAU, and for Clandon and now for Milford and last of all, for Jill. "You can't see it... but I'm travelling to Jill now!"



True Love in a time of Coronavirus - One year on



If you are going to have a catch up with Stanley and Jill, it's probably best to sit down with a cup of tea and a slice of cake. That is what we do in their little house, to discuss the year that has passed. Talking Covid is an emotional business on any day and however much tea is in the pot. Knowing I was coming round Jill added Coffee and Walnut cake to the morning shop.

"Has it really been a year?" asks Stanley, truly amazed at the passage of time. "It's like yesterday" Jill says, "and it could have been so different" she reflects, "very different indeed". So many patients died of Covid-19, some still are, and Stanley's survival was a miracle. "It's terrible" Stanley shakes his head. "Terrible."

Every so often, there is a knock on my office door and Stanley will be there to say hello. He is welcome as a friend as I am at his and Jill's place. After he had become well again, he spoke to the Board thanking them himself for saving his life. Nurse Kate was with them to manage the computer and the remote conference, and Stanley will always ask after her and the staff who looked after him. He is participating in the research to look after people who came through Covid in that first wave. They come in together. "We're getting on a bit now!" Stanley says and smiles.

The wonderful thing I get to witness are my two new, old, friends living in gratitude. They are a wonderful example. It is one of life's great challenges; tea + cake + gratitude and they do it so well. I tell them that I am about to go on holiday and they are as pleased and excited for me as I am. "Be sure

to call us when you're back" says Jill and I promise, and Stanley sees me to the door.

Here he stands next to his hanging basket. Stanley has a number of pots and nice flowers to tend to. Colour is a simple pleasure, and whilst full gardening is a bit of a stretch for him these days, this vivid basket is a perfect reflection of the sunny outlook on life he shares with Jill. And afternoon tea and cake have brought him back to proper colour and weight, according to Jill. Strong enough now to go for walks and potter with the plants. They have a plan, but are not ready to share it, so we say our goodbyes and he waves me off.

After a day's hiking on holiday, there's a missed call from them, and a voicemail. I hear just half a message; Stanley is very excited to tell me something of great importance but the details are lost, as Jill's voice is clear in the background. "Shush Stanley, you can't call him now, he's on holiday!". Then there's an apologetic voice asking for me to call when I am back.

I do just that. Did I have a nice time? Was it a good holiday? What was the hiking like? They are both pleased, and then I ask "What was the message?". "Oh yes!" Stanley gets excited. "Well, it's our Diamond Wedding anniversary soon you see" - that's 60 years of their story on 02 September - "and we're having a party!"

There is sure to be plenty of tea + cake + gratitude.

by Adrian Teare
Padre 106 (Yeomanry) Regt RA
Lead Chaplain Spiritual Care,
Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust



A GUNNER'S EXPERIENCE OF WORLD WAR II IN INDIA AND BURMA by Major (Retd) Don Raley RA (1919 - 2002) (Extracted from his autobiography)



"A" Troop, 1st British Medium Regiment RA, Burma 1944 (D Sub)

After about a year on this home defence role I felt that as a regular officer I should get out and justify myself in some military action, either in the Middle East or in Burma. I therefore volunteered for overseas service and later in 1943 departed on a reinforcement draft, destination unknown, from Glasgow. The only thing we knew was that we were headed for a warm area as we were issued with Khaki Drill shirts and shorts, stockings and puttees, and "Topees" or Pith Helmets.

To avoid U boats we went well out in the Atlantic and then due east into the Mediterranean, being only the second convoy to try this rather risky passage which was subject to air attack from the Italians and Germans. The first convoy suffered some casualties but we had only one. We eventually reached the Suez Canal which had been re-opened, but instead of disembarking for the Middle East war in Africa we proceeded on to India (Bombay) and eventually Burma. We threw our "topees" into the Red Sea as nobody ever wore them as they were useless relics of long gone days.

I was sent up to the Royal Artillery Depot and School of Artillery at Deolali, from whence I was posted to 8th Indian Field Regiment at Roorkee in the foothills of the Himalayas. The regiment was newly formed and commanded by a small, punch drunk, Lieutenant Colonel Wilfred Wall. He had been a successful boxer and rather disliked or mistrusted me, coming as I did fresh from UK and full of all the latest ideas on the use of artillery. I never really got on with him, and the only thing we had in common was a love of shooting. It was an unhappy regiment, commanded mostly by British officers

with only three Indian officers, and British warrant officers and NCOs. The Indian NCOs came mostly from the jute industry in Calcutta. There was a drink problem and some of the local "hooch", particularly Ranchi gin, was lethal. It resulted in one officer getting literally "blind drunk" losing his sight for two days! Luckily it returned naturally once the alcohol had worn off.

After about six unhappy months I appealed to my British Commander Royal Artillery (Brigadier Bill Morley) who remembered me from UK, and was understanding and sympathetic. He arranged for me to be posted to 1st British Medium Regiment in Burma. It was commanded by a nice but tough Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Bobby Soames. It was just like coming home: no language problems, no drink problems and a good bunch of officers and NCOs, and at last, an operational unit in action supporting the 14th Army against the Japanese.

We fought our way down from Imphal in North Burma through the jungle down to Kalewa where we crossed the River Chindwin by the longest Bailey bridge ever built, and onwards through the jungle until we broke out into the Plain of Mandalay. At Kalewa we came across vehicles and guns which had been abandoned by the retreating British army nearly two years earlier, because having no bridging equipment they were unable to cross the river. It was an amazing and uncomfortable campaign. We had to chop our way through the jungle, widening the un-made jungle tracks to take our 5.5 medium guns and tractors. We had to make log bridges to cross the streams running down the steep chuangs (valleys).



It was here that I first saw "Elephant Bill" Williams and his teams of bridge building elephants. These huge but gentle brutes were astonishing. Guided by their diminutive mahouts they would pick up a huge tree bole weighing half a ton with their trunk, place it in the stream carefully, moving it slightly as necessary, stop and consider, and then return for another and repeat the process until we had a rough but usable bridge to take our vehicles. Most of our supplies came by air and were parachuted in along with our mail (irregularly) and our drink ration (three bottles of beer per month). We fought the Japanese - a fanatical enemy who preferred death to the dishonour of capture, the jungle with its leeches and malarial mosquitos, and the monsoon with its perpetual heavy rain. Actually, out of the monsoon season the climate was not too bad.

And so, out of the jungle and in to the central plain at Shwebo. We fought our way down to the magnificent and huge River Irrawaddy and the fabulous city of Mandalay. By this time Japanese resistance was weakening as they withdrew to make a stand on the River Irrawaddy. Also, our air supply improved as we restored and created landing fields and aerodromes for transport aircraft. We captured Mandalay with little resistance and for the first time had to fire our guns over open sights at 500 yard range to breach its city walls.

The river crossings were rather more difficult and strongly opposed. I was involved in the crossings by assault boat with 2 British Divisions and 20 Indian Division. We had some casualties and I lost two good friends "Wattie" Scott-Plumber and Jimmy James. Other diversions included getting cut off behind the Japanese lines and pitching camp in a small pagoda area only to find the pagodas inhabited by an irate family of cobras!

By this time I had been selected as IORA (Intelligence Officer RA) by the Corps CRA Brigadier Stevens (known as "Hair Trigger" for his short and fierce temper). He was a delightful boss and his rages evaporated as quickly as they arose. We got on very well. It was May 1945 and by this time the victorious Japanese army was effectively beaten. We had crossed the great river barrier of the Irrawaddy in three places, and captured the important cities of Mandalay and Meiktila. The Japanese were now fighting a rear-guard action back towards Rangoon, harried from the air by the RAF and on the ground by General "Bill" Slim's forgotten but now revitalised 14th Army. A combined seaborne operation was planned to capture Rangoon and then to follow on and retake Singapore and Malaya. In the event this operation (Op Zipper) was overtaken by the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in July 1945.

"Hair Trigger", appreciating that to all intents and purposes the war against Germany in Europe and Japan in the Far East was won, felt it was time to develop my military career now that I was a regular officer. As he said: "You have now done the main fighting out here so it is time for you to go home and spread the military lessons we have learnt so painfully out here, and also to learn from others the problems and lessons of war in Europe". Thus I was nominated for a vacancy on No.34

War Gunnery Staff Course at the School of Artillery at Larkhill in Wiltshire commencing May 1945.

In conclusion, it is perhaps appropriate to recount my main memories of the war in Burma:

1. The Japanese were totally dedicated and fanatical fighting soldiers. They were jungle trained, which initially we were not. They scarcely ever surrendered and in one's own interest, if a Japanese position was overrun by us it was necessary to kill any Japanese soldier who was not obviously dead. If he had any life left at all he would shoot you in the back.
2. We could not have won without control of the air as we were supplied almost entirely from the air drops into jungle clearings.
3. Being the "Forgotten Army" we were starved of modern equipment which was destined on higher priority for the war in Europe. We had to improvise and manage as best we could using mules, ancient but effective 3.7 mountain "screw guns", elephants for heavy work and the construction of bridges, and modifying our own transport so that it could use the narrow tracks through the jungle.
4. We were fortunate in having a superb leader in General Bill Slim - a soldiers' General if ever there was one.
5. It was interesting that those same soldiers who would go to great lengths to avoid a Church Parade at home would all turn up for a Church Parade and religious address in jungle clearings on the eve of any major action.

And so back to good old "Blighty" after two years' service and war experience in India and Burma.



Japanese Artillery - Mountain Gun



For most of us, the year 1990 is living memory rather than modern history. For context, Nelson Mandela was released from the Victor Verster Prison after 27 years behind bars. East Germany and West Germany signed the treaty to merge their economic and social systems ultimately leading to reunification and Sir Timothy Berners-Lee created the first web server and the foundation for the World Wide Web. Consequently, it is inexplicable that women enlisting into the Army in 1990 were mandated to join the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC), (less medical and veterinary orderlies, chaplains and nurses), and serve on long-term attachments with corps and regiments rather than being permitted to join these organisations in their own right. However, in 1990 this approach changed and the Army Board decided that WRAC officers who were permanently employed with other Corps and Regiments, such as the Royal Artillery, should transfer from the WRAC to their parent organisation from 1 October 1990, with servicewomen following one year later.

On 13 April 1991, Second Lieutenant Sophie Huthwaite, nee Wigglesworth, made history when she marched up the steps of Old College as the first woman to commission directly into the Royal Artillery. She joined 32nd Heavy Regiment Royal Artillery as a Troop Commander in 57 (Bhurtapore) Locating Battery RA. In March 1992, the first female gunners (Gunnery T R Collinson, S M O'Neill and D R Thompson) joined 2Lt Wigglesworth in 57 (Bhurtapore) Locating Battery having transferred from the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC).

Whilst this was a milestone for the Royal Regiment, the foundations for women serving in the Royal Artillery had long since been laid and it would be remiss not to mention the many women who served the Royal Artillery in all but name prior to 1990. In the 1940's women of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) served in mixed Royal Artillery anti-aircraft batteries alongside their male counterparts. These women, commonly known as 'ack ack girls', were skilled in spotting and locating enemy aircraft, setting the range and bearing on the anti-aircraft guns and handling the ammunition (they were prohibited from actually pulling the trigger). As one gunnery assistant put it "We did the same duties as the men. When they stood on guard all night they had their rifle, when we stood on guard we had a broom handle."

The WRAC was established in 1949 as the women's branch of the British Army. Initially, progress was slow, and roles were limited, but eventually women in the WRAC worked in over 40 different trades, including staff officers, dog handlers, drivers and intelligence analysts. In the 1980s women were allowed to be trained in the use of firearms and were permitted to carry them thus enabling women to undertake a variety of important roles around the world.

WRAC members served in many operations, including Malaya (1948-60), Kenya (1952-60), Cyprus (1954-59) and Aden (1963-67). During 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland (1969-2007), WRAC members were deployed alongside civilian police in order to search female suspects at checkpoints, in house searches and on patrols. Over 200 WRAC personnel were deployed to the Gulf on Op GRANBY (1990-91) to work as staff officers and assistant adjutants, as well as serving as intelligence analysts. In 1991 one officer and three soldiers were attached to 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery and took part in Op HAVEN in Iraq. Since 1949, Fifty-nine members of the WRAC have died in service.

Since officially being allowed to join the Royal Artillery in 1991, the influence and achievements of women in the Royal Artillery have been many and varied. As a result of legislative and policy changes, opportunities for women serving have steadily increased, as more units and career fields were opened in a bid to modernise the Armed Forces. By 1997, the number of roles open to women in the Army rose from 47 per cent to 70 per cent. In 2016 the ban on serving on the front line was lifted, ensuring that 80 percent of roles in the Army were open to women. Finally, in October 2018, all Army roles were opened to women, including infantry and special forces units. On making the announcement, the Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson said, 'For the first time in its history, our armed forces will be determined by ability alone and not gender'.

To celebrate the last 30 years, Regimental Headquarters Royal Artillery is having a dinner at the Victory Services Club on 9 April 2022. If you would like to attend, please email rachael.lock940@mod.gov.uk.

by Major Rachael Locke
SO2 Personnel B
RHQ RA



WOMEN IN THE ROYAL ARTILLERY



30 YEARS +1 ANNIVERSARY DINNER



SATURDAY 9TH APRIL 2022

Victory Services Club W2 2HF - £75 per ticket

Regimental Headquarters Royal Artillery will host an anniversary dinner on 9 April 22 to celebrate 30 years of women serving in the Royal Artillery. The dinner will be held at the Victory Services Club and will include, a pre-dinner drink, a three-course meal with wine, followed by tea and coffee.

This event will showcase the achievements of women in the Royal Artillery with guest speakers, music and pictures. Those wishing to attend can use QR code above, or contact Rachael.Lock940@mod.gov.uk to book a place.

Bank details
Account Name: RAI
Sort Code: 30-11-75
Account Number: 00957269
Reference: WOMEN30TH



Annual Inter-Corps Netball Championships in Aldershot



Top row L-R: Gnr Finau 1 RHA, Gnr Kasowaqa 1 RHA, Capt James 1 RHA, Gnr Sevutia 26 RA, Gnr Samuel 26 RA, Gnr Naisowalu 1 RHA, Gnr Skelly 26 RA, Gnr Dopwell 19 RA, Bottom row L-R: Capt Peck 1 RHA, Capt Mills 104 RA, Gnr Hoyle 5 RA, Gnr Ligabalavu 1 RHA, Gnr Davies 47 RA, Gnr Maher 4 RA

The annual Inter-Corps Netball championships in Aldershot is a staple in every netballer's diary, and with COVID scuppering last year's competition (as well as many other life and sporting events) this year's championship's run-up was quelled with a level of tentativeness, understanding it may not go ahead. Of course, COVID safety and the importance of adhering to Government guidelines is paramount, but with recent Army sporting events taking place, the excitement was building for those desperate to get back on court.

Previously, the Gunners team has at times been known as a "scratched team", meaning a handful of regular players that are thrown together to play, without any former or formal training for what is a highly physical and technical game. Often, the hardest task is the availability of servicewomen, with our female recruitment numbers still undeniably low, generally, netball will often play second fiddle to Football or Rugby, especially

where the level of participation is concerned. In the past, we have often achieved an average placing at competitions but what we have always excelled on is our tenacity, our team spirit and adversity; and trust that adversity is required in abundance when you're up against AGC, RAMC and RLC Teams, which mostly consist of national, tri-service and Army players.

In 2015 we were awarded the Cpl Channing Day trophy which is an honour for best endeavour in memory of a popular RAMC Netball player that sadly died on Op HERRICK in 2014. That year, we had been placed in Division 1 with the A-teams and we could have accepted defeat before we had even entered the arena but knowing we couldn't possibly win ensured that we focussed on learning from the best, bonding as a team and showing off what we can do as Gunners when we come together. Since then, the Gunners highest accolade was winning Division 2 in 2018, which is no mean feat



and a testament to the team gathered on the day of the tournament without prior release for training.

This year, the call went out for the team just weeks before the competition and there was an element of surprise at the amount of interest. We were sceptical, certain that many would be denied release or prioritised for other tasks. In 2016, two of the team were denied training attendance by their BSM as he needed his padding pool moved; I am certain this would not happen if it were men's corps Football or Rugby. So, imagine the delight on day one of two training days held on Thorney Island when a record 26 Royal Artillery servicewomen were waiting to start drills, skills and of course netball games! The Gunners have never been in a position where they would turn players away, most years we've not been in the position to even have substitutions but evidently netball popularity is at an all-time high and this meant that

senior players, such as Maj Jackie Fidler 3 RHA (RA Netball Secretary), stepped back to enable these women to step forward.

It was clear to see within a few hours of training that the talent was outstanding. The difficulty now for those of us on the side-line, was to begin selecting an A team for Division 1 and a B team for Division 2, a task we have never had the privilege to carry out and suffice to say, absolutely all could have represented the Gunners in the A team with their level of skill and hard work.

The first game for both teams; the A team Captained by Capt Hannah Peck (1 RHA) and B team by Sgt Suzie Hockley (16 RA) saw defeat, but only marginally. Spirits were not dampened as the other teams were quickly aware that we were now very serious competition. Each subsequent game was fought with true Gunner spirit and it was a testament to all on how they played their

please turnover for continuation



Top row L-R: Gnr Tabua 19 RA, Gnr George 26 RA, LBdr Jackson 1 RHA, Gnr Harris 47 RA, LBdr McKenzie 5 RA, Gnr Volinavanua 4 RA Bottom row L-R: Gnr Adidreu 26 RA, Bdr McCollum 12 RA, Sgt Hockley 16 RA, Gnr Kuntaja 26 RA



part in unifying a solid team of true competitors. The Gunners were by far the loudest in the arena and as our games continued, we drew in more supporters than ever and most definitely more volume, all thrilled at how incredibly well we were playing and as excited as we were, as the competition unfolded. The biggest highlight was the enthusiasm from the Gunner teams which for the majority, are in the first two years of service and have never taken part in an Army competition such as this. 21 teams of servicewomen from the British Army including national, tri-service and Army players were amongst those competing and the Gunner spirit did not waiver in the slightest.

This event is very much a unique competition. Why? Because in 2021, Netball is still regarded as a Women's Sport and to date, there are still no men's teams or men's competitions within the British Army. The reason, quite possibly, that this Women's Sport is still incredibly underfunded and unsupported, compared to other Army sports that are predominantly represented by men.

That said, without a team strip, fancy water bottles or hoodies and only 1.5 days to train, the Royal Artillery Netball team A placed 4th out of 11 teams. To add context, that's the equivalent of Leyton Orient finishing up behind Chelsea, Liverpool and Man City – currently the top 3 of the Premier League. As for team B, they waltzed away with a respectable 3rd placing and more importantly, for the second time, the Cpl Channing Day trophy which we have been allowed to keep, and we are immensely proud and honoured to do so.

The highs continue as Gnr Ashik George 26 RA was voted Players Player and several members of the Gunners were selected to try for the Army teams the subsequent day of the competition, and we are extremely proud to announce that the following were successful in achieving their place; Capt Erica Mills 104 RA, Gnr Mia Finau 1 RHA, Gnr Ashik George 26 RA, Gnr Tyla Hoyle 5 RA, Gnr Tamara Samuel 26 RA and Gnr Asilika Sevutia 26 RA.

Furthermore, and most importantly, what has remained is an incredible team spirit, strong team cohesion, comradeship and the enthusiasm to continue this team and take the Gunners farther into future competitions. The testimonials from our most junior players speak for themselves and moving forward, I would hope that the support, funding and encouragement to take part is increased at unit and corps level, so that it is given an equal respect level that is afforded to the more popular sports. This will absolutely give the Gunners netball a better fighting chance at the Inter-Corps Championships, 2022.

What is your previous netball experience?

Gnr Regina Tabua, 19 RA: I've been playing since primary school and continued to play through secondary school and local team in Fiji.

Gnr Damauris Dopwell 19 RA: I have trained in the most senior club in St Vincent and under some great coaches that have taught me the skills and knowledge of the game. I was captain of the team as a Police Constable and won Sportswoman of the year in 2018.

LBdr Mollie Jackson 1 RHA: I have played throughout school and whilst playing for a local team I was scouted to play for Bedfordshire County team.

What are your thoughts on training prior to the competition?

Gnr Regina Tabua 19 RA: The two-day training camp was a great experience as it gave us a chance to get to know each other from different Royal Artillery units and work together as a team.

Gnr Damauris Dopwell 19 RA: For me, training was great. I got to meet new players, especially from units close to me. We all have different abilities and learned different drills from each other.

LBdr Mollie Jackson 1 RHA: The two days of training with the Gunners was incredible and such a great opportunity to meet other netballers from across the Royal Artillery and make new friends. The experience was ranged, and we were able



to coach and advise each other during training which was invaluable. The highlight was the skills and drills, everyone was so energetic and in good spirits, such a refreshing environment.

What are your thoughts on the competition?

Gnr Regina Tabua 19 RA: The competition was very challenging for us all, but we kept it together and tried our very best. Both teams have incredible players and although there are areas to improve, I can say we have given our all in this event.

Gnr Damauris Dopwell 19 RA: The competition was a different level to what I am used to, and it brought out the determination in every player – we all wanted to win! The Gunners were outstanding and played with such confidence, creativity and motivation, we brought everything to the court. I am so proud of both teams' placings which is the highest to date!

LBdr Mollie Jackson 1 RHA: The competition this year was phenomenal! So many strong teams and tough games to play which were challenging and made us work to our maximum. I had never played netball with or met any of the team before the training days, they're a fantastic group of ladies. We looked after each other on and off court - such incredible team spirit.

The overall experience?

Gnr Regina Tabua 19 RA: The best experience by far is playing in my first ever Inter-Corps Netball Competition and playing against a range of talented players from other corps. I am looking forward to playing more games and tournaments with the Gunners and work towards a shot at the Army team. I feel so proud of being part of and representing the Gunner team. If anyone is thinking of playing Netball for the Gunners, I would say go for it, it's a great opportunity to meet other RA girls and build on your skills, socialise and get your mind off work stuff whilst having fun!

Gnr Damauris Dopwell 19 RA: It was amazing, and I am looking forward to training again with the team, building on our strengths and skills and increasing our

knowledge. The more we can train the higher chance we have to win 1st place next year. If anyone is thinking of joining the Gunners netball team my advice is to do it but accept losses, use setbacks as an opportunity to learn and concentrate on your contribution as a player. Put the hard work in and the game isn't over until the whistle blows!

LBdr Mollie Jackson 1 RHA: The best experience was playing for a team that worked hard for each other whilst doing something they are passionate about. We were as excited to watch the other Gunner team play as we were to play ourselves. I want to continue playing for the Gunners and hopefully one day make the Army team. In the short term, I can't wait to get back to Larkhill and train with the girls I have now met on the Gunner team. I had forgotten how great team sports were and to be selected to represent the Gunners fills me with pride, as netball is my No.1 sport. I would advise anyone thinking of joining the RA Netball team that whatever your level, even a complete novice to a national player – do it! Everyone is welcoming and supportive plus the pride of representing the Gunners is the best experience.

by SSgt Kate Mizon
7 Air Defence Group



Gnr George taking a shot



Ex GUNNER GRAVITY 21



Sgt Masters coaching a technical section

Ex GG21 saw members of the Royal Artillery Gravity Team descend on Dyfi Bike Park, one of the world's best gravity mountain biking locations and the home of World Cup Downhill Multi Terrain Bike Champion trio Dan, Gee and Racheal Atherton. On the southern edge of Snowdonia National Park, it boasts red to triple black diamond pro graded trails on some of the longest descents in the UK.

The two-day training camp was designed to challenge and improve all aspects the rider's skills, from handling in rugged terrain to cornering, jumps and drops in preparation for the 2022 race season.

"Being able to get the RA gravity team together again was a fantastic opportunity, having been such a long time it was great to catch up and begin to develop skills as a team once again. The venue is spectacular and aimed at the right level to help push the skills by the whole team.

Having some of the Army Downhill riders along also added great value to the team's training." - Sgt Daniel Masters

Day 1 - With minimal bike time over the last year due to COVID-19 the day started with a coaching session from Army DH MTB Team riders Maj Marcus Goldsmith RA and Bdr Aaron Holford-Grant working on body position and cornering techniques. The Autumn weather did not disappoint yet the tracks ran surprisingly well in the rain and with confidence building the team headed over to the black diamond tracks "50 Hits" and "Oakley Icon" to put the training to the test on some of the biggest obstacles at the park.

Day 2 - With improving conditions the team were eager to get to the mountain and after the previous days training everyone was in 'race mode'. Focusing on the traditional downhill tracks at Dyfi, the team worked on the



WO1 Lee Wilson and Bdr Aaron Holford-Grant at Dyfi trail head

demanding sections before linking them together in simulated race runs.

"Developing line choice and bike confidence is key for racing, speed comes naturally once all the building blocks are there. It's easy to just pedal out the gate and go for it but you will soon find yourself in a bush if you have not planned your route and know how you're going to attack each obstacle." - Bdr Holford-Grant

Gravity mountain biking challenges physical fitness and technical skill whilst being great fun. Ex GUNNER GRAVITY 22 is an open training camp looking at encouraging gravity riding at grass roots level and identifying future talent. If interested, please email the RACA MTB Asst Secretary WO1 Lee Wilson (lee.wilson248@mod.gov.uk).

by Bdr Aaron Holford-Grant
47 Regt RA



RA Gravity MTB team (left to right) WO1 Lee Wilson, Bdr Aaron Holford-Grant, Sgt Dan Masters, Maj Marcus Goldsmith, SSgt Kev Penny and Maj Fraser Macpherson



The Royal Artillery Road Cycling team have won the Army Inter Corps Road Race championships 2021



Royal Artillery Road Cycling team

After the postponed season for 2020/2021 the team retained the title for the second season in a row from the 2019/2020 season.

Team captain Bdr Dale Jones 14 Regt RA led the team through the current season. The finale was at Redbridge Cycle centre on the outskirts of London to battle it out with various other Corps within the Army. The team of four from the women's category started the race with purpose and a positive mindset from the very get go, two of the team finished in the top three, Capt Sarah Johnson 4 Regt RA came an amazing 1st position whilst Capt Rosie Wild 7 RHA came 2nd. A new member of the team LBdr Wood 3 RHA showed grit and determination and finished exceptionally well and won the U25 title overall in her first ever race at the inter corps championships.

The Male race was soon after with WO2 Steven

Williams 1 RHA in the breakaway group who came an amazing 2nd position and won the veteran's title. All the while, Bdr Kevin Alexis 3 RHA, Sgt Tom Kaye 7 RHA and Bdr Dale Jones 14 Regt RA, continued in good form and rounded off the season's final race with strong individual performances. The small team of 6 riders did exceptionally well and retained the title.

Sgt Danny Allan 26 Regt RA and SSgt Kevin Osbourne 5 Regt RA were thrown in at the deep end by the team captain and excelled under the pressure of their first inter corps finals race. All good things must come to an end and unfortunately for the team this was Bdr Kevin Alexis last race for the Gunners. He will be sorely missed by all and we wish him all the best.

If anyone wants to know more about the cycling disciplines in the Royal Artillery, please contact Bdr Jones dale.jones804@mod.gov.uk





ROYAL ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

‘One Regiment; One Family’

The Cornwall Cup

All donations for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Royal Artillery Association go towards winning the Cornwall Cup and must be received by 31 December 2021.

Fundraising is vital for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund if we are to keep supporting all our individual cases and our Regiments. As part of the regimental family I hope that the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund, if not already, will become the ‘Charity of first choice’ to all serving Gunners.

The Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Royal Artillery Association are very grateful to everyone who has fundraised on behalf of the Charities and for the funds that you have collected so far this year.



Joan Wanklyn Memorial Prize

The Joan Wanklyn Memorial prize is a bursary to be presented each year by the Royal Artillery Association in memory of Miss Joan Wanklyn who was, for many years, our Regimental Artist.



(King’s Troop Royal Horse Artillery - oil on board - is reproduced by kind permission of Jess Hills - www.jessicahillsart.com)

The Bursary comprises a cheque of £500 and is to be presented at the RA Assembly to the artist

who produces a piece of work judged worthy of exhibition at the following year’s Assembly. Applications are open to the sons, daughters and grandchildren of Serving or Retired members of the Regiment, regardless of rank or station, who have reached the tertiary stage of education and are in or about to begin their first year of a course at a recognised College or University to study art in its broader form.

Contact Emma Pagan-Skelley on 01980 845895 or Emma’s email for further details emm.Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk

Gunner Sunday - 24 Oct 21

On Sunday 24th October the regimental family marked the very welcome return of Gunner Sunday by spending the morning with In Pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Gunner Sunday takes place every year in April but last year, like so many events, it had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. A large gathering of the serving regiment, veterans and their families attended the event at the Royal Hospital.

The Royal Artillery Standard Bearers joined the In Pensioners on parade where they were inspected by the Hospital Governor, General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL, the Regimental Colonel, Colonel Sam Shepherd MBE ADC and Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, WO1 (RASM) R Mealand. After the parade, the Standard Bearers and regimental family joined the In Pensioners in the Chapel for their Sunday Service conducted by the Reverend Steven Brookes, where the service also shared the baptism of a very well-behaved little girl. Following the parade, lunch was held at the National Army Museum.

We are very fortunate to be invited to join the residents of the Royal Hospital on this special occasion and we always receive a tremendous welcome. Thank you to everyone who travelled to attend this special event and we look forward to welcoming you to Gunner Sunday on 24th April 2022. If you are Gunner, past or present, then Gunner Sunday is an opportunity to visit this very special residence.



Lewes Branch

In early October RAA Lewes Branch held their Annual Dinner. Guests from 43 Battery (Lloyd’s Company), 47 Regiment Royal Artillery joined the Branch and family members to strengthened affiliations between the Branch and Battery. A thoroughly enjoyable evening was held in Lewes, East Sussex.



Shoeburyness & South Essex Branch

On 29th October the Branch held a Winter Ball at the Holiday Inn, London Southend Airport. This was a great opportunity to dress up, see old friends and enjoy each other’s company. The Branch invited the Royal Artillery Association Secretary, Captain Allan Solly and his wife, Cath and members of Colchester and North Essex Branch.

A wonderful evening of comradeship, good food, presentations and a disco. Congratulations to all the members who received awards and a Lifetime Achievement Award to Ron Clifton, presented to his wife, Pam and daughters, Heather and Tracy. A thoroughly deserved award in memory of our dear friend and a great Gunner.



JOB VACANCY – MAY 2022

ROYAL ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION SECRETARY

Captain Allan Solly, the current RAA Secretary, has announced that he will be retiring in May 2022, after some 16 years in post. The Association is therefore inviting applications for the appointment.

The RAA exists to promote efficiency within the Royal Artillery by: maintaining contact with past and present members of the Regiment; fostering comradeship, esprit de corps and welfare; and by providing welfare support to serving and veteran members and their families.

Based in RHQRA, in Larkhill, the primary role of the RAA Secretary is to provide advice and guidance for the Association’s regions, districts and branches, and to coordinate all national RAA activities and events. Jointly with the Assistant Secretary, the role also involves promoting the RAA and its activities through all forms of media. A significant element of the job involves visiting branches on a rotational basis. This often involves overnight stays.

Applications are invited from individuals who have served, or are still serving, in the Royal Artillery. Serving applicants should be within 6 months of retirement.

The successful candidate will be a highly motivated, proven, hands-on leader who is able to: work confidently with all stakeholders from Gunner to General; demonstrate a strong affinity for the objects of the Association and an empathy for its members; communicate effectively both orally and in writing; have strong IT skills including the effective use of websites and social media; plan and manage large scale events; and operate as a highly effective Secretary for the Association’s National Executive Committee, setting agendas and taking minutes.

The appointment is at SO2 level. It is a full-time role. Remuneration and other T&Cs are comparable with a Civil Service C2 grade.

Applications are invited by 20 Dec 2021. Those short-listed for interview will be notified by 07 Jan 2022 and should be prepared to be interviewed in the second half of January 2022, with the intention of confirming Captain Solly’s successor by early February. The successful applicant will be expected to start in the role with effect from Monday 2 May 2022 and handover completed by Friday 28 May 2022 (to include the RA General Assembly in Blackpool, 19-23 May 2022).

For a full job description and an application form, please contact Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley at Emm.Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk

For an informal discussion or to enquire further about the role, please contact Col (Retd) Matthew Carter, the Regimental Secretary, at matthew.carter133@mod.gov.uk



Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall opened the 93rd Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 11th November 2021. The annual event marks the start of the nation's Remembrance commemorations.

The Last Post was sounded from the parapet of St Margaret's Church by a bandsman from the Scots Guards.

After the observance of two minutes' silence, The Duchess of Cornwall met representatives from the military organisations and members of the public. The Royal Regiment of Artillery was represented by members of the Regimental Headquarters.

The Duchess of Cornwall then visited the Grave of the Unknown Warrior inside Westminster Abbey, where she laid a posy of flowers in remembrance.

Canon Ball: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends'.

We Will Remember Them



ROYAL ARTILLERY CHARITABLE FUND

Once a Gunner, always a Gunner

5th Regiment Royal Artillery

Five members of Q (Sanna's Post) Headquarters Battery took part in the North Yorkshire Ultra Marathon. Starting at Scarborough, following the coast up to Saltburn before heading towards the cheeky finish line at the top of Roseberry Topping covering a distance of 104 kms, 2,661 meters elevation climbed, all this in just over 18 hours! What an amazing team effort and congratulations on completing this challenge and raising £1,135 for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and helping Gunners in need.



3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery

In September, J (Sidi Rezagh) Battery completed the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge in sweltering conditions. After an exhausting day the Members raised an amazing £415 for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund.



14th Regiment Royal Artillery

On the 21st September, members of 1st Battery (The Blazers) completed a 24 hour, 100km walk fundraising for two charities chosen by Bdr Atkins for personal reasons; Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood. Well done to all who took part and fundraised for the Charities.



26th Regiment Royal Artillery

159 (Colenso) Battery took part on a 48 hour endurance challenge to raise money for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and Combat Stress. The Battery ran, cycled and rowed continuously for 48 hours to cover the distance from Larkhill to Colenso, a whopping 8,500 miles/13,500 kms. This impressive effort from the Battery raised over £4,000 for the Charities.



Come racing at the Gunner Point to Point Course at Larkhill



- 19 December 2021 Avon Vale Point to Point
- 2 January 2022 Larkhill Point to Point
- 22 January 2022 Royal Artillery Point to Point
- 6 February 2022 Combined Services Point to Point
- 27 February 2022 South & West Wilts Point to Point
- 27 March 2022 New Forest Point to Point

RACF



RACF Grants Report October 2021

October was a busy month for the team as we awarded £50,215 in grants to 64 members of our Royal Artillery regimental family. The biggest area where help was needed was Annual Grants. We awarded over £20,000 to those over pensionable age that need support with day to day living costs and we helped 15 of our older family members with Annual Grants. The next largest area where help was needed was household goods. We awarded £7,102 to help those struggling to buy essential household furniture, white goods, and carpeting. We awarded £5,755 to those struggling with mobility issues and we helped some of our family that live in care homes with £4,826 towards their care home fees.

So far this year the RACF has spent £448,094 on individual welfare grants to serving and retired Gunners and their families. It has made grants of £84,200 to serving regiments to support welfare within the unit.

Do you know of any member of our Regimental family that needs our support and help? If you do let us know. Call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 or contact us on 0300 167 3998 or 0300 158 7035. We can be contacted by email: rarhq-racf-welfare-mailbox@mod.gov.uk. Please don't hesitate, RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association (thegunners.org.uk)



INFORMATION

GUNNER 'ZIG ZAG' SPORTS BLAZERS AND BOATING JACKETS
 Many of you would have seen the success of the first run of 30 of the new Gunner Sports Blazers. There is still sufficient cloth for a further 12-15 blazers to be made. They are made to measure by Club Colours Ltd in Suffolk, with cloth from an English mill. Cost is approximately £220 each and they take about 4 weeks to make. If you are interested, please contact Mr Alan Middle 01473 231378 or 07801798508 or visit the website at www.clubcolours.co.uk

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

REUNIONS

ROYAL ARTILLERY BOYS AND JUNIOR LEADERS' ASSOCIATION REUNION
 Following the very successful 30th reunion in Oct 21, the organising committee has already confirmed a booking for next year's reunion. It will be over the weekend 22 Oct 22. Booking details and Gala Dinner menu will be published in the January edition of "Trumpeter" which is issued to all subscribed members. If you wish to be included and are not a member of the Association, please contact the Secretary Ted McKenzie by email exboysra.tm@gmail.com or call 07900 806235.

SCOTTISH GUNNERS REUNION DINNER
 Regrettably, the Scottish Gunner Reunion Dinner scheduled for 3 Sep 21 will be cancelled due to continuing social restrictions in Ministry of Defence establishments. We plan to hold the next Reunion Dinner in the autumn of 2022 placing us back on our normal biennial schedule. We will seek to inform you all of the revised date as soon as we can. If any former Highland, Lowland or Scottish Gunners wish to register their interest for 2022, please email Capt Abbie Lawrence, the Dinner Secretary,

on scottishgunnerreunion@gmail.com. The facebook page will also remain open, so please stay connected.

13 MARTINIQUE BTY RA REUNION 2022
 The reunion dinner will take place on Sat 23 Apr 22, at the Copthorne Hotel, the Waterfront, Brierley Hill, Dudley DY5 1UR. Bookings are to be made with the hotel direct on +44 (0)1384 482882 - Quote 13 MARTINIQUE REUNION. All other enquiries - K Brooks-Usher 07834287426 (text only).

YORKSHIRE GUNNERS REUNION DINNER
 5 Regt RA will host the Reunion Dinner for serving and retired officers in the RA Mess, Larkhill on Fri 11 Feb 22. Any former officer of the Regiment who wishes to attend should please contact the Dinner Secretary, Maj Rob Fidler by email at Robert.fidler160@mod.gov.uk. The Regiment is always keen to update its Past Serving Members database and as such, even if you are unable to attend this Reunion Dinner please do email the Dinner Secretary your details.

RMAS SMC 28 REUNION - 2022
 (Passing Out April 1982)
 James Archibald (11 Pl, Salerno Coy, SMC 28) is trying to make contact with all Gunners from SMC 28. If applicable (or you know someone who would be) please email contact details and mobile number to jlarchibald@icloud.com. Specifically looking for DM Cullen, RA Dare, CJ Mason, GAR Masters, PD Robinson, AM Smith, RP Warren, Tony Faith (DS), Jamie Marment (DS), Tony Faith.

SPRING DINNER
 The Spring Dinner 2022 will be held in the RA Mess Larkhill on Fri 22 Apr at 7.00pm for 7.30pm. The dinner will take the form of a Ladies' Guest Night and is open to officers of the Royal Regiment, serving and retired, and their guests. There will also be some regimental guests. The Master Gunner St James's Park, Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL, will preside. Dress for serving officers is Mess Dress – ceremonial evening (soft shirt) and dinner jacket (black tie) with decorations for retired officers/civilians. The cost is £60 per head. Please apply to Jennifer McGrath email: Jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk or telephone 01980 845788. Places are confirmed upon receipt of payment as follows: BACS: RAI, 30-11-75, 00957269 (please prefix payment reference with SD22). Cheque: Made payable to the Royal Artillery Institution.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH THU 3 MAR 22



The next Royal Artillery Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 3 Mar 22 at The Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, regular and reserve, whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £59 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after the 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 £59 to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (Sort code 30-11-75. Acc number 00568858) annotating your transfer with your initial and surname or send a cheque made out to 'Royal Artillery Charitable Fund' to the Regimental Secretariat Assistant, Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley. If you make a bank transfer please email the Regimental Secretariat Assistant 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



20 REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY (DISBANDED) REUNION 21 AUGUST 2021



Attendees



Pictured with Cheque, left to right. Doug Speight (20 Regt and Blesma member), Adele Miller (Blesma) and David McDaid (20 Regt)

The 95th Sussex Yeomanry Association Dinner was held at St Francis Social and Sports Club, Haywards Heath, Sussex on 13th November 2021. 60 plus attended with the President Colonel David Stevens OBE TD DL presiding. An excellent meal was supplied by the club. This being the first dinner we have had since before the Covid 19.



21 Newhaven Troop ACF RA - Cdt Bdr Lavalle, Cdt Bdr Parsons, Cdt LBdr Allerston and Cdt LBdr Parsons

LAST POST

Notification of Death:

- Dave Utley - October 2021
- David Leonard Clark - October 2021
- Lee John Christian - October 2021
- Ashley Moxey - October 2021
- David Davies - 21 October 2021
- Dave Patterson - 24 October 2021
- Ray Adams - November 2021
- Harold Robinson - November 2021
- Tony Matthews - 4 November 2021
- Henry Pearce - 8 November 2021
- Maurice Puttock - 9 November 2021

DAVIS - Major General (Retd) Brian Davis CB CBE OBE RA sadly died on 24 October 2021. He was a proud Gunner having joined 19 Field in the late 40s, commanded 21 (Gibraltar) battery with 50 Missile, commanding officer 32 heavy and then light regiment in Bulford and CRA of 3 Div followed by Chief Brixmis and finishing as VQMG.

HARDING-ROBERTS - Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Malcolm Harding-Roberts TD sadly passed away on 29 September 2021, aged 102. He saw service in 67 Field Regiment RA, in the BEF and was a Dunkirk Veteran. After commando and airborne training he was posted to the Far East as a Naval Gunnery Observer. After completion of full-time service he returned to Malvern and was appointed Commanding Officer of 267 Field Regiment RA TA. Malcolm was an active member of Malvern Branch Royal Artillery Association for over sixty years and will be sorely missed.

GOSLING - The late Captain Leslie S Gosling, late 3rd RHA, Chevalier de Legion d'Honneur. I'm very sorry to inform you that my old chum and fellow HAC Member died yesterday 12 October 2021.



Leslie was the last surviving officer from the Battle of El Alamein. Significantly he was also involved in the Normandy thegunner@artycen.ra.mod.uk • December 2021 • GUNNER 39



landings (See the September Gunner 2020 edition, page 19) on his 100th birthday, and because of that, he and other surviving stalwarts were invested by the French Ambassador with the Chevalier de Legion d'Honneur. Leslie was a truly lovely man and when his eyesight started to deteriorate his wife Joan used to read the daily newspaper to him. Joan is three years younger than Leslie. Thanks to her, he was at all times very switched on and most certainly had all his marbles! I shall miss him. Joan lives in the same large house as their daughter, son in law and two adopted grand daughters, which will be a comfort to her.

Yours faithfully

Sandy Rogers

Capt (Retd) Alexander A P N Rogers TD

GROVES - Lionel Bruce Ford Groves suddenly passed away on 19 December 2020, aged 71. Lionel served for ten years in 43 Battery (Lloyds Company) RA, 20 Regiment RA and 214 AD Battery RA, reaching the rank of bombardier. His service took him to Germany, Hong Kong, Libya and Northern Ireland. After regular service he joined 21 SAS Reserves. Lionel joined Malvern Branch Royal Artillery Association in 2015 and was a popular member.

STONE - Major (Retd) Michael Alexander Stone TD, Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur, sadly passed away on 16 March 2021, a month short of his 99th birthday. He served in 53 Medium Regiment RA, on D-Day. After completion of full-time service he joined 267 Field Regiment RA TA in Malvern. Mike supported Malvern Branch Royal Artillery Association for many years, including as President, and will be sorely missed.

TIPPETT - Colonel H G Tippett late RA passed away quietly in his sleep on the 25 June 2020 at Oak House Residential Home in Greatham after a full career and happy life. Col George was called up for national service in 1948 joining the Royal Artillery as a Gunner. After serving his national service he decided to sign on as a regular and continued to serve in the Royal Artillery. The majority of his soldier service was within Air Defence regiments and units on guns and rockets. Throughout his soldier service saw him posted within the UK, Gibraltar and Malta. It was whilst at Shoeburyness he met and married Emily his partner and wife for the next 69 years. On gaining promotion to WO1 RSM he was posted to TA units in South Wales at Pembroke Dock, Brecon and Newport on completion of this posting he was posted as Depot RSM at Woolwich before moving to take up the post of GSM Woolwich Garrison. Over this period as WO1 RSM at Woolwich the RA held their 250 anniversaries of which he was involved in. He was commissioned as an LE officer into the Royal Artillery in 1972 and took up his first post as a QM Captain at 12 Lt AD Regt RA in Germany and the UK. He was also posted to the Woomera Rocket Establishment in Australia as the QM where

he assisted in the drawdown of British forces back to the UK. George continued to be posted and promoted within the RA with his last post on promotion to Lt Col as the QM in Larkhill Garrison his final tour of duty in regular service. On completion of his military service, he and his family moved back to Brecon to take up an RO post as QM Sennybridge Camp and Ranges. It is whilst serving there that he was asked to become the Colonel Commandant for the Powys Army Cadet Force. After retiring as an RO both he and Emily stayed in Lower Chapel until moving to Lincolnshire to be nearer his children. George and Emily have 4 sons all of whom joined the Army the three eldest following him into the Royal Artillery and the youngest into the QARANCs. He will always be remembered by family members and friends for his great hospitality and BBQ's which you knew would always go along into the night. Sadly, Emily passed away in her sleep at Oak House Residential Home in May 2021. George and Emily are survived by their four sons (George, John, Peter and Martin) and wives, 7 Grandchildren and 8 Great Grandchildren. The family are laying George and Emily to rest in the Cemetery at Lower Chapel in July 2022 the place they most loved in all of their wanderings over their last 69 years of marriage.



Major William Patrick Murphy RA 1943-2021



'Paddy' was a highly technical and inspirational gunnery instructor who commanded great respect in his 32-year career with the Royal Regiment, and who proved to be a particularly great asset to the Gunner Troop of Oxford University Officers' Training Corps to which he was attached in the mid-1970s.

Paddy had passed the eleven-plus exam and been offered a place at the local Catholic Grammar School which had a reputation for sending pupils to Oxbridge. Unfortunately, whilst the Salesian Fathers, a teaching order of priests founded in the slums of Milan in the mid-19th century, had a vocation to teach poor boys, they insisted upon well-dressed poor boys; the uniform was a considerable expense to a poor family and, as one of a dozen children, Paddy had to forego his place. At secondary school, Paddy took to mathematics like a duck to water but had to leave school

at the age of fifteen and a half to supplement the family's income. He worked in the local Co-op before joining 253 Regiment RA (TA), the Bolton Gunners, famous at the outbreak of the Second World War because the captain of Bolton Wanderers, Harry Goslin, addressed the 23,000 crowd after a match before leading the entire team down to the Bolton Gunners to sign up, and later fight at Dunkirk and Monte Cassino. Paddy was made of the same stuff.

Having greatly enjoyed just over a year with the Bolton Gunners, Paddy signed on as a regular soldier and went to 17 Training Regiment RA at Oswestry, before serving with 26 Field Regiment RA and 2 Field Regiment RA in Hohne, Malaya and Cyprus. While on his Sergeants Course at Larkhill Paddy met his wife-to-be, Sheila, in Salisbury. Sheila must have turbocharged him because by the time they married in 1972, Paddy was already a WO2 (AIG) Field. Theirs was to be a great love and together they brought up three daughters.

Early married life was spent in Shoeburyness and at Larkhill before the move to Oxford and the OTC in 1975. OTCs then were All Arms establishments and members, aside from officers attending universities for in service degrees, were officer cadets not short of intelligence,

indeed in some cases dangerously intelligent, but at times rather buried in their books, a bit light on practical application, man management and the wisdom that comes with working as part of a team to achieve a common aim. Still a young man, not much older than his charges, Paddy had the great gift of being able to meld this eclectic bunch into an efficient unit of young men and women who knew their jobs and who could put the high jinks of student life aside on the gun position. The result was to win the highly coveted King George VI cup competed for by University OTC Gunner Troops across the country. When off duty, Paddy was no spoil sport and played a mean game of darts.

His protégés included Ian Sinclair, who went on to command 29 Commando Regiment RA, and Bob Eggar who commanded 32 Regiment RA. 'Spud', as he was affectionately known in Oxford, and Sheila were greatly loved by all. His young officers and cadets were devastated when he received a call at the OTC to inform him that his younger brother, Maurice, who was serving with 32 Regiment RA in Northern Ireland, had been shot in an ambush. Paddy was flown out to give support to his brother in hospital and things seemed hopeful but Maurice died a month later. Despite his loss,



Paddy never missed a step at the OTC. Its members still visit St Alban's the Regimental Church of the Royal Artillery at Larkhill to remember Maurice in their prayers; six ex-OTC members attended Paddy's funeral.

Ever upward after Oxford, Paddy returned to Larkhill, and then BAOR before becoming WOI (Master Gunner) Planning at Shoeburyness, later HQ DRA and the Royal School of Artillery on his way to a commission which he was awarded in 1984. He was a Unit Training Officer with 49 Regiment RA and later Assistant Range Liaison Officer (Captain TIG) and rose to Major just before his retirement. In a very varied career, he was part of the Training Team in support of Her Majesty's visits to Malawi and Botswana and enjoyed what he called 'my cruise' with the Sales Team which, with demonstration kit aboard RFA Tarbatness, called in Greece, Spain, Nigeria, Brazil, Columbia, Tunisia and Gibraltar over three months. The rumour persists that he appeared as Widow Twankey in a pantomime in Benbecula while on a solo posting.

Retirement in 1992 saw Paddy buy a milk delivery franchise which enabled him to rise very early, stay fit and do a day's work before anybody else had had breakfast. He later swapped this physical exercise for the mental exercise of providing

a book-keeping service which proved much more convenient in that he and Sheila could travel extensively. This they did until Paddy was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis which he endured for the best part of twenty years with enormous courage. His GP was amazed that he came through crisis after crisis. Yet as he lay dying, and knew it, he still found the strength to whisper to Sheila "I love you."

Paddy is survived by his widow, Sheila, daughters Vanessa, Patricia and Maria, seven grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren: well on the way to Murphy's Troop Royal Artillery. Once a Gunner, always a Gunner.

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

RA Historical Society Winter 2022 Programme

Date and Timings	Type of Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Registrations Close
Thu 27 Jan 2022 1930 hrs	ONLINE WEBINAR	Mining and the tactical problem of the Western Front in WW1	Simon Jones	Mon 24 Jan
Wed 2 Mar 1930 hrs	ONLINE WEBINAR	The Russo Japanese War 1904/5	Dr Spencer Jones	Sun 27 Feb

Open to all Gunners

To register please email the RAHS Secretary by the dates shown
Zoom Log In details will be emailed to all who register for webinars
Email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary: richard.clayton312@gmail.com



THE DUNCAN COMPETITION 2022

The Duncan Essay Competition is sponsored by the Royal Artillery Institution which is piloting a new approach this year. Previously a purely essay-based competition, a more modern approach will be adopted for 2022. Whilst the traditional essay format will remain submissions will also be accepted via other mediums including podcast, animation, power point presentation or any alternative format that enables the same level of analysis expected of the original essay competition. See the rules below for details.

The competition is open to all ranks who are serving members of the Royal Artillery (Regular and Reserve). All submissions are to be sent to RHQ RA Adjt no later than 25 Mar 2022. Additional direction and guidelines regarding RA Unit submissions will be issued by Formation HQs.

The Prizes are as follows;

- 1st Place - £1500.00
- 2nd Place - £1000.00
- 3rd Place - £750.00
- 4th Place - £500.00

The entries will be graded and judged by a designated panel and invigilated by the Regimental Colonel, their decision is final. Results will be published in Gunner Magazine and the RA DOWNREP.

Competition Rules:

- Questions are to be chosen from one of the titles provided by RHQ RA below.
- Submissions must be original work but can be from a single author or by collaboration.
- Virtual submissions must be pre-recorded and last between 15 - 25 mins.
- Essay submissions must be written in accordance with the Joint Services Command and Staff College Essay Writing Guide January Edition 2014. Essays not submitted in the correct format may be discounted. Please contact RHQ RA for a copy of the writing guide.
- The essay word count remains between 2,500 and 3,500 words in length and must be unclassified. An abstract is not required.
- All submissions illustrated with pictures, diagrams, charts and graphs must have the source stated for copyright purposes.
- To avoid a marking bias, all submissions must be anonymous and submitted using a nom de plume/pseudonym displayed in the top right corner of presentations and on the header on each page of essays.
- A covering letter must accompany each submission to include the rank, name, contact details and the author's chosen pseudonym which will be retained solely by the RHQ RA Adjt.
- Submissions must be received by RHQ RA electronically.
- All submissions will become the copyright of the RAI and may be reproduced in journals, magazines and presentations belonging to or associated with the RAI, at the discretion of the Regimental Secretary.

DUNCAN ESSAY COMPETITION TITLES 2022

1. Post COVID-19, what are the command and leadership challenges likely to face our junior officers and soldiers over the next 5 years and what should we be doing to mitigate them?
2. The Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper talk about the importance of Interoperability with our Allies and Partners. What do we mean by this and how is this achieved in terms of Joint Fires and Effects?
3. Reinforcement, resilience, reconstitution and regeneration: Does the RA Army Reserve need a new Unique Selling Point?
4. Jack of all trades, master of none; how should a smaller Royal Artillery focus its resources to continue to deliver a broad spectrum of capability?
5. How should the Deep Recce Strike Brigade prosecute the deep fight? How can the network of deep reconnaissance sensors be used to target the enemy at greater range?
6. With the increasing proliferation and sophistication of Unmanned Air Systems, do we need to review ground manoeuvre doctrine and what is the impact for Ground Based Air Defence?



Gunner Lottery JOIN TODAY to be in with a chance of winning

For every £1 entry, at least 50p goes directly to The Royal Artillery Charities



Fantastic cash prizes up to
£25,000
could be yours!

Supporting those who serve. Supporting those who have served.



www.thegunners.org.uk

NHS mental health care for veterans

Mental illness is common and can affect anyone (including serving and ex-members of the Armed Forces and their families). Whilst some people cope by getting support from their family and friends, or by getting help with other issues in their lives, others need clinical care and treatment, which could be from the NHS, support groups or charities.

Accessing NHS mental health care for veterans
Access to both of these services is through the TILS. You can contact the service direct (see below) or ask your GP or a military charity to refer you.

North of England services: call 0303 123 1145 or email vwals@nhs.net
Midlands or East of England services: call 0300 323 0137 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net
London or South East of England services: call 020 3317 6818 or email cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net
South West of England services: call 0300 365 0300 or email sc.veterans@nhs.net

It is important to register with an NHS GP and tell them that you have served in the Armed Forces so, where appropriate, you can access these and other dedicated services for veterans.

The closing date for all competitions in this month's edition is Monday 10 January 2022. The winners will be drawn at random and notified as soon as possible. Don't forget to fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

Easy Sudoku

				4				
5			6		9			4
1	3						2	6
		8	4		3	6		
				9				
		3	1		8	7		
8	4						5	7
3			9		4			8
				2				

The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 sub-grids that compose the grid contains all of the digits from 1 to 9. The puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid, which for a well-posed puzzle has a unique solution.

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Wordsearch - missing word?

.....

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The Gunner Wordsearch

P	U	L	P	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C
A	G	O	A	L	K	E	E	P	E	R	X	O
S	S	S	P	H	P	F	E	F	S	E	W	R
T	A	T	I	F	E	F	M	R	T	P	O	W
E	C	I	C	A	E	A	W	I	O	R	N	A
U	K	A	K	B	R	H	W	D	C	E	I	R
R	F	U	L	H	E	G	H	G	K	S	G	D
I	E	E	I	P	F	I	I	E	I	E	M	T
R	N	R	N	L	E	E	S	R	N	N	A	I
E	D	O	G	O	R	L	T	A	G	T	T	O
T	R	C	I	D	T	S	L	T	P	S	N	L
T	A	S	H	U	E	A	E	I	P	S	A	E
I	T	V	A	R	R	C	C	O	O	A	S	G
L	S	U	O	F	T	A	X	N	H	P	F	N
G	H	T	R	H	S	T	H	G	I	L	O	A

This month you are looking for words that are associated with free kicks, please find which word is not hidden in the grid. They can be found vertically, horizontally, diagonally and backwards. Good luck!

- ANGEL
- CHRISTMAS
- GLITTER
- LIGHTS
- PRESENTS
- RUDOLPH
- SACK
- SANTA
- SLEIGH
- STAR
- STOCKING
- TINSEL



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