



MAY 2023



Op STIFFTAIL

Ex KEREN OVERLORD

ROYAL ARTILLERY BOXING

GUNNER

#FINDandSTRIKE

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Guidance on Submissions

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

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

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GUNNER



MAY 2023

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FIND & STRIKE



Colonel M A A Dornan
Commandant Royal School of Artillery

As Ferris Bueller said in the 1986 film 'Ferris Bueller's Day Off' - "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it", and I certainly feel that we are at risk of this if we don't just pause for half a moment to reflect on both what we have achieved and also where we are heading in the future. From a training perspective, I would comment that life in the training world is busy, really busy, often too busy, but it is mainly 'good busy' and is certainly so for the Royal Artillery. Having been asked to write this month's editorial for Gunner Magazine, I thought I would just take this brief opportunity to outline the highlights of the past training year and also describe where our training is heading over the next year or so.

First, of course, I must highlight our collective contribution to training the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU). The pace at which this training has been planned and delivered has been hugely impressive. For those that are not aware, the RSA and RA units have trained hundreds of AFU Gunners on HVM, LIGHT GUN, AS90, MLRS, ASP and MAMBA, and all this on top of delivering our normal day-to-day outputs. This achievement is something that we, as Gunners, should feel incredibly proud of.

From a more inward-looking RSA perspective, we have made significant progress in optimising our trade training. We have reviewed 88 RSA courses and saved over 250 days of student training time. The RSA has also switched focus to a more threat-based syllabus focussed on tactical training with students now spending far more time in the field and training as they would fight in the contemporary operating environment. In addition to these changes, the RSA is also supporting WATCHKEEPER training in the United States and now delivering armoured FST training, pre-ICSC(L) training, pre-employment training for BCs and a Joint Battlespace Management Course.

There are exciting times ahead too. The conversion of 3 RHA from Lt Gun to MLRS is now well underway and this will, in very short order, deliver a significant enhancement to the Army's long range fires capability. Elsewhere, we are heavily

invested in our GBAD capability and there are big up arrows in both HVM and SKY SABRE training. We also have good news for our Close Support Gunners as we will very soon be delivering training on the ARCHER 155mm howitzer when it comes into service as the Interim Mobile Fires Platform, and this will mark a huge leap forward in capability for the Royal Artillery. Also, and long overdue, we are now investing far more time and effort in our Army Reserve training with, this year, the RSA delivering the first of what will be an annual trade training concentration for our reserve regiments.

Life in the training sphere is moving fast, really fast, but encouragingly, we as Gunners are not just keeping up with this pace but we are setting it. Collectively, as Gunners, we have achieved a huge amount over the past year, but there is still much more to come, and I would argue that with all of this positive change, there has never been a more exciting time to be involved in Gunner training. So, do stop and look around once in a while, do think about what we have already achieved, but perhaps more importantly, do look at what is ahead as the future really is both exciting and bright for the Royal Artillery.

#FINDandSTRIKE



Press Release



Forces Pension Society: can you help identify a Veteran with an unclaimed pension?

As part of a campaign to encourage Veterans with unclaimed pension benefits to come forward with their claims, the Forces Pension Society encourages you to help identify anyone you think might qualify. We know there are thousands of Veterans who have not yet made their claims. Our recent Freedom of Information request showed that during the 24-month period alone, between 1st June 2020 – 31st May 2022, over 4,000 Armed Forces pensions went unclaimed.

The AFPS Annual Report (July 2022) identified a larger total of 16,518 unclaimed benefits, with some Veterans having more than one entitlement.

Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO of the Forces Pension Society said:

“We can all play our part in encouraging Veterans we know, to come forward if they have not claimed their preserved pensions or preserved lump sums. These can be significant amounts of money. For example, a preserved pension of £1,500 for someone who left in April 1985, would now have a value of £4,500 pa.

Anyone serving after April 1975, now aged 60 or over, could have an unclaimed pension. AFPS pensions earned before April 2005 are payable at age 60 but will not be paid automatically – they have to be applied for.

“We urge you to encourage anyone who might be eligible, to visit the Veterans’ Gateway website without delay:

https://support.veteransgateway.org.uk/app/answers/detail/a_id/395

“Of course the Government also has a role to play in signposting the issue to the Veterans’ community, and we continue to encourage them to do just that.”

The Forces Pension Society is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that acts as a pension watchdog for the entire military community. If you would like to find out more about our work and how we empower our Members to make the best pension choices, visit our website – www.forcespensionsociety.org



Artillery is making an impact



An AS90 and the Royal School of Artillery's turret trainer, which is helping to upskill Ukrainian troops on the gun

UKRAINIAN gunners were live firing on Salisbury Plain as plans to send British AS90s to the front line of the fight against Russian aggression moved a step closer.

The serials marked the conclusion of the second three-week training package delivered by the Royal School of Artillery, meaning that 150 Ukrainian personnel now have the skills required to use the asset in combat on home soil.

With soldiers from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers also completing maintenance work on the guns, the AS90s could arrive in the country and start firing later this month.

The challenge of training the Ukrainians was welcomed by the Larkhill-based establishment, with instructors compiling an intensive programme that started with basic familiarisation on the platform and

concluded with crews conducting live-fire missions of their own.

"They are getting the relevant information they need, and having interpreters makes the job easier," instructor Sgt Daisy Burnfield, of 19 Regiment Royal Artillery.

"We have built a good relationship with them, and they understand the technical information we are trying to get across."

"We have had all experience levels on the courses. Some have fired before, while others are new to the military."

"However, their will to learn more is off the scale and they ask us thousands of questions."

19 Regiment has provided 12 AS90s to Ukraine and the unit is now waiting on the Archer system as an interim replacement after the UK struck a deal with Sweden.



In the meantime, Sgt Burnfield believes the Army's generosity can make a difference on the battlefield.

"AS90 is another heavy artillery asset for them to use; artillery is making an impact in this war and this platform will certainly add to that", she explained.

"We are proud and privileged to be a part of this. If it is the last time we see the AS90 it will be a nice bookend to my career on the platform."

"We are delivering the best training we can on a piece of kit I'm fond of."



Sgt Burnfield hopes the Army's generosity can make a difference on the battlefield





Operation STIFFTAIL



32 Bty Photo

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has led to NATO countries sending an increase in military assets to their Eastern European members. One of the biggest recipients of such has been Poland where shortly after the war began 16th Regiment Royal Artillery were deployed on Op SCORPIUS, sending 11 (Sphinx) Battery as part of NATO's deterrent against Russian aggression. In October 2022 members of 32 (Minden) Battery, deployed to Poland on the now renamed Op STIFFTAIL, taking over the Regiment's continued operational commitment to provide Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) to the region. Alongside their Polish and American counterparts, 32 Bty are contributing to the trilateral Integrated Air and Missile Defence in South-Eastern Poland; working to reassure and provide security along the Eastern border of NATO.

After coming into service in 2020, the British Army's Sky Sabre air defence system has been a hot topic within the air defence community with many countries interested in seeing its capabilities. 32 Bty have provided a continuous operational capability protecting Polish skies as well as conducting training as part of the integrated group with the Polish and Americans. 32 Bty previously operated Sky Sabre in the Falkland Islands in the equipment's maiden deployment. Being in Poland has given the Bty the unique opportunity to operate Sky Sabre alongside other NATO partners for the first time in a live theatre where threat states frequently escalate, and defence of the region's skies is vital to NATO security.

Sky Sabre contains three main elements which make up the system: Networked Land Ceptor (NLC), the launcher element



which utilises the Common Anti-Air Modular Missile (CAMM) capable of engaging enemy aircraft up to 25km away. The Giraffe Agile Multi Beam (G-AMB) Radar system which provides the system its air picture. Lastly, the Surface to Air Mission Operations Centre (SAMOC) which is the Command element of Sky Sabre which the other elements feed into in order to engage targets and control the missiles in flight.

Integration with their Polish and American units has been at the forefront of Bty activity. Different units of Polish and US forces have visited 32 Bty's deployed location to receive briefs and insight into the capability provided by Sky Sabre. Towards the end of 2022 the UK Secretary of State for Defence, The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP, announced that 16 RA's commitment

would be extended in Poland during his visit to the southern city of Zamość. Members of 32 Bty had the opportunity to meet the Secretary of State the day this was announced while they were delivering a display of Sky Sabre to the Polish in Zamość. They also saw equipment displays from the Polish about their air defence systems including Poland's NAREW GBAD system, which includes elements of Sky Sabre.

The radar capability that the Sky Sabre system provides is among the best in the world with the G-AMB radar capable of seeing a mixture of low and high altitude threats up to 120km away. 32 Bty have worked with the Americans utilising Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) to better understand Sky Sabre's radar capabilities. Training like this has been an invaluable



32 Bty Photo



opportunity for allies to understand how to best utilise their equipment. UAS assets have been used heavily in the conflict across the border particularly the Shahed 136. The role which elements of Sky Sabre could have against UAS threats if the conflict were to escalate makes the presence of the Bty essential.

Being in Poland has given the Bty the unique opportunity to enjoy recreational activities during periods of stand down. Junior members of the Bty organised a trip to Auschwitz in which they received a guided tour, gaining an in-depth understanding of the holocaust and the atrocities which occurred at Auschwitz. Speaking with LBdr McGee “We all felt an emotional feeling visiting Auschwitz due to the history the place had. Visiting the barracks and seeing the conditions got to everyone emotionally, trying to understand the hardships they had living there, trying to survive day in and day out.”

Being away from family during the Christmas season is something many in the Armed Forces have had to deal with during operational deployments. On Christmas Day a traditional Christmas meal was enjoyed by all, served by the Officers and Senior members of the Bty. Members of 32 Bty kept up their morale by organising



Christmas jumpers

a Boxing Day football game against the Americans in which the attached RAF personnel did their bit for the British side bringing home the win.

16 Regiment will continue their operational commitment in Poland for the foreseeable future. 32 Bty are set to stay on operation until mid-April 2023; they will continue fulfilling their operational requirements and conducting training until their replacement, 14 (Cole’s Kop) Bty, arrives and takes the lead.

by LBdr McGee and LBdr Skrzypiec
32 (Minden) Battery
16th Regiment Royal Artillery



Walking to launchers



Basketball group photo



Auschwitz



Exercise KEREN OVERLORD



The soft yellow sand and wide expanse of Normandy's pristine sunlit beaches, its placid blue waters and families on holiday betrayed the vision of its own history. Beaches who's only footfalls in the 21st Century are the civilians making the most of life and the paws of dogs bounding alongside. Creating scenes in one's mind of scarlet rivulets streaking the wet grit, of terror and agony amongst the cold grey brine brought an element of surrealism to the warm sun and calm clear skies of 2023.

In mid-February, Normandy once again found British soldiers on its shores, although this time in the form of a Battlefield Study. Exercise Keren Overlord brought members from 1st Battery (The Blazers), 24 (Irish) Battery and 34 (Seringapatam) Battery of 14th Regiment Royal Artillery together for a welcome three day reset period.

The venture provided instructors with the opportunity to learn, appreciate and reflect upon the vast array of events that took place on the northern French coast in June 1944. Nearly 79 years ago, these operations were the cornerstone to achieving a firm foothold onto the continent and would ultimately turn the tide of World War II.

A superb introduction to the planning and overarching picture of the Normandy invasion (Operation OVERLORD) was had at Southwick House near Portsmouth on route. This touched on the immense scale and planning complications that relentlessly plagued Operation OVERLORD, after which we took passage by ferry from Portsmouth to Ouistreham. Multiple sites that were key to the spearhead into Europe were visited and contemplated each day as we toured by coach with our knowledgeable



battlefield guide, the regiments' Padre, Maj Roger Grafton CF. This started with D-Day's premier action by the men of D Company, 2nd Battalion, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. The action absolutely oozed airborne prowess, dedication and the commitment of the men and their glider pilots, overcoming odds of the known and even greater odds of the unknown. Bestowed to them was the critical task to capture and hold the Benouville Canal Bridge (Pegasus Bridge). Facing a magnitude of tactical difficulties ranging from trenches and machine gun nests to pill boxes and an anti-tank gun, this mission highlighted the determination and spirit of the airborne troops involved, setting a profound benchmark and a fine example for paratroopers today.

In keeping with the theme of remarkable airborne feats prior to the main D-Day invasion, the afternoon was soaked up by a walk around the formidable gun emplacements of Merville Battery. Posing a direct threat to amphibious landing forces, the four 150mm guns were a thorn in the side of the invasion plan, with the threatening barrels dominating the open ground of Sword and Juno beaches. It was decided that an attempt to silence these guns was essential. Akin to the men who captured Pegasus Bridge, overcoming a multitude of difficulties came naturally to the members of 9 Parachute Battalion. Looking at the thick reinforced concrete bunkers protruding stoutly from the ground, one must appreciate the task laid before them. The surrounding land smashed with deep craters, it was a challenge to see where one pitted scar ended before another began.

If the relentless salvos of naval gunfire failed to take the guns out of action, it was for the scalpel of ground troops to surgically strike. Heavily outnumbered and cut off due to perilous weather, navigational errors and in complete darkness, it became another prime example of a mission's success against heavy odds. This paved the way just in time for the main landing. Had this not been done, it may have delayed or changed the outcome of the war entirely, further highlighting how small teams and individuals given mission command were vital to accomplishing essential strategic objectives on the ground.

Visiting Omaha and Sword beach, just two of the five beaches where unprecedented amphibious assaults took place was the centerpiece of our trip, perhaps only emotively falling short of the war cemeteries. The beaches harbored the main landing effort, the true linchpin to the end of the war and thus shape the political landscape of the modern world. Seeing the arcs of fire and the German defenses that the Allied infantry were up against brought home the sheer mental fortitude that had to be captured in order to succeed. Learning of maritime innovations and the detailed forethought to cater for the best chance of hurling German troops inland made anyone standing observing the flat expanse, cliffs and open water appreciate the detail, deception and dedication involved. It's hard to grasp and impossible to imagine the scale of such a gambit, with 130,000 troops from across the globe being ferried across the channel to meet head on in such a decisive battle.

Undoubtedly the most poignant element, a stark and moving reminder of realities past,



was to be found overlooking Omaha beach. It separates the myriad of incredible operational stories with the harsh reality of warfare, where row upon row of pristine white marble crosses commemorate just a fraction of those who died. It's an American cemetery, impeccably well-kept and peaceful. A silent place where time stands still, acting as an appropriate memorial for thousands.



towards the base of the marble headstones. Some religious, some lamenting loss and despair, others purely stating that specific soul will be forever missed. The captions personified the fallen in our minds, conveyed through the memories and heartbreak of the people that loved them. The permanence of death ever apparent and unshakeable, lost for the benefit of the very people that left those most meaningful words.

Our visit concluded with stopping at an RA memorial to pay respects and lay a wreath, included upon the memorial's inscriptions was the ancestor of 24th Bty, 14th Regt RA.

The Battlefield Study was a great success, providing insight, depth, and value. A venture that enabled us to conduct a homage appropriately as possible to the echoes of the past.

by Bdr Doe
1st Battery (The Blazers)
14th Regiment Royal Artillery



Stopping off at a smaller cemetery for a proportion of British and Canadian soldiers resonated in a more personal way. Seeing the names and ages of those who died cited on the American graves was harrowing but with the British graves there came two other engravings that brought pause. Familiar cap badges, most still worn today. More crushing were messages from the families or partners inscribed





Exercise TYROLEAN TIGER 3 - Royal Artillery Corps Engagement Team take to the slopes



The Royal Artillery CET has just returned from an unforgettable AT package, Ex TYROLEAN TIGER 3, in Mayrhofen, Austria. The Exercise was a chance for all capbadges and Corps Engagement Teams (CETs) to hone their skiing skills through SF1 or SF2, while at the same time encouraging networking and bonding across Regiments and Corps.

The trip was organised by HC Arms & Services, with participants drawn from across all Corps and Regimental HQs, and HQ HC. All ranks participated in the trip, from young Gunners and Private soldiers through to Regimental Colonels. The RA CET seized the opportunity, sending six of its number.

The Gunners spent their days on the slopes, perfecting their technique and learning new skills. Mayrhofen provided access to a wide range of runs, from beginner nursery slopes

to the daunting Harikari, a piste named after Samurai ritual suicide; it is the steepest piste in Austria with its dramatic 78% incline! It was dutifully conquered.

Conditions varied throughout the week which provided a test in itself and contributed to achieving the aims of AT. On foggy days, we learnt of 'flat conditions' where distinguishing between the snow and the sky was difficult and all our concentration was focussed on 'survival skiing'. On beautiful clear days with stunning views of the Alps, we were able to focus more on skiing skills, working through powder and ticking off TOs as we went.

SF1 took turns to lead their group down the mountain, picking the route and keeping everyone together while leading the descent from the front. This exercised team leading skills within a group. It was a great challenge



and certainly pushed the limits of individuals' comfort zones, encouraging them to embrace new challenges and overcome fears. SF2 groups took on similarly challenging activities, including ski touring and practising avalanche rescue drills.

After long days on the slopes, the soldiers were able to enjoy relaxing in the evening through a variety of social activities, including après-ski parties, the Hotel's on-site spa and use of the local swimming pool. This enabled the wider aim, of bringing CETs together across cap badges and the Gunners too built camaraderie and strengthened bonds as a team.

The Royal Artillery is committed to providing opportunities for gunners to engage in physical fitness and outdoor activities. Skiing is an important part of military training. It requires physical fitness, coordination, and mental focus. It also provides an opportunity for soldiers to build resilience and overcome challenges.

This opportunity was the first skiing most of us had experienced and it was fantastic to be afforded the chance to get away as a team and do something challenging and new.

The RA CET were supported financially by the RACPD whose generosity minimised personal contributions to allow maximum attendance on this PD exercise. The soldiers have returned to Larkhill with a renewed sense of camaraderie, physical fitness, a new skill and increased mental focus to push on with our core outputs of Army and Gunner recruiting – what a great advert for us to be able to talk first hand about just one of the benefits a career in the Gunners can offer.

The RA CET already look forward to future development opportunities, with more overseas AT and a field exercise planned for the summer term.

by Gnr Burberymayes
12th Regiment Royal Artillery





The Army's new identity has been unveiled ahead of the King's Coronation

When King Charles III took to the throne, ensuring the Army reflected the distinct identity of a new commander-in-chief was a priority for top brass.

In a revision that has not been undertaken for seven decades, the cap badges of the Service were amended to reflect the new monarch's cypher and personal preferences.

Changes were carried out with a keen sense of urgency amid ongoing preparations for the coronation.

And the task was completed on schedule, with striking new designs of 46 regimental and corps identities officially approved by the King.

Now being forged in metal, troops at the crowning ceremony will be the very first to wear them.

"These are symbols of immense pride - each is unique and they are worn by everyone from the commanding officer to the newest recruit," Lt Col (Retd) Kestrel Simon, who works in Army ceremonial policy and plans.

"A cap badge shapes who we are and is part of the glue that holds our corps and regiments together - you take on the identity from the moment you join".

Creating a new design is certainly taken extremely seriously and is subject to a thorough process. But with a huge amount of work needed to adapt formal regalia following the seven-decade reign of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the King gave his consent for a streamlined approach.

Under established protocol, a watercolour painting would usually be commissioned and submitted to the garter king of arms, who is responsible for royal heraldry.

He would authenticate the design with his signature on the artwork before placing it before His Majesty.

With the tight timeframes in place, however, and a period of restraint on the public purse, in-house designers at Army HQ instead produced the graphics for the King.

"Even submitting single designs is a long process, which can take several weeks, and we had more than 40 cap badges to deliver," Lt Col Simon, who served with The Queen's Royal Hussars in a three-decade career, continued.

"The King gave permission for a change in procedure this time and we received his approval for the designs, which incorporate his crown and cypher."

"Our contractor has been in the process of producing the finished items and there will be just enough made initially for those taking part in the Coronation - replacing all items of regalia with new designs will take several years."

Lt Col Simson pointed out that the King - along with other royal family members with military roles - took a huge personal interest in the Army and the well-being of its personnel and families. Identity was hugely important to monarch and soldiers alike.

"His Majesty - in his former duties as the Prince of Wales - has always been very keenly aware of the troops for which he has been responsible," he added.

"In turn, regiments and corps have always ensured he is kept up-to-date with every thing that is happening - the King is held in huge affection."

"The sovereign, too, represents our continuity and constant in the Armed Forces throughout the generations - our cap badges will be worn with pride."





Warriors All - #FINDandSTRIKE





Warriors All - #FINDandSTRIKE





World Rowing Indoor Championships, Toronto 25-26 February 2023



British Army Team - WRIC 2023

22 members of the British Army Rowing Team travelled to Toronto over the weekend of 25-26 February to compete in the World Rowing Indoor Championships. The team competed in various categories at 500m and 2km, as well as entering two teams in the Men's Relay, Women's Relay and the Mixed relay, all over 2km.

Maj Matt Rea from 5 Regt RA produced two seasonal bests in the individual 500m and 2km races, finishing 11th and 17th respectively in the fiercely competitive Men's Heavyweight category. He was also part of the British Army A team in the 2km Mens Relay, finishing 8th in impressive time of 05.34.

Capt Lindsey Denyer from RMAS produced a personal best in the 500m to finish 20th, and 24th in the 2km Women's

Heavyweight category. She was also part of the British Army A team achieving 11th in the 2km Mixed Relay with a competitive time of 06.12.

It was a fantastic trip, providing the opportunity to compete against Olympic level athletes in a challenging but inclusive event. Both competitors offer their sincere thanks to the Army Sports Lottery and the Royal Artillery Institution for their kind support to enable this trip to take place.

by Capt Lindsey Denyer RHA
Platoon Commander
9 Platoon
Waterloo Company



Maj Matt Rea & Capt Lindsey Denyer - RA members of the British Army Team - WRIC 2023



Exercise WESSEX CARP



For many, the sport of 'Angling' can take some getting to grips with. Whilst many question the physical intensity of such a sport, the mental and psychological benefits cannot be brought into question. Regardless of angling ability or experience, it brought together like minded individuals for what could be likened to occupying an Observation Post (OP), by the side of the River Bank.

Ex WESSEX CARP 23 provided an opportunity for Soldiers and Officers from across 32 Regiment RA with a chance to implement various new tactics, sharpen their angling craft and learn lessons about living and operating in the wilderness. All in the hope of catching a monster carp.

Prior to attending the event, anglers from across the regiment undertook multiple fishing adventures designed to expose them

to a range of skills, intended to improve their angling ability.

Ex WESSEX CARP was available to a mixture of angling talents providing an opportunity for experienced anglers, whilst encouraging complete novices to attend, in a bid to learn new skills whilst forging new relationships.

Bracing the recent cold snap, anglers were exposed to lows of -7 degrees Celsius. Despite the freezing temperatures, five of the eight anglers managed to navigate the freezing hands and frozen lakes to land fish upwards of 25lb.

Although far removed from any other military sport, fishing builds both character and resilience, relying on key military skills and the ability to administer yourself whilst in austere conditions, whilst exposed to freezing and inclement weather. Without grit, determination and a healthy



dose of patience (all great qualities in our soldiers) the angler would simply pack up and go home.

Fishing also provides an effective platform for soldiers to employ soft skills like coaching and mentoring and effective leadership, driving cohesion throughout the group.

WO2 (RQMS) Byles was the first one to get the group up and running, landing a 19lb Mirror Carp. He later had another carp in his net at 18lbs.



Shortly after, Capt Unwin, BK 22 Bty, managed to land an even bigger Mirror Carp weighing at 24lbs. Subsequently, LBdr Shipton (21 AA Bty) was rewarded for his effort's, landing 2 carp in quick succession.



A 25lb Mirror Carp was the biggest fish landed and was caught by the event organiser and regimental fishing lead Sgt Salisbury (21 AA Bty).



Anglers from across the Regiment are already planning their next outing, aiming to return to Todber Manor Fisheries, Sturminster Newton in a bid to prepare for key fishing events such as Royal Artillery Carp Championships (RACC).

For more information on RA Carpers follow @RA_Carpers on Facebook. Search @32Regiment_RA

by Sgt Salisbury
32nd Regiment Royal Artillery



The Dutch Open Taekwondo Championships Eindhoven



Sgt Yamikani Guba of 3 RHA competed at the 50th Dutch Open Taekwondo Championships, held at the Indoor Sportcentrum Eindhoven in the Netherlands on 11-12 March 23, representing the British Army Taekwondo team at the G1 World Taekwondo Ranking event.

Guba won a Silver Medal in the Masters division +80 kg, but lost to German competitor in the finals.

Guba is now looking forward to the Army Open and Midlands Open Championships.

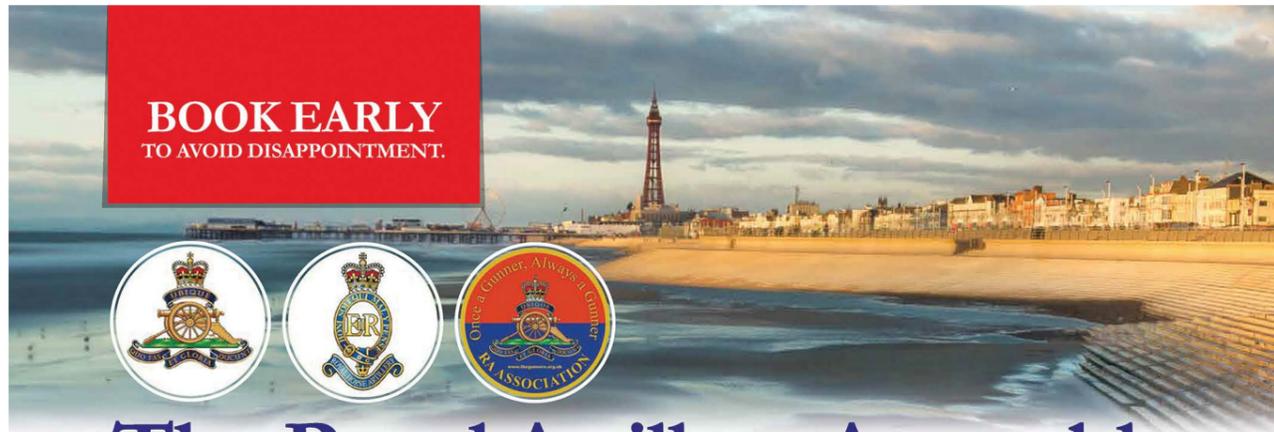
The Next International games will be the European Masters in Finland and the British International Open Championships, Manchester. Both competitions will be on July 23.

Sgt Guba is currently on the Talented Athlete Scholarship programme at Northumbria University, Newcastle.

Many thanks to the CoC of 3 RHA-C Battery for allowing me to participate in these games.

Charity starts at home. "Thank you Red Cypher Charity" for all the support given to me towards this World Ranking event.





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#FINDandSTRIKE

RAA Battery Grants

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

Find out more information from emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or through your chain of command.

16th Regiment Royal Artillery

14 (Cole's Kop) Battery

On Wednesday 8th February, 14 (Cole's Kop) Battery took part in the Op TEAMWORK initiative. They were hosted by D-Day Story Museum in Southsea, who provided a fantastic function room and accompanying refreshments. Delivering the initiative in the appropriate setting reinforced the importance of the material being discussed. Members of the battery of all ranks came together for the event and were able to voice their opinions and experiences of the Army's culture. In particular, we were able to discuss themes such as leadership, challenging, feeling valued and psychological safety. The battery then sat together and had fish and chips on the seafront to reinforce cohesion and strengthen our battery culture. The event would not have been possible without the input of the RAA who advised and offered generous funding towards the event.

11 (SPHINX) Battery

Ex SPHINX SOLDIER was an training camp run by 11 (SPHINX) Bty. The Bty had just recently come back from a 6 month deployment in Poland in October 22 and is due to deploy again 6 months later in April 23 to the Falkland Islands. The aim was to qualify personnel on the new core military ITR skills, pass SP on the ACMT, deliver AT and reward the troops on a 6 months on, 6 months off Op cycle.

Due to the turnover of recent deployments the Bty hadn't been in one place as a collective since the return from Poland and the time spent together as a Bty was well received by all. The Ex was a time to build cohesion, remind and revise key soldiering skills and remedy the deficiencies from Phase two training establishments left during COVID. All aims were met and with great gratitude to the RAA, who provided a large amount of the funding, the Bty managed to subsidise the cost of sending troops Go-Karting and holding a Bty Smoker on a catamaran in Limassol Harbour. Without the support of the RAA the exercise would have had to be either reduced in ambition or delivered at a much higher cost to personnel.

The two events funded featured at the end of the two week period and were a well deserved reward for the service personnel who attended.





Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance

The Royal Artillery Association will conduct the Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas on Saturday 22nd July 2023 commencing at 1100 hrs. All members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and their families are welcome to attend. Please find further details of the event www.thegunners.org.uk/events



CWGC - Driver David Butcher

The Storrington and District Museum hosted a short service on Sunday 2nd April to dedicate a new Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone for Driver David Butcher (RHA) who was buried in Storrington in 1919.

Branch members from Lewes and Worthing Branches and Gary Toseland from the RHA Association laid wreaths of remembrance on behalf of the Royal Artillery Association. In attendance will be a Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Mr Harry Goring and High Sherriff of West Sussex, members and Standard Bearers of the Royal British Legion.

David Butcher was a man determined to serve his country. He was born in Washington in 1890 and on his eighteenth birthday in 1908 joined the Royal Navy signing up for twelve years. Unfortunately, after three years he became medically unfit and was discharged from service.

In 1914 when war broke-out he was one of the first to join up attesting for service on the 14th September. Assigned to

the Royal Sussex Regiment he went to the training camp at Shoreham but sadly, again, in November he was declared medically unfit for service. However, this did not stop him! Just over a month later in January 1915 he joined the Army Veterinary Corps as a Horsekeeper and was sent to France. In November 1916 he was transferred to the Royal Horse Artillery and posted as a driver later joining the Leicester Royal Horse Artillery. However, over this time he was hospitalised on several occasions and was finally invalided back to the United Kingdom and discharged from service in October 1918. He was eventually sent to the Grosvenor Sanitorium in Kennington where on 22nd October 1919 he passed away. He was just 29 years old with a wife and two children.

In 2014 while researching the names of the people on Storrington's war memorial and Roll of Honour, where his name appeared, members of the Storrington Local History Group discovered that he did not have a Commonwealth War Grave and nor did he appear in its Book of Remembrance. He was buried in St Mary's Churchyard in Storrington. Surely a man with such a record of commitment deserved to be recognised nationally. The members of the group started a campaign to get him this recognition having been inspired by hearing of similar cases that had been successful. Fortunately, David's war records had survived, and one piece of vital evidence gave impetus to the campaign. His medical records stated that his disabilities were attributable to "service during the present war". Armed with this a submission was made and in 2018 the group heard that his name had been added to the CWGC Book of Remembrance. Then at last, late this year we heard from the Rector at St, Mary's that a CWGC headstone was to be erected in the churchyard.



Gunner Sunday

On Sunday 16th April the regimental family returned to the Royal Hospital Chelsea for Gunner Sunday, spending the day with the In-Pensioners. A large gathering of serving, veterans and their families attended the Service at the Royal Hospital.

The Royal Artillery Standard Bearers, members of the serving regiment and veterans joined the In-Pensioners on parade where they were inspected by Dr F Keating, Physician & Surgeon RHC, Brigadier Mark Pountain CBE and Colonel Charlie Harmer ADC. During the Parade music was played by The Guards Association Band.

After the Parade, the regimental family joined the In-Pensioners and congregation in the Chapel for Choral Matins and a Baptism. Following the service, a curry lunch was held at the In-Pensioners Club.

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 21st April 2024. If you are Gunner, past or present, then Gunner Sunday is an opportunity to visit this very special residence.





Return to the Fatherland

RAA visit to Germany 2023

As the dust settled on this year's Gold Cup at Sandown myself (the RAA Sec) along with Brig Mark Pountain (RAA Chairman) were finalising the detail on what would be our end of February trip to Germany.

There were several elements to the visit, the first stop was a trip to Paderborn where I was to officiate over the inaugural meeting of the new Germany Veterans Branch. The branch is because of some tireless work by Michael Bridgeman who is the Regional Rep for Germany and whilst they will have centralised meetings which will take place at the old family's centre in Sennelager is actually made-up from members who are spread around the area rather than solely living in Paderborn itself.



getting together in small groups, socially but all collectively engaged in language and general support, along with offering sage advice and like I say individual pockets of comradeship. Surprisingly in some respects they are more aligned to original objects of the charity, as in many cases they are a virtual employment bureau, and I would urge anyone who is thinking of retiring or moving over to Germany to contact me and I will link you in.

Finally, it was a move North to Celle, meeting up with Brig Mark for a good old gathering with the North Germany Branch. The RAA Chairman gave an all-things Gunners update and we collectively spent the evening answering questions. It was also great to speak to members of the 'Friends of the Royal Artillery', a group that I will be engaging with in the coming weeks to look at how they can be brought under the whole RAA family umbrella and how we capture other smaller groups across the country.



Overall it was a very worthwhile trip, easily doubling our membership in Germany as well as having the opportunity to catch up with some of our key supporters. A special thanks must go to Michael Bridgman for his work during our visit but also on the whole as Regional Representative in Germany. I would also like to thank Lt Col Wild Danny – Sennelager Commander GSU for his support on not only the visit but his future support to our Germany Veterans Branch.

The second serial and one in line with an area that the RAA hopes to evolve, was to introduce myself to the members of the Germany Remainder WhatsApp group, this Group of about 40 members is a truly remarkable group,



Cornwall Cup



The Cornwall Cup is awarded at the Regimental Conference in the Spring to the Regiment, Gunner establishment or sports club that raises the most funds in the previous year for the RACF. The funds can either be raised by a Regiment, a Battery or an individual or group of individuals on the posted strength of a Gunner unit or belonging to an RA Sports Club.

The award is based on funds received by Artillery House from 1st January through to 31st December. Totals are as at 31st December each year.

The results of the Cornwall Cup for 2022 are as follows:

Regt	Total Raised	Total Received	Placing
32 Regt	£4,695.04	£4,612.30	1
16 Regt	£4,258.30	£4,229.91	2
47 Regt	£1,360.68	£1,346.23	3

The RACF is extremely grateful for the efforts of all those units who have been able to raise funds for the charity, in addition to the significant sum donated by individuals through the service giving scheme each year. Donations such as this enable us to continue to support individual serving and retired members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and their families, who are in need, as well as supporting the serving Regiment with grants to support welfare and comradeship.

Many congratulations to 32 Regiment for raising the largest sum. We would encourage all regiments to consider the RACF when organising sponsored events during the current year – Charity begins at home!



RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

To date in 2023 we have helped our Gunner family by providing 226 grants.

Just under £190,000 has been pledged to help those in need in 2023.

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

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

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

Thank You's

"Thank you for your great kindness...this grant will help me enormously"

"his family have expressed their extreme thanks...in assisting them and their move from Serving soldier to civilian. They are extremely grateful and cannot thank you enough"

"Thank you so much...Some will go towards (helping me) to keep warm...so very much appreciated. Many many thanks indeed"



Date	Event	Location
2023		
12-14 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
13 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool
15 Jun	Hail & Farewell Dinner	Larkhill
22 Jul	NMA Service	Staffordshire
28 Jul	YOs' Dining In	Larkhill
14 Sep	Sunset Ceremony	Larkhill
09 Mar	RA Boxing Finals	Larkhill
04 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
05 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
20 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
09 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
12 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
03 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
08 Dec	YOs Dining In	Larkhill
1 Jul 2024 (tbc)	RA Service of Remembrance	National Memorial Arboretum



REUNIONS

30 BATTERY REUNION

30 Bty intend to hold a Bty reunion on Sat 29 Jul 23. The format for the reunion will be an equipment & heritage display on Thorney Island, followed by a formal dinner in the evening held at a local hotel. This reunion is open to all serving and retired members of the Bty. Please contact the reunion lead, WO2 Wheeler at: 30batteryrcoy@gmail.com

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARTILLERY CLERKS' ASSOCIATION AND REUNION DINNER

The 25th Anniversary of the Artillery Clerks' Association will be held in the Royal Artillery Sergeants' Mess, Larkhill over the weekend of Fri 23 to Sun 25 Jun 23. A full programme of events is being planned. This uniquely special Reunion weekend is open to all members of the Artillery Clerks' Association and partners. A new silver Centrepiece especially commissioned to mark this significant milestone will be unveiled prior to the Reunion Dinner on Sat 24 Jun 23. The Association web page will be updated regularly with a list of those who have confirmed their attendance. Notification of attendance must be completed and sent, either by post, email or using the link within the Association Web site to the Reunion Secretary no later than Thu 1 Jun 23.

ARMY APPRENTICES NATIONAL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF ARMY APPRENTICES

13th-14th May 2023, Mickleover Court Hotel, Derby DE3 0XX, and the National Memorial Arboretum. Contact: info.armyana@gmail.com

ATTENTION ALL EX-25 ERS

2024 will see the 40th anniversary of the demise of the best gun Regiment of its day. We have just celebrated the 38th disbandment reunion in the usual fashion, kind courtesy of 204 Battery at Kingston Park, Newcastle, with circa 120 in attendance. There is still an intent to run the same again next year (Fri 16 and Sat 17 Jun 23). The planning dates are therefore Mon 24, Tue 25 and Wed 26 Jun 24. Indeed Tom Robson has managed to secure a number of quality rooms at the County Hotel and the Vermont and will underwrite the accommodation for the period through his company as a charitable benefit. We have made provisional arrangements with Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral, for a commemoration/celebration

service hopefully supported by the Newcastle Scottish Pipes and Drums with 25 pounder gate guards and uniformed ushers provided by 101 Regiment RA, for 1500 hrs Wed 26 Jun. We will also be providing live entertainment and a finger buffet all at no cost to those attending. So at the moment participants should arrive on Mon 24 for a free day. Tue 25 you have the choice of afternoon tea for the ladies and a pie and pint for the men or whichever way round you prefer! Wed 26 Cathedral Service at 1500 hrs and as mentioned above this would be followed by a reception for our guests and a party in the evening as the main event. Come on boys and girls none of us are getting any younger and to aim off for a 50th celebration might be pushing it a bit so this is the big chance for one memorable great reunion. Please sign in or request to join '25 Regt RA - 40th Anniversary' for further information.

1RHA REUNION DINNER

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

7 AIR DEFENCE GROUP GROUND BASED AIR DEFENCE REUNION DINNER 2023

7 Air Defence Group will host the Ground Based Air Defence Officers' Reunion Dinner 2023, which will take place on Saturday 8th July 2023 in the Officers' Mess on Thorney Island. To register interest and receive a formal invitation please respond to the QR code below.



HAIL & FAREWELL

The next Hail and Farewell will be held at the RA Mess on 15 Jun 23. In addition to those new LE officers being dined in, all those officers retiring, but not serving at Regimental Duty, after a pensionable engagement, are welcome to attend, with partner, as guests of the Regiment. Please note that this includes those that are leaving up until Dec 23. The dress for the event is Black Tie. Timing 1900 for 1930. Subject to numbers you are welcome to invite additional guests at your expense. If you would like to attend please contact Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley - emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or Tel 0300 155 6172

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH THU 5 OCT 23



The next Royal Artillery Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 5 Oct 23 at The Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. Our guest speaker will be announced nearer the time. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, Regular and Reserve whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £65 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after lunch. To attend the lunches you must be a member of the Alanbrooke Club. There is an annual membership fee of £10 but this is waived for serving officers. Members wishing to attend this lunch should make a bank transfer for £65 to the Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund (Sort code 30-11-75, Acc number 00568858) annotating your transfer with your initial and surname or send a cheque made to 'Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund' to the Regimental Secretariat Officer, Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley. If you make a bank transfer please email the



Royal Artillery Secretariat Officer to say that you have done so. Any excess of funds will be donated to the RACF at the end of the year. Do spread the message amongst your Gunner friends, and of course you may bring a guest (who may be non-military) should you wish, or bring a group of friends you served with. Commanding Officers are asked to encourage and facilitate attendance by their officers. If you wish to join us please contact the Regimental Secretariat Assistant Emm. Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk

SEEKING

SEEKING FORMER STUDENTS OF WELBECK DEFENCE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE



The Defence Academy is trying to reach students who attended Welbeck DSFC between 2005 and 2019 but who left without joining Defence. Their parents or guardians who incurred the Default Event Recovery charge may have been overcharged and due a refund. Email enquiries to the Defence Academy on DEFAC-DTOEES-HQ@mod.gov.uk

PRI GOING ONLINE ONLY

Jason (aka Dusty) and Dawn Miller have been running the Larkhill PRI shop since 2010. The family have lived in the area since 2001 when Jason came to the Royal School of Artillery to attend the GCC 18 course. The couple's two grown up children have since moved away from Wiltshire so the couple will also be relocating before the end of 2023. They have been looking for someone to take over the running of the shop for the last year but unfortunately no one has been found to step in. It is with a heavy heart that they have announced that the physical shop will be closing on 27 Jul 23. Although the physical shop will go, most of the services will still be available online via the website, via email and of course telephone. The shop will still supply embossed and printed notebooks, stickers & mugs along with the very popular engraved port. The smaller framed badges will also be

available online. They will continue to provide PT tops for the sub units and are able to add new units when required. After the shop has closed they will endeavour to ensure free carriage for sub unit PT tops. There will unfortunately be a disruption in service when the workshop is moved so please plan ahead. If you would like any further details or are interested in taking on the running the Garrison PRI shop then please do contact the shop directly. Contact details can be found on the website www.garrisonpri.co.uk Tel 01980 653749. Jason and Dawn would like to wish all members of the regimental family both past and present all the very best for the future.

APPEAL FOR INFO

59TH (NEWFOUNDLAND) HVY REGT RA



I'm writing from Ashford, Kent, which was a front-line Garrison town in World War II with orders to 'fight to the end' in event of Hitler's planned invasion 'Operation Sea Lion' from the French coast opposite Kent. In 2018 I discovered that men from Newfoundland and Labrador were stationed here from 1941 to 1943 on Coastal Defence manning heavy guns along our coastline, and were billeted in Ashford School that was evacuated ready for their occupation. I approached the school which resulted in much

interest and since then, several commemorations and Acts of Remembrance for the regiment have been held including a special Armistice service. In August 2022 I was asked to speak to members of Ashford Borough Council with a view to having a permanent memorial for the men here in Ashford in 2024 in the town's Memorial Gardens. The Council have since moved forward on this and I have now been asked on behalf of the Council and Ashford School to liaise with relevant organisations to gather more information, due to it being so scant for this period. It is intended that there should be a photographic display alongside the Memorial event. An appeal for any information from Ashford residents will be going out to each household this summer, which will be an appeal for photographs or letters from families of veterans who had relatives in the 59th (Newfoundland) Hvy Regt RA from 1941 to 1943 and who would be happy to share them with us for this exhibition. If so, the contact email address for this is: connect59th@aol.com A similar appeal has also been sent to several Museums and Veteran organisations in Newfoundland and Labrador. An Act of Remembrance service held in Ashford in November 2022 has also been published in the Canadian Gunner magazine there. The men gave invaluable service to us here in Ashford at a time when the town was suffering from the Battle of Britain. We are therefore hoping for a good response. The regiment was recruited in Newfoundland in 1940 and also comprised of British officers, NCOs and other ranks. The CO was Lt Col J W Nelson who also oversaw their occupation of Ashford School. It was disbanded in 1945. Any information that your readers can give will be greatly appreciated.

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



LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Ernest Collins 9 January 2023

Lt Col Richard Francis Crimp 20 February 2023

Robin Chambers 7 March 2023

Tony (Ginge) Ives March 2023

Richard Dudley March 2023

Maj John Eden MBE 16 April 2023

BONNET - Maj Gen Peter Bonnet CB, MBE died peacefully at home on 18 February, aged 86. Representative Colonel Commandant 1994 and Director Royal Artillery 1986-1989. Loving husband of Sylvia and father of the late Gavin (died 1st June 2017) and Tim, and grandfather to Emily, Tommy and George. A private family funeral service was held at St Michael's Church East Anstey on 18th March 2023. It was Peter's specific wish that there should be no Memorial Service, but he asked to take this opportunity, through the Regimental Magazine, to say goodbye to all his friends in the Regiment.

FERNS - WO2 Colin Brian Ferns passed away peacefully on 22 February, aged 79, at the Wessex Lodge Nursing Home, Whitchurch. Colin enlisted in the Junior Leaders Regiment in 1957, and from there, he served with the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, in St John's Wood. A transfer to 50 Missile Regiment in 1965, took him to Sennelager, Germany. On his return to England in 1976, he was stationed at Woolwich. Colin was discharged from the army in October 1983 with the rank of WO2, having completed 22 years service. The funeral took place with private family committal, on 17 March at Basingstoke Crematorium. He is survived by his two daughters, Tricia and Sarah. His four grandchildren, Charlotte, Scott, Megan and Nathan. His two great grandchildren Ivy and Poppy. Solar Mhic De ar a n-anam.



LITTLE - Sgt Roy Little passed away on 24 December 2022 after attending hospital for a chest infection and unfortunately catching Covid. Roy was called up for National Service in 1950 to 1952 serving with 50th HAA Regt RA at Carlisle where he served his whole 2 years never leaving the UK. On completing his National Service he served in many TA Regiments, 563 LAA Regt RA (TA) 1952-1954, 285 Airborne Regt RA (TA) 1954-1956, 289 Parachute Regt RA (TA) 1956-1961, 289 Parachute Regt RHA (TA) 1961-1967, 289 Parachute Battery RHA (V) 1967-1977, 289 Cdo Battery (V) 29 Cdo Regt RHA 1977-1983. During this time Roy served on various equipment, from air defence to mortars 25 Pdr, 105 Pack and 105 Light Gun. He also completed P Company and the Commando Course. Roy was an outstanding gun No 1, always looking after his crew. During his time in service he served in Germany, Turkey,

Cyprus, Holland, Gibraltar and Norway. Roy also worked in Ford's of Dagenham for many years and enjoyed adventure training especially canoeing as well as travelling around the UK and Europe in his camper van. Roy will be sadly missed by all at 289, his loving daughter Susan, grandchildren Aurora and Louie and great grandchildren Daniel and Hayley.

PATERSON - Cyril Paterson - formerly RSM - 16 Lt Air Defence Regiment Royal Artillery, peacefully passed away on 11 February 2023 in Scunthorpe at 90 years of age.



WINGATE - Michael (Mike) Wingate passed away peacefully on 26 November 2022 at his home in Colwall, Malvern after a long battle with cancer. After five years with Worcestershire Army Cadets, Mike joined 29 Regiment RA in 1955 as a Gunner/Driver, serving in Germany, and left in 1960. He joined RAA Malvern Branch in 1988 and was Chairman for many years before being appointed President, a position he held until his death. He will be sadly missed by his beloved wife, Margaret, and his Gunner friends.

WITNESS APPEAL

Defence Serious Crime Command

DEFENCE SERIOUS CRIME UNIT APPEAL FOR WITNESSES

The Defence Serious Crime Unit are currently investigating a Serious incident which occurred in Germany in 1984.

If you were a member of 6 Battery, 27 Field Regiment Royal Artillery and were part of an exercise to Germany between 1 April and 20 April 1984 please contact the DSCU Bulford Office by: 31 March 2023

Calling: **01980673640** or

Emailing: **SIBRMP-3InvCoy-32Sect-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk**

Quoting Investigation Reference Number: **03524/22**.



For emergencies always dial **999**



Major James (Jim) Barrie Hamilton RA 1919-2023



Jim was born in the family home in Kirkhill, Cambuslang, Scotland on the 3rd December 1919. In those days you didn't go to hospital to give birth. One family member described Jim as being born all blue and like a skinned rabbit. Little did they know then that Jim would live to such an age.

Jim was the youngest in the family and was described as a 'steering laddie' meaning one that was never at peace. He was in at everything.

From about 10 years of age, all Jim wanted was a football and his interest in football remained throughout his entire life. He was an avid supporter of Queen's Park Football Club, better known as 'The Spiders' and in Jim's later life football was always on the television and was the main topic of conversation with fellow football enthusiasts.

There was a butcher shop at Kirkhill and Jim always went for his mother's butcher meat. Jim wanted to be a butcher and have a shop of his own.

When Jim was about 13 years of age, he became very friendly with Ian McKendrick who was just 9 months older than Jim. Ian was very sadly killed in action whilst serving with the Glasgow Highlanders in France during World War II in July 1944. For as long as the family can remember Jim has always placed a wooden memorial cross at Biggar War Memorial for Remembrance Day to commemorate Ian. A tribute that Jim's granddaughter will continue to do with pride and the collection at Jim's thanksgiving service was for The Royal British Legion Scotland Biggar Branch.

In the summer of 1935, when Jim was about 15 years of age, he went on a two week school trip on the troop ship Neuralia. The ship sailed from Leith and travelled to Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Germany before docking in London. The cost of the trip was £5.

Whilst in Germany Jim observed Hitler's youth. The military training was obvious, and Jim knew war was not so far away.

Jim left school on his return from the school trip and joined the firm J.W. Galloway Ltd, Glasgow (the leading Butchers in Glasgow) as an Apprentice Butcher. In February 1939, Jim was appointed Manager

of the Rutherglen Branch and worked there until he was called up for military service on the 24th August 1939.

Jim had also joined the Territorial Army in April 1939 due to the increasing expectation of war and when a new Anti-Aircraft Regiment was formed at Hamilton. This regiment was deployed with modern guns which could reach the height of 40,000 feet and was ultimately responsible for protecting the City of Glasgow and industry along the Firth of Clyde.

In October 1941, Jim commenced Officer Cadet Training in Wiltshire.

It was always Jim's plan to propose to Anne McKendrick (Ian McKendrick's younger sister) and they became engaged on Anne's 21st Birthday on the 31st March 1942.

Jim was commissioned shortly after on the 6th April 1942 and Jim and Anne were married in Glasgow on the 29th July 1942. It was a private family wedding. There were no big weddings when the war was on.

Jim was thereafter posted to Wick to defend the Coastal Command Airfield, then to Aberdeen, Dundee and Arbroath before going overseas to Italy in 1943 until the war ended.

In April 1946, Jim returned to civilian life in Scotland and to J.W. Galloway to manage the shop in Rutherglen. Jim also re-joined his old Territorial Army Battery at Hamilton and was promoted to the rank of Major.



On the 15th of February 1947, Jim and Anne welcomed identical twins William and John.

In 1950, Jim was promoted to Manager of the elite shop of J.W. Galloway's butchering business and in 1955 Jim became a director of the business.

Jim always wanted to have a butcher business of his own and in 1966 he grasped the opportunity to buy a butcher shop which was for sale in the farming town of Biggar. Jim knew Biggar well as family lived in the area.

Jim's preoccupation with quality of the product and customer service could not be better demonstrated when the British Transport Hotels Group which included The Central Hotel and The North British Hotel in Glasgow, The Caledonian Hotel and North British Hotel in Edinburgh, Gleneagles Hotel, The Station Hotel, Perth to name a few forsook Galloways and went with Jim.

In Jim's first year of trading in Biggar his sales turnover achieved £605,000. A figure which provoked disbelief amongst the partners of Jim's accountants. For that is equivalent to a figure today of just over £14,000,000.

An extraordinary achievement from a small shop in Biggar. It clearly demonstrated the positive effect of product quality coupled with customer care and courtesy in gaining and retaining customers, and thereby to Jim's very substantial success in business.

In October 1967, Jim's son William was accidentally killed near Lamington whilst out on butcher deliveries. He was only 20 years of age. The entire family and Biggar community were devastated.

The 70s decade brought happier times when Jim became a proud grandfather.

Jim retired in 1989 and enjoyed spending quality time with Anne helping her tend to their garden. He couldn't have been prouder of Anne when she was announced as the overall winner of Biggar's Annual Garden Competition in 1990.

Jim was also an active member of Biggar Golf Club and thoroughly enjoyed regularly playing golf with his neighbours. He even managed a hole in one!

In August 2002, Jim and Anne celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary with family and close friends. It was a very happy occasion.

Sadly, Anne passed away in February 2003 following a very short battle with cancer and for the remaining twenty years of Jim's life he missed her terribly.

On the 3rd December 2019, Jim celebrated his 100th birthday. Family and close friends travelled from all over Scotland, England, Jersey and Australia to celebrate this special milestone with him at a wonderful birthday lunch.

Jim reached a centenary and a few more years, spanning great success

in business, with a much loved and devoted family, a spectacular golf reputation, and an immaculate garden.

Jim was very much 'the old school' from a remarkable generation. He had a cheerful salutation for everybody, he was a great family man and was held in warm regard by all who knew him.

When Jim was asked what the secret was to live a long life, he would reply 'Keep active and everything in moderation'.

Jim had an exercise bike in his bedroom and would cycle a mile every morning well into his 102nd year.

On the 11th February 2023, Jim passed away peacefully at home surrounded by family. He was 'sharp as a tack' right to the very end.

A very fitting service took place at Biggar Kirk on the 1st March 2023 with representatives from The Royal Artillery and The Royal British Legion in attendance.

Jim had a wonderful life, and he was a wonderful man.





Major General P R F Bonnet CB MBE



In December 1936, Peter Bonnet was born in Chittagong, a significant port on the north eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal, now in Bangladesh, where his father worked for the Burmah Oil Company. Up to the age of eleven years old, Peter attended a boarding school 500 miles away in the Himalayan foothills for eight months at a time. In 1939, his father was called up by the [British] Indian Army and served in regimental and staff appointments in India during World War II. When India gained its independence in 1947, the Bonnet family returned home to Plymouth, so Peter completed his secondary education at Plymouth College where he passed his GCE A Levels as well as qualifying as a potential Cambridge University Army Scholar.

In 1959, having passed out of RMA Sandhurst and completed his RA YOs's course at Larkhill, 2nd Lieutenant Peter Bonnet joined 33 Parachute Light Regiment RA at Aldershot. He duly completed a 'P Company' course and gained his parachute wings but, shortly afterwards, he injured his back badly while parachuting at the start of an exercise. This accident meant that Lieutenant Peter Bonnet could no longer fulfil his sporting potential but he continued to enjoy sports at a Regimental level. As a result of a prolonged stay in hospital including some recovery and rehab, Lieutenant Peter Bonnet had to forgo the opportunity of attending Cambridge University and read for an honours degree at RMCS Shrivenham instead. During this time, he married one of his sister's school friends, Sylvia, and they became a devoted and most hospitable couple for the best part of sixty years.

On completing his degree, Captain Peter Bonnet was posted to 3rd Regiment RHA in Kenya where 'The Bonnets' were allocated a relatively isolated hiring near Nakuru, on the slopes of the Menengai Crater, rather than a married quarter at Gilgil. Despite his limited experience of Gunner regimental duties, Captain Peter Bonnet

and his troop were detached to Aden on a six-month, operational tour based up-country at Dhala. Meanwhile, Sylvia had to come to terms with the local civil unrest associated with the approaching Kenyan Independence as well as the increasing mutinous attitude of the KAR troops. Captain Peter Bonnet was stationed at Detmold for the latter part of his tour with 3 RHA at Detmold. His first formal annual 'practice and firing' training camp took place on the Luneburger Heath training areas where he put his artistic talents to great effect by producing a notebook of remarkable OP sketches of the targets in the Hohne and Munsterlager ranges' impact areas. Captain Peter Bonnet was briefly posted to 17 Training Regiment RA at Oswestry as Adjutant before returning to RMCS Shrivenham to start a Division 1, Army Staff Course. By this time, Peter and Sylvia's two sons, Gavin and Tim, had been born; subsequently, they became successful entrepreneurs based in London.

After finishing the Camberley module of his staff course, he served as an SO2 G2 at the Army Intelligence Centre, Ashford, before, in early 1973, returning to BAOR to take command of 38 (Seringapatam) Battery RA, 40 Field Regiment RA, at Gütersloh



for 30 months. During which time Major Peter Bonnet carried out two Op BANNER tours - one mainly in the Londonderry Enclave and the other in the Belfast Markets. During his second Op BANNER tour, while the rest of 40 Field Regiment RA ran the Belfast City Centre Segments operations from the Grand Central Hotel, his 38 Battery were based in The Belfast Gasworks assisting the Royal Ulster Constabulary regain a credible police presence in the sensitive Belfast Markets area before subduing the 'aggro' along the Ormeau Road during the 1975 Belfast 'Marching Season'. 38 Battery's successful tour in the Belfast Markets was largely due to Major Peter Bonnet's consistently firm but fair leadership which resulted in him being awarded a well-deserved MBE.

In late 1975, shortly before he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Major Peter Bonnet joined the staff of HQ Director RA for three years at Woolwich before returning to Germany to take command of 26 Field Regiment RA at Dortmund. His notable 'regimental command tour' was followed by an almost immediate promotion to Brigadier initially at Lübbecke followed by

York. In the mid 1980s, Brigadier Peter Bonnet attended an Indian National Defence College course, New Delhi - the Bonnet family's favourite posting, for one year before returning to Woolwich on promotion to Major General to serve as Director Royal Artillery from 1986 to 1989. Major General Peter Bonnet was appointed a CB on completion of his final tour as General Officer Commanding, Western District, stationed at Shrewsbury.

General Peter and Sylvia retired to a charming country house beside St Michael's Church, East Anstey, on the south western edges of Exmoor where General Peter became actively involved in local matters as well as developing his artistic talent further in order to raise funds for the refurbishment of St Michael's Church by painting local landscapes. He also enjoyed painting his family's portraits. As CEO OPS, he masterminded its migration to it becoming the all-ranks Forces Pension Society. Even in retirement, his active involvement in Gunner regimental matters continued with his appointment as an RA Colonel Commandant and Representative RA Colonel Commandant for 1996 as well as Honorary Colonel of 26 Regiment RA. In the 1990s, he

wrote a brief Gunner history; in the late 2010s, typically and generously, he acted as honorary editor for the Concise History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. General Peter continued to show his characteristic unfailing courtesy and great dignity to the very last despite the challenge of failing health, partially related to his earlier parachuting injuries but also cancer. He will be sorely missed by both his family and friends as well as his fellow Gunners.





Brigadier William Osborne Cook (Will)



Brigadier William Osborne Cook (Will) was born on 3rd January 1951 and died unexpectedly on 19th February 2023 aged seventy-two. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, and friend. He had a long and distinguished military career characterised by passionate commitment and selfless service. He was steely, yet fair minded, kind, compassionate and a steadfast supporter of his friends and of those under his command. He was great company with a wonderful sardonic sense of humour and an engaging smile. He enjoyed cricket and was a keen and competitive yachtsman who sailed the Atlantic and on occasions braved the most terrible storms.

Will was commissioned into the Royal Artillery on 31st January 1970 and posted to 47th Light Regiment, equipped with 105mm Pack Howitzers, in Sek Kong Camp,

Hong Kong. Whilst there he spent three months in South Korea as part of the 'Korean Honour Guard' in a ceremonial role alongside US forces. He also threw himself into the Jungle Warfare course in Singapore, qualifying as an instructor. He did 'Loan Service' with the Sultan of Oman's Armed Forces from 1973-74, a challenging and exciting appointment especially so soon after commissioning. This was during the so-called, and now largely forgotten, 'Dhofar War', an insurgency against the Sultan from 1963 to 76. He was then posted to 25th Field Regiment, equipped with Abbot 105mm self-propelled guns, in Munsterlager, Germany. During this posting he undertook two four-month tours of duty in Belfast. A tour as a Platoon Commander Instructor at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, was followed by being Adjutant of 32nd Guided Weapons Regiment, equipped with 'Swingfire' anti-tank missiles, in Bulford. It was whilst a young captain that he met and married Rosemary, who at that time was a captain in the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC).

Will was selected for the career shaping Army Command and Staff Course, completing the technical element, Division II, at the Royal Military College of Science, and then attending the Staff College, Camberley. His resulting 'Black Bag' appointment was to 7th Armoured Brigade, 'The Desert

Rats', in Soltau, Germany, in a role equivalent to Deputy Chief of Staff today, responsible for support and logistics. Battery Command followed of the prestigious 'A' Battery (The Chestnut Troop) Royal Horse Artillery from 1986-87. This was a pivotal appointment. Thereafter Will held a deep affection for the 'Chestnuts' and they hugely valued him as one of their most absolute stalwart supporters. He promoted from there to Lieutenant Colonel as a Directing Staff at the RMCS and then commanded 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery from 1990-92 in Bergen-Hohne, Germany. After command of 'First', and into his retirement, he retained a close connection with the regiment as a great advocate and was always available to dispense wise counsel and pastoral advice. He was the chief 'whipper in' of former Commanding Officers at its reunion dinners, ensuring fulsome attendance.

As a Colonel, he attended the Higher Command and Staff Course and then served in the Directorate of Land Warfare from 1993-96, developing the Army's warfighting doctrine. He was also, in 1996, Chief of Operations in the NATO 'Implementation Force' (IFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, involving 54,000 troops from 32 countries. He promoted to Brigadier as a Commander Royal Artillery (CRA), commanding 1st Artillery



Brigade. His regiments undertook successive six-month tours of duty as the UK contribution to the United Nations Force in Cyprus. Will made a special effort to visit them all, which had the doubly beneficial effect of keeping everyone on their toes and providing an excuse for a party. After a stint as the Director of Studies at the RMCS, he became Chief of Staff of NATO's 'Kosovo Force' (KFOR) from 2001-02. At that point KFOR commanded 32,000 troops from over thirty countries. His final appointment was as the UK National Military Representative

in NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), in Belgium, for three especially happy years from 2002-05.

Following his military career, after 2006, he became Defence and Security Adviser to Du Pont Defence, a role which he enjoyed enormously. He remained the galvanising force behind all sorts of Gunner occasions including Remembrance Sunday at Hyde Park Corner. That this is growing in attendance is due in no small part to Will and others like him. Latterly, he was a valued member of his local parish council and very

much involved in the many facets of village life, including being an active tree warden, identifying rare trees requiring special attention and those the community would be better off without. He was a passionate gardener, which required him to amass a variety of impressive grounds maintenance machines.

He was always immensely proud of his now adult sons, George, and Robert, and had the makings of a very special grandpa to John (3) and Lola (5 months). He was a force for good, and then some. He will be sorely missed.

RA Historical Society 2023 Programme

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close
Tuesday 11 July	Visit	Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth	Capt Magnus Thompson RA	Tuesday 20 June
Friday 20 October	Shrapnel Lectures, Newcome Hall, Larkhill and Buffet Lunch	5 Lectures on a China theme. Subjects to be notified.	Lt Col Peter Thompson	Friday 6 October

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

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

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7 Para RHA

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Army Rugby finals 2023 - Gunners men and women