



**NOVEMBER 2023**

**Ex TIGER CARA NORDIC**

**Ex IRON STORM**

**ROYAL ARTILLERY ALPINE SKIING**

# **GUNNER**

**#FINDandSTRIKE**

The Larkhill-based team that supplies you Gunner.

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### Gunner Rules

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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



## NOVEMBER 2023

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**Colonel Chris Coton**  
Commander 7<sup>th</sup> Air Defence Group

**Back in Business: An Air Defence Resurgence**

GBAD is back in business. The Army's commitment to double its medium-range air defence fleet, and triple (yes, triple) its short-range fleet couldn't have come sooner. 7 Air Defence Group, a 1600-strong formation based on the South Coast of England, has been plonked at the forefront of Army change. We are gearing up: brand new equipment now, in the next eighteen months, over the next three years and beyond. We are growing: an additional 200 air defenders in the last eighteen months, with even more growth already in the pipeline. And we are busy: deployed on three operations in the Middle East, two in Eastern Europe, and one in the South Atlantic – we are amongst the lucky few to be winning operational medals right now. But why this sudden resurgence? What is making 7 Air Defence Group such an exciting place to be?

**Operationally Relevant**

Ukraine. Yes, but not just Ukraine. Whilst Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year sharpened the collective NATO focus on threats from the air, the wake-up call came even earlier. After decades of counter-insurgency operations where the air threat was non-existent, the Western world's air defence capability was allowed to wither on the vine. Today we see an air threat that is on a more diverse spectrum than ever – ultra-slow to hyper-fast; ballistic to contour-hugging; commercial to super-stealthy; all sporting a range of payloads. We see that threat proliferating more widely too – available and affordable to states and violent extremist organisations alike. And all this wrapped up in a volatile geopolitical context: NATO on tenterhooks; State-sponsored actors threatening peace in the Middle East; and a rapidly changing political-military situation in the South Atlantic.

So, 7 Air Defence Group is growing and re-equipping to face these threats head on. But two decades of atrophy mean that the regain is sharp. 137 (Java) Battery – a Battery with an esteemed history and proud following – has been reformed as another 'short range' air defence battery. Our 'medium range' Sky Sabre batteries, currently deployed in the Falkland Islands and in Poland, have increased by a third in size to meet the span of their commitment. Despite this welcome growth, demand still outstrips supply. More growth is coming. Watch this space.

**At the Bleeding Edge of Technology**

We are currently fielding one of the Army's newest capabilities – Sky Sabre. Its mix of air surveillance radars, complex launchers and sophisticated 'brain', mean that it requires a different calibre of soldier to operate it. The capability is in high demand and respected by our allies – it was described a 'battle-winning asset' by GOC 3 Div at the culmination of the most recent Warfighter Exercise in America. We have just enough

to concurrently service the demands of the South Atlantic and Europe. The Army intends to double this arsenal by 2026.

Our 'short-range' missiles are still best in class (the High Velocity 'Starstreak' Missile, and the newer Lightweight Multirole Missile). The platforms from which these missiles are launched, particularly the tracked Stormer vehicle, fall off their perch in 2026. They will be replaced in tranches – the first, wheeled version of which is likely to materialise over the next eighteen months. This first batch is an excellent interim solution that will further broaden our warfighting flexibility. The jury's out on what the longer-term replacement could be – thankfully we are not short of options.

And there's more. We are experimenting with kit straight off the manufacturer's shelf. Saab's Giraffe 1X radar, a smaller version of the G-AMB, is deployed and we are, in concert with Saab, developing it on the fly. We are teaching Ukrainians how to get the best from it. There is a raft of other emerging capabilities that we are getting to grips with too.

**Shaping National Prosperity**

All this technology doesn't come cheap. Convincing our allies to buy similar capabilities has some economic advantages, as well as, of course, making technical interoperability that bit easier. For a start, commonality of air defence systems across NATO would mean three things: it would mean, for example, that our chances of launching a Polish missile from a British launcher, cued by a German sensor and coordinated by a US headquarters (or any other mix of 'sensor-shooter') would be that much greater – the panacea; it would mean that what we buy would be that bit cheaper, as manufacturers would have the confidence to scale-up production for a bigger market; and, if the common system was British-made, it would mean onshoring Industrial capacity, jobs and UK exports. The combination tends to see GBAD thrust into the political limelight. More tangibly, it results in our officers and soldiers being deployed to the far corners of the globe as ambassadors for the capability that we are investing in: Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, India, throughout Europe, to name a few. It requires professionalism, diplomatic nous and an adventurous spirit from our youngest officers, soldiers and RAF aviators. It is a thrilling sidebar to our role as air defenders.

**Conclusion**

The spotlight is on. The mix of kit that 7 Air Defence Group operates – radars large and small, short- and long-range interceptors, wheels and tracks – has never been in such high demand. The people that own that kit – whether wearing the Gunner blue beret, the blue-grey berets of the RAF, or the maroon berets of airborne operators – find themselves deployed with it on operations all over the world. Gearing up, growing, and busy. An exciting place to be.



# ROYAL ARTILLERY GOLD CUP

## Sandown Park Thursday 15th February 2024



### AN AFTERNOON OF QUALITY JUMP RACING

The Royal Artillery Gold Cup, first run in 1862 and one of the oldest events in the horseracing calendar and a flagship day for the Gunners. Regiments will again be setting up co-located focal points, within a dedicated Gunner area, this time in the Surrey Hall, which forms part of the main concourse on the ground floor. This venue puts the Regiment very much at the centre of the day, with immediate access to the racecourse and bookies on one side and to the Parade rings and the Winner Enclosure on the other. It also makes a range of catering outlets more easily available, with convenient bars and food outlets, providing greater choice and the opportunity to have a drink and meet with friends.

Serving and retired members of the Regiment will be able to meet fellow Gunners in the Surrey Hall, but there will also be an option to book a two-course buffet lunch in The Gallery, which is on the first floor of the Grandstand and has its own bar and views over the track. It is hoped that will be an attractive option to those who wish to enjoy a sit-down meal in slightly more formal surroundings. This will include:

- Two-course buffet including dessert
- Pay as you go bar (Card payments only)
- Private lounge, with shared tables

Gallery Badges and admission tickets included £49 per person, please contact the Sandown Park hospitality team on 01372 477747 or by emailing London.Hospitality@thejockeyclub.co.uk

Entry to The Gallery will be restricted to badge holders only until 1400 hrs.

Use promotional code **UBIQUE24**

Purchase tickets by scanning the QR Code



Tickets at the discounted price of £14 can be booked online

<https://www.thejockeyclub.co.uk/sandown/events-tickets/royal-artillery-gold-cup-day/>



## Scandinavian Summer Sailing - Ex TIGER CARA NORDIC - 457 Battery



After a long adventurous training hiatus following the pandemic, six members of 457 Battery, 106th Regiment Royal Artillery deployed to Stavanger, Norway on Ex TIGER CARA NORDIC, a sailing expedition aboard the NATO Joint Warfare Centre's (JWC) sailing club yacht, Aurelius II. Sailing over nine days, the aims were to develop team cohesion and introduce soldiers to the Joint Services Adventurous Training (JSAT) and Royal Yachting Association (RYA) sailing schemes. With a variety of sailing experience and backgrounds, each day provided its own challenge for all individuals involved.

We arrived at the sailing club in Ulsnes, just outside of Stavanger. Aurelius II is beautifully looked after and in part funded by The Nuffield Trust. We were pleasantly surprised at the ease of the handover process, no doubt owing to the JWC's centre manager, Lieutenant Colonel Piers Noble RE in charge.

The skipper and mate, Second Lieutenant Josh Lam RA and Gunner Zimmermann received the instruction from the centre manager. At approximately 1800, after a briefing from the skipper, we slipped the lines, motoring the short voyage into a spirited Stavanger Saturday night for the first sleep onboard. Reminiscent of our resident Blighmont Army Reserve Centre; we woke up to a familiar sight; the P&O cruise ship Aurora coming alongside a few hundred metres away; streams of tourists pouring down the gangways.

Each day had a similar structure, lessons were delivered in the morning, followed by sailing activity. Starting the lessons was an introduction to the points of sail. We sailed towards open water on a beam reach, the easiest point of sail where the wind is perpendicular to the boat (on the beam). With the traffic clear around us, we started off by conducting man-overboard drills to



familiarise everyone with different roles throughout the situation. Succeeding this, we tied up to a mooring buoy off the island of Tingholmen and stopped for lunch there, enjoying the scenery, weather, and wildlife on the island.



Monday was peaceful, it started with a lesson in springing off; utilising mooring lines for manoeuvring the boat off a berth. Unfortunately, wind was lacking; under sail and engine power we travelled to a village called Skudeneshavn, twenty miles north of Stavanger. The next day's forecast however, looked promising. We anchored for lunch in an island archipelago called Kvitsøy, with Gunner Hammond and Staff Sergeant Baker responsible for meal prep that day. We finally reached our destination, the quaint village providing a scenic sunset; sadly, too late to discover that the sauna was fully booked.

Tuesday's weather conditions provided an excellent character-building experience, we received a blessing from an eccentric self-proclaimed local bard who called himself the Herring King of Norway and got under way. The initial challenge sailing in the heightened sea state pushed the boundaries of comfort zones for all involved. Eventually, we returned to Skudeneshavn with seasickness setting in for some of the crew.

On Wednesday we set sail for Skartveit, an island twenty-five miles away. In stark contrast to the previous day, we had sunshine and a favourable breeze behind us making

for light work, sailing on a broad reach most of the way there. Whilst en-route we had lessons in knot tying and buoyage.

We started Thursday off with a lesson on the Rules of the Road (the highway code for boats). The fine weather provided us with some more great training opportunities on passage to Jørpeland. This was the day when everything clicked, firstly we were close hauled and short-tacking up-wind, the wind then shifted which required some gybing; entertaining and challenging all the crew.

Gunner Johnson, the battery's social media lead, took some spectacular photos on Friday. After a consolidation and cultural day, we rounded off with a BBQ overlooking the Sun Mirror on Klungholmen. The island situated the Norwegian equivalent to Stonehenge but also included a frisbee golf course. Coals now smouldering; Staff Sergeant Baker now frisbee golf champion and at the grill; we enjoyed our Viking feast with the sun setting over the mirror. We finished the climactic day engaged in conversation around the firepit; the last leg looming, we embraced the benefits of adventurous training in such a stunning setting.



On Saturday we returned to Stavanger, a dramatic forecast saw strong winds later in the afternoon. To make the most of the building wind we had an early start, tacking



and gybing our way towards Stavanger. More experienced as a crew now, we pushed Aurelius II to almost 11 knots; trimming the sails and fine-tuning adjustments were becoming second nature. We reached the familiar guest marina in time for our final dinner overlooking the harbour. The last night together boasted a social night out in the city. On Sunday, feeling slightly worse for wear and unwilling to go home so soon, we prepared the boat for handover back at the Joint Warfare Centre.

The impact of the expedition on the crew cannot be understated. Averaging no to very limited sailing experience across the board, we exceeded our own expectations, performing well as a team. Gunner Zimmermann gained valuable experience at the helm and is now looking to complete the RYA Day Skipper course. Second Lieutenant Lam, in his first outing as skipper made headway in mooring manoeuvres. Staff Sergeant Baker, Regimental Mentoring Support Officer (ReMSO) and no stranger to adventurous training, capitalised on the recruiting opportunities afforded to us from the trip. Gunner Hammond had this to say:

'It was such an amazing time and I built so many strong friendships within the unit. It really pushed me out of my comfort zone, especially never having been on a yacht before, although I was a bit seasick to begin with, it went away after the first couple of days. I learnt a lot from the lessons, like tying a bowline or reading the wind - something that I will be able to carry over to my kitesurfing!'

Overall, the expedition was impeccably executed and something I can only hope to repeat again in my career. On reflection, it provided me with an opportunity to transfer skills from my previous experience navigating cargo ships. Little did I know at the time; this

would be my first and last AT expedition as a reserve soldier with 457 Battery; naturally quite reserved, the trip emboldened me and two weeks later I passed the Army Officer Selection Board Main Board with aspirations to join the Regular Army.



by Officer Cadet George Gadd  
457 (Hampshire Carabiniers Yeomanry) Battery  
106th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery



## 28/143 Battery (Tombs's Troop) RA Live Fire on Ex IRON STORM 1/23



Having recently undergone a swift conversion from AS90 to Light Gun, 28/143 Battery (Tombs's Troop) RA deployed to Bergen-Hohne, Germany in July to participate in the Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise (CALFEX) section of Ex IRON STORM 1/23. Over the course of the two-week exercise the Battery, consisting of a four-detachment Gun Line, Command Post and Tac Group, provided intimate fire support to the 1 ROYAL WELSH Battlegroup. This is the first time the British Army have fired the guns on Bergen-Hohne training area since 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery left Germany in 2015.

As part of the special-to-arm phase, after two days of dry firing, the Battery fired a variety of live mission sets including Basic INs, Danger Close, Last Safe Moment, Smoke and complex Fireplans. The highlight

of the week for the Gun Detachments was the Modified Indirect and Direct Fire practices which saw all four guns engaging simultaneously at visible targets only a few kilometres away.





As the exercise moved into its second week, the Battlegroup conducted the CALFEX over a 2-day scenario. Putting into practice all of the knowledge gained over the preceding weeks, 28/143 Battery provided timely and effective fire support for the Battlegroup throughout its conduct of an ADVANCE and DELAY, suppressing enemy targets through a combination of Basic INs, Fireplans and Last Safe Moment drills, all coordinated by the FSTs who moved with the battle to observe and call in fires.

The deployment to Germany on Ex IRON STORM 1/23 was a great success for 28/143 Battery (Tombs's Troop) RA who, in just over a month, went from converting to Light Gun to delivering complex live fire missions in support of the 1 ROYAL WELSH Battlegroup's CALFEX. After the Tac Gp returns at the beginning of September from the FTX in Altmark, the Battery's focus switches to preparing to fulfil the role of Public Duties Reinforcement Company for two months this Autumn, an exciting and rare opportunity for all involved.

by 2Lt M A Wood RA  
 Skeddy's Troop Commander  
 28/143 Battery (Tombs's Troop) RA  
 19th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Scottish Gunners)



## Back in time with GAV - annual training for excellence

Annual training for the GAV 2023 was our best and biggest so far, and all went well!!



Ready to fire

On a sunny April morning a casual observer might have reflected that they had entered a time warp as a convoy of ten gun tractors, limbers and 25 pdr gun/howitzers, accompanied by jeeps, a White Scout Car, REME recovery vehicles, Bedford MW's and QM, Bren Carrier, motorbikes and even a Belgium field kitchen came trundling over Salisbury Plain. With all occupants resplendent in World War II Battledress and with all the vehicles and guns of 1939-45 vintage the reflection could be justified. This sight was in reality the Garrison Artillery Volunteers (GAV) deploying for action during its annual training weekend.

One of the finest military historians in modern times, Michael Howard, in his essay "The Use and Abuse of Military History," suggested that military history needs to be focussed on width, depth, and context. We at the GAV not only believe this but also passionately add perspective by 'living' the history that our members are so enthusiastic

about. Our motto at the GAV is "Giving a Future to the Artillery of the Past."

The GAV are a group of volunteers, from all walks of life and ages, some serving or ex-military, others devoted historians or just military enthusiasts who share a common aim to rediscover, learn and pass on knowledge in all technical aspects of gunnery during the 20th Century, but especially that of World War II. We demonstrate the skills we have learnt using period equipment. Our greatest enthusiasm though is passing this knowledge on via educational demonstrations enabling us to give this future to artillery of the past.

This year, the GAV's annual training weekend was the largest that we have ever undertaken. Ten detachments of vintage 25 pdrs and attendant vehicles were available and many of our volunteers concentrated on site to participate. Joining the domestic Troop were detachments from the Netherlands,



Dinner is served, Belgian field kitchen

Belgium and the Czech Republic. We were particularly pleased to have serving officers and men from the 41st Dutch Artillery Battalion and gun sets from the Dutch Royal Artillery Museum.

To deliver on our enthusiasm and to ensure that we portray accurately our artillery battery regular training is given every Easter so that all our membership is not only aware of the gun drills and management of the battery functions as undertaken by the RA during World War II but practice these functions safely and correctly to the standards of the day.

Prior to the weekend all members were invited to regular theory lesson conducted over Zoom by our highly skilled, knowledgeable and enigmatic Training Officer, Keith Brigstock who imparts his knowledge with passion and gusto.

With the theory completed the Training Weekend could begin in earnest.

Friday morning, the day started with 08.30 morning parade and safety brief to all members. The whole battery was separated into groups for those training as gunners, Command Post and Recce groups and drivers. The gunner's morning training included position in action and detachments front and rear, Basic gun drills and safety about the gun position whilst in the afternoon into and out of action practical drills were completed.

Whilst the gunners completed their drills, each member of the detachment taking turns in each gun position the drivers were practicing again the basic driving skills, including first parades, reversing into buildings, winching and into action and quick action. They teamed up with the gunners in the afternoon for the into and out of action training.



As the gunners and drivers completed their practical's the CP and Recce teams trained and honed their skills in basic Director and passing line drills, selection of gun positions then joined each troop in the afternoon to accomplish the passing line director to the guns practical.

The great exercise was undertaken on Saturday, based on our operational scenario Operation CATTON Sabre scripted, somewhat tongue in cheek, by our RA liaison officer Captain Alex Lewis with the objective "the GAV are to demonstrate readiness and proficiency to the RA Gunnery Staff" and the challenge was accepted unreservedly by the full GAV membership.

Practical deployments were achieved in a variety of locations and the culmination of the exercise was the silent night-time deployment and firing, a pyrotechnic display of stunning excellence.

This training weekend was truly of epic proportions with 10 Detachments and gun sets, and 10 other Battery support vehicles all necessary for a Battery plus sized organisation. With a few minor break downs and bumps all made it back under their own steam. A truly fantastic performance by all considering the age of the vehicles and equipment.

Now we are again trained, we all look forward to a busy event year putting all this training into action.

References: Michael Howard, "The Use and Abuse of Military History," The RUSI Journal, 107, no. 625 (1962)

by Adrian Lee



International cooperation, British, Dutch, Belgian and Czech contingents



## Fast-paced world of tactical flying puts UAS operators to test



Photo credit: Graham Main, Soldier Magazine

DRONEX takes shape

On a distant hillside on the edge of Salisbury Plain a blob of dark green moves into a wood block. Moments later a small uncrewed aerial system (UAS) appears, its bird-like silhouette almost impossible to distinguish as it hugs the ground below the horizon.



The two-man drone team confirms the “blob” that was observed is actually a section of heavily-armed “enemy” reconnaissance troops.

As humble as this small serial was, it formed part of one of the most significant new exercises the British Army has introduced in recent years.

The two-day package, dubbed “Dronex”, focused on the tactical flying of UAS, examining how they are deployed and how effective the equipment operators are at completing specific missions.

Drones are becoming increasingly prevalent and important on today’s battlefield, and the Service has introduced a number of initiatives to ensure it is at the forefront of this fast-evolving element of warfare.

This exercise is one of the latest and was trialled for the first time in 2022 as an exploratory package to refine its formula. But last month saw the first proper staging of the event, with several combat units providing suitably qualified teams to



test themselves against their peers in a competitive environment.



“It’s been a great opportunity – not just because we can compare ourselves against different units but because it’s interesting to see how other teams do things,” says Pte Jack Kenyon.



“We’ve picked up some great tips and have seen how others use different controllers for the same drone we use, so that’s been interesting.”

Pte Levi Brook “We have probably been using drones for longer than many other units but this kit is now really important to the Army. So anything like this, where regiments can work together in the same environment while sharing how they operate is a good thing.”

The exercise was organised by the Land Warfare Centre, which is keen to expand the concept in future to include more teams from across the Service.



Spreading best practice in tactical drone flying is essential, says Sgt Stephen Harvey, a static camera surveillance specialist and drone course instructor at the Combined Arms Manoeuvre School, which helped run the event.

“This is a great way of raising standards as the troops are being assessed all the time.”

“As with Cambrian Patrol, we have highly trained personnel who want to test themselves against other units to hone their skills and learn from fellow crews.”

“The competitive environment helps that. Like the career courses at Brecon, when someone you’re alongside is doing that little bit better, you always want to raise your standards and beat them.”

“I think the creation of this package is the latest sign the Army is taking strong steps forward in training for flying small UAS.

“It is rolling out courses to Regular personnel, from Sandhurst to the Infantry Battle School and overseas exercises. The process has been pretty quick and it shows how adaptable the Service can be.”



A sign of that ambition was evident in the final element of Dronex, when troops worked with the tri-Service British military drone racing team.



"The Land Warfare Centre wanted to show soldiers our capabilities so they invited us along," says Lt Col Karl Eze, who is head of the outfit and also leads the Army squad.

The former Regular who now serves as a Reservist with the Honourable Artillery Company, adds: "Currently, the Army tends to use line-of-sight but we fly first-person view with a spotter and that gives you a different level of manoeuvrability because you can fly through tiny gaps and around obstacles fast.

"From a military perspective, with line-of-sight flying, if you go behind a tree or building you can't easily appreciate where the drone is or what's around it, but obviously with first-person you can."

"The level of control is also higher. You are able to pull higher-speed turns and other intricate manoeuvres, so drone racing is a great vehicle for teaching personnel high-level flying skills."

Tpr Liam Seckam, another Regular-turned-Reservist drone racer, demonstrated how they constructed improvised drones and experimented with their design.

"We build ours from scratch with components and upgrade them when new kit comes out," he explains. "Some of the Army's UAS get broken and sit on a shelf, but we fix and modify them."

"With the 3D printing that's now available you can do all sorts of stuff and part of the reason we're here is to show the troops what's possible."

It's clear the British Army, even at the highest level, recognises how vital it is to develop the Service's UAS capability – whether that be through new technology, training personnel to ever higher levels or using left-field ideas such as drone racing teams.

As Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Patrick Sanders, said during his recent speech at DSEI: "I am struck by the fact that in the evolving Ukraine drone campaign, 40 per cent of losses are attributed to pilot error. When the electro-magnetic spectrum is so heavily contested, automation fails and the skill of the pilot predominates."

"We need 'war fighters' – whether they are cyber specialists, drone pilots or infantry soldiers – to be stronger, faster, more intelligent and more resilient."

Dronex is undoubtedly an important step in such a quest, and this package is set to become one of the most important stops on the annual roster of Field Army training packages.



## 100th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery returns from suspended animation



MN FAB Group Photo Ex 23

On 4th September National Reserve Headquarters Royal Artillery (NRHQ RA) was Redesignated to become 100th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery. The Regimental structure remains largely unchanged with the exception of an additional 32 new Reservists to deliver a Target Acquisition capability through Reservist TUAS and MUAS soldiers. There will be a Parade and Regimental Dinner Night held to mark the occasion on 25th November in Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich; the former home of the Gunners and the current home of 100 Regt RA.

A Regiment being redesignated in this way is highly unusual and understanding a little of the history of the unit may help to explain why this has happened. One of the reasons for the change of name was that

few people within the Gunners and across the Army understood the unit's role and the name did not help. The association between NRHQ RA and the similarly sounding CVHQRA, a unit disbanded in 2014 to create NRHQ RA, caused confusion – some of the roles were similar but they had evolved and expanded. The name NRHQ RA also did not sound like any other Regiment. It was not a 'numbered Regiment' and its name suggested a headquarters of some sort rather than a whole Regiment. Finally, the name NRHQ had also become associated with just one of the sub-units – the All-Arms Staff Pool, leading the other two Batteries to be forgotten.

100th (Yeomanry) Regiment consists of 368 officers and soldiers within three sub-units. Its role is Operational Support



and augmentation of Warfighting Increment to Fd Army formation HQs. It is a Future Soldier Regiment of The Army Reserve under OpCom 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team (1 DRS BCT). Providing Staff Officers, Gunnery Instructors and TACPs aligned to provide Fd Army and wider Defence with Trg Sp, Institutional Resilience, and Warfighting Increment. Delivering multiple capabilities held in small numbers, unified by an Operationally Focussed golden thread in a single unit structure which delivers flexibility, efficiency and coherence.

Whilst the Regiment sits within 1 DRS BCT it also provides capability and outputs to elsewhere within Field Army but there is an overwhelming core of Royal Artillery personnel and outputs.

221 (Wessex) Battery is based in Larkhill but recruits nationally to provide Gunnery Staff to REINFORCE all of the Regular and Reserve RA units within Field Army, the

Royal School of Artillery (RSA) and the Royal Artillery Capability and Assurance Team (RACAT). They are integral to the planning and delivery of the RA Transition To War (TTW) plan through retention of expertise.



A French Caesar conducting night firing

255 (Somerset Yeomanry) Battery is based in Bath and provides JTACs and JTAC signallers including JTAC-I and JTAC-E to REINFORCE the Field Army and other Defence users either as individual augmentees or as formed TACPs. They are integral to the delivery of Regular and Reserve JTAC Training and Retention of SQEP.



The All-Arms Staff Pool (AASP) provides Reserve Staff Officers to Field Army formation headquarters as augmentees for training and warfighting increment for operations. They also deliver project work and are integral to the delivery of Adventurous Training through pre-existing KSE. The AASP supports HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps including the Battlespace Co-ordination Detachment, 3rd UK Division including the Multi-Domain Operations Group, 1st UK Division, 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade, 1st Multi-National Field Artillery Brigade, 7th Air Defence Group, 12th and 20th Armoured Brigades, 16th Air Assault Brigade, 4th and 7th Light Brigades, 11th Security Force Assistance Brigade, 8 Engineer Brigade and Standing Joint Command. The AASP also delivers the Army's Naval Gunfire Liaison Officer Capability.



4 members of the AASP on Ex TALLIN DAWN

by Lt Col Adam Greenfield RA  
Commanding Officer  
100th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery

Some statistics:

- 221 (Wessex) Battery provided 28% of the instructors on the recent Reserve Centralised Training Event in Larkhill.
- 255 (Somerset Yeomanry) Bty contains the largest number of trained JTACs of any single Field Army sub-unit – 20.
- The Naval Gunfire Liaison Officer capability only exists within the Reserves and are involved in UK, NATO and Five Powers Defence Arrangements live firing multiple times each year.
- The All-Arms Staff Pool consists of 183 staff officers taken from any cap badge to support Field Army formations.
- The Regiment forms the UK spine of NATO's 1st Multi-National Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters in support of the ARRC.
- The Regiment is the only National Reserve unit in the Royal Artillery. This means a reduced minimum commitment of only 19 days and no need for personnel to be located in proximity to the unit.
- On any given day an average of 10% of the workforce are committed to Operate outputs (rather than internal Training)
- The Regiment has soldiers contributing to the delivery of every Gunner capability with the exception of the STA capabilities held within 5th Regt RA.
- The Regiment does not only contain officers – there are 129 soldiers including 23 Warrant Officer posts.



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See Distribution

Date: 6 October 2023

**ROYAL ARTILLERY CENTRE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (RACPD) – UPDATE**

1. I am writing in my capacity as the Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Royal Artillery Centre for Personal Development (RACPD), to provide an update on our charity following the recent loss of the RA Apprenticeship contract. The contract (which included the AAC) was awarded to The Colleges' Partnership (TCP) on 1 August 2023, and the RACPD staff provided an excellent handover during July and August.

2. The RACPD Board of Trustees' unanimously voted for RACPD to continue trading with the same charitable objects. I have already briefed Master Gunner St James's Park of that decision and he was delighted that RACPD is to continue as a Gunner charity to benefit our soldiers, their dependants, and the wider veteran community. I have been asked to brief the Master Gunner's Committee in December of this year and will set out the context in which the charity will operate, its vision for the future and its core objectives.

3. RACPD staff are currently restructuring but will maintain delivery of high quality information, advice and guidance (IAG), relevant programmes of learning and aligning military skills with recognised civilian qualifications where possible and appropriate. This offer will continue to benefit the Gunner community in terms of increasing in motivation and confidence in life-long learning and it thereby supports better employment opportunities, in-Service as well as in the civilian labour market. In essence, RACPD will now be able to focus on the non-apprenticeship elements of Personal and Professional Development (PD) working in tandem with stakeholders such as RARHQ and TCP, along with a variety of other charitable organisations and companies who are focussed on supporting our people.

4. Please be patient as RACPD re-launches our charity to better focus and concentrate on supporting your soldiers outwith the apprenticeship scheme. It is worth reminding you that RACPD, as a charity reinvests all income generated from delivering personal and professional development opportunities, back into the Royal Regiment, through a number of tangible activities. As such, we will continue sponsoring the annual RACPD Awards, invite requests for funding PD activities through annual allocations ringfenced for all RA Regular and Reserve units and organisations with Gunners on their establishments, and may also introduce a new initiative whereby we will consider applications for other educational opportunities for RA soldiers who cannot be funded via alternative sources. Further communication will follow.



R M Clements CBE  
 Major General  
 Chairman RACPD Trustee Board

Distribution:

All RA Regular and Reserve units – CO

Copy to:

- Comd 1 DRS BCT
- Comd 7 AD Gp
- Comd Field Army Surveillance Group
- Comdt RSA
- Comd Watchkeeper Force
- Comd Larkhill Garrison GMT
- RACPD Board of Trustees and Chief Executive





**Major Helena Holden**



Maj Helena Holden was presented a Commendation by Lt Gen Sharon Nesmith. Helena is a Gunner – who has performed impressively as a Campaign Manager in Army Comms

**Capt H R Holden RA**

Capt (now A/Maj) Holden is commended for her outstanding contribution as a motivated and professional communicator who has been employed in Army Comms as a Campaign Manager for the last three years. She has brought a background in PR as well as previous regular experience to bear, delivering an Innovation campaign well beyond that which should be reasonably expected. She regularly shifts her availability to match changing Army priorities and is thoroughly deserving of this formal recognition.

**Mrs Sally Hutton**



Sally has been a great asset to the RA (she also works to the Sappers...) and is a great help to RA WF Plans, the RA Desks at APC and to the RARCMOs. She was nominated for the award by Lt Col Paddy Talbot-King – particularly for her efforts in delivering the RA's Future Soldier structures.

**Mrs Sally Hutton**

Sally Hutton is commended for her outstanding work within the Army's Org Branch team responsible for managing Royal Artillery and Royal Engineer structures. These Corps underwent a significant overhaul under the Army's Future Soldier transformation programme, demanding substantial, complex, and regularly changing outputs to create the structures required for the future Land force. She has been a lynch pin in this work, displaying phenomenal tenacity, dedication, and attention to detail. The huge structural change her team has delivered would not have been possible without her.



**The Royal Artillery Ceremony of Remembrance at Hyde Park Corner 12th November 2023**



The 2023 Royal Artillery Ceremony of Remembrance will this year be taking place on Sunday 12th November at the RA Memorial on Hyde Park Corner from 1000 onwards.

All Veterans are invited to conduct a march past at the RA Ceremony of Remembrance. This will be coordinated by Master Gunner Young Officers and the

Royal Artillery Battery Sergeant Major. All those who would like to take part are to meet at the Wellington Arch at 1115, with the service starting at 1030.



## Bristol war grave sparks search for living relatives



Simon Bendry from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Harry Dunn is buried at Arnos Vale Cemetery in Bristol

Historians have appealed for living relatives of a serviceman to come forward after the discovery of his grave at a Bristol cemetery.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission recently created a new headstone for Harry Dunn at Arnos Vale in Bristol.

Although narrowed down to a couple of metres, the exact location of his grave could not be confirmed.

The headstone is inscribed: "Buried near this spot." Now historians are looking for any known relatives to come forward.

Simon Bendry from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission said they have managed to gather a fair bit of information about Mr Dunn.

He said: "Harry enlisted in 1915 into the South Midland Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery, which was part of the territorial force."

"He served in France and Belgium on the Western Front up until the end of 1917, when the division he was serving with transferred to Italy."

"He served as a driver, so he was one of those responsible for driving the horses that moved the artillery guns and wagons around on the battlefields."

Mr Dunn returned home to the Brislington area of Bristol at the start of 1919, but died of pneumonia only a month later.

As he was still in service when he died, he was eligible for a Commonwealth War Graves headstone as a World War I casualty.

"So in recent weeks we've been able to discover a reasonable amount about Harry," said Mr Bendry.

Mr Dunn was born in Brislington and was one of eight children. During World War I, he gave his next of kin as his uncle living at Sandwich Road, in Brislington.

"His uncle Albert Keepin died tragically in a work-related incident in 1916 but even on discharge in 1919 Mr Dunn gave his permanent address as that of his aunt and uncle in Sandwich Road."

"So we know that he had that very strong connection."

"The records we, as an organisation hold, give no further next of kin information, and therefore the whole story as to why Harry's grave was not marked at the time, and why it's taken 100 years to do so is one that we're starting to unpick," Mr Bendry added.

Research to date has not revealed any further married names, from the sisters Harry had in the early 1920s.

"We know sister Alice had a connection with Newport in Monmouthshire. We know that another brother had emigrated to Canada," Mr Bendry said.

"But then there are the rest of the family who still have that sort of Bristol connection, as far as we can see.

"So any connections with the Dunn family, or people who feel that they have that connection to the Dunn family. Those are the people we're looking to engage with."

by Matthew Pick  
BBC News



## Commanding Officers' Lunch



from left to right  
Michael Charlton-Weedy, David Lyon, Derek Hudson, Matt Brocklesbury, Greg Cole, Harry Waller, Robert Purdy, Tom Bremridge, Tony Faith, Richard Wallwork, Richard Williams, Chris Squier

On 20th September Harry Waller, the current Commanding Officer of 4th Regiment, and 11 of his predecessors spanning the last 40 years shared a cheerful reunion lunch at the Army & Navy Club in London. Sadly, for a variety of reasons, John Patrick, Rob Alston, John Catto and Chris Hakes were unable to be present to complete the set.

### 4th Regiment COs

- 1983-85 Tom Bremridge
- 1985-87 John Patrick\*
- 1987-90 Richard Williams
- 1990-92 Michael Charlton-Weedy
- 1992-95 Tony Faith
- 1995-97 David Lyon
- 1997-99 Robert Purdy
- 2005-07 Derek Hudson
- 2007-09 Greg Cole
- 2009-11 Chris Squier
- 2011-14 Richard Wallwork
- 2014-16 John Catto\*
- 2016-18 Rob Alston\*
- 2018-21 Chris Hakes\*
- 2021-23 Matt Brocklesbury
- 2023- Harry Waller





## Royal Artillery Alpine Skiing: Exercise ALPINE TIGER



RA Team at Army Championships

This season's iteration of Ex ALPINE TIGER was an immense success, with both novice skiers and seasoned racers vying for the Gunner Cup. Ex ALPINE TIGER consists of two weeks of training then a week of racing. The training offered by the ESF in Alpe d'Huez was second to none and they provided an expert training environment which set the Gunners up for success for the remainder of the season. None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our sponsors, who have the thanks of all the Gunners who took part. Particular thanks go to MBDA whose sponsorship makes the Championships possible by largely contributing towards the race fees and ESF instructors.

The training started with a few days doing drills and building technical competence and confidence on skis. As the training

package progressed, training in racecourses was introduced, which represented a great challenge to those who had never raced before. Most competitors took to it quickly, and as we moved into our first timed runs the competitive spirit, we pride ourselves on, was clearly on display. These initial races set the conditions perfectly for race week.

Race week was a great success with the Gunner Alpine Committee fighting some tough weather and snow conditions to get all three races completed: a Slalom, typical Giant Slalom (GS) and an extended GS. It was fiercely competitive with some excellent racing. The overall team competition was convincingly won by 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, with SSgt Curran from 1RHA taking home both the male overall and the Veteran's Cup. The female category was won by Sgt Margetts of the Honourable



Artillery Company. SSgt Wilkes and Sgt Margetts also received Colours this year for their outstanding commitment to the Gunner Alpine scheme.

The novice category of skiers is filled with those who have never skied before (if you've ever put skis on you can't be in the novice category). The grit and determination shown by those in this category is particularly impressive. It's no mean feat to hurl yourself down a race piste with only two weeks experience. Particular plaudits go to the winner of the Novice category, Gnr Baggaley from 5th Regiment Royal Artillery.

After the Gunner Champs, the top 16 RA skiers continued onto an elite training camp in Les Deux Alpes. With exceptional coaching from the team in resort, the Gunners came on leaps and bounds. The Royal Navy were also training in the same resort and kindly included us in their race package, in which the Gunners performed remarkably well.

The success was continued at both the Divisional Championships and the Army Championships, with Gunners getting podiums in both the Novice and overall category at Divisional Champs, and a couple of strong results at the Army Champs. With a number of first-time racers placing highly in these competitions the future of Gunner Alpine is looking bright.

Lt Vanbeck from 32RA, was fortunate enough to be selected for the Army team, this was following a second and third place finish in the slalom races at the Army Champs, and top 10 finishes in the other events. He then went on to represent the Army at the Inter-services Championships, in which the Army team convincingly won. Lt Vanbeck also placed 4th in the Inter-services Alpine combined race, which earned him a place on the UK Armed Forces team to compete at the British Championships.

by Lt Rob Vanbeck  
32nd Regiment Royal Artillery



LBdr Tim Hill competing in the Giant Slalom at Gunner Championships



## Navy sunk on way to convincing title win



A stunning solo effort from Gnr Akisi Yaravoli

A 36-0 demolition of the Royal Navy paved the way for another successful title defence by the Army women in the Inter-Services Rugby League Championships.

The reds ran in eight tries on their way to a commanding victory in Portsmouth, a result that was followed by a 34-0 triumph over the Royal Air Force as the team lifted the trophy for a 14th successive time.

A stunning solo effort from Gnr Akisi Yaravoli (RA) was the highlight of the soldiers' opening day win as she collected a kick deep in her own half before embarking on a scintillating solo run that saw her sprint the near length of the field to touch down under the posts.

Skipper Sgt Emily White (AGC(RMP)) and vice-captain Cpl Ellie Raines (RAMC) were also on target in head coach Sgt Adam Coburn's

(RA) first Services fixture, and he was delighted with what he saw from his players.

"As a team we found it reasonably comfortable," he said. "There are always things to work on after every match, but in this case that is just me being picky."

"It took a few minutes to get into our game and some harsh words from the sidelines got us going. We then clicked into gear and started to move forward in the way we wanted."

"From that point we controlled proceedings and were in their half for probably 90 per cent of the fixture."

Despite having a host of players plying their trade in the Super League, Coburn decided to stick with the squad that has served him so well over the course of the wider campaign.

LCpl Isabel Bibby (AGC(RMP)), Gdsm Manuqalo Komaitai (IG) and LCpl Charlotte



Hill (RLC) have been among the standout performers and top-tier scouts were among the spectators in Portsmouth. The Reds suffered semi-final heartbreak in the Super League South competition earlier in the year - losing 22-12 to London Broncos - but their efforts paid off as they went on to secure the Services silverware.



"It is a reward for the girls who have worked so hard - they have dug out blind at times," the coach continued.

"This is the culmination of our season and is a chance to hammer the other Services as much as we can - they have 100 per cent earned that."

"The Super League South has massively helped our development and the squad is probably 80 per cent new."

"There are some pretty big teams involved in that and it is nice to go up against them and get a few wins."

"We were together for two weeks before the Inter-Services and that made a difference - there was a real sense of cohesion. The players had an almost telepathic understanding and we're hoping for more of the same next season."



Gnr Akisi Yaravoli



Veterans Bronze medal +80 kg at the English Institute of Sports



Sgt Yamikani Guba, 4th Regiment Royal Artillery

Sgt Yamikani Guba of the 4th Regiment Royal Artillery won the Veterans Bronze medal +80 kg at the British Taekwondo National Championships 23 at the English Institute of Sports.

Guba was team captain for the UK Armed Forces Taekwondo (all Army players) at the full contact Taekwondo Championships. All UKAF fighters competed with indomitable spirit and have benefitted from the step up in class.

The Secretary of the Army Martial Arts Association Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) D Campey MBE was present to support the UK Armed Forces Taekwondo team at the Championships.





**RAA Battery Grants**

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

Find out more information from [emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk) or through your chain of command.

**King's Troop**

The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery recently hosted the Baxter Ball; their yearly event celebrating the end of the ceremonial season prior to some well-earned summer leave. This year was a particularly large celebration to match an equally busy year seeing Op BRIDGE, Op GOLDEN ORB and the mounting of King's Life Guard, amongst many other occasions, all taking place in this training year.



**106 RA**

Serving members of 457th (Hampshire Carabiners Yeomanry) Battery, veterans and family members enjoyed a summer families day in the Summer.

Over 85 members gathered with families at the Orangery Suite with some ex- members travelling from Canada, Spain, and France to attend the day. The historic venue is set in three acres of walled gardens which allowed families and friends together in the relaxing environment to catch up whilst enjoying a beautiful hog roast buffet.

Over the last 12 months the Bty has mobilised Army Reserve soldiers and officers to support 12 Regt RA in Northern Iraq on Op SHADER and will continue to do so into 2024. The Bty has regularly deployed officers and soldiers to Iraq, Afghanistan, Cyprus, and numerous MACA taskings since its formation in 2000.



**7 PARA RHA**

At the end of a busy and demanding Ex HAKARA STORM in Kenya, F Bty enjoyed celebrating Ahmed Kehl Day and spent their last full day at the Maiyan Resort. This provided a great opportunity for everyone to relax before flying home and to enjoy some well-deserved rest and recuperation after an exciting and challenging period in Kenya.



**14 Regt RA**

1st Bty RA, The Blazers recently celebrated their 244th Birthday. The aim of the celebration was to bring members of the Battery together, encouraging team building, boosting morale and educating members of the Battery on the history of The Blazers.



**TISF23**

The Thorney Island Summer Fayre returned with a bang. After being postponed in 2022 due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II, on Saturday the 2nd of September the long-awaited family's day was opened by the Fort Cumberland Guard and the firing of their ceremonial cannon. This event is traditionally tailored to facilitate community cohesion across the whole of 7 Air Defence Group.



**RA Branches**

**Aigburth-Merseyside Branch**

On Saturday 19th September twenty Branch and families members visited Lytham St Annes to visit the 1940s Festival Wartime Weekend displaying WW2 military equipment, history displays, a replica Spitfire and vintage traders.

A team of six ex-Members of 208 Bty HSF Troop completed their annual fundraising event to raise funds for the Liverpool Alder Hey Children's Hospital on 27th September before the expected 'Storm Agnes' arrived. Over the years this team have raised in excess of £30,000 for the Children's Hospital.



**Lewes Branch**

Lewes Branch held their Annual Branch Summer BBQ on Saturday 26 August 2023 at St Marys' Supporters Club in Lewes. After the Advance



Party got drenched in the downpour setting up the gazebo's, no sooner had we set up, they were no longer required as the sun shone brightly on the RAA for the rest of the day.

35 members & their guests enjoyed a fun packed day. The 'Boys' finally took the lead in the Annual Skittles Tournament against the 'Girls' and they now lead by 2 - 1.

All enjoyed a truly fantastic day of a great laugh, good food, excellent company and a true sense of comradeship, at such a Great Annual Event which lasted into the evening (as always). We also welcomed two new members to our Branch.

It was also a great opportunity to celebrate our Vice Chairman, Budge Harding's, 83rd Birthday. Happy Birthday Budge.

All RA Serving or Veteran's are always Welcome to Lewes Branch and please get in touch via <https://www.theraalewes.co.uk/contact-us>



**Canterbury Branch**

In September and October Canterbury Branch supported local commemorative memorial events:

On the 1st September members from the Branch attended a Commemorative Service for the Merchant Navy Day service in Dover. It was very well supported by local dignitaries, British Legion Branches, Merchant Navy Association, Sea Cadets, Royal Marine Association and RAA members. There were 3 RAA Standards on parade; Kent District - Doug Kay, Dover - Harry Hopper, Canterbury - Ray Homer. Wreaths were laid by Dennis Gabb (Canterbury) and John Bishop (SE Region). It was a moving ceremony conducted within view of the

Straits of Dover where so many seafarers lost their lives in conflict.

A wreath was also laid on behalf of the Norwegian Embassy at the Royal Norwegian Navy Garden of Remembrance.



The Branch attended the Battle of Britain Commemorative Service at the Memorial Arch in Folkestone. Standard Bearers were on parade with the Air Training Corps.



**South Pembrokeshire Branch**

Most recently the Regional Representative, Clive Boyles visited the Branch, attending one of their meetings. The Branch has continued to forge links with the British Legion in Milford Haven and the



VC Gallery Centre which operates both in Pembroke Dock and Haverfordwest. Although consisting of only 24 members, South Pembrokeshire Branch have organised many fund-raising events throughout the year and continue to make contributions to the RACF.

In this area of historical Royal Artillery presence, with Manorbier, Pendine, Penally and Castlemartin (in their heydays!), seeing many Gunners pass through their gates, it is considered that there are many RA veterans in our area, and we continue to try and recruit new members, to foster good social ties and maintain the feeling of the Gunner Family.

So, if you live in the South Pembrokeshire Area and you are reading this, don't delay -

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH, TODAY!



**Germany Branch**

Veterans in the Branch attended the Candle in the Wind Commemorative Service. This Service remembers the fallen and honours the veterans. It was held at Nederweert War Cemetery with a fly past conducted by the Dutch Airforce. Wreaths were laid in memory of soldiers from the RA, RHA and HAC.



**25 Regt RA - Reunion**

Over the weekend 16/17 Jun 23 saw the 39th Annual Reunion of the disbandment of 25th Regiment RA. The event was held at 204 Battery RA, 101 Regiment RA, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

25 Regiment RA were disbanded in 1984 in order for the reformation of 3 RHA with the majority of its manpower being subsumed into 3 RHA during the reformation process. It is a real testament to the tenacity of this diminishing band of brothers that over 120 attended the weekend – bearing in mind the age group is some 60+. Indeed even 39 years on we had members attending for their first time and a fantastic weekend was had by one and all. Next year, however, sees our 40th and due to the age of those attending, but more importantly to drive down the cost, the event will be held over three days during the week commencing Mon 24 Jun 24 and culminating in a Cathedral Service on Wed 26 Jun 24 followed by a party in Newcastle Labour Club that evening. This will be a high-profile event with the Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Maj Gen R Clements representing the wider Gunner community and the Mayor of Newcastle in attendance. A generous benefactor has underwritten accommodation in two of the top city centre hotels; the Vermont and the County and anyone who has still to sign up for this should contact Tom Robson at: [tom@matom.com](mailto:tom@matom.com) for further information. Outline details are contained on the Regiment's Facebook page: "25 Regt RA – 40th Anniversary".



**NEC Members visit the Museum**

NEC members enjoyed a heritage visit to the Royal Artillery Museum in October. If your group wishes to visit, please contact the Royal Artillery Museum, Wood Road, Larkhill, visits are by appointment.



**Lisbon Maru Memorial Service**

Last month the RAA Association Secretary attended the screening of 'The Sinking of The Lisbon Maru'. In October the 81st Anniversary Service was held at the National Memorial Arboretum, representatives from RHQ RA attended the commemorative event; Lt Col Richard Carter (Retd), Maj Richard Lupton and the King's Standard Bearer, Mr Mark Ballard.



**RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY**

To date in 2023 we have helped our Gunner family by providing 452 grants.

**Just over £530,000 has been pledged to help those in need in 2023.**

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

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

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

**Thank You's**

*"I wish to convey that the assistance rendered to me to get me back is deeply significant; XXX and I are hugely grateful for your support. It is also of great comfort to know the strength of the support network for my officers and soldiers should they be in need. Thank you for your continued dedication and hard work to support our people"*

*"On behalf of XXX and the wider Regiment community, can I express my thanks and gratitude for the extremely kind and supportive support offered in these difficult times. I am sure it will make a significant difference and assist greatly"*



**Edinburgh Branch RAA**



Visit to the Lady Haig's Poppy Factory, Edinburgh, on Monday 16th October 2023.

**RA Historical Society 2023/4 Programme**

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close	Cost per Head
Tuesday 14 November 2023	Webinar	Air War Ukraine 2023: Are Air Forces obsolete?	Col Mike Blair	Friday 10 November	Nil
Tuesday 23 January 2024	Webinar	17 Pdr SP M10 in WW II	Maj Frank Baldwin	Friday 19 January	Nil
Tuesday 20 February 2024	Webinar	Tracing Frederick Miller VC	Maj Mark Martin	Friday 16 February	Nil
Tuesday 23 or Wednesday 24 April	St George's Day Lectures, RA Mess Lunch and AGM, Newcome Hall, Larkhill SP4 8QT	<b>War in North America:</b> Could the British have won the War of Independence?  British Artillery in the War	Professor Jeremy Black (to be confirmed)  Maj Rick Hatton	Tuesday 9 April	To be notified

These events are open to all Gunners  
To register please email the RAHS Secretary by the dates shown  
Email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary: richard.clayton312@gmail.com  
All Gunners are entitled to join the Society. Please contact the Secretary for details.



Date	Event	Location
2023		
01 Nov	Charities Investment Committee	London
09 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
12 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
21 Nov	RA Board of Management	Larkhill
25 Nov	100 Regt RA - Redesignation Parade	London
30 Nov	Sports Awards Dinner	Larkhill
03 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
03 Dec	St Barbara's Day Lunch	Larkhill
08 Dec	YOs Dining In	Larkhill
13 Dec	Master Gunner's Committee	Larkhill
15 Dec	Wiltshire County Carol Service	Larkhill
2024		
13 Jan	Ex SNOW STORM 24	Flachauwinkl, Salzburg, Austria
15 Feb	Royal Artillery Gold Cup	Sandown
06 Mar	Master Gunner's Committee	TBC
07 Mar	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
13 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill



**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 www.clubcolours.co.uk

**BESPOKE WALKING STICKS**

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

**REUNIONS**

**ATTENTION ALL EX-25 ERS**

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

**1 RHA REUNION DINNER**

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

**RA CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE**

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

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

Readiness  
Opportunities  
Professionalism  
Challenge



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



IN MEMORIAM

## LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Mr Ronald Cruxon 31 August 2023  
Robert Powell September 2023  
Allan Latta 27 September 2023  
Maj Alexander Johnston TD 30 September 2023  
Granville "Eddie" Woods October 2023  
Alan "Titch" Hunts 6 October 2023

**HOWICK** - Lt Christopher Roger Howick sadly passed away on 15th May 2023 aged 81. A regular army reserve on a short service commission. He was a keen cricketer and played for the regiment. His long term career took him to the West Country where he owned a very successful construction company for which he travelled the world.



**MIDDLETON** - Lt Col Gerald Courtney Middleton MBE aged 81 loving husband of Liz, father of Stephanie, Victoria and Michael and grandfather of eight lively grandchildren died unexpectedly on 19 July 2023. After spending the greater part of his Army career in BAOR Gerry retired in 1992 moving to York where he continued to work as an RO at Imphal Barracks volunteering as a York City Guide and School Governor. He was also a long serving active member of his local SVP (St Vincent de Paul) Society. In his later years Gerald (Gerry) showed great courage and stoicism during his prolonged degenerative illness never losing his humour, sense of adventure and enthusiasm for life. Gerry was much loved and is greatly missed by his family and friends.

**SHAW** - Roland (Roly) Major (Retired) died peacefully on Sunday 16th July 2023 after a short illness aged 91. Roly was commissioned into the Gunners in 1952 and served in Hong Kong and BAOR. He is survived by his daughter Nichola and his son Robert, and his second wife Dee who he married following the death of Esme to whom he had been married for over 40 years. He is also survived by two further generations of gunners, his son in law Colonel (Retired) Simon Bate OBE and his grandson, Major Joshua Bate RA. Roly spent much of his gunner career on the Gunnery Staff, both as IG BATUS and at RSA Larkhill, and was never more at ease than when he was upon the OP ridge on Salisbury Plain. On retirement in 1984 following 32 years of regular service he and Esme moved to Suffolk where he became the PSAO of 202 (Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry), part of 100 Regiment RA(V). He retired from military service in 1990 and returned to Wiltshire living in Donhead St Andrew.



**UPTON** - Ida Frances Upton nee Wass (known as Frances), died peacefully on 15th April 2023 aged 101. Dearest mother of Susan, Christine, Henry, Louisa and Caroline; grandmother of 15 and great grandmother of 23. Frances was born in Lewisham, London on 15th February 1922, the second child of Arthur and Louisa Wass. At the age of 6 months, Frances, her mother and older brother sailed to Bombay to join her father, an officer in the 4th Queen's Own Hussars serving with the British Army in India. Frances left school in 1938; took a course in shorthand and typing and was employed by the Bank of England. She helped the war effort by working in a munitions factory in the evenings. Frances was called up in 1943 and applied to the ATS, Auxilliary Territorial Service. She trained at Oswestry. Radar was a new invention and the Royal Artillery was advertising for radar operators. Frances was good at maths. She was selected and sent for training on aircraft recognition and was then deployed to the south of England. She and her colleagues had to work out the height, speed and direction of enemy aircraft and pass the information to the gunners. They all lived in very basic conditions, sometimes under canvas and sometimes in huts. They were constantly on the move as the Royal Artillery defended the southern coastline. Frances and her childhood friend, Tom Upton, a serving officer in the Royal West Kent Regiment, were married on 4th April 1945 in Hampstead. Tom was then deployed to Greece and Frances stayed in the Army. She was selected for Officer Training (OCTU), attending Course No 30 from 24 January to 28th March 1946 at Imperial Service College, Windsor and passing out from the Course as Chief Cadet. Tom subsequently served in Malaya, HQ British Army of the Rhine, Rheindahlen, Suez and Cyprus; eventually taking redundancy from the Army in 1958. The family settled in Harrow and Tom found permanent employment in a retired officer's post at the MOD in Stanmore. Frances worked as a PA for NatWest Bank. Following graduation from Sandhurst, their only son Henry, served in the Queen's Lancashire Regiment. Tom died in December, 2010.



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## Major P H Morrish MBE TD



Maj Pat Morrish (second from left) on the flight deck of HMS BULWARK, in transit to Cape Wrath 16 July 1968, with L to R: Capt Malcolm Fordyce, Michael Craig-Cooper & John Newman

Pat Morrish died in Epsom Hospital on 25 July following a cardiac arrest on 20 July aged 91. He was a longstanding member of the ABA, having joined 267 Combined Operations Bombardment Battery RA (COBBRA) at Fremington in north Devon in April 1951 as a National Service second lieutenant, the first National Service officer to be posted to a regular AO unit. The officers were trained as both NGFOs and NGLOs. After initial training at Cape Wrath, Pat was posted to B Troop in Trieste, northern Italy, until October 1952. Trieste then still had an Allied garrison of 10000 with a guardship in support of the British brigade and the UK and US Mediterranean Fleets available for reinforcement. Much of the NGS training was conducted with USMC ANGLICOs. After National

Service, Pat served with 881 (AO) Bty RA (TA) in Windsor until the Battery's disbandment in April 1967 when he was promoted Brevet Major to command the remnants of the Battery as they reformed in CVHQ RA to continue the Bombardment role as the NGS Troop RA(V). Malcolm Fordyce remembers him from this time:

Boundless energy is how I will remember Pat when I joined 881 (AO) Bty RA (TA). He was always at the forefront of all the Battery activities. But perhaps his legacy is that the NGLO role continues to this day. After the disbandment of 881 Bty in April 1967, which was formed in 1947 by former COBUs, we were transferred to the RA Specialist Pool within CVHQRA as individuals but keeping our links with 29 & 95 Cdo Regts & 95 FOU. Pat realised that we needed to continue as a formal sub unit to survive so he decided that our unit name was NGS Troop RA(V) later NGLO Section RA(V). This really secured our links for the future working with both 20 and 148 Batterys at RM Poole and worldwide.

Pat's 26 year service in the NGS word ended in 1977 when he was posted as an FGA GLO with 6 (Jaguar) Sqn RAF; in 1978 he was with 4 Fd Regt RA as a para OP officer, and in 1982 he was with CVHQ RA as a Watchkeeper. In 1986 he was appointed to the TA Pool of Information Officers as an Escort Officer, finally retiring in 1992. A fuller version of Pat's remarkable time with 267 COBBRA appeared in the 2016 Salvoes Edition 18.



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# Festival of Remembrance

Salisbury Plain



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Final course photo of the Ukrainian AS90 instructor, Train the Trainer course held this year.