



**NOVEMBER 2021**



**Ex ARIES STORM**

**Ex MOUNTAIN MAGPIE**

**ROYAL ARTILLERY  
CUP POLO**

**GUNNER**

**#oneregiment**

The Larkhill-based team that supplies you Gunner.

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

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

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

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## Gunner Publications

RHQ RA,  
Royal Artillery Barracks,  
Larkhill, Salisbury,  
Wiltshire,  
SP4 8QT

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# GUNNER



## NOVEMBER 2021

Registered Charity Number 1122002

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Front cover photo taken by Michael Patrick  
Gunner Wallis, King's Troop RHA

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**Brigadier Charlie Hewitt -  
Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Artillery Brigade**

### Getting 'greens' isn't necessarily (that) bad .....

In 2015 Steve Gerras wrote, 'Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession'. Gerras's thesis was that the US Army had created a culture which feared failure to such an extent that success was founded on lies. Having met Gerras at the US Army War College I swore that I would stop lying to myself.

Accordingly, I am delighted to report that Exercise ARIES STORM 21 was a complete triumph – as the Divisional Artillery Group achieved 12.5% green gradings and the remaining 87.5% were either unobserved (black), amber or red. We struggled with the basics – navigation, communications, basic soldiering, our standard operating procedures and artillery logistics. We worked data hard (and must do better); we integrated the whole force (Reserve and Regular); we used simulation as much as possible; and we worked on survivability – digging in or 'perpetual motion' (staying mobile to counter the threat of UAVs and rockets). We tried hard – some things went well, most did not – we baselined where we are and learnt – we cannot afford not to.

Here I am buoyed by my year and a half at 1st Artillery Brigade. The Royal Artillery has exceptional people – from Olympians, through business people, to single parents, Regular, Reserve and Civil Servant. Some who are in rude health; while others are struggling (physically, mentally or both) – but who, to a person, understand the notion of service, of duty and who recognise that the Royal Artillery have serious questions to answer. Consequently we have designed a plan which focuses on: increasing our lethality, increasing our survivability, refining our structures and adapting

our processes. However, that sounds like a staff college answer – what we are trying to do is find and kill the enemy at range – be that with surface to surface or surface to air fires.

Furthermore the Integrated Review will land this month – and with that comes real opportunity. Not least to bring the 'system of systems' together under a Royal Artillery narrative which recognises our proud history but also our diversity – thereby defining our Royal Artillery identity. And, of course, from a parochial perspective the long overdue overhaul of 1st Artillery Brigade's equipment is coming. We shall follow where 7 Air Defence Group and the Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) Gunners have gone recently with a new Gun and rocket capability.

In sum, change is constant and so we have evolved out of necessity – to stand still is to choose to fail. So the Royal Artillery have established a 'ginger group' as a think tank, the 'team of teams' network is expanding (to encourage challenge and speak with one voice), we are conducting 180 degree reviews across all ranks (to call out behaviours and hold ourselves to account), we are mentoring more coherently and the 'Council of Colonels' is managing talent actively. Next, we need to deliver a genuine 'whole force' to leverage the most from Reserves and Regulars and really think through our international interoperability.

So the future is bright – but it's not green ... just yet!



### A BATTERY COMMANDER'S NOTES ON DEPLOYMENT TO ADEN IN THE EARLY 1920s

To the majority of people, the name of ADEN conveys an impression of intense heat, combined with great general discomfort. Against this we find the consoling saying - so often heard in the East and elsewhere as well - that "Aden is not as bad as it is painted." The writer will therefore endeavour, so far as is possible within the limits of these notes, to clear up the question by giving his personal experiences of the station, as he found it during a tour of duty there some years ago.

ADEN is a mass of bare and desolate volcanic rock, five miles in extent from East to West, and connected with the mainland of South Arabia by a stretch of flat, sandy ground. The greatest elevation is JEBEL SHAMSHUM (1,776 feet) with the Port Signal Station on its summit.

The native town is on the East Coast, and is situated within a crater formed by low rolling hills. There are no flowers and practically no vegetation of any kind growing in the place.

The Royal Garrison Artillery are stationed at STEAMER POINT, a strip of sandy land at the western end, from ½ to ¾ mile wide and extending from the sea to the foot of the hills. Here are found the barracks, bungalows, shops, official buildings, etc comprising the European quarter.

The Royal Artillery Officers' Mess is at the extremity of the Point on the top of a cliff, where it gets the benefit of the prevailing breeze. Aden is a Lt Col's command for the RGA and is at the present time garrisoned by Nos. 62 and 69 Companies, RGA (The latter Company is for disbandment.) The normal garrison also includes a Battalion of both British and Indian Infantry, A Company of Indian Sappers and Miners, and the Aden Troop of Cavalry, the latter unit comprising Indian "Sowars" mounted on both camels and ponies. The Infantry are quartered at "THE CRATER" and the Cavalry at KHOR MAK SAR, some miles from Steamer Point on the ISTHMUS. There are quarters for both single and married RA Officers near the mess and good and spacious barracks for other ranks close by, also a comfortable Sgts' Mess and the usual Regimental Institutes.

The climate is hot, but not particularly unhealthy. The average shade temperature is 83 Fahrenheit and varies from 76 in January to 91 in May and September.

The two latter months are by far the hottest, as they immediately precede and follow the monsoon. From November until the beginning of March, the weather is fairly cool and by no means unpleasant. The rainfall is limited to a few showers annually, the water supply being from condensed sea-water.

Aden is generally free from diseases such as enteric, dysentery, etc and the only cases of malaria occurring in the station have been contracted in the interior or elsewhere outside the station. The chief complaints are heat stroke, and a mild form of fever lasting three or four days. The absence of shade and green makes the place rather depressing. Ladies and children do well in the station in the winter, but should go home, or to the hills of India, in the hot months (April to end of September, or October if possible). During the latter period all parade work is reduced to a minimum and as a rule is over by 8 am.

Every possible facility is given to NCO's and men for indulging in games and sports.

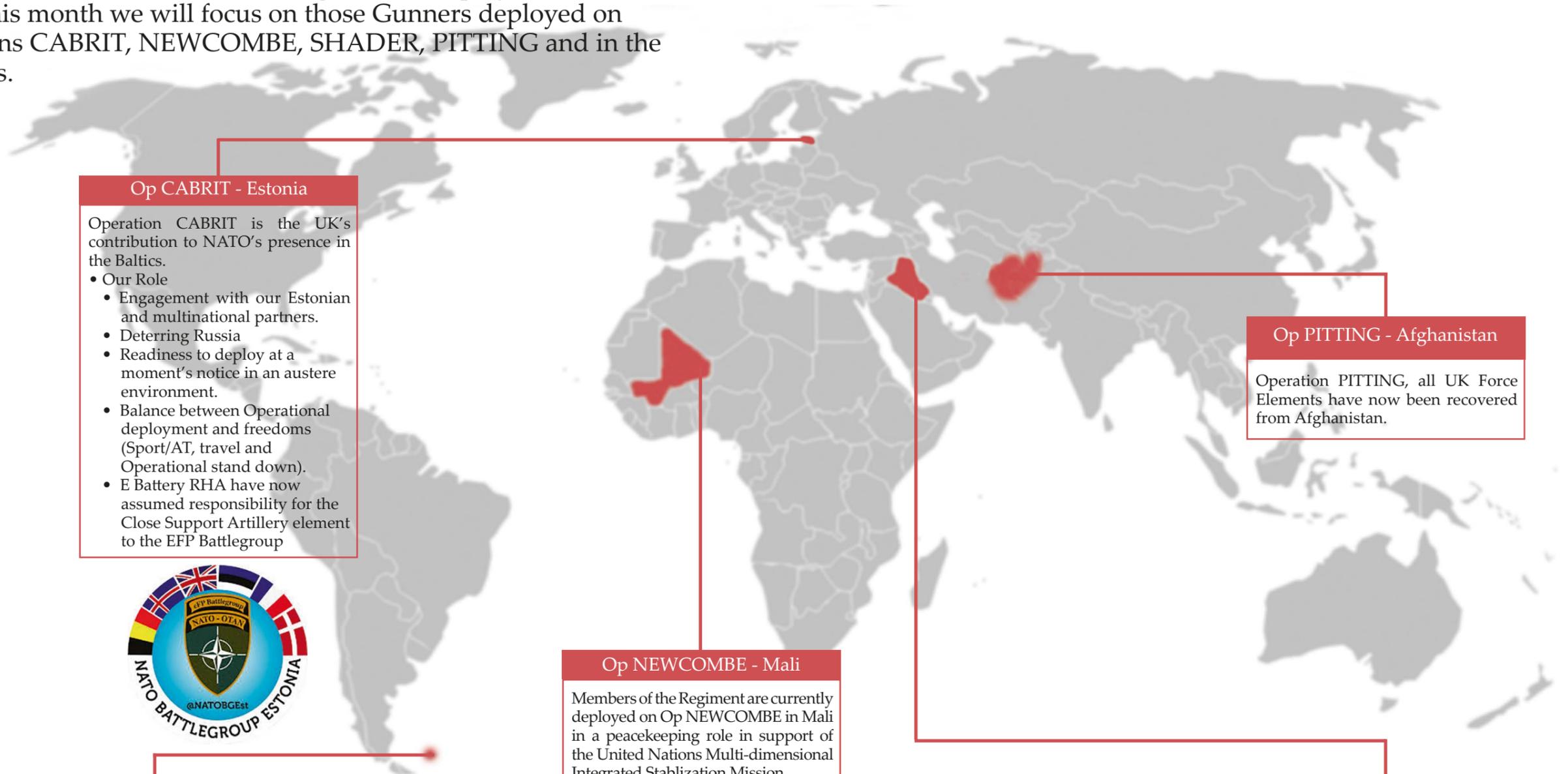
At Steamer Point, football, cricket (on matting) and hockey are freely played. There is a Gymkhana Club for the use of officers, with tennis courts attached and a nine-hole golf course has been laid out on the sandy plain between the barracks and the mess.

Boat sailing and fishing are also popular forms of recreation. Large fish (such as the tarpon) are to be had, but to be successful special rods and tackle are necessary, as well as some skill on the part of the fisherman. Sea-bathing is only permitted at certain allotted spots fenced in as a protection against sharks. It is very unsafe to bathe in the open sea for this reason.

From November to February, Aden is quite a gay station, and dances, theatricals, gymkhanas, dinner parties, moonlight picnics, etc follow each other in quick succession. Open-air concerts for the men are also got up from time to time. Polo (of sorts) is sometimes played at Khor Maksar, the cavalry station, on ponies provided by the Aden Troops.

Khaki drill uniform is worn in all orders of dress except at mess where white mess uniform is the rule. Home pattern service dress is never required. A Wolsley helmet should be brought from home. Review order (white) with gold belts might possibly be required on special occasions.

The Gunners are currently engaged on over ten overseas operations with formed units and individual augmentees deployed across the globe. This month we will focus on those Gunners deployed on Operations CABRIT, NEWCOMBE, SHADER, PITTING and in the Falklands.



**Op CABRIT - Estonia**

Operation CABRIT is the UK's contribution to NATO's presence in the Baltics.

- Our Role
  - Engagement with our Estonian and multinational partners.
  - Deterring Russia
  - Readiness to deploy at a moment's notice in an austere environment.
  - Balance between Operational deployment and freedoms (Sport/AT, travel and Operational stand down).
  - E Battery RHA have now assumed responsibility for the Close Support Artillery element to the EFP Battlegroup



**South Atlantic Overseas Forces**

Members of the Regiment are permanently deployed in the Falkland Islands. The Falkland Islands are a dependent territory of the UK and will remain so for as long as the Islanders wish them to be so.

**Op PITTING - Afghanistan**

Operation PITTING, all UK Force Elements have now been recovered from Afghanistan.

**Op NEWCOMBE - Mali**

Members of the Regiment are currently deployed on Op NEWCOMBE in Mali in a peacekeeping role in support of the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission.



**Op SHADER - Iraq**

Members of the Regiment are currently deployed on Op SHADER on the ongoing military intervention against Islamic State.





## Junior Entry Training at AFC Harrogate



Junior Soldier on Exercise

The Army Foundation College is the only Junior Entry Phase 1 training establishment in the British Army. With a responsibility to graduate over 1000 Junior Soldiers aged 16-17 each year, the Army Foundation College offers a unique training environment with Junior Soldiers spending either six months or a year learning the fundamentals of soldiering. They also spend a considerable amount of time with TQ Pearson, a civilian organisation responsible for teaching English, Maths and ICT Levels 1-2 as well as a BTEC Award in Public Services. AFC Harrogate inspires personal development and provides young people with the skills to succeed in the Armed Forces and their lives beyond the military.

### Training during the Pandemic

Like the rest of the British Army, the College has had to overcome several challenges since the start of the pandemic. With over 1000 Junior Soldiers in the College at any one time, a different approach to training has had to be taken. All staff and Junior Soldiers conduct lateral flow self-testing twice

weekly, which allows for training to continue without rigorous social distancing. Section 'bubbles' were created within each platoon, ensuring that Junior Soldiers are kept safe during training such as Skill at Arms lessons. The creation of a bespoke Covid-19 Isolation Facility also allows Junior Soldiers to safely isolate in single person rooms if they develop Covid-19 symptoms.

All of these measures have allowed Junior Soldiers to remain at the College and avoided the need for virtual training; however, it did require them to remain at the College unless on block leave periods. This created a new challenge for the Junior Soldiers and Permanent Staff, as they spent much longer periods away from home and their loved ones.

### Captain Sir Tom Moore

During Lockdown 1.0, Captain Sir Tom Moore walked 100 laps of his home and raised £33m for the NHS. Captain Sir Tom Moore served in the Burma Campaign during the Second World War as a member of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, now amalgamated into the Yorkshire Regiment.



As a proud Yorkshireman, Captain Sir Tom Moore was made Honorary Colonel of the Army Foundation College in August 2020 and was the Inspecting Officer at the September 2020 AFC Harrogate Graduation, at the grand old age of one hundred! Giving an inspiring speech at the ceremony, Captain Sir Tom Moore told the Junior Soldiers "you are starting a future of absolutely unlimited scope. The world is an oyster and yours to go and open".

To commemorate Captain Sir Tom Moore at the



Captain Tom Moore

College, a memorial walkway was opened by his daughter Hannah Ingram-Moore in July 2021. Mrs Ingram-Moore said: "There's no question in our minds that two of the proudest moments for my father in the last year of his life were being knighted by the Queen and becoming the honorary colonel of the Harrogate Army Foundation College."

### 2021 Graduation

In August 2021, around 750 Junior Soldiers graduated from the College, including 74 Gunners. The ceremony was the first in 18 months to be watched by their loved ones in the stands. The parade is the second largest in the British Army, after the Queen's Birthday Parade. It featured a flypast from an RAF Typhoon, a jump from the Royal Logistic Corps parachute display team, and a speech from Lieutenant General Ian Cave CB, Commander Home Command and Standing Joint Commander.

Whilst stringent Force Health Protection Measures are still in place, the next 12 months of training will see Junior Soldier opportunities opening up again such as Battlefield Studies in Normandy, sports tours and fixtures around the world, and a chance to go home on some weekends to see their loved

ones. This intake will see another 115 Junior Soldiers graduate from the Army Foundation College into the Royal Regiment and on to Initial Trade Training at Larkhill.

by Lieutenant D Simmonds RA  
21 Platoon Commander  
Burma Company  
Army Foundation College Harrogate



Graduation Parade 21



Graduation Parade Major Chapman



## Ex MOUNTAIN MAGPIE - Adventure Training North Wales



Students receive a safety brief from the Anglesey Adventures instructor prior to tackling Sea Level Traversing

Ex MOUNTAIN MAGPIE held in Anglesey in North Wales was a team building and cohesion weekend organised by 205 Battery a sub unit of 101 Regiment Royal Artillery.

Setting off late on Friday afternoon from the North East of England nineteen Army Reserve officers and soldiers arrived at the Nuffield Sailing and Water Sports Centre in Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwytrobwillantysliogogoch (say that with your mouthful) where on arrival they received a series of briefs about the weekend activities from the Battery Commander (BC), Major Andy Loader and the Battery Sergeant Major (BSM), Warrant Officer Class 2 Jamie Pearson.

After a good night's sleep everyone attended breakfast then broke into two groups, Group One led by the BC travelled to the West of Holyhead to conduct Sea Level Traversing in the morning and Coasteering in the afternoon. The training pushed individuals out of their comfort zone and challenged them with controlled exposure to risk, focusing their mind as well as developing both leadership and teamwork skills.

From negotiating vertical cliff faces over 30 metres high to traversing open gorges on a single rope to

swimming across open water navigating the current, swell and coastal rock formation which culminated in individuals plunging into the sea from heights in excess of 10 metres, this may not sound high, but looking down into the abyss it took a lot of courage to take that final step into the unknown.

Back at the Nuffield Centre the BSM and Group Two took part in a day of dinghy sailing in single seater toppers and catamarans, kayaking and stand up paddle boarding. All activities required skill and determination, especially in the Menai Strait which is well known for the changeable sea conditions. Under the watchful eye of the statue of Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, which lies below the Britannia Bridge that connects Anglesey to the Welsh mainland, there could be no better place to spend a weekend on the water. Saturday evening provided the opportunity for both groups to relax, unwind and exchange tales of bravado and daring doo.

Sunday saw the groups swap activities before returning for an evening meal prior to the return journey which afforded everyone the opportunity to compare how high, far and fast they had gone in contrast to their peers.



Major Andy Loader said "In a physically demanding and challenging environment all participants displayed moral and physical courage and had a fantastic time. Anglesey and the Nuffield Centre is a hidden gem which is available to all service personnel, veterans and their families and we can't wait to return".

by Capt Andy Loader RA  
101 Regt RA



SSgt Dean Moon maintaining 3 points of contact at a height of 30m during Sea Level Traversing



Catamaran Crew learning tacking manoeuvres on the Menai Strait at the Nuffield Water Sport Centre



Capt Savage leading the race back to the Nuffield Centre hotly pursued by Maj Andy Loader on a Stand Up Paddle Board



## 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Imjin - 170 (Imjin) Battery



Major David Pugh RA (BC) and WO2 Kieren Williams (BSM) attended a wreath laying ceremony at the Korean War Memorial

*The only surviving British Army unit to still wear a US Presidential Unit Citation, 'for extraordinary heroism in military operations against an armed enemy', awarded from the Battle of the Imjin River, 170 (Imjin) Battery Royal Artillery of 12 Regt RA, have been attending numerous commemorative events alongside their surviving veterans and antecedent Rifles counterparts over the past few months.*

The Imjin River Battle in 1951 was one of the most fierce battles of the Korean War, culminating in the valiant last stand of 1st Battalion The Gloucestershire Regiment alongside their supporting mortars, C Troop 170 Independent Mortar Battery. A and B Troops conducted fighting withdrawals under withering enemy fire while attached to the Northumberland Fusiliers and Royal Ulster Rifles (RUR). 1GLOS and C Troop could not withdraw. After days of fighting, and with ammunition depleted their position was finally overrun by what has since been described as a "swarm" of Chinese infantry. The unit was awarded the Presidential Citation by President Truman in recognition of their sacrifice. Seventy years on, 170 Bty has attended a series of events to commemorate the heroic actions of their forebearers, amongst emphatic South Korean support.

Lectures on the Imjin River Battle, were eagerly attended by both Bdr Cockerill (A Troop – the new Light Mobile Launcher (LML) Fire Group) and LBdr Leigh-Pearson (C Troop – the Divisional Air Defence Cell). The audience were taken through the background of the battle, the battle itself and on to the significance of the battle to the Korean War. These two 170 Bty representatives met Tommy Clough, a veteran of C Troop who was captured by the Chinese at the Battle. To meet an individual who was present when your Battery won its battle honour is honour in itself!

The 27th July was the 68th anniversary of the Korean Armistice Agreement signing. Major David Pugh RA (BC) and WO2 Kieren Williams (BSM) attended a wreath laying ceremony at the Korean War Memorial outside MoD Main Building in Whitehall. His Excellency The Ambassador to the Republic of Korea (RoK) Mr Kim Gunn and the Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP were among the distinguished guests. After a moving ceremony, photos were taken before retiring with attending Veterans to take lunch. This lunch was hosted by RoK embassy staff and the military attaché at 'The In and Out Club' in St James's Square. All guests enjoyed a hearty lunch



with Korean entertainment, including national dance displays and karaoke.

Next came the Gloucester Goes Retro Festival in late August; a festival celebrating cars, fashion and music. Outside the Soldiers of Gloucester Museum (SoG), an Imjin Village was created with South Korean food, music and dancers. A Detachment from A Troop 170 Bty under Bdr Wright deployed with their LML to the Imjin Village and were pleased when crowds fielded them questions about the impressive setup. Supporting their South Korean counterparts, as before, the Detachment engaged with the crowd and were also lucky enough to sample some of the exquisite eastern delicacies! In attendance once again was Tommy Clough who was thrilled to see his Battery represented at the event.

Most recently, the Battery HQ deployed to Gloucester for the Imjin 70 parade, commemorating 70 years since the battle. Seated in Gloucester Cathedral, packed with South Korean representatives, Veterans, prestigious guests and members of The Rifles, a heartfelt service was held with wreaths laid by the veterans and a keynote speech delivered by Peter Snow CBE. After the service, the Battery HQ marched, leading veterans, local ARRC representatives and cadets through the streets of Gloucester to the SoG museum to applause from the crowd on arrival. A quick tour of the museum and some light refreshment followed what was an emotional and moving parade.

Long known as Britain's "Forgotten War", The Korean War was fought in a faraway land and with questionable support from the people back home. For the South Koreans however, they owe their very way of life to those who fought and died there. The display of gratitude from all South Koreans in attendance has been the most moving part of these commemorative events. This can be seen in their enthusiastic and continuous support. A defensive action, the Imjin River Battle is seen as a triumph over the onslaught of the enemy, successfully taking the speed out of the enemy's advance through sheer courage and sacrifice. Ultimately this action helped ensure the survival of a free and prosperous South Korea. Thanks to commemorative events such as these, and in spite of its informal name, the Korean War will always be remembered by the South Korean people, the people of Gloucester and 170 (Imjin) Battery Royal Artillery.

by 2Lt Sam Bates RA  
12 Regt RA



Korean Veteran Tommy Clough with 170 (Imjin) Bty



Gloucester "Imjin 70" Parade



The Korean War Memorial outside MOD Building, Whitehall



## 12 Regt RA deploy a Battlegroup to Northumberland on Exercise CENTAURS CHARGE



12 Regt RA Battlegroup

In September 2021, 7th Air Defence Group deployed a Short-Range Air Defence (SHORAD) Battlegroup (BG) under command of Lt Col David Butt RA, consisting of 12 Regt RA and 49 Bty from 16 Regt RA.

Ex CENTAURS CHARGE 2021 (ExCC21) began with a twelve-hour road move from Thorney Island, deploying the 12RA BG in a 3 (UK) Division warfighting context, to Spadeadam and Otterburn to face an air and ground Opposing Force (OPFOR). The aim of ExCC21 was to develop new employment TTP's, optimising SHORAD detachments (Dets) and their ability to observe the battlefield. The endstate for this development is for 12RA BG to supplement the Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Reconnaissance (ISTAR) matrix within any supported formation, while simultaneously executing our primary function as SHORAD. Dets adopted the new mantra to "patrol like recce, deploy like Operations (OPs)", facilitating protection of SHORAD assets and ensuring their sensor capability is employed more broadly to FIND, IDENTIFY and UNDERSTAND both air and ground targets.

The enemy aviation (Avn) consisted of pairs of WILDCAT, APACHE, MERLIN, CHINOOK and PUMA, all deployed as part of the overarching Joint (Air Warfare Commander and Joint Helicopter Command) Ex COBRA WARRIOR (ExCW). ExCW used 12RA BG to validate their Qualified Warfare Instructors (QWIs) in a contested, degraded, operationally limited environment.

Additional integration came in the form of DSTL input, flying a light aircraft to mimic Unmanned Aerial Systems profiles and conduct ISTAR against

the SHORAD Fire Groups; this provided an invaluable check-zero for the development of our cUAS TTPs. We were also lucky enough to have 661 Sqn, 1AAC flying bespoke missions to test and validate these trials, as well as demonstrating their mission planning system (MPS) processes to deliver detailed feedback on how our own Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) Standard Operating Instructions and Procedures (SOI/Ps) could be improved.

The Dets used laser-emitting canister to simulate engagements and trigger the laser warning receivers on the Avn, enabling them to witness the Avn's reaction. Dets deployed in pairs, as sections, to maximise their capability and practice operating independently; these sections were tasked with conducting Air Defence (AD) ambushes to defeat Avn and UAS platforms, whilst concurrently defending against a persistent ground threat.

The exercise was the culmination of 12 months of experimentation for 12AA Bty, who are now proficient in constructing OPs to observe and engage air and ground targets with the new Lightweight Multiple role Missile (LMM). Efforts to enhance equipment for the Dets are underway, with thermal sights to enable 24hr ISTAR and cross-cuing of targets top of the list. Fighting against Avn flying 10-20m off the ground showed that engaging tracks or wheels instead of rotor blades would be very achievable, especially as LMM is able to engage targets out to >6km with a shaped charge and blast/frag warhead.

by Maj D K Pugh RA, 170 (Imjin) Bty &  
Lt M J Cohu RA, 12 (Minden) Air Assault Battery  
12 Regt RA



### A.T.S. Gunners.

By "X.Y.Z."

**I**n a training camp overlooking a sleepy market town on the Welsh Borders, a piece of history that has no precedent in the British Army is being made. Over 400 girls of the A.T.S. are being taught to take their places alongside the men on anti-aircraft gun sites.

One morning, not long ago, we said good-bye to the first trained contingent as they marched smartly out of the camp gates with steel helmets, gas capes rolled and respirators at the alert. In front and behind them marched the gunners whose dangers and trials they were going to share in the Battle of Britain. They were the vanguard of a big army that will soon follow.

There has already been much comment on this "mixture" in batteries. "Was not the experiment too drastic?" "Was it going to be one of those things that are all right in theory but all wrong in practice?" "Were Wellington, Marlborough and other great figures of the past, sleeping uneasily in their graves?" We have not found any difficulty except perhaps convincing the sceptical and unbelieving that they are wrong. The girls have come from all walks of life. A number recently left some of the great English colleges; some have worked in shops, mills and factories; some have had no need to work for their living.

"Surely this is enough to start your experiment on the wrong foot" wail the cynical. Not a bit of it. These girls wear the same uniform and are fighting for the same cause. War is a great leveller.

The girls' working day during training is exactly the same as that of the men. A typical day in the life of Private Alice Smith is:—6 a.m., reveille; 7.15, breakfast; 8.25, first parade; 8.30—9.15, marching drill on the square; 9.25—10.10, lectures for height finders, predictor numbers, spotters and telephonists; 10.40—11.25, aircraft identification lecture; 11.35—12.20, physical training; 12.30—1.30, lunch; 1.45—3.25, instrument drill; 3.25—4.20, talks by Section Commanders; 4.30—5.10, respirator and gas cape drill.

Permanent Staff Instructors, never over indulgent in praise, say that these girls are very quick on the uptake and soon learn the drill and inner mechanism of their instruments. Their memories are retentive and quickly absorb details of the various planes they will have to identify on a site. The predictor was made for the delicate touch and a woman's hand is ideally suited for balancing the rates and setting heights and fuzes. This will lead to accurate shooting. When they have overcome an initial shyness, their marching and drill is smart and correct. They usually work in steel helmets, respirators at the alert and light tan overalls. A new type of battle dress with light-weight slacks and blouse is on the way.

Don't think these girls like kid-glove methods of instruction. They prefer hustling to the bark and bite of a Sergeant whom they know at heart is a human and kindly soul.

It is not our policy to segregate. The girls feed with the gunner and share the same canteens. Every week there are dances and visits to the Garrison Theatre and Cinema. The girls play their own hockey and netball, but I have seen them kicking a football and playing cricket with the men. Just now there is a great need for Sports Officers—a full time job in the A.T.S. But courses are being run and many former games mistresses will soon be filling vacancies in establishments.

I have conversed with numbers of these girls in the short intervals betwixt lectures and drills on the square. What is their attitude towards sending a Hun bomber crashing to earth from a height of 20,000 ft.? Rather like that of a farmer who shoots down a carrion over his wheatfields. Many from London and the Northern and Midland cities have sat in shelters and listened with impotent fury while their homes and civic monuments were being pulverised. "Some one has got to stop it, sir. The Hun is striking at women. Why should not we strike back?"

What motives inspired some of these girls to leave the security of well-paid jobs for the rigours of the square and the gun site? "The newspapers tell us that we are fighting for democracy; some of us are not quite sure what they mean by that, sir. But we all know that we are fighting for our existence and all that is near and dear to us."

A word for the A.T.S. Officers.—It is not their lot to receive press interviews and laurels; for their's is a humdrum and never-ending task of administration and welfare. But they will be on the sites sharing the danger and hardships of their girls. One of these Officers, with a row of ribbons (including the 1914-15 medal), will shortly go into the front line again.

The nights are getting darker and longer. More and more girls are marching out of the Camp gates towards the gun sites. Soon we will again hear the throb of Hun engines accompanied by the rumbling of guns and flashes in the sky. We will remember that much of the fire is being aimed and directed by these young women of Britain. They have brought something unique in distinction to the history of the Royal Regiment, and when the job is done, we will not lightly forget them.

★ ★ ★

"Shall we, who are thus favoured and endowed; shall we, who are thus abundantly supplied with iron and steel, powder and lead; shall we who have a fleet superior to the maritime force of all the world; shall we yield up this dear and happy land, together with all the liberties and honours, to preserve which our fathers so often dyed the land and sea with their blood? We have the strength and the will to repel the hostility, to chastise the insolence of the foe. Mighty indeed must be our efforts, but mighty also is the need."

—William Cobbett.

★ ★ ★ ★

"Pleasure comes through toil and not by self-indulgence."

—Ruskin.



## Unconventional Warfighting Exercise



LBdr Welch and Gnr Henderson carrying out Battlefield Casualty Drills during a training serial

Over the summer months, P Battery (The Dragon Troop) RA deployed to the US on Unconventional Warfighting Exercise (UWEx) in support of 4 Rifles as they transition from Land Special Operations (LSO) to the newly formed Ranger Battalions; this saw us deployed overseas for almost 60 days. Some of us were lucky enough to be involved in this exercise for a second time, but for many it was a unique opportunity. P Battery have recently been through a lot of organisational and administrative changes, with a new Battery Commander and Battery Sergeant Major.

White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) has very different weather to the UK, with extremely high temperatures, humidity and operating at over 4,000ft (higher than Ben Nevis) a period of acclimatisation was necessary. We spent this time working alongside our new team members, practicing basic infantry and soldiering skills, and enjoying the sunshine when we could. We shared our camp with the 82nd Airborne and 5th Special Operations from the US Army, we used this unique opportunity to socialise, exchange keepsakes, and play sport together. After we got, slightly, acclimatised to the temperatures, we were thrown into serials and scenarios, playing the enemy or civilian population for 4 Rifles in Phase One of the exercise. This Phase was quite hectic, with us travelling long distances across the desert at different times of the day and night and many hours at a time. However, we got the first glimpse of how the 4 Rifles Teams worked together, which was a great learning opportunity and an insight into what was to come.

Then came the most anticipated phase of the exercise, where the Battery began playing the Partner Force, simulating an indigenous Army. As a part of the integration, for 10 days we lived and worked alongside each other in the field. We spent the days conducting a multitude of lessons; Battlefield Casualty Drills (BCD), Close Quarter Battle (CQB) and Site Sensitive Exploitation (SSE) to name a few. We were introduced and tested on multiple new (to us) weapon systems, collectively, our favourite was firing the 50-calibre, Heavy Machine Gun. Having learnt a lot of new and useful things we were keen to put our newly acquired knowledge into practise. After the second phase was cut short by the weather, we had to quickly regroup and get ready for the final part of the exercise, which saw us on joint operations with 4 Rifles and even some of the American Units. We had to conduct multiple Team and Company level attacks, with different tasks and objectives. This was not easy; we had to overcome many obstacles during planning and while on the ground. To aid us we were able to utilise some of the American assets such as Reaper and Black Hawks.

After finishing the official parts of the exercise and tending to the magnitude of post exercise admin, we were rewarded with a lovely BBQ and finally had time to unwind and relax. We spent our R&R sightseeing in the likes of Phoenix, Albuquerque and El Paso, immersing in the very different culture, and loving the food!

by Gnr Godek  
P (The Dragon) Bty RA  
5 Regt RA



## Exercise ARIES STORM



Gun Group Movement Orders

104th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Welsh Borderers) deployed on Exercise ARIES STORM with the 1st Artillery Brigade as part of our Annual Deployment Exercise. It was a brilliant opportunity to integrate Regular and Reserve soldiers at scale and included capabilities from across the Brigade in a rich scenario against a free-thinking enemy within a synthetic Tactical Effects Simulation (TES) wrap. For many of us it was the largest exercise that we have taken part in.

The Regiment, consisting of five guns, Command Post and a G4 team, mustered at our Army Reserve Centres in the South West, West Midlands and Wales and then moved to and conducted Detachments front in our Regimental Home in Newport, South Wales. We then deployed to join the rest of the Brigade on Salisbury Plain Training Area.

The first few days of the exercise involved training and preparation before the main phase started. The weather was great, and this time allowed us to do Gun Detachment training and conduct lessons to make sure that we could perform to a high standard in front of our Regular colleagues. We were issued and fitted TES equipment, which was a first for most of us. It was also an opportunity to share some much-needed brews, chats and catch-up with each other in person.

The Regiment was then grouped under 4th Regiment Royal Artillery's Fire Direction Cell to form a Light Gun Group of two Batteries. The following couple of days

was spent on integration training and Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWTS) with 4th Regiment to make sure that we were all working together effectively. We then received Orders before starting the main phase of the Exercise.

The pace of the next phase was increasingly demanding and saw us conduct tactical deployments in Artillery Manoeuvre Areas. This was another first and was a step-change from the straight-line gun positions that we had become used to during conversion from Mini-Unmanned Air Systems. The constant movement between gun positions in order to enhance our lethality and survivability was relentless. It was exciting and rewarding and saw us achieve increasingly fast into and out of action times. The Light Gun is an ideal system for the Army Reserve. It demands tight team-work and basic soldier skills that is the perfect antidote to civilian employment.

Exercise ARIES STORM was a superb opportunity for 104th Regiment, and one that we fully grasped. The scale, pace and complexity of the exercise drove us to new levels of performance and marked a fitting culmination of our conversion period. It was great to be part of a large-scale Exercise and deploy with our Regular colleagues. We are looking forward to Ex ARIES STORM 23!

by Sgt J Meredith  
104 Regt RA



## STA Patrols on the Unconventional Warfare Exercise (UWEX) 2021



4/73 Battery Troop deployed on UWEX 21

At the heart of the Integrated Review was the creation of the Army Special Operations Brigade (ASOB) and a new breed of soldier, the Ranger. Having spent the last few years increasing our support to the Specialised Infantry Group, which has now reformed to create ASOB, STA Patrols once again deployed alongside a 4 RIFLES Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) to the United States in order to test our ability to achieve success in the 'grey zone' as a guest of the US 5th Special Forces Group.

As success is bred in preparation, STA Patrols integrated prior to deployment with SOTG A-Coy conducting joint training with a focus on basic offensive actions, with surveillance and reconnaissance (SR) support and both team and task group planning procedures. The wet and windy plains of Salisbury were quickly swapped for a warmer climate as we deployed to White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico in early July. As we were not the only 1st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Brigade asset deploying, UWEX also served as an opportunity for STA Patrols to continue the organic integration of wider assets; including Electronic Warfare (EW) and Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), to increase survivability and depth of collection for forward deployed patrols.

UWEX was an exercise of multiple phases, the first of which focused on individual SOTG Team actions without a partnered force. Having deployed on 2 previous UWEXs, STA Patrols knew they would have their work



NOMAD 21 conducting night infil using the MRZR tactical vehicle

cut out throughout this phase; with 2 patrols supporting 5 teams on 5 x 36-hour lanes, turnaround timings were tight and tasks were in abundance. During this phase STA Patrols conducted a wide range of taskings; static covert surveillance (SCS), trigger observation posts (OPs), setting conditions for offensive action, ambush site reconnaissance and subsequent guide ins to name a few. Due to the high level of training each STA Patrol soldier conducts, it enabled us to seamlessly integrate into SOTG

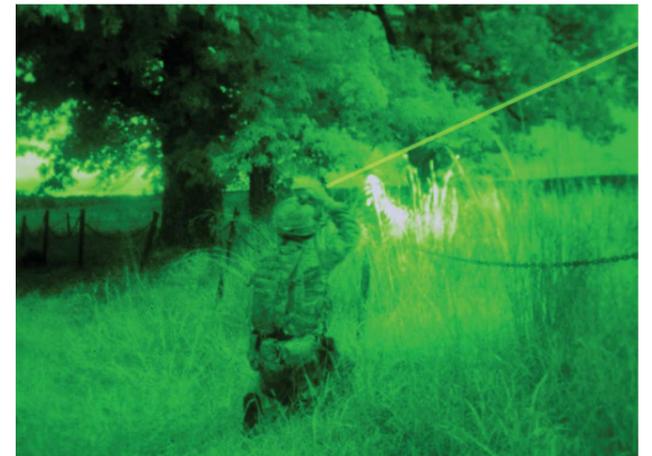


Teams bolstering manpower for high threat taskings and demonstrating the core dismounted close combat competence each of our soldiers holds.

As one phase slipped away the following came and went with the main effort now switching to the Rangers developing and deploying alongside a Partner Force. Whilst this added significant complexity for the SOTG Teams, STA Patrols continued to deploy independently and enabled the FIND, UNDERSTAND and DEVELOP of subsequent objectives. Our ability to coordinate the full spectrum of kinetic effects is what sets us apart from other reconnaissance organisations and these subsequent phases saw STA Patrol Joint Tactical Attack Controller (JTAC) embedded into SOTG Teams as air and aviation became readily available for offensive actions. This proved to be a significant force multiplier, enabling commanders to STRIKE targets from safety and nullify threats before committing troops to the target.

In summary, UWEX 21 was a demanding and challenging exercise that tested every member of 4/73 (Sphinx) Special Observation Post Battery in a multitude of ways; STA Patrols deployed fourteen Special Observers. In support of 4 RIFLES SOTG-A Coy on UWEX 21, our people provided STA Patrols in support of Team and Task Group Operations, JTAC embeds deployed as integral members of SOTG Teams to coordinate air and aviation on objectives, we deployed the headquarters element consisting of the Officer Commanding (OC) the Joint Effects Cell, OC STA Patrols, OC Tactical Air Control Party and OC Fires, and an observer mentor focused on the training development of our personnel.

by Capt Dan Anderson  
4/73 Bty



STA Patrol JTAC signalling US Close Air Support



NOMAD 11 conducting an aviation infil



STA Patrol Commander conducting offensive action planning using his ATAK

▶

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## RACPD running the distance for Royal British Legion



The Northern team walked along parts of Hadrian's Wall

On Wednesday 8th September RACPD collectively ran, walked and cycled a distance of 598 km or 372 miles to raise vital funds for the Royal British Legion during the charity's 100th year anniversary for their RBL100 Appeal.

Events included having a stand in Salisbury City Centre with RBL merchandise for sale and the RACPD main office team circumnavigating a 5 km route, taking in the beautiful Harnham Water Meadows in groups with 20 minute time intervals. A total of 17 laps were completed, a mixture of running, walking and cycling with 26 participants and 3 or 4 individuals per lap.

The Northern team: Jim Harker, Susan Hudson, Mark Keane and Si Irwin walked 77 kms along the picturesque Hadrian's Wall in glorious sunshine with Mark Slaiter from Plymouth cycling 160 kms in torrential rain and winds! Alison Hinds walked to the summit of Ben Nevis, a staggering 27 kms with the most amazing views.

A fabulous team effort raising more than £1628.00 for this fabulous charity, who work tirelessly to ensure Armed Forces veterans get the support they deserve.



Alison Hinds walked to the summit of Ben Nevis



**GENDER**  
Inclusivity

**FAMILY**  
Inclusivity

# The Gunner Inclusivity Group

**ETHNIC**  
Inclusivity

**FOREIGN &  
COMMON-  
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Inclusivity

'Improving Inclusivity  
Across the Royal  
Regiment'

**LGBTQ+**  
Inclusivity

**RELIGIOUS**  
Inclusivity

The second dial in  
(Gender Inclusivity)  
will take place @15.00-16.30 on

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**RESERVE**  
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Inclusivity

For further information follow  
'Royal Artillery RHQ'  
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## RAF Women turn up the heat in Bournemouth



"How it started - the RAF Women's side before the first game"

On the hottest day of the year so far the Royal Artillery Women's football team battled it out in Bournemouth to become the 2021 Bournemouth 6's champions. The team arrived in Bournemouth on the Friday night and even after a long hiatus from football due to COVID you could immediately feel the excitement to be back together as a squad and eagerness to play football again. Friday night and Saturday we spent team building with the players and coaching staff enjoying games and relaxing on the beautiful Bournemouth beach.

Sunday was game day and we were ready to get playing and win some silverware. The tournament had 10 teams from across the South of England including London and the standard of football was very high with a lot of teams using the tournament as their first pre-season run out. The conditions were tough due to the heat but our fitness, determination and desire to win gave us a real edge on many of the teams. With it being a 6-a-side competition, it allowed us to play with real flair and creativity



"How it finished - RAF Women crowned 2021 Champions"

which resulted in some outstanding individual and team goals. LBdr Birtwistle (19 RA) was our top scorer with 6 closely followed by Gnr Roberts (5 RA) with 4 but almost everyone got themselves on the score sheet. Sgt Burnfield (19 RA) and Bdr Clarke (26 RA) were also exceptional in goal, putting their bodies on the line numerous times resulting in only two goals conceded in 7 games of football.



Having only recently completed Ph2 training this was my first time with the squad. I was immediately made to feel part of the team and was amazed by the high-quality of football, team cohesion and spirit. I was extremely proud to represent The Royal Artillery with the girls team and I look forward to seeing what the next session holds for us.

Group stage scores; 8-0, 1-1, 1-1, 2-0, 2-1  
 Semi final: 1-0  
 Final: 2-0  
 Top Goal scorer: LBdr Birtwistle  
 (19 Regt RA)

by Gnr Burberymayes  
 9 (Plassey) Bty  
 12 Regt RA



RAF Women in action



"Gnr Roberts (5 RA) and Bdr Copley (14 RA) keeping a touch Brixton side at bay"



## Army Inter Corps Cross Country Relay Championships



Senior Male Team - WO2 (BSM) Rick Bugg, SSgt William Ewens, Sgt Tom Kaye and Sgt Jack Geldi

The annual Army Inter Corps Cross Country Relay Championships were held on Wed 15 Sep 21 at Tweseldown Racecourse, near Aldershot. Due to COVID19 this is the first time in over a year that the Army Corps teams have managed to come together to compete competitively in hope to be crowned Army champions.

Each team of 4 runners had to negotiate a 3-mile course as part of a relay.

The competition for both the male and female categories was fierce with the best runners from each Corps well represented. The entire team could sense this would be a hard-fought battle from the start. The senior male and the U23 teams both started at the same time, with the female team having already raced earlier in the morning.

Sgt Kaye 7 Para RHA led the male senior team out from the front and came back round in 5th place with an impressive time of 15.49.

He handed the baton over to Sgt Geldi of 5 RA for his debut race in a Gunner vest, and he did not disappoint, managing to maintain the 5th place and coming home in a time of 16.46. WO2 (BSM) Bugg of 5 RA was on the 3rd leg and he drove hard to try and bridge the gap from the leader, he managed to steal a place and finish in 4th with a time of 15:51. With the RAPTC, Infantry and REME teams ahead, it was then for SSgt Ewens of 26 RA, to try and close the gap. Within the first half mile progress was made, and just before the end of the first loop SSgt Ewens moved the team into 2nd place, overtaking the RAPTC and the Infantry. The team all fought hard and finished in 2nd place and SSgt Ewens closing a lap time of 15:27, against a competitive field.

The RA secretary, WO2 (SMIG) Byrne fielded a U23 & female team of Phase 2 soldiers from 14 RA. Special mention must be made to Bdr



Statham, their Troop Staff, who was drafted in on the day, with 20 mins to go before the event began. Without her we wouldn't have been able to field a complete team, so well done.

This was a debut race for most of the female team, with the only experienced runner being Capt Harriet James 1 RHA, who led the team and did a fantastic job of sharing her experience with the junior athletes, who all ran extremely well, and finished in 10th place.

The male under 23 team, consisted of four, phase 2 soldiers for 14 RA. They experienced a tough start to the race as they set off alongside the senior male teams. This did not seem to faze these young athletes, and they gave it their all, showing how proud they were to represent the Royal Artillery. A great result from the team who finished in 3rd place.

Hopefully these young athletes will keep motivated and show what they can do on the next outing for the Gunners. Watch this space for more updates.

This year the Gunners cross country teams made real progress in the Inter Corps Relay Championships and will be hoping to continue to develop into 2022. There are plans to run a centralised RA training camp in late 2021 building into a season of racing in 2022. We welcome new members to the team, so if you or any of your soldiers are interested in racing for the Royal Artillery Cross Country Team, please encourage them to speak to WO2 Sean Byrne, RSA.

by SSgt Ewens  
26 Regt RA



Female Senior Team - Capt Harriet James, Gnr Mackenzie Hudspeth, Gnr Niamh Brown and Bdr Choloe Statham



Male under 23 Team - Gnr James Melvin, Gnr Mark Kimmins, Gnr Aaron Mead-Lamont and Gnr Finley Squire



## Royal Artillery Sports Parachuting Association (RASPA)

In 2020 the Royal Artillery Sports Parachuting Association (RASPA) was reformed with the aim of re-establishing Sports Parachuting within the Gunners and competing in the Armed Forces Parachute Championships. 2020 didn't quite go as planned however, and so the ambition was put on hold for a year.

2021 was a new opportunity and although we are not quite back to the normal we once had, parachuting was back to being green-lit by the Army Sport Control board and so into training and preparation for the Championships. The first challenge faced was finding out who is still in the Gunners and still a skydiver, without a team having been entered into the competition in 5 years there was ample opportunity for former members of the sport to have moved on. Fortunately, it's a small sport and also Social Media enables reasonable reach. With Instagram, Facebook and emails of people that they knew used to jump the RASPA Committee set to tracking down a team with the aim of getting some practice in prior to the Championships.

Six responses were received which turned out to be the ideal number, with a mixture of rank, regiment, regular/reserve, and experience in skydiving it presented the perfect mix for a formation skydiving team to be entered into the Championships with an option to rotate members through for experience. Formation skydiving seems a simple discipline with four members of a team and camera person exiting the aircraft and seeking to form a set of three formations in order as many times as possible within 35 seconds. Using the wind tunnel at iFly Basingstoke gave the team the opportunity to simulate the freefall phase of the skydive starting with one to one before moving up to the full team four in the tunnel practicing the formations that would be done in the sky.

After two intensive sessions in the wind tunnel the team felt prepared for the freefall element of the championships, it was just the dreaded exit from the plane that needed to be covered.

Finally, the Championships started on 19 Jul. Not only was this freedom day for the country but it was the start of a week of weather that was perfect for skydiving, no wind, no clouds, just blue skies as far as the eye could see and the largest Championships in at least 7 years with over 147 competitors across the differing disciplines. Given the experience in the team, it was entered into the Rookie Formation category which had nine teams in total who would compete to have the highest cumulative score after six rounds. The first day saw the first two rounds completed and the Army Air Corps (AAC) leading the category with the Gunner team just one point behind. The coming days would see the two teams leading the category with always the narrowest of margins between them.

On Thursday the results were announced and despite the wafer-thin gap that had been in place between us and the AAC in the first two days, the final two rounds had seen the Gunners create a convincing lead finishing 18 points to 14. At the awards ceremony there was a further surprise with the most junior member of the team, Gnr Johny from 5 RA, who had been skydiving for less than a year taking Silver in his accuracy category.

The team welcomes all skydivers (new and old) and we will be conducting our next training day in the wind tunnel in December. If you wish to join or to find out more about the team we can be found on Facebook @RASkydiving or Instagram @royalartilleryparachuting.

by Sgt Tungate  
29 Cdo Regt RA



## Polo - The Royal Artillery Cup



Photo credits: Peter Meade Photography and Amanda Jane Smith Photography

"Let others play at other things; the king of games is still the game of kings"

The May bank holiday saw Tedworth Park Polo Club playing host to the Royal Artillery Cup – the first military polo tournament post COVID 19, and welcome relief to a sport that has had significant overheads with little activity or income due to the last year's restrictions. The club has had to do some pretty drastic tightening of the figurative saddle-girth in the last year in order to keep its ponies fit and healthy, but thanks to their resourcefulness and commitment they pulled through.

In contrast to a somewhat lean previous season in 2020, the RA Cup – only given the go-ahead at the last safe moment – boasted a record-breaking bumper crop of teams, with 14 split across four divisions. The four Gunner teams (RA, RHA, HAC and RSA) were comprised of the usual motley assortment of characters from across the Royal Regiment – regular and reserve, officers and soldiers... and a

passing Australian Lt Col. The RSA team – styling themselves 'The Canterng Colonels', although this name failed to gain popular traction – was composed of unrepentant pony-botherers with extensive past form across various equestrian disciplines (if, indeed, discipline is an appropriate term to describe their feral mounted antics). Conversely, the RA and RHA teams were for the most part made up of a more junior crowd, with a few confusing exceptions such as LBdr Steve Collins of 106 RA, and a newly sworn-in King's Troop Gunner who looks suspiciously like a freelance polo coach known to live in the area.

The Canterng Colonels under Colonel Tom Ridgeway – thanks in no small part to the dexterity and base cunning honed by long careers elbowing incautious junior officers out of their favourite armchairs by the fire – 'galloped' to victory in Division IV. They were joined on the podium by the



RHA team under Maj Sam Hewitt backed up by the alarmingly powerful arm of LBdr Steve Collins (a former world heavyweight boxing champion - look him up on Google - he is happily a reformed character these days and has foresworn the grubby tedium of dismounted sports) as the clear winners of Division III. In Division I, the HAC were drawn against the RA, but after a fast paced match, with some top flight polo, the RA triumphed. However, St Barbara's elect were tragically denied a clean sweep of the tournament thanks to some pretty blistering play from the King's Royal Hussars, who beat the RA team in the final - scoring in the last few seconds - by a mere half-goal.

The day was an outstanding success. Besides providing an entertaining spectacle for an enthusiastic crowd of a thousand rigidly-spaced spectators and passers-by starved of outdoor diversions due to the Great Pestilence, it was also the debut of teams from both the Royal Signals and Royal Engineers. And it was all nicely rounded off with the announcement by the Director of Army Polo that Capt Darryn Wilson and Capt Scarlett Glover had been selected to play for the Army team in the summer. In addition,

the Director also asked the RA Squad to provide all four Army players for a Combined Services match in Aug 21 - a rare, if not unique, privilege. That team will consist of Maj Luke Wadman, Capt Jess Ward (C), Lt Will Young and LBdr Steve Collins.

The tournament was followed up in June with an introductory session at Tedworth Park Polo for those who fancied trying their hand at the game of kings, which saw 7 junior soldiers and junior officers (and a stray Adjutant from the Reserves) cantering about the grounds of Tedworth Park, whacking balls around the place with cheerful abandon. If this sounds like it might be the kind of thing that flicks your proverbial switches, follow the team on Instagram at @gunner\_polo, or contact the RA Polo Club secretary Maj Luke Wadman at Luke.Wadman162@mod.gov.uk or Capt Darryn Wilson at Darryn.Wilson778@mod.gov.uk. The next session will be held as soon as we have sufficient volunteers, and when Tedworth Park Polo can fit us in their tight schedule. It costs £35 for an hour and a half, and all equipment is provided. It's also cracking good fun.

by Capt Alex Lewis RA  
IG Course Student  
Royal School of Artillery





Members from across the Scottish Region came together recently for the first time since the start of the COVID pandemic to undertake a guided tour of military memorials in Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens. This informative tour was conducted by Craig Blaney, chairman of the Edinburgh Branch RAA and culminated with food and drinks in the Scots Guards Club. The occasion presented the opportunity to return to some kind of normality and although government guidelines still apply particularly inside the club this in no way deterred the members from enjoying getting together once again.

One of the memorials visited was of particular interest as it was not only gunner related it also is a symbol of hope, trust and the overcoming challenges to survive in life. The memorial in question was that of Wojtek the soldier bear who was an inspiration during and after WW2. His story is as follows;

### WOJTEK THE SOLDIER BEAR

In the spring of 1942 following the release of Polish prisoners and deportees in the labour camps in Siberia, a new Polish Army was formed in the Middle East under the command of the British – Polish 2 Corp. The Polish soldiers came across a little bear, who had been orphaned following the death of his mother by hunters, and he was traded to the soldiers by a shepherd boy who kept the bear in a sack.

The bear would be adopted by 22nd Transport Company Artillery Division and given the name Wojtek.

As the Polish Army prepared to enter the war zone in Italy during 1943, the problem confronting the Polish soldiers was the question of Wojtek's status. Animals were not permitted to accompany the army during the fighting. By giving the bear his own pay book, rank and serial number there would be no question that he was on the list of soldiers.

During the Battle of Monte Cassino, Wojtek was on a gun position, where he was seen moving boxes of ammunition close to the truck he was chained to. Always inquisitive and willing to copy what the soldiers were doing; he began picking up the boxes and moving towards the guns.

The sounds of gunfire did not concern him, and he displayed courage in his willingness to participate in the action.

After the battle, the official badge of the 22nd Transport Company became a likeness of Wojtek

holding a shell. This symbol appeared on vehicles, pennants and on the uniforms of the soldiers.

The war ended in May 1945 and the Polish soldiers were eventually sent across Europe to Berwick Upon Tweed in England where they stayed at Winfield Camp.

As the soldiers went through a process of demobilization, they would say goodbye to Wojtek, many knowing that they would never see him again since their journeys would take them to distant parts of the globe.

Wojtek found a home at Edinburgh Zoo where he became a popular attraction with many visitors including ex-Polish servicemen who would talk to him in their language.

His death in 1963 was met with sadness from those who knew him, and it was reported in newspapers and radio stations.

His exploits and adventures have not been forgotten with numerous written accounts, memorials, and statues. There is also statues of him in Duns and two further statues in Poland.

In a time when Polish soldiers had lost their country to the Nazis and later to the Communists, Wojtek became a symbol which the soldiers were proud of, themselves knowing that they would not soon return to a free homeland.

He became part of the history of the Polish Armed forces in the Second World War and his legacy will endure.

Regarding 22nd Transport Company, on March 4, 2014, the Company traditions were taken over and honoured by the Logistics Battalion of the 5th Lubuskie Artillery Regiment in Sulechów.



# Forces Pension Society Press Release

## Making sure the McCloud pension decision works for you.

**Now that the outcome of the McCloud consultation has been reached, in line with the recommendations of the Forces Pension Society and others, we need to ensure that it is implemented in the best possible way for all those affected by it.**

You will recall that the chosen remedy for the age discrimination issue is “Deferred Choice Underpin”, meaning that when benefits become payable, all those impacted (all personnel in service **both** on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 **and** on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, including service leavers) will be able to choose between the benefits of their legacy scheme (AFPS 75 or 05) or the reformed scheme (AFPS 15) for the period of their service between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

We have made a presentation to the MoD setting out three key criteria against which we will judge the success of the implementation of the remedy. And I want to share those criteria with you as follows:

- (1) everyone affected will be given sufficient time and information to make a fully informed decision.
- (2) For serving personnel, timely and appropriate enhancements to the AFPS calculator will be made to help individuals forecast their likely benefits.
- (3) Those with complicating factors, including Pension Sharing Orders, Medical Discharge, Abatement, Death in Service or in Retirement, AVCs/Added Pension and Pension Taxation (Annual Allowance, Lifetime Allowance), should have access to further information and guidance from the Pension Administrator, Veterans' UK.

This initiative is in line with the Society's practice of holding governments to account on behalf of our Members and the wider Armed Forces Community.

**As always, the Society will be on hand to guide Members through the decision-making process when the time comes. In the meantime if you would like to join the Society or find out more about our work, please visit:**

[www.forcespensionsociety.org](http://www.forcespensionsociety.org)

**Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO, Forces Pension Society**



**Royal Artillery Charities - #oneregiment, #onefamily**

Thank you to all of you – serving, veterans and families – who continue to raise funds for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund and the Royal Artillery Association, either through the Service pay Giving Scheme or by organising or participating in sponsored events. Your efforts and generosity enable us to continue to provide valuable support to those members of the Gunner family in need.

In this edition, we have provided an update on how the Royal Artillery Institution, RACF and RAA budgets have performed so far this year.

Overall, both income and expenditure across all three charities have again been impacted by Covid 19. However, income has remained on or above budget due to a good return on investments and steady SGS income. In terms of expenditure, we have not seen the anticipated rise in applications for individual support, although we await the impact of the closure of the furlough scheme in the last quarter of the year. We have maintained planned levels of financial support to the serving Regiment, although the restrictions on activity have meant that applications for support for Battery level events and sporting activity have been significantly reduced. Across the board we anticipate an excess of income over expenditure.



**Regimental Artillery Institution (RAI)**

The 2021 budget anticipated an excess of expenditure over income of £108,725. As at 31 Aug there was an excess of income over expenditure of £95,159. This is primarily due to income (including investment income) remaining largely on budget while the cancellation of regimental events has significantly reduced expenditure. We anticipate that year end will see an excess of income over expenditure.



**Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (RACF)**

The 2021 budget anticipated an excess of expenditure over income of £178.4K. As at 31 August there was an excess of income over expenditure of £289.79K. Anticipated income at year end is predicted to be up against budget due to better than predicted investment income. Expenditure is predicted to be below budget due to lower activity levels and a lower number of grant applications.

**Income.** Investments have performed better than predicted. SPGS donations are on track. Donations are up. We have received a legacy of £58K at the beginning of October. Cornwall Cup donations are higher than anticipated (largely due to increased sponsored activity).

**Expenditure.**

- a) Salaries are under budget due to an overestimate in salary increases
- b) As at 31 Aug individual grant applications were down significantly and currently we predict an End Of Year spend of £475.2K vs budget of £661K. This is partly because case workers processing rates have slowed significantly.
- c) We still have Kelly Holdsworth Artillery Trust quarterly grants for Q4 (£15.7K) and Christmas grants (£32K) to pay out.

We anticipate the overall position at year end will be an excess of income over expenditure.



**Royal Artillery Association (RAA)**

The 2021 budget anticipated an excess of expenditure over income of £48K. As at 31 August there was an



excess of income of £595.5K. However, this reflects the fact that the major legacy of £691K has not yet been transferred to the investment portfolio.

**Income.** Most areas of income are where we would expect them to be, the exceptions being: investment income is up; income from RAA100 merchandise has not materialised, as the events at which it would have been sold were cancelled. We are now unlikely to realise this income; we still await approximately £90K from the Bmajor legacy.

**Expenditure.** A number of areas of expenditure are under budget as a result of cancelled activities. In particular:

- Battery Grants – reduced unit events
- RAA 100 Grants – no RAA 100 events
- RA Assembly Costs - cancelled
- RAA 100 Commemorative spend (Statue, window and NMA garden).

The following areas of expenditure are unlikely to be fully required, generating the potential in-year savings indicated:

- RAA 100 statue - £25K
- NEC costs - £6.5K
- T&S Costs - £5K
- RA Assembly - £7K
- General grants - £9K
- Grants to batteries - £15K
- **Total savings - £67.5K**

By year end therefore, we anticipate that there will be an excess of income over expenditure of approximately £12K.

**Summary.** 2021 has clearly been another disrupted year. The level of investments and investment income has recovered well. We are fortunate to

have a stable secondary income stream in the SPGS and the reduction in activity has meant significant underspends in many areas.

**Wycombe Branch**

Wycombe Branch held their Summer BBQ on Saturday 24th July 2021 at Wycombe Marsh RBL Club, it was very well attended with Allan (RAA) and Cath Solly as guests. The event had live music, fun and games, a great day was had by all.



**Lewes Branch**

Lewes Branch met on Saturday 28th August for a RAA Games Evening. A great turnout, good food and lots of fun.





**North West Region Mini Assembly**

The NW Mini Assembly took place on 27-29 August 2021 at The Palace Hotel, Buxton. Seventy people from the North West RAA gathered for the AGM and a great weekend was enjoyed by all. Brigadier M N Pountain CBE, Chairman RAA presented Certificates of Appreciation to members of Widnes Branch and also presented Harry Heatley from Aigburth-Merseyside Branch with the NW Standard and trophy after the Standard Bearer's Competition. A Gala dinner was held in the evening, followed by a disco which everyone enjoyed, and promising to attend again next year 2022.



**West Lothian Branch**

West Lothian Branch RAA held their first post Covid Gunner breakfast on Sunday 5th September 2021 at Military Museum Scotland, Wilkieston West Lothian.



**Sunset Ceremony**

Thank you to the RAA and RHA Standard Bearers who attended the Sunset Ceremony held at Larkhill on Tuesday 14th September 2021.



**RACF Fundraising**

**29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery**

At 0400 hrs on 5th July 2021, 4 members from the 29 Commando Workshop ran a 40 mile route from Okehampton Battle Camp to the Royal Citadel, Plymouth in only ..... 7 hours 36 mins.



**Young Officers' Course 224**

A warm welcome to the Royal Regiment of Artillery and thank you for thinking of your Charity, the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund. On Friday 23rd July 2021 the Course organised RSA 101 Challenge, a non standard triathlon, completing 101 KM in 15 hours. Running, rowing and cycling on static equipment in the gym, raising a fantastic £605.00.



**5th Regiment Royal Artillery**

Challenge complete - Heimdall Cup is awarded to the winning Troop and Sub-Unit for raising the most funds, the winners for 2020/21 are A Troop 4/73 Battery raising a total of £1,907 and the Sub Unit is 4/73 (Sphinx) Special Observation Post Battery raising £3,750.

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in the ultra marathon's, Race to the Coast, Cycle Coast to Coast, rowing, cycling, and running - taking part in challenging activities with your comrades that require physical and mental strength.



**RACF**



**RACF Grant report 2021 to end September 2021**

So far in 2021 we have awarded £369,660 in Welfare grants in 469 individual grants to Gunner veterans, their dependants and serving Gunners and their dependants. We have noticed the number of cases coming through asking for help has reduced. The biggest area where support has been needed is for annual grants. We awarded a total of £83,700 in annual grants to our Gunner veterans who are over state pensionable age who are struggling with day to day living costs. In addition:

- £43,368 was awarded to 38 serving Gunners and their dependants.
- £56,801 was awarded to help veterans with household goods.
- £33, 554 was awarded sadly in bereavement grants to our veterans.
- £32,067 was needed to help those struggling with mobility issues.
- £22,712 was awarded to help our veterans with their care home fees.
- £22,350 was needed by our veterans who were struggling with household arrears.

We helped many more veterans with general needs, training support, debt, well being, house moves, travel, educational needs and house maintenance.

There are many areas we can help with.

The only things we cannot help with is headstones, legal or medical fees. If you know of any member of our Regimental family that needs our support and help, please pass on our details. They can call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 or contact us on either 0300 167 3998 or 0300 158 7035. We can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF-WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk Please don't hesitate, help could be on its way.

So far this year the RACF has received £72,267 in donations for which we are most grateful.



## CELEBRATIONS

### DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

23116886 Bdr Derek Marbeck late 15 Medium Regiment RA 1955-57 Kowloon, married Dorothy Ellen Benson on 30 September 1961, at Ainsworth (Cocky Moor) Parish Church

## 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](http://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](mailto:droberts8641@gmail.com)

## REUNIONS

### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

### 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

There is not a Mons alumni system as such, but it is the intention to hold a 50th Anniversary Dinner in the Army & Navy Club on Thu 12 May 22. Thus far, we have contacted nearly half of the sixty-one who were on parade, and there is overwhelming support for the event. We are making great use of digital media and those who have maintained contacts over the years. However, the time has come to increase the search pattern and make wider enquiries. Email [nigel.noble@btinternet.com](mailto:nigel.noble@btinternet.com)

### RA CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE - HYDE PARK

The annual Ceremony of Remembrance will take place at the Royal Artillery Memorial, Hyde Park, on Sun 14 Nov 21, with 5 Regt RA on parade. All are welcome to attend, anyone wishing to attend is requested to contact SO2 Regt Pol [andy.astbury202@mod.gov.uk](mailto:andy.astbury202@mod.gov.uk) or 01980 845929 to book seats. If attending, you are requested to be seated by 1030 hrs, it is anticipated that the event will conclude at 1145 hrs. It is an open air event and in the event of inclement weather, you are advised to dress accordingly.

### 1 RHA REUNION DINNER LXVIII

The 68th 1 RHA Officers' Mess Reunion Dinner will be held at the RA Mess, Larkhill on Fri 12 Nov 21. Any former officer of

the Regiment who wishes to attend, and who has not received details of the dinner should please contact the Dinner Secretary, Maj Claire Blakiston on 01980 845246 or email [Claire.Blakiston677@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Blakiston677@mod.gov.uk)

### 45 REGT OFFICERS' MESS REUNION

The next reunion lunch for the officers of 45 Regt will be on Tue 9 Nov 21 at the RA Mess Larkhill, subject to any Covid restrictions. Those not on the mailing list who wish to attend, on this, the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Imjin, should contact the Lunch Secretary, Lt Col David Clubleby, on [davidclubley@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:davidclubley@tiscali.co.uk)

### 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 [jarchibald@icloud.com](mailto:jarchibald@icloud.com) so that you can be contacted when necessary. 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.

## 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



## 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?

# LAST POST

## Notification of Death:

Maj David Moynihan Carey Clunie - 6 April 2021

Lt Col Guy MV Gillett - 26 July 2021

Leonard Thompson - August 2021

Lt Col (Retd) Lesley Addington - 6 August 2021

LBdr Roy Smith - 25 August 2021

Steve Jones - 30 August 2021

Sgt Pat Hamilton - 30 August 2021

Gnr Percy Hale - 31 August 2021

Roy Jockins - September 2021

Roy Perks - September 2021

Lionel "Butch" Bushell - September 2021

Lt Col (Retd) Anthony (Tony) Feek - 5 September 2021

Dean Fairbrother - 10 September 2021

Charles Black - 11 September 2021

Maj H J Gillingham - 12 October 2021

**FEEK** - Lieutenant Colonel A J Feek DL died peacefully at home on the night of 4 September in the presence of his beloved wife, Fran. Tony's funeral was held in St Leonard's Church, Seaford before a full church made up of friends and relatives, including ten of Tony's grandchildren and members of Tony's last regiment, 26 Regt. Eulogies were given by Sir Peter Fields, whom Tony worked for when Sir Peter was the Lord Lieutenant, by Major General Peter Bonnet, who was General Bonnet's Staff Officer as the DRA, and by Tony's two sons, Tony and Gary. Tony's daughter Georgie, read Psalm 23 and Sophie a granddaughter and professional singer, sang "I vow to thee, my country.....". His third son David, was watching live on a video link to Australia where he works as a race horse trainer. Afterwards a gathering of guests was held in Lawrence House, Seaford.

**HENRY** - Colonel Henry MBE died peacefully in his sleep on 21 September, aged 91. Beloved husband of Elizabeth, loving father of Caroline, Richard and Oliver and proud grandfather of nine and great grandfather of two.

**HICKIE** - Major John Hickie MBE died after a brief struggle with cancer on 14 July 2021, aged 87, at Peterborough City Hospital. One of his sons, Patrick, also an ex-Gunner, was with him when he died. John was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in December 1955 after a short time serving in the ranks. He served in Hong Kong, Malaya, Borneo, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Belize, BAOR, and Northern Ireland. His Regimental Duty included field artillery, locating and air defence and he commanded T (Shah Sujah's Troop) Battery as part of 12 Light Air Defence Battery in the early 1970s. John was posted to the Special Military Intelligence Unit in Londonderry in 1973, a role which he later described as 'hairy' and for which he was made an MBE. From 1975 until his retirement in 1989, John spent all but 2 years serving as a Ground Liaison Officer with the RAF Harrier Force, with both 3(F) and 1(F) Squadrons, in Germany

and the UK. When he retired from the Army in 1989, after 36 years' service, John took on an RO's role with the Range Safety Inspection Team. His wife, Mary, died in 2007 and John spent much of his later years enjoying battlefield tours of Normandy and Flanders. He researched the stories and visited the war graves of numerous Gunners, always proudly wearing his Gunner tie. John was diagnosed with cancer in 2020 and carried his illness quietly and without fuss, like a true soldier, until it suddenly got the better of him in July 2021. He is survived by his three children, Patrick, Andrew and Katie and eight grandchildren.

**JAMES** - Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Keith James. Douglas was born in Lahore, India on the 1st May, 1933. He attended St. Georges College, a Christian Brothers' School, in Mussorie in the Himalayan mountains. On returning to England in 1947, Douglas was admitted to Eltham College, London, where he was a very talented Sportsman. He sprinted for Kent and played Rugby for Surrey. In 1951 Douglas joined the British Army and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery (as a Gunner) from the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst in 1953. Douglas boxed, ran and played rugby for Sandhurst. Douglas married his wife Hazel in 1957. He saw service in Hong Kong, America, Scotland, Germany, England (where Douglas was Senior Instructor of Gunnery at United Kingdom Land Forces) and a very turbulent Belfast in 1970 where four of his soldiers were killed. In 1983, at the age of 50, Douglas retired from the Army and joined Siemens Plessey Electronics as a Senior Marketing Manager, for ten years. At the end of that time Douglas started a public speaking business, "Better Speak" to keep his mind active. Douglas and Hazel had two daughters, Caroline born in 1959 and Melanie born in 1961. Caroline was sadly killed in a climbing accident on Mont Blanc in 1998. Hazel died on the 9th April, 2019. Melanie is married to Peter Doyle and have three daughters, Hannah, Megan and Victoria. Douglas died peacefully at his home, The Street, Capel, Surrey on the 5th July, 2021 with his family with him. Melanie took care of him for two years in his home after Hazel died.

**LANE** - Gunner Anthony Lane (Bronco) November 1955 to July 2021. Bronco joined as a Junior Tradesman completing his training at JTR Rhyl before joining 30 Bty Rogers's Company in Soest in 1973. During his time with the Bty he completed several operational tours of Northern Ireland, drove a green goddess fire engine during the 1977/78 firemen's strike and converted from Bofors Gun to Rapier Missile system. Bronco left the Army in the early 80s and settled in the Dartford area in Kent where he worked mainly as a driver. Bronco died peacefully in his sleep from pancreatic cancer at Ellenor Hospice, Gravesend. R.I.P Bronco, you will be sadly missed by all who knew you.



## Brigadier Jack Thomas



Jack at work

Brigadier Jack Thomas, died, aged 94, like the soldier he was, bravely and with dignity, on a COVID ward at Basingstoke hospital. He regarded his military service as a privilege and an opportunity.

*"I have made friends of all colours and creeds and all stations in life around the globe and I look back upon a job in which I have not made much money, but in which I have made a mark and a contribution to the success of Her Majesty's Government's policies throughout the world and I have tried to do it as humanely as possible,"*

Port Talbot Guardian, 27 October 1977

Standing six foot three, with a broken nose and cauliflower ears, the legacy of exploits on the rugby field and in the boxing ring, he had considerable presence. But, above all, he was a consummate professional, a tough leader and commander who had the ability to win affection, the knack of resolving problems and, when it was needed, a ruthless determination to succeed. He set great store by exemplary turnout, physical prowess, the ability to

think on one's feet while under pressure and the requirement to expose himself to danger alongside his soldiers without showing fear. He played the mouth organ and guitar, learnt languages wherever he went and boasted a working knowledge of German, Swahili, Russian, Cantonese and Spanish.

He was born at Port Talbot, where the actor, Richard Burton, and the trade union leader, Clive Jenkins, were contemporaries. He was an Army Cadet, a member of the Home Guard and followed his father into the Life Guards as a trooper. He was useful with his fists and on one occasion, when confronted by the barrack room bully laid him out. He was remanded for orders and after being marched in front of his squadron leader, he was given the option of being locked up or going to OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit). Jack chose the latter and was eventually commissioned into the Welch Regiment in April 1945, volunteered for the Army Commandos (No. 6 Commando) and in 1946, after the unit's disbandment, he was transferred to the 1st Battalion of the Parachute Regiment serving in Palestine. During an attack on Ein Shemer the airfield, his vehicle hit a landmine killing the driver and a landmine killing the driver and gunner. Jack woke up in hospital, and it was six months before he was able to return to the Welch

Regiment and a year before he spoke. When he did, the change in his voice resulted in his nickname "Squeaky Jack" which stayed with him for the rest of his career. Jack transferred to the gunners in 1949 and spent time at the Training School in Larkhill as well as Barton Stacey, Barnard Castle, Woolwich, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya and Germany. Regiments he served in included 33 and 66 Airborne Light Regiment RA (UK & Germany), 58 Medium Regiment RA (Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya and UK), 61 Light Field Regiment RA (Korea), 72 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment RA (Hong Kong) and 94 Locating Regiment RA (Germany). He played rugby at Army, County and club level (at 7 in modern parlance and 15 in his time) including Aberavon, Blackheath, Northern and Taibach (largely reflecting Unit Locations). He was selected to play for Wales but had a motorcycle accident and unable to play in the match. Soon after, he was sent to the Far East losing the opportunity for further consideration but did play in the first Tour to Japan after the War in 1952 by the Hong Kong Football Club. He reportedly took his beloved Cotton Oxfords with him everywhere until his last match in his late 30s when he broke a leg scoring a try after which his wife (Dorothea) put paid to further



play by boiling the boots. He deployed to Korea 3 weeks after getting married and letters home to his wife provide some snapshots of his time towards the end of the war. The regiment was part of the Commonwealth Division and he was an Forward Observation Officer (FOO) for the Fusiliers (with whom he maintained a lifelong connection) and the 22e Canadian Infantry Regiment. As the end of the war approached, he wrote home:

**H Troop**  
**248 Light Battery RA BAPO 3**  
**Thursday 11 June 1953**

"Everyone is speculating as to the date of the end of the war and rumours or latrinograms as we call them, are sweeping the area. We listen religiously to the nine o'clock news from Toyko but it's always the same, talk, talk, talk! I reckon Syngman Rhee is just shooting his mouth off. He can't afford to continue the fight contrary to the United Nations opinion...It would be a bad show if he messed everything up after the great efforts made by everyone else."

Unbeknownst to him at the time of writing, the war would continue for over a month, during which time he was injured in the shoulder. Jack was patched up but had no idea of just how much damage had been done. The shoulder eventually needed

extensive wiring to hold it together (and later in life he got used to setting off alarms when passing through airports). Worse still, Dorothea had set sail for Hong Kong four days before and there was a huge risk they could miss each other.

**Thursday 18 June 1953**

Peace appears to be just around the corner, we will soon know what's going to happen once the cease fire is ordered. My first move will be into hospital to get my shoulder patched up. It's causing me quite a lot of bother once again.

**Friday 26 June 1953**

"I went to see a surgical specialist yesterday, who had my shoulder X-rayed; he showed me the X-ray photograph and I had quite a shock. There's a quarter inch gap between the collar bone and the shoulder. The doc wanted to downgrade me and send me home – with a chance I would be operated in Hong Kong, so I have asked him to leave it for a couple of months so that I can get it done when you arrive."

Two days later, after that consultation he is back on duty, though in what state, it is hard to tell:

**Sunday 28th June 1953**

"Life is very interesting too, something is always happening. For instance, the Reds were going

to raid an outpost tonight but 'Charlie' attacked first. There's a hell of a battle going on, we can hear the guns rumbling away, non-stop. Both the Chinese and the Koreans have no regard for human life so they 'bash on' regardless of casualties. They both must have lost an awful lot since the expected day of peace. How either can continue to sustain such losses and not pursue a more peaceful policy is beyond me. They don't seem to care."

The war cost the lives of millions of Koreans and Chinese, as well as over 50,000 Americans. Reflecting the banality and poignancy of it all - something he often talked about - his letters reveal the compassion that lay not far below his practical and occasionally blunt exterior. Towards the end of July, however, his concerns were of an altogether lower order before returning to commentary on the end of the war:

**Tuesday 23 July 1953**

"The underpants arrived safely, a very welcome parcel. Here, in what is supposed to be the best equipped British division ever, it is quite impossible to get a pair of underpants or a shirt. The Canadians, New Zealanders and Australians are 'well off', but the English, pooh!

**Saturday 25 July 1953**

"The war should end tomorrow according to the experts but the present signs don't point to that.



Last night there was a tremendous battle over on our own left flank. The American Marines caught it very severely. They succeeded in holding their line ... the Chinese however seem determined to hammer the Americans and Koreans for all they are worth before signing on the dotted line."

**Monday 27 July 1953**

"We're all eagerly awaiting the news at 10 o'clock today, eight hours' time, when it is stated the truce will be signed. You will know by the time you read this letter of course, but we're rather skeptical here. Syngman Rhee may well put a spoke in things. If there is going to be a truce it certainly belies the present situation, for the last three nights quite big attacks have come in. The US Marines on our left suffering very heavily. On Friday night alone they had two hundred casualties.

On his shoulder/gunshot wound and the fact that his wife was on her way to Hong Kong...

**Monday 27 July 1953 continued...**

"My shoulder has really deteriorated and causes me quite a lot of discomfort. I don't really know what I ought to do at the moment, if I go to the same surgeon, I'll be sent home. I think I'll have to suffer it until I get to Hong Kong, then if I am sent home 'you' can probably go with me."

He is eventually sent (Aug 53) to The British Commonwealth General

Hospital in Kure, also called Brit Com General Hospital, where the wounded and injured from the Korean War were evacuated.

The much discussed peace agreement comes on 27th July. Jack wrote to his wife Dorothea the day after. He reflects on the fact that four of the second lieutenants who sailed out on the Orwell with him died. Some within an hour of being on the lines. He goes on to describe the atmosphere once peace was announced:

**Tuesday 28th July 1953**

"It's a lovely day, the sort of day that one expects after a night last night. The moon was round and brilliant, showing the country up almost like day. The truce was signed at 10 o'clock in the morning and the 'ceasefire' was 12 hours later. Everyone was slightly tight except for the duty officer and myself sitting in our command post feeling flat and empty. "Charlie" threw in a couple of shells half an hour before the end wounding, slightly, a corporal in the Royal Fusiliers; then I heard "Cease firing, empty guns" on my RA wireless set, the distant note of the bugle playing the "Ceasefire" and the raucous remarks of the soldiers. We all went outside and stood on top of my Observation Post (where the shells landed three nights ago) and watched the fireworks.

All along the divisional front, coloured lights and flares soared

skywards but on our left the US Marines were very quiet; so was the Chinaman. Small wonder however, as they both suffered heavily during the battles of 23rd, 24th and 25th. The Chinese casualties must have been literally thousands .. ours were very light. Remarkably light as we had 5,000 rounds of artillery and mortar onto us during that time.

Today there appears to be great "bonhomie", the Australians next door to us on the Hook – I moved from little Gibraltar three weeks ago and am now on Yong Song – are shaking hands and talking to the Chinese who have appeared on Warsaw, about 500 yards from them. It's funny but the Australians, most pugnacious and fire-eating troops out here, should be so friendly."

**He transferred to the Military Police in 1959**

Perhaps I have been at times an unruly, hard-working, sometimes reckless soldier who, when he found he couldn't beat the Military Police, decided to join them."

Port Talbot Guardian, 27 October 1977

He was awarded an OBE for Service in NI and was advanced to CBE for his contribution as PM Army.

On retirement, he was initially a defence consultant, then a director of security.

*Gunner Lottery*  
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*to be in with a chance of winning*

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Fantastic cash prizes up to

**£25,000**

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Supporting those who serve. Supporting those who have served.



[www.thegunners.org.uk](http://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](mailto:vwals@nhs.net)  
Midlands or East of England services: call 0300 323 0137 or email [mevs.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:mevs.mhm@nhs.net)  
London or South East of England services: call 020 3317 6818 or email [cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net](mailto:cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net)  
South West of England services: call 0300 365 0300 or email [sc.veterans@nhs.net](mailto: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.



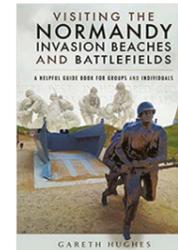
The closing date for all competitions in this month's edition is Monday 13 December 2021. The winners will be drawn at random and notified as soon as possible. Don't forget to fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

**Easy Sudoku**

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

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.

To win the Visiting the Normandy Invasion Beaches and Battlefields book - all you have to do is fill out all your details and send it to us at Gunner Publications, RHQ RA, Artillery Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QT.



Wordsearch - missing word?

.....

Name: .....

Tel: .....

Email: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

**The Gunner Wordsearch**

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

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!

- |          |            |         |
|----------|------------|---------|
| BENCH    | GOALKEEPER | REFEREE |
| DEFENDER | LEAGUE     | SCORE   |
| FORWARD  | MATCH      | TEAM    |
| FOUL     | PENALTY    | WHISTLE |



In the year AD 9, three Roman legions were crushed by the German warlord Arminius in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest. This event is well-known, but there was another uprising that Rome faced shortly before, which lasted from AD 6 to 9, and was just as intense. This rebellion occurred in the western Balkans (an area roughly corresponding to modern Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Montenegro and parts of Serbia and Albania) and it tested the Roman Empire to its limits.

Very few British soldiers could lay claim to such a full war as Leslie Young. Having survived the retreat to and evacuation from Dunkirk, he volunteered for the newly formed Commandos and took part in their first operation, the raid on the Lofoten Islands. He fought and was captured in Tunisia. He went on the run before his POW camp at Fontanelato was taken over by the Nazis after the September 1943 Italian armistice.

**RA Historical Society**  
Autumn 2021 Programme

Date and Timings	Type of Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Registrations Close
Wed 24 Nov 1930 hrs	ONLINE WEBINAR	The Gunners of Newfoundland and Labrador	Col Peter Williams Royal Canadian Artillery	Sun 21 Nov

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](mailto:richard.clayton312@gmail.com)



Date	Event	Location
2021		
11 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster
14 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park
30 Nov	E2 Dinner Night	Larkhill
05 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill
10 Dec	Subalterns' Dining In	Larkhill
2022		
17-21 Jan	RA RMAS Cadre	Larkhill
17 Feb	Royal Artillery Gold Cup	Sandown
19/20 Feb	Reserve Conference	Larkhill
9-11 Mar	WO1's Convention	Larkhill
16 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
21-24 Mar	RA Boxing	Larkhill
8 Apr	Subalterns' Dining In	Larkhill
17 Apr	Gunner Sunday	Royal Hospital Chelsea
22 Apr	RA Spring Dinner	Larkhill
20-22 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
21 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool
16 Jun	Hail & Farewell	Larkhill
02 Jul	RA Service of Remembrance	NMA
17-18 Jul	Festival of Sport	Larkhill
8 Sep	Sunset Ceremony	Larkhill
13 Oct	Sports Dinner	Larkhill
20 Oct	Central Sgts' Mess Dinner	Larkhill
21 Oct	RA Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
10 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster
13 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park
04 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill



Maj Matt Rea RA takes part in Dashain celebrations with soldiers of 3rd Bn, Royal Gurkha Rifles currently deployed on Op TANGHAM, Somalia.

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*With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year*

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£6.50 per pack of 10 incl. p&sp\*. 105x148mm.  
*With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year*

**D**  **Embossed RA Coat of Arms with Ribbon**  
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**E**  **Foiled RA Badge**  
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---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity required: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

**A** \_\_\_\_\_

**B** \_\_\_\_\_

**C** \_\_\_\_\_

**D** \_\_\_\_\_

**E** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

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 All money raised goes to the RAA. For enquiries please e-mail [cas.thoburn603@mod.gov.uk](mailto:cas.thoburn603@mod.gov.uk)

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Gunner Ladies who represented England at the British and Irish Tug of War Championships  
left to right Bdr Turner 32 Regt RA, Gnr Odoi 3 RHA, Mr John Gracie (Coach), Gnr New 32 Regt RA and Maj Scott 32 Regt RA