



SEPTEMBER 2021



Ex URBAN STRIKE

Ex CYPHER CRESCENT

RA FOOTBALL TEAM
CLINCH PROMOTION

GUNNER

#oneregiment

The Larkhill-based team that supplies you Gunner.

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Gunner Rules

Guidance on Submissions

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

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

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

Articles must be received by the 15th day of the month preceding the magazines publication. Please send to thegunner@artycen.ra.mod.uk

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GUNNER



SEPTEMBER 2021

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Gnr Karris Artingstall receiving her Bronze Medal at the Olympics in Tokyo

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Dear Readers,

I would like to thank you for all the positive reactions to our first "new" Gunner magazine, a few tweaks are still needed but I am heartened by your support, especially for the online copy hosted on our Regimental website and DEFENCE-CONNECT.

Alongside improvements to Gunner magazine we have also refreshed our social media presence. Our social media has incredible reach, is fresh, dynamic and presents an unrivalled opportunity for our Regiments to highlight their activities and achievements in a timely manner, please follow us on:

twitter and facebook @rhqra and instagram @Royal_Artillery

As always I am open to your ideas, observations and constructive criticism, please feel free to contact me on simon.howe519@mod.gov.uk

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**Major General J M J Bennett CBE -
Regimental Colonel Commandant**

Conscious that you all want certainty about the Integrated Review (IR) outcome I am also acutely aware that this certainty doesn't yet exist! There is no question that Defence received a strong settlement within the IR, although there will be challenges in how we create sufficient capacity (people mainly) across the delivery organisations (Army HQ, Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Digital) to deliver the programmes we want to accelerate.

For the Army we have a new concept - the Future Land Combat System - which talks to doing the deep battle properly - both in terms of fires and non-lethal effects, in order to protect better our people in the close fight and when 'operating' more broadly as an army. This is - as the Master Gunner said in the last edition - music to the ears of Gunners, and indeed to all who understand the value and significance of fully integrating effects. Hence multi domain integration is a key theme for Defence - in other words harnessing 'other people's stuff' - to create concentration of effect based on a network that connects sensors, shooters and deciders in a way we haven't been able to technologically - and also culturally - until now. Thus there are new or refined roles for 16 Air Assault Brigade - the 'global response force', the commandos (or Future Commando Force, focused more on raiding and forward presence), and an opening up of the special operations community both to more individuals and teams through the creation of an army special operations brigade and its sister organisation the security force assistance brigade.

This narrative is set to be backed up by investment in people and also in the equipment programme. Crucially there are plans to upskill our people to drive this higher tech army, and also to adapt the 'MS' system to encourage people to have

a greater say in their own careers and aspirations. There will also be significant investment in exciting new synthetic training methods that use virtual reality and online gaming technology to be both immersive and to enable the machine to learn, adapt and challenge based on soldiers' inputs.

From an equipment perspective we will be enhancing Watchkeeper and MAMBA, introducing a new weapon-locating system (SERPENS) and adding more Aquila Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). There will be a new medium range contingent air defence capability as well as investment in counter UAS/drones and Short-Range Air Defence (SHORAD); and renewing the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) so it can fire both further and quicker while aligning it with the replacement for Exactor; also investing in an AS90 replacement or upgrade with improved accuracy and range, plus related modernised target acquisition.

The Army HQ is concurrently reorganising to lead all this change more effectively. Specifically we will create greater capacity to deliver the equipment, training, people and infra programmes ('turning cash into contracts') while also focusing more on the opportunities that artificial intelligence and remote autonomous systems offer to genuinely transform the army into a human-machine teamed organisation by the mid-thirties. Hence we are developing a 'Futures' directorate (from the capability directorate) to do so, with an increased focus on understanding the threats, and the conceptual and technology opportunities to counter them. We will use experimentation - including through the Royal Artillery Trials and Development Unit (RATDU) - to deliver the evidence we need ahead of the next review (in only 3 years potentially) to underpin our evolving concept of creating an integrated human/machine teamed army for 2035.



THE ROYAL ARTILLERY WAR MEMORIAL

On Sunday 18th October 1925 the War Memorial, erected to the memory of those of all ranks of the Royal Artillery who gave their lives in the Great War, was unveiled and dedicated. Field Marshall H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught graciously consented to unveil the memorial, having previously served in B Battery, 4th Brigade Royal Artillery. A Guard of Honour consisting of three officers and 100 men and the Regimental Band were drawn up in front of the memorial while the choir of St George's Garrison Church lead the singing of Hymns.

At the close of the war a considerable sum of money was raised. In order to meet the wishes of the subscribers, it was decided by a Committee composed of all ranks, to set aside not more than 12% of the amount received for a permanent Memorial in London, the remainder to be used for benevolent purposes.

Over 888,000 of all ranks passed through the Regiment between the years 1914-1918. Of this number, 49,076 were killed in action, or died, 129,156 were wounded and 6,689 were reported missing, making the casualties a total of 184,821, or nearly twice the size of the artillery at the commencement of the war. At the end of his address, H.R.H said to future generations of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, I say:

*'See to it ye that come after
That their names be not forgotten'*

The Central Committee consisting of 55 members of all ranks from Gunner to General was formed in 1918. The specification given to the sculptor was for 'a sculptured group in bronze on a suitable pedestal, such as will be unmistakably recognisable as an Artillery memorial to any gunner or layman of ordinary intelligence. The Committee unanimously approved the design submitted by Mr Jagger. His Majesty the King, Colonel-in-Chief was graciously pleased to approve the design.

The memorial consists of a platform and pedestal surmounted by a sculptured representation of a 9.2 inch BL Howitzer. At the south end is placed the figure of an Artillery subaltern and on the east and west sides respectively are figures of a Gunner (in shirt sleeves) carrying 18 pdr ammunition and a Driver sheltering himself with a waterproof sheet. At the north end, over the spot where copies of the Roll of Honour and the Royal Artillery War Commemoration Book have been deposited, is the recumbent figure of a dead artilleryman.

In 1925 a wreath, which was seven feet in diameter, composed of laurel with bands of red roses and sprigs of rosemary inserted for remembrance was laid. The badge on the inscription attached to the wreath was taken from the remains of an unknown Artilleryman, found on one of the battlefields of France. The card was framed in wood from broken crosses found on graves of Artillerymen whose bodies had been moved to consecrated ground.

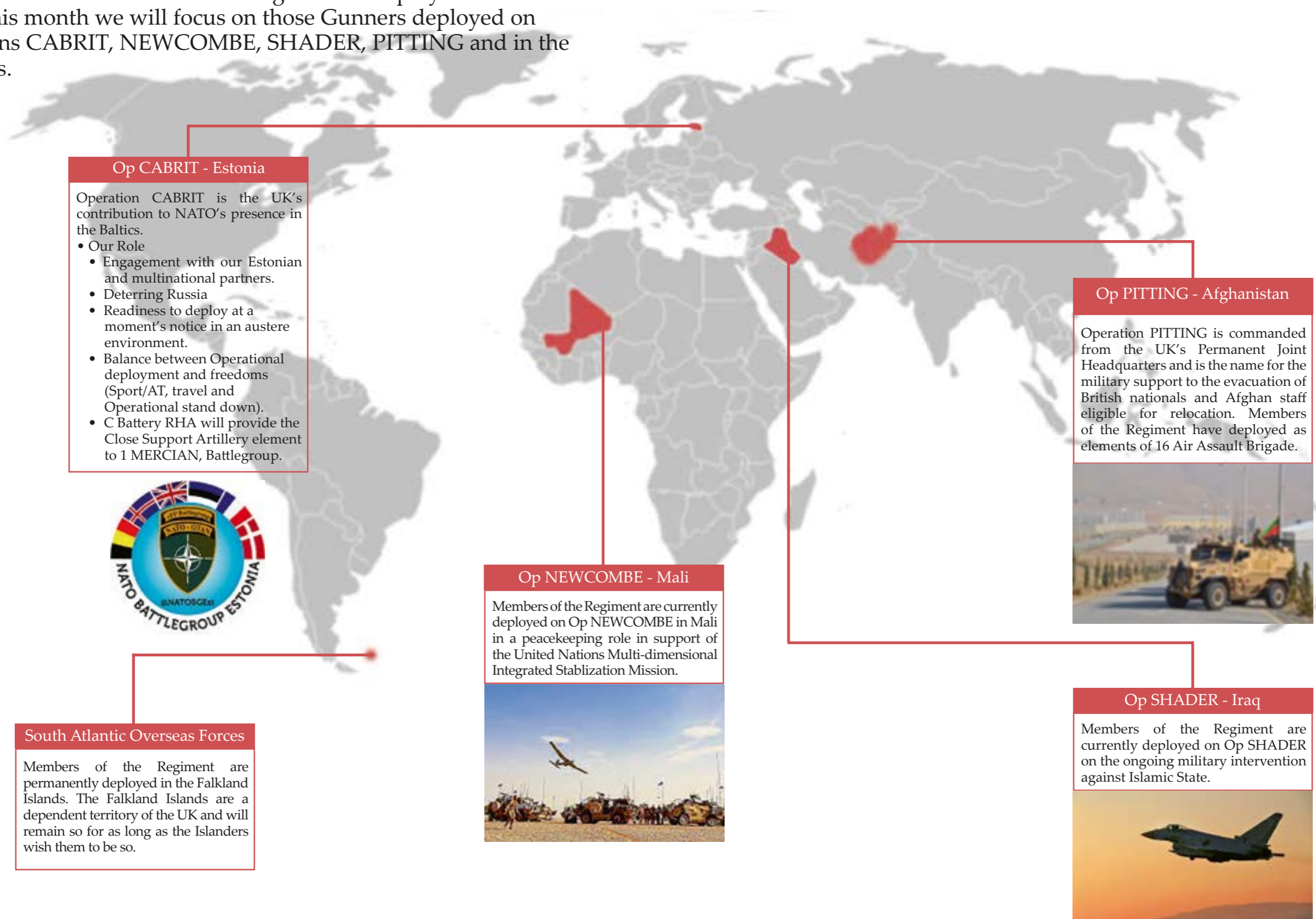
On Sunday 29th May 1949 the panels to commemorate all ranks of the Royal Artillery, who gave their lives in the 1939-1945 War were unveiled and dedicated. The Regiment were particularly gratified that H.R.H. The Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh kindly consented to perform the Unveiling Ceremony. As in 1925 a Guard of Honour together with the Royal Artillery Mounted Band and the Royal Artillery Band were present, together with the Woolwich Garrison Choir.

The extension to the memorial was effected by removing the flight of steps at the south end and substituting in its place a wide stone platform on which are laid three bronze panels. The Architect for the project was Darcey Braddell. One panel bears the words: 'to commemorate 29,924 all ranks of the Royal Artillery who gave their lives for Their King and Country in all parts of the World during the war of 1939-1945. They died with the faith that the future of all mankind would benefit by their sacrifice'.

Every year since 1925, the Royal Regiment has held a Ceremony of Remembrance at the Memorial to remember those that fell. During the Second World War attendance was limited just as it was last year due to Covid. Just as in 1925 and 1949, a Guard is on parade together with a Band. In 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the Great War, the Regiment read out the Roll of Honour at locations across the World, finishing the final readings at the War Memorial. This year, soldiers of 5th Regiment Royal Artillery will be on parade to ensure the Field Marshall H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught's words are remembered.

Anyone wishing to attend the Ceremony of Remembrance on Sunday 14th November 2021 and who requires a seat, should contact andy.astbury202@mod.gov.uk. You are asked to be seated by 1030 hrs. Please note that this is an outdoor event and you should dress according to the conditions.

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).
 - C Battery RHA will provide the Close Support Artillery element to 1 MERCIAN, 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 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 PITTING - Afghanistan

Operation PITTING is commanded from the UK's Permanent Joint Headquarters and is the name for the military support to the evacuation of British nationals and Afghan staff eligible for relocation. Members of the Regiment have deployed as elements of 16 Air Assault Brigade.



Op SHADER - Iraq

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





Initial Recruit Training during a Global Pandemic



Army Training Centre (Pirbright) Parade

The last twelve months for 59 (Asten) Battery have been somewhat challenging. If anything was to fast-track changes to training, a global pandemic was a sure way. On the announcement of lockdown, 59 (Asten) Battery had recruits already in training; with Colenso, Le Cateau and Sphinx Troops in week four of their fourteen-week programme. The decision was made to send the recruits home to see out lockdown V1.0 and return when it was deemed safe to do so. This resulted in an adaptive and innovative change to the delivery of initial training. Before their return to camp, the recruits were subject to hours of virtual learning and self-development designed to teach and test their knowledge on all military subjects, such as the Values and Standards, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) and Physical Training, to name just a few. Thankfully, due to the efforts of the training teams, this virtual learning proved invaluable. It set the conditions for the recruits to return to camp to conduct a bespoke five week course designed to prepare and assess them, ready to pass out of Phase One training and onto the next stage in the recruit's career.

In fear of missing out, and in addition to the 'adapt and overcome' virtual learning sessions, the training teams joined the rest of the Field Army and were required to deliver COVID-19 testing to the recruits on their return to camp. This enabled the recruits to continue their training in a COVID free environment, ensuring every possible step was taken to keep the recruits safe.

A fast and furious five weeks was to follow! An intense and condensed training programme was created to include a full range package. This comprised of an Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) (after only four weeks of 'actual' training) and a shortened Final Exercise, whilst adapting to the new and alien social interaction requirements and adhering to Force Health Protection Measures. The recruits maintained their professionalism with great success, with the vast majority of them successfully taking part in a modified pass off parade, which was streamed live on social media for their families and loved ones to enjoy.

by Sgt R Ellenor
59 (Asten) Bty
Ops Sgt



I arrived at ATC Pirbright during the middle of the pandemic not knowing what to expect - 2020 was certainly to be the year of the unknown. Driving through the gates and signing for my room certainly cemented that feeling. Whilst the rest of the Army were being deployed on Op RESCRIPT or at home on leave, I was taking a troop of 24 recruits through their initial training. They turned up in July and due to restrictions from COVID-19 training, we started with only 50% of the expected numbers.

It was tricky from the off; trying to nurture and train 24 recruits whilst maintaining two-metre social distancing and wearing face coverings to name but a few. Simple day to day activities we take for granted, such as feeding several hundred recruits, became a challenge. Everything slowed right down. Gone were the days where you had 20 minutes to have breakfast! We were now having to ensure that everyone maintained two metres distance, sanitise and wash their hands prior to arriving at the hot plate. During the initial two weeks of training, the recruits were required to wear blue armbands to show that they were in the controlled monitoring phase due to being a higher risk of infection and transmission. Every lesson was to be conducted outside or in a large open (make-shift) lecture theatre. This adaptation of teaching had an effect on both the recruits and the permanent staff, who were required to deliver crucial initial training in some unsuitable learning environments or weather conditions. As the weeks passed, the constant commitment and dedication from the permanent staff to ensure the maintenance of social distancing and also safety during training was exceptional, demonstrating the true calibre of the individuals selected to be here.

Amongst the chaos of COVID, the Common Military Syllabus (CMS) was being remodelled to improve training and to be more focused on the development of recruits in line with the Values and Standards. Surprisingly, the adaptations of COVID training supported the implementation of CMS21. ATC(P) had an uplift in resources and infrastructure; with the building of several outdoor classrooms - which provide some protection from the elements; a new undercover-outdoor gym -

allowing the recommencing of PT with kit and equipment; and the introduction of large touch screen boards (Prowise boards) in most rooms and Troop lines. Virtual learning which we relied upon during the first lockdown, remained as a support to learning, particularly if we had outbreaks of potential COVID cases or to support in revision sessions.



One of the biggest changes to the CMS has been the implementation of a modular learning process (three modules) which culminate with a Battle Camp (another new addition to the programme). Different to CMS 18, Battle Camp 2 sees the recruits deploying for two weeks to an area 'at reach', simulating and preparing them for longer sustained deployments in the field. The Battle Camp consists of a range package followed by an exercise period. Rather than the previous teach and assess approach, CMS 21 has introduced Battle Exercises, which are scenario based allowing for a sense of realism to the teaching and learning.

With all these adaptations and developments, we have all had to change our approach to the delivery of the CMS. It has required increased innovation and creativity from the instructors, as it allowed us the space and freedom to adapt training to meet the requirements for each recruit. The last year has been difficult on all of us but we have seen some good developments from it.

by Sgt Swatland
59 (Asten) Bty
Woolwich Troop Sgt



Ex URBAN STRIKE - 26 Regt RA return to action



The impacts of COVID-19 have been vast and the opportunities to practice soldiering limited, so it was with much anticipation that 26th Regiment Royal Artillery rolled out to Brecon Beacons and Salisbury Plain Training Area on Exercise URBAN STRIKE in July 2021.

The exercise developed individual military skills, delivered Multi Launch Rocket System (MLRS) and Extractor 2 training, and enabled urban operations conceptual study to take place. In Wales, troops navigated their way across the rugged terrain of Pen-y-fan, competed in stretcher races, and were tested on navigation and shooting skills during the first phase of the exercise. All events were scored, and contributed to the coveted Painter Sword, the annual inter-battery competition, originally presented to the Regiment by Lt Col Painter RA who was the Commanding Officer in 1966.

However, it didn't stop there, and within days of throwing themselves around Wales, troops were instead throwing themselves off buildings, down tunnels and into discussions on how best to deliver urban operations in Copehill Down:

"The urban training was mega, abseiling down buildings, crawling through tunnels and kicking down doors is the kind of stuff you join the Army for."

The recently formed Targets Troop (made up of four target development teams who provide specialist

targeting advice and artillery intelligence support), homed in on the 'target end'. Working to understand how to maximise effectiveness in complex urban terrain. Using the Defence Targeting Toolset and supported by Apaches from 3 Regt AAC and Watchkeeper UAS from 47 Regt RA they built target packs and passed critical information from Watchkeeper to the Apache to prosecute.



"Fire Mission Two Launchers"

"It was amazing to have the opportunity to work with live Apache and Watchkeeper to develop then prosecute targets. The information the sensors those two assets can produce is eye-opening." SSgt Cole 26 Regt RA, Targets Troop.



Throughout, the E2 and MLRS Batteries were exercising in the rural-urban interface, bouncing from hide to firing point rapidly in an effort to go undetected and improve survivability. The soldiers from 19 (Gibraltar 1779-1783) Battery delivered a Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWT) on MLRS in the urban environment, throwing out initiatives and ideas that will help to shape our doctrine for years to come, ensuring we are building our knowledge from the ground up.

A thoroughly enjoyable couple of weeks, pulled together by the training team at 26 Regt RA enabled the successful delivery of effective training. The CO, Lt Col Chris Wild RA says:

"Ex URBAN STRIKE was designed to provide three key training opportunities; first it gave the Regiment the chance to get into the field and back to soldiering following COVID-19 dispersal, second it gave us a chance to develop and test our doctrine in the urban environment and third it gave us the opportunity to deploy as a regiment to test our skills and drills before 1 Arty Bde's Ex ARIES STORM in September. Most importantly it let us build our cohesion and fight together in the most testing of environments."

by Maj S A Manning-Degobertière RA & Maj F Macpherson RA
19 (Gibraltar 1779-1783) Bty
26 Regt RA



GOC 3 (UK) Div with 19 (Gibraltar 1779-1783) Bty



4 Regt RA in 2021 and beyond - #FightingFourth



For the last three years 4 Regt RA's mission set has been rich and varied. In 2019, the Regiment deployed on Peacekeeping Operations as part of Op TOSCA in Cyprus. As it was for many, 2020 was dominated by Op RESCRIPT – Defence's response and support to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, Fighting Fourth's focus has returned to preparing for our Primary Purpose; provision of the overwhelming firepower required to shatter enemy will and cohesion, in support of a Combat Arm.

Despite being part of 1st Artillery Brigade within 3 (UK) Division, Fighting Fourth are aligned to 1 (UK) Division. The Regiment's role is to support the Light Brigade – a light role One Star formation who are trained, prepared and ready to constrain and fight enemies and adversaries worldwide.

The environment the Light Brigade is likely to fight within is highly contested: it is expected that the threat to Friend Forces (FF) will appear amongst the population, across a 360 degree battle; there will be a high presence of Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) and a high threat from Counter Indirect Fires (C-IDF); and the sophistication of Electronic Warfare (EW) capabilities will make it difficult for FF to freely communicate. In such an environment, the Light Brigade expect to be found and killed unsustainably quickly and, as a mitigating consequence, is driving rapid change in the way it will fight.

To be able to support our Combat Arm's evolving tactics, Fighting Fourth is also adapting the way we fight. In 2021 and into 2022, the Regiment has and will conduct a series of incrementally experimental exercises to improve how we generate flexible tactics end-to-end, increase our ability to survive across a congested battlefield and improve how we sustain our forces. To achieve this, 4th Regiment will focus on and refine how we disperse and 'hide' our Gun & Tactical Groups, C2 nodes and echelons. We will also continue to optimise how we move, fire and communicate to protect ourselves against potentially superior enemy weapon locating capabilities and CIDF platforms. And we will refine how we sustain ourselves to ensure our guns and people are always available to fight.

To realise our intended goals, 4th Regiment have started with the basics. In July 21 the Fighting Fourth deployed to Otterburn on Ex SUNDERLAND DAGGER to fire live for the first time in 18 months. Blessed with unusually great weather for the North East of England, we fired 2500 rds of ammunition and achieved Trained Qualified Current and Competent status (TQCC) across the Regiment. This has achieved a benchmark of capability across our ranks and set a solid foundation on which to conduct future experimentation, which has already begun in earnest.

by Maj Alexander Davis RA
88 (Arracan) Bty
4 Regt RA



The Gunner Inclusivity Group

'Improving Inclusivity Across the Royal Regiment'

The first dial in (Foreign & Commonwealth) will take place @15.00-16.30 on the

30 Sep 21

(via MS Teams)

For further information follow

'Royal Artillery RHQ'

(on Defence Connect)

GENDER
Inclusivity

ETHNIC
Inclusivity

LGBTQ+
Inclusivity

RESERVE
Inclusivity

FAMILY
Inclusivity

FOREIGN &
COMMON-
WEALTH
Inclusivity

RELIGIOUS
Inclusivity

WOUNDED
& SICK
Inclusivity



Support to G7 Summit



49 (Inkerman) Battery deployed 2 MOD C Giraffe Agile Multi Beam (GAMB) radars and 2 Control Node Command and Control systems comprising the Land Environment Air Picture Provision (LEAPP) capability to Godrevy Point National Trust site, St Ives Bay, during the recent G7 Summit, under the Op TRELAWNY banner.

49 Battery, a sub-unit within 16 Regt RA, and LEAPP are held at Very High Readiness for the Air Mobile Task Force and also at readiness to support the Lead Armoured Task Force, Armoured Infantry Brigade within 3 (UK) Division as well as sub-threshold and Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA) taskings. Unique in Defence, it is the only RA sub-unit commanded by an RAF Battery Commander and is a joint RA and RAF sub-unit that provides air situational awareness to commanders in the field. The GAMB's recent addition of a nascent counter-UAS DETECT, TRACK and IDENTIFY capability in its Enhanced Low Slow Small (ELSS) function has seen the sub-unit deployed on multiple UK operations. From the NATO 70th Anniversary to Op DEVERAN, the UK Border Force's counter Human Trafficking operation in the English Channel, where, throughout the summer of 2020, LEAPP made vital contributions to both the Police effort and in support of 47 Regt RA WATCHKEEPER Force, there is increasing demand for LEAPP's capabilities. Deployed in support of

Devon and Cornwall Police Force's operation to secure the Summit, the Battery was also charged to contribute to the Air Command Air Security Plan Recognised Air Picture (RAP).

Thanks to the Battery Ops Officer, Capt Andy Allan's excellent recce and some detailed local knowledge (and excellent pasties) from our Battery Training Officer, Sgt Nick Dawes, the location was tactically ideal. We set up on one of the car parks, where the topography ensured the approach to the site screened the equipment from casual observers, whilst allowing an uninterrupted field of view to the defended asset. It was a very public location, and whilst there was support from the public, they were very interested to know where the missiles were but were swiftly corrected!

We also enjoyed several high-profile visits, firstly from Commanding Officer 16 Regt RA, Lt Col Chris Lane MBE and the RSM, WO1 Tobi Horne. This gave Sgt Dawes some great face time, as he took full advantage, taking the CO surfing afterwards. We also hosted Commander 7 AD Gp, Col Graham Taylor CBE, who presented Sgt Dawes with the prestigious Commander's Coin for his efforts planning the deployment. Finally, we also enjoyed a visit from the Regt Col and RASM, who were on fine form. Overall, this was a fantastic opportunity to showcase LEAPP's capabilities and the skill of its operators.

by Sqn Ldr Hew Thomas RAF
BC 49 (Inkerman) Bty RA



Ex ATHENA ATLAS



The recent Integrated Review made it clear that Remotely Piloted Air Systems have a key role in supporting the British Army's 'future soldier'. As a result, Watchkeeper received ringing endorsement and is in the ascendency after its successful deployment to the English Channel last year during Op DEVERAN. With the ongoing exercise in Cyprus now approaching its 3rd year, the next challenge was to train a battery collectively in a more austere environment. To achieve this, 47 Regt RA deployed a detachment to Keevil Airfield on Ex ATHENA ATLAS in May 2021. The aim of the exercise was simple - to develop how we fly, find and fight the enemy from a more realistic location.

Keevil Airfield is unique for Watchkeeper deployments. Unlike Boscombe Down, RAF Akrotiri or Lydd Airport, from where the Regiment flew for Op DEVERAN, Keevil Airfield presented its own opportunities to test how we sustain, operate and integrate from a site with no useable infrastructure. It has proven that Watchkeeper can deploy to an austere environment and conduct successful sorties without the permanent Air Traffic Control (ATC), hangars or station facilities we are normally used to. Through rehearsals, innovation and technical support the detachment has effectively shown that these hurdles can be overcome and, most importantly, demonstrated that Watchkeeper is a truly expeditionary capability which can operate independently across the globe.

To ensure the aircraft is ready for operations the REME have trialled the use of a Forward Maintenance

Facility (FMF). The FMF is an inflatable hangar which has the capacity to store two fully constructed aircraft. Watchkeeper's deployability has been greatly enhanced through this development. With attached offices and space to maintain and store equipment, it has given an all-weather capability to deploy at Readiness to any tarmacked or rough strip location globally. LCpl Hellon from the Regiment's workshop said: "This has given us all more experience, which has proved invaluable. With the Forward Maintenance Facility we were able to work on the aircraft constantly ensuring it was ready to fly whenever needed."

In addition to this pioneering deployment model, the detachment also supported numerous exercises over Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA). As a result, the battery learned how to better integrate with the wider Royal Artillery 'system of systems' to provide the best effect in support of the manoeuvre arm. For example, Watchkeeper Integration Teams (WIT) embedded with 26 Regt RA on Ex URBAN STRIKE. These small teams provided live feeds which were used to find and track enemy vehicles so that the experimental Accelerated Targeting Cell could coordinate attacks. These serials culminated in an Attack Helicopter strike cross-cued by a Watchkeeper – a significant achievement proving just how potent these two platforms can be when operating together.

by Lt H Loxdale RA
10 (Assaye) Bty
47 Regt RA



Op NEWCOMBE



On the ranges

Speed of relevance matters utmost in Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and there are few better examples than the deployed soldiers of 32 Regiment RA. The only Royal Artillery soldiers to deploy with their capability on Op NEWCOMBE have clocked up more than 250 flying hours, operating the PUMA RPAS (Remotely Piloted Aircraft System) in Mali. Living and working out of COYOTE Protected Mobility vehicles, the operational theatre is challenging, exciting and austere.

As part of the UK's contribution to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the Detachments have been fully integrated into the Long Range Reconnaissance Group (LRRG), deployed at reach across the Sahel, delivering vital ISR feeds to the commanders on the ground. Back in the HQ, the Troop Commanders (TC) have been embedded first with the LIGHT DRAGOONS Task Group (TG) and now with 2 ROYAL ANGLIAN, managing the complex planning and airspace deconfliction requirements of a multinational Operation.

The variety of RPAS tasks have proven the utility of the asset, ranging from providing overwatch for dismounted patrols and key leader engagements, establishing the leaguer ground trace, conducting route reces, and tracking high value targets during cordon and search operations. The full motion video and imagery provided by a Detachment enabled the find and exploitation of a cache of weapons, communications systems, and vehicles, directly contributing to the protection of local nationals and the overarching MINUSMA aim to maintain security in the area. The deployed team continue to test the boundaries of this highly capable asset, with new aspects of the capability and increasing authorisations being granted on a weekly basis. This innovation and development paves the way for pending RPAS platforms that will deploy at the heart of the Army's future force.

Gathering lessons from the deployed TG, a rigorous Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) package has been preparing the next rotation of 32 Regiment RA soldiers, alongside counterparts from The QUEEN'S DRAGOON GUARDS. Starting by refreshing their 'green skills', they have honed their vehicle drills, sharpened their shooting expertise, qualified as Team Medics and HORN users, and conducted weeks of Dismounted and Mounted Close Combat ranges. Command and control was developed during the Tactical Commanders Cadre, delivering lessons on patrolling, leaguer drills, Forward Operating Base (FOB) occupation and other tactical actions. Amongst this busy period, the soldiers have retrained and qualified from DESERT HAWK 3 to the PUMA II AV system. Balancing achieving currency and competency on a new platform, in conjunction with PDT integration with the TG has been stimulating and rewarding.

Within the HQ, the command team have trained to deploy with a robust understanding of the fragile and multifaceted security situation. The history of the region emphasising the complexities within Mali and the Sahel, set within the context of a UN Operation that draws from multiple nations, has made for fascinating staff training. Finally, the command, tactical, and flying elements will be put into practise during the Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise and Mission Rehearsals in October, in order to assure that the combined TG is at the highest standard to deploy.

Op NEWCOMBE has provided the soldiers and officers of 32 Regiment RA the opportunity to demonstrate that ISR – in particular, lightweight, soldier portable RPAS – is still a vital, battle-winning asset that the Army cannot do without.

by Lt George Galla RA
32 Regt RA



Royal Artillery Golf Championships in Gainsborough



Congratulations to the Regimental golfers who recently competed for the Holloway Trophy in the Royal Artillery Golf Championship at Thonock Park Golf Course in Gainsborough.

The Regiment entered two teams, each made up of five Regular and Reserve personnel.

Both teams convincingly won their qualifying round, this ensured the Regiment had two teams in the top four playing for the Holloway Trophy.

The teams captained by Major Pete Armstrong and Warrant Officer Class 2 Kieron Murphy competed against The Royal School of Artillery and 5 Regiment Royal Artillery. Unfortunately the end results were in favour of the opposition, however, a very respectable 2nd and 4th overall was a great result against worthy winners.

A fantastic tournament and a great result for the 'Northern Gunners' who came so close to becoming the Royal Artillery Champions.

by WO2 Kieron Murphy
101 Regt RA





Ex CYPHER CRESCENT



Ex CYPHER CRESCENT gun run

Ex CYPHER CRESCENT saw a Short-Term Training Team (STTT) from 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery deploy to Jordan for 7 weeks to train, mentor and partner the 105mm Artillery Battery (L119 Light Gun) of the Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ) Quick Reaction Force (QRF).

The QRF Brigade is the UK's primary defence partner within Jordan, and since 2016 a partnership between the QRF and 16 Air Assault Brigade has enabled the development of a high readiness expeditionary force. This STTT formed part of the high readiness training within Ex OLIVE GROVE (lead by B Coy 3 PARA), with the aim to deliver a fully integrated Combined Arms training exercise.

7 Para RHA sent 17 soldiers over to Jordan to conduct the STTT, with representatives from every Artillery trade: Strike, Artillery Command Systems (ACS), Logistics, and Observation Post (OP). This meant it was an opportunity not only to mentor and partner their Jordanian counterparts, but also gain more developed exposure to the other trades within a Close Support (CS) Battery; Fires Support Teams (FST) were getting involved on the gunline, gun detachments could see what the Command Post (CP) gets up to during missions, and CP soldiers could watch rounds land at the OP end.

Working with the Jordanians, who have a culture wholly different to our own, and the huge language barrier was a daunting prospect, but within the first few hours of our



Ex CYPHER CRESCENT FST

first meeting we were quick to realise that drills, skills, banter and competition form part of a universal language.

The L119 Light Gun is very similar to the L118 and this meant we could quickly drum up a race of coming in and out of action on the gun line. This set an excellent precedent for the integration to come, with friendly competition and mutual deference. This even extended



to evening football matches where, as out on the area, 7 Para RHA took a decisive victory.

The STTT were able to advise and mentor our Jordanian colleagues on a wide range of Artillery skills and technical expertise, knowledge which they keenly absorbed and applied. Equally, there were plenty of things we could learn from our Jordanian counterparts, whether in small wins, efficiencies in drills, their risk aversion, or their ability to have sweet teas brewing whenever and wherever we deployed!

Travelling to Jordan at the tail end of the COVID pandemic brought with it another incredible opportunity, experiencing some of the World's most famous and coveted sights, with barely another tourist in view. The Team visited Petra, one of the new Seven Wonder's of the World, an ancient city half-built and half-carved into the rocks and canyons of South Jordan. They also visited the Dead Sea, a salt lake separating Jordan, Israel and the West Bank, lying 430.5 metres below sea level, and 10 times saltier than ordinary seawater (bringing with it the natural buoyancy which makes standing difficult but floating very easy), and they had an overnight stay in Bedouin tents at Wadi Rum, well known for the exploits of Lawrence of Arabia, as well as camel rides and a traditional Bedouin meal and entertainment.



Ex CYPHER CRESCENT Dead Sea

An incredible few weeks and an unforgettable experience, one treasured all the more because of the lack of international travel and deployment opportunities for many due to the pandemic, but a trip to Jordan has certainly set the bar for future STTTs within 16 Air Assault Brigade.

by Capt Rosie Wild
7 Para RHA



Ex CYPHER CRESCENT Petra



ATS into Action

This year sees the 80th Anniversary of the formation, in 1941, of the first mixed combat unit in the army - 435 (Mixed) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery. The Battery was the brain-child of Lt Gen (later General) Sir Frederick Pile, GOC Anti-aircraft Command throughout WW2, who has arguably never been fully recognised for his extraordinary achievements in advancing Anti-Aircraft artillery and indeed in advancing the role of women in the Gunners.

Pile was a very astute officer and with the manpower challenges he faced, it was clear to him that gender was immaterial when compared to saving the nation. Pile embraced technology and really trusted his people. To prove the plethora of naysayers wrong about the effectiveness of women in mixed batteries, he asked Ms (later Dame) Caroline Haslett (who since 1924, had been the Director of the Electrical Association for Women) to undertake a review of the 'Gender Free' abilities required on the guns. She concluded that there was no task, apart from the very heaviest, that members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) could not complete.

The RA/ATS mixed battery took over an operational gun position in August 1941 but the female members remained mostly off the guns themselves and in modern parlance were mainly engaged in ACS and Log duties. This included communications and aircraft plotting. However, many let rip with Lewis guns during the summer of 1941 to deter searchlight beam-riding FW190s.

The Battery was hugely successful in the Blitz and Op DIVER (V1 countermeasures) in 1944 and then in 1945 redeployed to Belgium to engage V1s in Europe.

The following related article was published in the October 1941 edition of Gunner.



"Ack-Ack Girls" in Training



On Tuesday 27th April, an Evening Prayer and Laying-up of the Standard of the Swansea Branch was held at Christchurch (Garrison Church), Swansea.

Letters of Appreciation - Royal Artillery Association

Many of us only ever get to see our Standard Bearers at national events such as the Assembly, NMA or Hyde Park Corner but at the RAA Headquarters we are in touch with our Standard Bearers on a weekly basis. During the pandemic Standard Bearers and Buglers from Army Bands have attended funerals to support families and represent the Royal Artillery, turning out in all weather conditions, often at short notice and covering long distances. We truly appreciate your dedication and professionalism; you are so much appreciated by the families who you are supporting. The Headquarters have received a couple of letters of appreciation and we would like to share them with you.

'Words do not seem enough but I cannot begin to tell you how much having the Royal Artillery drape meant to us today. Sending off our wonderful Father, Major J E Williams in this way was superb and very much appreciated and noted by all.

It made a sad day in this crazy world a happier one, celebrating a truly great man, who had an amazing life and a very happy military career, yes it is true, 'Once a Gunner, Always a Gunner'.

Thank you for all you have done. Take care and keep safe.'

Chrissie Jelly (daughter of Major James Edward Williams)

'I wish express my most heartfelt thanks to you.

Thank you for arranging the presence of the Royal Artillery Association Standard Bearers and the Royal Artillery Bugler for my husband Henry's funeral service at Holy Trinity Church Holme, Cumbria.

Their presence in every way was most befitting. They brought a special dignity to the whole ceremony. We were very honoured that they were present and that they would gift their time to do such a special gesture.

"The Last Post" was both rousing and very emotional. I know that myself, my family and the whole congregation were very moved by this.

All three Royal Artillery men representatives are a credit to their service, they were all very dignified and professional. The gentlemen were so very much appreciated on this day.'

Linda Bond (wife of Major Henry Bond)





Quite a few of the Gunner magazine readership will recognise Colonel Barry Jenkins. A former Regimental Colonel and Commanding Officer of 16th Regiment, Barry retired in 2018. He dropped by RHQ Royal Artillery in Larkhill to see if the plants were being watered and see his old office. Gunner magazine had a chance to catch up with him and hear about his adventures as an entrepreneur.

Barry recalled his last days of his service in 2018. "After a full contract, career, 'stretch' (call it what you will) of 35 years, I left the army full of terrific memories, great friendships, few regrets and a very strong desire to keep thinking outside the box. I wanted to try my hand at a portfolio career and be a free agent for a while seeking business in diverse areas". And diverse they most certainly seem. Impresario to a Mezzosoprano, defence advisor for an investment bank, Director of Strategic Business Development for an Open Source Intelligence Company and using his significant Ground Based Air Defence experience, consulting in the exciting and fast paced Counter Drone industry.

I asked him how it is going. "The Counter Drone industry in 2018 was in the same state as Cyber security was, about 15 years previously. Society loved the internet but ignored the risks. Fast forward to the explosion of drones. Society quickly fell in love with hobby and commercial drones but ignored the risk – the abuse of drones. There were few reputable Counter Drone companies, and I am lucky to work with trusted names and people I know. The attempted assassination on the Venezuelan President in August 2018 gave me a break. I just phoned Sky News." How did that help? "45 minutes later, having shaved and put on some trousers, I was live on Sky News in the studios. Opportunities must be grabbed. Be bold. I then went for dinner."

Ok, go on. "After dinner I was served a cocktail. Part of which was served in a mini aluminium jerry can. It struck me just what an iconic item it is. Known across the world for providing extra fuel in austere conditions and at a moment's notice, the jerry can is trusted by the world's militaries."

Three years later Barry started selling his rugged, powerful mobile phone powerbank, 'Fuel the Adventure', designed in the shape of the iconic jerry can. "My Unique Selling Point is the jerry can shaped powerbank emblazoned with a badge or logo - a USP is essential. The powerbank market is crowded with bland and unremarkable foreign made products. Mine is an MOD licensed product, made and assembled in the UK and stands out. A fellow entrepreneur told me that USP stands for; Understand - your target market (IPB), Spy on your competitors (intelligence gathering via social media and trade chat rooms), Point – create a unique and unforgettable product (Reinforce your Main Effort with a bold plan). That was great advice. My resettlement course at Manchester Business School was invaluable – I highly recommend it."

How tricky is the journey from idea to realisation? "I embarked on my entrepreneurial and invention journey with only about 35% knowledge of the work and risks involved. I didn't fully appreciate the costs associated with CE testing, guarding my intellectual property, the complexities of design, the time spent negotiating with suppliers and of course, the significant money needed up front to buy equipment and stock. BREXIT is a real challenge selling into the



EU, but I wanted to keep it UK made and that does attack the profit margin, but we must start somewhere to 'Buy British' and during the pandemic I kept a UK machining firm from going under with my order.

The army, regardless of rank, equips us with the skills needed to start the whole adventure. Confidence, articulating a plan, issuing 'orders', setting deadlines etc. The AB545 and a sync matrix have become essential! Civilian firms enjoyed receiving a set of clear orders and guidance. They also took to 'positive feedback' rather sportingly. If you believe in your product, can nail your USP and have the determination to go for it, then the rewards will come as dreams are ten a penny. A really

good accountant is key – they know everything and everybody and like all the people who were with me on this mad roller-coaster ride, they want you to succeed. My product is now in the market and with all the current Service and regimental cap badges available, customers can choose their colour of jerry can, add their cap badge (RHA and RA amongst 55 others) or a flag. I would be delighted to offer any help or assistance to anyone wanting to start up a small business. Can I be bold and add a 15% GUNNER 15 discount on my website for your readers - many thanks.

www.fueltheadventure.co.uk

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 31st March 2012 and on or after 1st 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 1st April 2015 and 31st 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

Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO, Forces Pension Society



Ex LOUISBURG CYCLE



WO2 Jones and Sgt Spraggon working hard up the final portion of Wrynose Pass

July 21 brought sporting highs and lows with England's performance at the Euro's and the start of the Olympics. However, for 9 Soldiers and Officers from 53 (Louisburg) Air Assault Battery this marked the beginning of an epic journey from Coast to Coast to Coast cycling across the North of England in the name of raising money for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund covering over 420km distance and 6000m of elevation.

The route took them from the Tommy WW1 statue in Seaham, west through County Durham and into the North Pennines on the first day which provided a challenging trio of climbs late in the afternoon to burn off the legs. The following morning kicked off with the riders tackling the long Hartside Pass to get them over the Pennines and skirt around the northern edge of the Lake District before dropping down into Whitehaven to complete the first coast to coast.

The main event of the week came on Wednesday with the infamous Hardknott Pass followed



The riders formed up at the Tommy WW1 Statue in Seaham on the first day of Ex Louisburg Cycle

immediately into Wrynose Pass. Both these climbs are leg and lung busting efforts with gradients varying between 25-33% over what can only be described as a wall of twisting tracks and hairpins. With some smirks from the support drivers who looked particularly smug in the vehicles at this point and the occasional good luck from on lookers, the riders tucked in. It was immediately clear why



both these climbs have such fierce reputations and although utterly awful to do, all the riders gained a huge sense of achievement from completing both the climbs and incredibly all the riders made it up both climbs unaided. The efforts were rewarded by the amazing scenery riding around Lake Windermere to end the day.



WO2 (BSM) Bugg setting off first down one of the tricky descents in the Lake District

The penultimate day saw the riders cross the width of the Yorkshire Dales after a cheeky climb to get out of Kendal. It was a long day in the saddle but again the Dales provided fantastic views to take in as the riders clocked in over 100km. The stage ended with the group riding back into Marne Barracks, Catterick after overcoming Redmire Hill, another severe climb to get out of the Dales. By this stage there were questions being asked as to who let the Troop Commander plan the route?

The final day took the riders the relatively short distance from Marne Barracks back to Seaham which provided mercifully less hills over the route compared to the previous four days. This allowed for the somewhat sore legs within the group to fully enjoy the last ride of the week. Although relatively uneventful, two riders who shall remain nameless may or may not have found themselves briefly on

the A19 before a little back country effort to get back on the right route...



The riders having successfully made it to Whitehaven at the end of the second day

At this point there must be a mention to the four soldiers who were our support drivers throughout the week, their tireless efforts to keep the riders hydrated, fuelled, and motivated meant that the cyclists could focus on the task at hand and without doubt the week would not have been possible without them.

Overall, Ex Louisburg Cycle was a great success for all involved, particularly for the number of novice cyclists, some of whom had barely started riding two months prior to the event. The route was much more of a challenge than anticipated in parts but that added to the sense of achievement and satisfaction that came from completion.

Mt Ventoux and Alpe D'Huez next year anyone??

by 2Lt W W Hall RA
5 Regt RA



26 Regt RA Wksp Relay Channel Swim



Night time swim training at Poole

Back in Oct 20, the challenge was set to any willing members of the Regiment to test and develop their physical and mental resilience in an attempt to complete a Team Relay swim across the English Channel in Jun 21.

Leading and proposing the challenge was our own English Channel Solo swimmer himself, Major Owen Larsen (OC Workshop) and his intent was to push for two teams to be submitted to add a further competitive element amongst them.

Volunteers came forward and dipped their feet into taking on the attempt in the first few sea swim sessions conducted down at Poole lead by our civilian English Channel swimming veteran, Mark Newman.

Full training then started in Nov 20 with a good mix of pool and sea water swimming until the country went into a 2nd lockdown and we were then unable to train. The training window had suddenly been halved and the task of swimming the channel had become even more daunting.

By Easter, we were allowed back into the pool and restarted our sea swimming training with initial short 20-minute exposure swims in the 10° water and gradually increased this to 2 hours over the coming weeks.

The team members started to mould, and the selected 12 swimmers were identified creating the two relay teams of 6 that would simultaneously attempt the

English Channel Swim in the months to come. The two teams were an even split of 6 x RA service personnel from the Regiment, and 6 x REME soldiers from the Workshop and thus the Teams RA and REME formed for the competition.

In the 2 weeks remaining before our Channel Swim window, we focused more on boat swimming sessions and night sessions to get used to swimming in darkness – which is surprisingly calm and an eery experience.

All to quickly mid-June 21 came around and thus started our swimming week window. We anxiously waited for our Boat Pilots to analyse the weather/tide conditions and give us the phone call to be called forward to Folkestone. Praying for good weather, with grey skies and rain looming throughout the week, a brief window appeared, and the call was made. We would attempt our English Channel Swim in the early morning of 16th June.

The two teams set off from Larkhill the day before with tensions and nerves filling the minibuses for the whole journey. Once down in Folkestone, we met with one of the two pilots and saw the small and rustic fishing boat that would see us across. We ate heartedly and settled into a nearby transit camp early trying to squeeze in a couple hours of rest.

by Capt Ryan Thomson & OIC Maj Owen Larsen
26 Regt RA



'Gunners end eight year wait'

In gloomy conditions, fitting of an English spring, a faultless 138 run partnership between Lt Oliver Cross (47th Regt) and LBdr Craig Ross (4th Regt) guided the Royal Artillery Cricket Club (RACC) to victory over the Adjutant General Corps, in the Inter-Corps Twenty20 Finals at Aldershot. The victory ended RACC's eight year wait for Twenty20 silverware and was the perfect start to the first season of competitive Inter-Corps cricket since 2019.

It was nearly all over before it started with a rain affected group stage at Larkhill halting RACC's early momentum. After cruising past the Army Medical Service with a 10-wicket victory, the team were enjoying early success with the bat in their game against the Royal Signals. Heavy rain then resulted in the game being decided by a 'bowl-off' with both teams taking turns to bowl at an open wicket, reminiscent of a penalty shoot-out. RACC were undone by the Royal Signals 1-2, despite this setback their superior run-rate guaranteed their progression as group winners.

A semi-final at Larkhill against the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers was the next spectacle, so much so it would have made a fitting final given the quality of cricket demonstrated by both sides. RACC choose to bat first and stormed to 195-4 off their 20 overs, with Bdr Wiseman (12th Regt) as dangerous as ever, scoring 106 off 50 balls. Calm heads prevailed in field as the team fought to contain REME to 181-3 in reply.

With confidence high, a final at Aldershot against the AGC awaited. AGC choose to bat first and with 25 off 3 overs they were threatening to post a demanding total. LBdr Schofield (3rd Regt) however, quickly dismissed both openers, rocking the AGC who struggled to regain their initial momentum; finished their innings 137-7. Comfortable in chasing the modest total, RACC were soon facing an uphill struggle, finding themselves 2-3 off 3 overs. An expertly judged chase however, ensured that victory did not escape the RACC, both Cross and Ross clinically

finishing and demonstrating the abundance of talent within the squad.

With RACC winning the first Inter-Corps cricket competition since 2019, the confidence and focus within the squad to repeat the success in both the Power Cup (50 over format) and the historic Gunner vs Sapper (190th) 3-day fixture is at an all-time high.

by Capt A S Park
7 Para RHA

Royal Artillery Cricket Club Captain





LBdr Lockwood Gunner Captain 7 Para RHA receiving the Massey League 2 Championship Trophy from the Regt Col



Gunners Clinch Promotion

It has been a very frustrating couple of seasons for the Royal Artillery Football Club. With the 19/20 season being declared null in void and the Gunners only xx points/games away from securing promotion, it meant we had to wait for the pandemic to ease and the Army Sports Control Board (ASCB) to give the green light for the 20/21 season before we could look to secure promotion again. In October 20 the ASCB gave us the go ahead to restart playing Corps football.

First up the Gunners welcomed the RAC to Shrapnel Park which saw the Gunners run out 2-1 winners in a very physical game. Next up, the Army Medical Service, away at Litchfield. This game saw the Gunners come away with a 2-0 victory and all 3 points to take back to Larkhill. A great start to the season, 6 pts on the board, but still a long way to go. Unfortunately, in December COVID began to rise again and Corps Football was put on hold until further notice.

Finally, in May Football was given the green light to commence. A slight change to the league format saw a reduced schedule from 10 games down to 5, playing each team in the league once in order to allow the season to be completed. Having already played the RAC and the AMS before lockdown, the Gunners only had 3 games remaining: RAPTC, AGC and the Int Corps. First up was the RAPTC away in Aldershot, The Gunners cruised to a 4-1 win and an excellent performance from Gnr Beckley (16 RA) who scored twice on his Gunners debut. This win saw the Gunners sitting pretty at the top of the league with 3 wins from 3 and 9 points, with the RAPTC and RAC in second and third place respectively, both still having opportunities to pounce if we slipped up.

With 2 fixtures remaining, the Gunners travelled to Worthy Down to play the AGC. A close game which the Gunners edged, coming away 3-2 winners after an 88th minute winner from Gunner Polius (7 Para RHA) on his debut. He celebrated in style with a gold medal winning back flip: much to the delight of the travelling squad members on the side lines. The Gunners remained top of the league with promotion ours to lose with one last game at home to the Int Corp. All that was needed to secure promotion was a point after the RAC were awarded a 2-0 win against the RAPTC due to fixture availability.

Game day, 25 June 21, The Gunners welcomed the Int Corp to Shrapnel Park, the home of the Royal Artillery Football Club. The pressure and tension was building before the game and was evident in the early exchanges but an early goal by Gnr Beckley settled the nerves and allowed the Gunners to play the quality football they are used to. Second half and the Gunners really turned up the heat and were now unplayable another 3 goals flowed which secured the win, 3 points and the League title. The game ended 4-0 and promotion back to the Massey League Division 1.

I would like to personally thank all the units for releasing your soldiers to play "The Soldiers Game" especially over these difficult times. Also, I would like to thank the backroom staff: WO1 Jimmy Richardson (HQ 20X), RAMG Keith Allison (RSA), BSM Alfie Lightfoot (19 RA), SSgt Neil Reilly (47 RA) for their continued hard work.

- Player of the season** - Bdr Harrison 7 Para RHA
- Top Goal Scorer** - Sgt Lewis 7 Para RHA
- Royal Artillery Football Club Manager** - WO2 Craig Willis



Stormers do the double



12 Regiment RA Rugby Team (The Stormers) have successfully won both of their opening Army Rugby League competitions. Winning both the Nav 9's and Yeoman 13's a side Competition at Aldershot.

The Nav 9's were up first and saw 30 Regiments from across the Army taking part. 6 pools of 5 teams were drawn with players travelling from all over the UK and NI. The Stormers were drawn in one of the toughest pools with; 26 Royal Engineers, 1 Royal Welsh, 5 Regiment Royal Artillery and 1 Mercian joining The Stormers. The two top teams in the competition that scored most points in their pool would automatically play in the cup finals. The Stormers successfully won all their games and managed to let their inexperienced players have a run out. They then had to face their Premiership Rugby Union arch-rivals, 9 Regiment RLC in the cup final. Filled with young, talented and physical players, 9 Regiment were the fans' favourite with

a large support base in tow and odds on favourite to win the tournament. The Stormers started the game dominating through their forwards with endless barrage of hard running which saw LBdr Fex Naulivou burst through the opposition defence and score the first try. 9 RLC responded straight away with a well worked try from open play that saw them score in the corner. Going into half time the scores were level with a big 2nd half performance required from The Stormers. The second half started at a fast pace the resolute defence of 12 Regiment made it difficult for 9 RLC to break through. Despite this, halfway through the second half a brilliant individual try from the 9 RLC five eighth who spotted The Stormers fall back out of position and executed an excellent chip and chase to score under the posts. After some patient and controlled build up play The Stormers responded with a try from Sgt Sikeli Komainalawa who utilised his sheer power and strength to



bulldoze his way through the oppositions defence and score. With the scores level and neither defence faltering Bdr Owaine Davies attempted a drop goal from behind halfway line which agonizingly hit the cross bar as the full-time whistle went sending the game into golden point extra-time. 12 Regiment started the second half with all guns blazing and put real pressure on 9 RLC by camping on their half line. LBdr Eps Naulumatua spotted Bdr Davies had dropped back into the pocket again and fizzed the ball into him to give Bdr Davies a second chance at a golden point drop goal. Under pressure from the on-rushing defence Bdr Davies executed the drop goal perfectly and saw the ball fly straight through the middle of the posts – winning the game for The Stormers. The final score was 9 – 8 to the Stormers.

2 weeks later and The Stormers were out again and hunting for the second piece of silverware. The Army Rugby League 13's a side Competition in Aldershot saw 12 Regiment in another tough pool against; 1 Irish Guards and 1 RSME. Winning both games, they automatically qualified to play the cup semi-finals. They beat a strong and youthful 8 Bn REME by 18 points to 6 to progress into the final. The Stormers knew that they had a mammoth task in front of them in the form of 1 Yorks Regiment who had just hammered the Rifles in the other semi-final by 56 points to 12. In the final, the youthful and powerful Yorkshiremen side tried to outrun The Stormers. However, 12 Regiments defence remained disciplined and shut down any threats. A good break from the Yorks right centre saw them break the deadlock, but this was quickly cancelled out by WO2 Saimoni Qarau after he outpaced the Yorks the right winger to score comfortably under the post. At half time, the score was level again and it looked like history was going to repeat itself. 1 Yorks came out blazing and some quick play saw them score straight after half time. Unpanicked the experienced Stormers

remained calm and disciplined in both attack and defence. A well worked try by Sgt Isikeli Sauliga ignited The Stormers fight back and was quickly followed by tries from LBdr Eparama Naulumatua and team captain Bdr Davies. The experience of the team now came back into play and they saw the game out comfortably, securing their consecutive cup win. The Final score was 20 – 8 to The Stormers.

by WO2 Saimoni Qarau
12 Regt RA





REGIMENTAL SECRETARY CHARITIES UPDATE

Royal Artillery Service Pay Giving Scheme (SPGS)

In the July edition of Gunner, we provided some details of how your regimental funds were being spent this year, in delivering outputs against the objects of the regimental charities. We also provided details of how regiments had raised funds for the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (RACF) as part of the Cornwall Cup Competition.

In this edition I would like to highlight the invaluable contribution made by the vast majority of serving Gunners, of all ranks, who support the regimental charities through the SPGS.

What is the SPGS?

Introduced in 1964, this Army-wide system provides a means of making voluntary subscriptions to your regimental charities. It is open to all serving members of the Regiment. Currently about 95% of regular Gunners subscribe. The regiment receives around 30% of its income in this way, with about 60% coming from our investments and the balance from fundraising, donations and legacies. Projected income from the scheme for 2021 is about £620,000.

How much do I Pay?

Gunners and JNCOs contribute 75% of one day's pay annually. WO's & SNCOs contribute 100% of a day's pay, which includes a 25% element toward the Central Sergeants Mess. Officers contribute 150% of a day's pay, which includes subscription to the RA Journal and a contribution towards the Royal Artillery Officers' Mess, regimental silver upkeep and regimental events. Payments are deducted monthly from pay accounts. Reserve officers and soldiers pay a 12% of a day's pay on receipt of their annual bounty.

How is the money used?

Funds are divided on a proportional basis between the RACF, the Royal Artillery Institution (RAI) and the Royal Artillery Association (RAA).

All members of the Regiment are automatically life members of the RAA. The Regimental charities are there to support you and your dependants while you are serving and after you leave.

SPGS funds, together with income from investments, help support many charitable activities across the regiment. The following are some examples of direct support to the serving regiment, included in this year's budget:

- £112,000 on individual serving welfare from the RACF
- £156,000 for sport split between the RAI & RACF.
- £156,000 to regiments from the RACF / RAI
- CO's grant - £2-5K – enhance those activities not covered by public funding.
- Welfare grant - average of £4K for UWOs / ROSOs.
- £61,000 RA Mess (incl staff and insurance)
- £44,000 – Central Sergeants' Mess (+ 25% directly from SPGS @ source)
- £35,000 on comradeship in batteries from the RAA (Up to £1500 per Battery).
- £24,000 on serving regimental events.

What if I choose not to contribute or leave the scheme?

If you leave the scheme you will continue to be eligible for welfare support where there is a need but will be considered ineligible for other types of grant and may be unable to participate in some regimentally funded activities.

What happens when I leave the Regiment?

Subscriptions to the SPGS cease automatically on discharge. However, you remain eligible for lifelong benevolence support for yourself and your dependants when in need.

Further information can be obtained from your RAO or the Finance Secretary - becky.hoblyn147@mod.gov.uk

95% of the serving regiment contribute around £620,000 per year to regimental charities



It is worth noting that because of the level of investment income, we are able to keep the ask for in SPGS contributions to a minimum. Just as a comparison, the figures for two other large capbadges are as follows:

- Officers: RSigs 190%. RE 230%.
- SNCOs: RSigs 140%. RE 125%.
- Soldiers: RSigs 110%. RE 120%.

The trustees of the RACF, RAI and RAA are extremely grateful to all those members of the Regiment who contribute through the scheme. Your support directly helps both serving and retired Gunners, and their families, in times of need and supports a wide range of sporting, social and regimental activities during the year.



Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (RACF)

Anyone who has served as a Gunner, if only for a day, is, together with their family and dependants, eligible for support from the RACF.

Recent Fundraising

We are happy to report that fundraising for the RACF has continued over the last couple of months. While it is perhaps a little unfair to pick out individuals, three members of the Regiment have recently completed 100Km Ultra marathons in order to raise funds for the RACF.

34 (Seringsapatam) Bty – 14 Regiment RA – Race to the Stones



Maj Glyn Forster, BC 34 (Seringsapatam) Bty, 14 Regt RA presented the RACF with a cheque for £852.00. Glyn ran the ultra marathon, Race to the Stones in July covering the distance of 62 miles from Lewknor, Oxfordshire to Avebury, Wiltshire.

4/73 (Sphinx) Bty – 5 Regt – Race to the Castle



Bdr Sam Jones and Capt Dan Anderson, Race to the Castle, 100km Ultra Marathon - Support for RACF

4/73 (Sphinx) Bty Team raise over £1400 for RACF

On 26 June, two members of 4/73 (Sphinx) Bty completed the Race to the Castle raising over £1400 for the RACF.

Having never ran competitively over any distance, we made the interesting decision to jump in and start with a 100km (62 miles) race in Northumberland. With a bit of prior research, we quickly discovered that anyone and everyone recommended running a shorter ultra before then tackling 100km and that the 12-hour mark is a somewhat respectable time for a first 100km race. Concerned we may have taken on more than we should; but now with a goal time in mind, we subsequently stumbled across some great advice from an experienced friend. Firstly, if you can't maintain a conversation you're going to quickly, secondly walk the ups, shuffle the flats and run the down and lastly, it's less of a running competition and more of an eating one, make sure you take something on every 30 minutes.

So, with a little bit of knowledge, significant apprehension and some poor chat we found ourselves stood at the start line in Kirkharle, on an early, unsurprisingly wet and windy morning in the North of England. The route took us over moorland, up and down country lanes and along coastal paths, with the weather turning everything to a muddy mess; both route and racers alike. We used the advice we had received and got ourselves through the first 35km in good time however, a couple of dark moments between there and the half way point appeared, as we found the constant fuelling to be harder than expected. The real challenge of the day was hitting the half way point and realising we still had another 50km and 6-7 hours of work still to do, a quick bowl of pasta, change of socks and with rather tight lower limbs we powered on.



The second half was as tough as we expected, with the fatigue of endurance running fully kicking in and a battering by the coastal wind and rain as we pushed our way further north towards the finishing line. 14 hours after setting off from Kirkharle, we had eventually reached Bamburgh Castle, the irony of the finish line being 1km further down the road was not lost on us, as even when we thought we'd made it there was one last funny thrown at us by the event. We crossed the line with an official time of 14:22:58, whilst we didn't quite reach our goal of 12 hours, we had still enjoyed a tough personal challenge and raised a great amount of money for the RACF in the process!

We would both like to take the chance to thank everyone for helping us raise £1428, both those that donated, shared our page and supported us along the way.

We are hugely grateful to Maj Forster, Capt Anderson and Bdr Jones, for their magnificent efforts in raising such impressive sums for the RACF.

But more widely, thank you to all of you, serving, veterans and families, who have been raising funds for the RACF and once again we would like to say 'Thank you' to the many anonymous donors who contribute via online giving.

So far this year you have raised £44,466 for the RACF.

We have also received £34,905 in legacies.

Thank you!



Royal Artillery Association (RAA)

Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance,
National Memorial Arboretum

The annual Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance, organised by the RAA HQ staff, took place at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire on Saturday 3rd July and once again and within Covid restrictions, the event attracted a large crowd. The underlying theme for this year's service was the emergence from government restrictions and emphasising the role and traditions of the RAA and was conducted by

the Venerable Stephen Robbins CB, Honorary Chaplain to the Royal Regiment of Artillery. Music for the service was provided by The Lancashire Artillery Band and Pipes and Drums, 103 Regt RA, under the direction of their DoM, Major Guy Booth, and excellent they were too.

Despite some early rain, the weather was again kind to us this year as we held our Wreath Laying ceremony in the Royal Artillery Memorial Garden led by Brigadier MN Pountain CBE, Chairman of the RAA and Colonel SJ Shepherd MBE ADC, Regimental Colonel and during which WO1 (RASM) R Mealand recited the Ode of Remembrance.

It is always very encouraging to see this event being so well attended, not only by RAA veterans but also by serving Gunners and their families and friends. This year's event was the first large, organised event following the relaxation of certain Covid-19 restrictions and was a welcome outing for many for over 17 months.

Events on this scale would not be so well executed and appreciated without assistance, and to recognise that, special thanks go to WO2 (RABSM) M Webber, The Lancashire Artillery Band, 4th Regt RA for providing soldiers as ushers. Additionally, we thank all members of the serving regiment who attended and, of course, Mr Jimmy Young and our association's Standard Bearers who turned out in force adding exceptional style, pageantry and tradition.

In addition, we were able to include the dedication of Wrexham Branch's Standard as part of the service. Standard Bearer Dennis Murphy was immaculate in his drill and bearing during this profound ceremony and did his Branch proud.

The event also included the presentation of outstanding RAA awards that we were not able to present as normal at the RA Assembly.

The following awards (as announced in the July edition of Gunner) were presented following the Service by Brig MN Pountain:

- The Burton Cup for 2019 and 2020 - Norwich Branch
- The Artillery House Cup for 2019 and 2020 - Norwich Branch



- The Caterham Cup for 2020 - Colchester and North Essex Branch
- The Joan Wanklyn Cup for 2019 - Birmingham Ladies' Section
- The RA Association Kerr Cup for 2019 - 176 (Abu Klea) Battery
- The RAA Certificate of Merit - Mr Harry Heatley of Aigburth-Merseyside Branch

Separate arrangements will be made to present further awards to those unable to attend the event.



RAA Awards

In addition to those awards notified in the July edition, the Mansergh award for 2020 has now been awarded.

RAA Awards		
Award	Criteria	Winner 2020
Mansergh Memorial Award	Awarded for outstanding acts of bravery, which have not been recognised by another award or commendation, in the absence of any such act, other special achievements by individuals of the Regiment will be considered.	LBdr Ben Baker, of 26th Regiment whose actions in assisting an injured teenager, demonstrated, selfless commitment, professionalism and calmness under pressure.

RACF



RACF Grants Report July 2021

We have noticed the number of cases coming through for help has reduced, as it usually does during the school holidays. In July we helped 36 Gunner veterans, serving Gunners or their dependants. We awarded £29,485 in total in July. £8,525 was awarded to serving Gunners members. The remaining £20,920 being awarded to Gunner veterans and their dependants. To our veterans we awarded:

£6,369 to those who were struggling with funding household goods.

£4,501 was awarded in bereavement grants.

£3,692 was awarded for Care Home Fees.

£2,318 to those who needed help with critical household arrears

and we helped other veterans and their dependants with general needs, wellbeing support, mobility needs, training fees and house maintenance funding.

We can help with many different things. 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 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.



Hi, I just want to express my very grateful thanks to you and the Gunners for your generous contribution towards my mobility scooter hoist. Please know that this will help enormously to afford me some quality of life. I have been confined to my armchair

(receiving palliative care at home) for 14 hours a day almost 14 months. I recently managed to purchase a used mobility scooter and that has changed my life. I am now able to move around my garden and I look forward to being able to get back into society when I am able to load the scooter onto my car.

**Thank you once more, all best wishes,
Ged Layfield, RA Veteran**

Afternoon Sandra,
I just wanted to drop you an email to let you know how much I appreciate you and your team for sorting XXXXXX with some funding for his rent arrears. When I told him what the RACF have pledged, I could hear the weight lifting from his shoulders, he has sent me a few messages since on Whatsapp thanking me for the help. I think the thanks are down to everybody at RACF.
Serving LBdr through SSAFA

INFORMATION

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

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

REUNIONS

SCOTTISH GUNNERS REUNION DINNER

Regrettably, the Scottish Gunner Reunion Dinner scheduled for 3 Sep 21 will be cancelled due to continuing social restrictions in Ministry of Defence establishments. We plan to hold the next Reunion Dinner in the autumn of 2022 placing us back on our normal biennial schedule. We will seek to inform you all of the revised date as soon as we can. If any former Highland, Lowland or Scottish Gunners wish to register their interest for 2022, please email Capt Abbie Lawrence, the Dinner Secretary, on scottishgunnerreunion@gmail.com. The facebook page will also remain open, so please stay connected.

53 (LOUISBURG) BTY RA REUNION 2021

The next Reunion will take place over the weekend Fri 29/Sat 30 Oct 2021. It will be held at The Chamwood Arms Hotel, Coalville, Leicester LE67 1TB, 01530 813644. Please book direct with the Hotel and tell them you are coming to the Reunion, if you require anymore information please contact me on barrygunner@outlook.com or 01427 668860.

13 MARTINIQUE BTY RA REUNION 2022

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

YORKSHIRE GUNNERS REUNION DINNER

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

SAVE THE DATE

14 RA OFFICERS' MESS REUNION DINNER 2021

Fri 24 Sep 21 - RA Officers' Mess, Larkhill Invitations are being posted at the end of January 2021, but for more information or to request an invitation please email the Reunion Dinner Secretary at william.povey100@mod.gov.uk We look forward to catching up with many past members of the Regiment.

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

30TH REUNION THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BOYS AND JUNIOR LEADERS' ASSOCIATION

"The Royal Artillery Boys and Junior Leaders' Association are delighted to confirm the final details for our 30th Reunion are, venue; Holiday Inn Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2HP., dates 1-3 Oct 21. Anyone who had not booked or is

now wishing to take advantage of booking for these dates must do so before 17 Aug by using the booking form in the June edition of "Trumpeter", or getting in touch with me on exboysra.tm@gmail.com (tel 07900 806235)."

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 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.

7 (SPHINX) COMMANDO BATTERY ROYAL ARTILLERY

The next reunion of 7 (Sphinx) Cdo Bty RA will be held over the weekend of 3/4 Sep 21. In Plymouth. Further details will be released in due course but to express interest in attending please email pauldavidhorne@yahoo.co.uk

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

86TH ARTILLERY CLERKS' REUNION AND ASSOCIATION DINNER

The 86th Artillery Clerks' Reunion and Association Dinner will be held in the Royal Artillery Sergeants' Mess, Larkhill over the weekend of Fri 22 - Sun 24 Oct 21. The Reunion weekend and Association Dinner is open to all members of the Artillery Clerks' Association. Attendance forms are available on the Association web page <http://www.artyclerkassn.org/>

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



ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH THU 7 OCT 21



The next Royal Artillery Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 7 Oct 21 at The Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, regular and reserve, whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £59 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after the lunch. To attend the lunches you

must be a member of the Alanbrooke Club. There is an annual membership fee of £10 but this is waived for serving officers. Members wishing to attend this lunch should make a bank transfer for £59 to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund (Sort code 30-11-75. Acc number 00568858) annotating your transfer with your initial and surname or send a cheque made out to 'Royal Artillery Charitable Fund' to the Regimental Secretariat Assistant. Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley. If you make a bank transfer please email the Regimental Secretariat Assistant to say that you have done so. Any excess of funds will be donated to the RACF at the end of the year. Do spread the message amongst your Gunner friends, and of course you may bring a guest (who may be non-military) should you wish, or bring a group of friends you served with. Commanding Officers are asked to encourage and facilitate attendance by their officers. If you wish to join us please contact the Regimental Secretariat Assistant emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk

ALAMEIN DINNER

The Alamein Dinner 2021 will be held on Fri 22 Oct in the RA Mess, Larkhill. The dinner will take the form of a ladies guest night and is open to officers of the Royal

Regiment, serving and retired, and their guests. There will also be some regimental guests. Dress for the serving officers is Mess Dress - Full Ceremonial Evening, (stiff shirts) decorations. For retired officers/civilians it is evening dress (white tie) with decorations. The Alamein Dinners is a formal event and ladies are requested to wear long evening dresses. The cost will be £55 per head. Applications for accommodation and the hire of stiff shirts should be made to the Mess Secretary. Maj Van Poeteren: ramessec@btinternet.com. For places apply to Jenny McGrath by email: jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk 01980 845788 and payment can be either BACS: RAL, 30-11-75, 00957269 (please prefix payment reference with AD21) Cheque: made payable to the Royal Artillery Institution. Please note a first come first served basis applies.

THE KING'S TROOP ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS CARDS 2021

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LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Ronald Frank Melbourne - 10 June 2021

Lt Col (Retd) K F Travers RA - 13 June 2021

Victor John Hanson (Vic) - 22 June 2021

Tony Masters - 1 July 2021

Lt Col (Retd) A E J Felton late RA (Ted) - 5 July 2021

Maj Alexander (Sandy) Douglas Moffat TD WS - 13 July 2021

Robert Clare - 14 July 2021

Bdr Mick Eady - 28 July 2021

Lt Col Kevin Francis Lane MBE - August 2021

Sgt Charlie Turford - 1 August 2021

Jock McAndie - 2 August 2021

Len Gibson - 2 August 2021

Lt Col The Hon L R B Addington DFC - 6 August 2021

CRUMP - Major Peter Crump sadly passed away on 22 June 2021 aged 77. He saw service with 24 Msl Regt, 32 Hy Regt, 1 Regt RAA, 50 Msl Regt, 94 Loc Regt and 39 Fd Regt. Life member of RAYC.

DAVIES - Major Dai Davies RA TD joined 103 Regiment circa 1976 as a Lieutenant and was rapidly promoted to Captain and Troop Commander in the newly formed X Battery which was to become 213 Battery with Maj Roger Squires as BC and Capt Bob Gornall as the other Troop Commander. Dai had been a National Service officer and often reminisced his days in the Training Regiment at Oswestry. Col Bob Gornall recalls he once hosted some of his old Oswestry comrades at the St Barbara's Dinner. Dai was to become BC 213 Battery and I together with Col Bob Gornall served under him as Troop Commanders. Dai was a hard task master but he was fair and was well liked by his Officers, Senior Ranks and soldiers alike. He had a keen sense of humour but also a good work ethic. He was a salesman to the core and was Managing Director of a Company called 'Eastern Carpets' at the time of joining 103 Regiment. He was the life and soul of any party whether it was Officers' Mess or All Ranks and would often lead the choir after Officers' Mess Dinners with his rich Welsh voice and his repertoire of Rugby songs would make your hair curl. After Dai left the Regiment his interest in all things RA didn't wane. He started a business producing models of Artillery pieces and all things military and those of you who visited the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas will have seen Dai outside of his shop selling the souvenirs and chatting happily with people about military matters. I last saw Dai at Alrewas when I was there with the Aigburth RAA in 2019. He was in good form although his dementia was slowing him down. He was a big man and a good example to all. Major Gerry Stubbs- Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) R E Gornall TD Pictures - Major Chris Vere



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.



KENNEDY - Major (Retd) John Kennedy RA died peacefully on 11 August 2021 at his home in Preston, Lancashire, following a long battle with cancer. Always a proud Gunner, he will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

LANE - Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Francis Lane MBE passed away at home on the morning of 4 August 2021 after a long hard-fought battle with illness. Kevin joined The Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery in 1969 and served The Gunners for 40 years both at Regimental Duty and on The Gunnery Staff. Kevin's enthusiasm for all things 'Gunnery' will be remembered by many, but especially those he commanded, taught, trained and helped whenever he could. On leaving The Gunners in 2009 Kevin became a mainstay and driving force in his local Royal British Legion Scotland Branch in Fort William and inevitably became its President in 2017. Kevin leaves behind his wife Jeanette and two sons, David and Michael. He is sadly missed by all family and friends and is a great loss to The Gunner Community.



RENNIE - Major (Retd) Graham Rennie passed away, at home, on the 8 June 2021 in his 98th year. Leaving Dumbarton Academy in 1940, he became a CA apprentice with J Wilson Crawford of Dumbarton. Called up in November 1942 for basic training with the East Lancs Regiment, at Lytham St Annes where they were billeted in Pontins Holiday Camp. After basic training he was posted to the 22nd Cheshire Regiment, where he trained as a Vickers machine gunner. He resisted overtures to become an officer, as he was enjoying the life and was a successful cross Country runner, running for both the Battalion and Western Command. He was posted to the 5th Bn the Cheshire Regiment, where he learned range finding, whilst continuing to run for the Battalion and Western Command. Persuaded finally to take officer training, he was sent to OCTU at Alton Towers, having passed that, he was surprisingly sent back to the 5th Bn, the Cheshire Regiment, where he has been a corporal. In August 1944 sent off to France as reinforcements for the 2nd Bn the Cheshire Regiment, where not a lot happened, until the push got under way, when he was involved with clearing German snipers, left behind to slow the Allied advance. Still waiting for an MMG vacancy, within the battalion, sent off to Ostend, joining an RAOC Company, where with a Corporal and twenty four men, he unloaded, landing craft, tanks, half tracks, armoured cars, etc, these were taken on strength by the British Liberation Army (later BAOR) Still no MMG vacancy, joined 5th Bn Royal Berkshire Regiment to prepare for the Rhine crossing. Having held the near bank, they then crossed using Buffalo, a large amphibious and armoured troop carrier, he was by now Company Commander with six excellent Officers, his Coy crossing first, and when established on the far bank, patrolled it against Germans, floating down, in an attempt to sink the pontoons which were supporting the bridges. After VE Day, their were courses on defusing booby traps and mines, was told he would be going East, to take on the Japanese, but that came to nothing and he was moved to Greece, joining 1st/6th East Surreys, part of 18 Brigade, which included the Lovat Scouts and 77 Fd Regiment RA Later 277). When the Battalion was subsequently reformed in Surrey most of his fellow Officers transferred to the 1st Battalion, he chose to join the Loveat Scouts, where he was OC the HQ Company. Cameron of Lochiel had just been replaced by a Colonel MacKenzie ex G1 of the Scottish Division. His fellow Officers were from Scot's Guards, the Seaforths, and the Black Watch, his Cheshire Service Dress, was a bit out of place, but not much! Demobbed in 1947 joined the TA in Latta Street Dumbarton where he was expecting a more restful life, it was not to be, in quick succession 417 Heavy Ack Ack, then 254 Light Ack Ack (with a little radar) then reorganised to R Battery 277 Fd Regt RA with 25 pdrs, which lasted for a year or two,

before becoming R Coy 8th Bn A&SH. He was then invited back as 2IC of 277 Fd Regt RA (TA), which subsequently merged with the 6th Bn A&SH. As they had considerable Trust Funds, the CO changed the name to 277(A&SH)Fd Regt RA (TA), we wore the Glengarry. Graham who was teetotal all his life, was a cheery sole, full of fun, specialising in one liners. Sales Manager, Scotland, for W&J Leigh paint manufacturers. Survived by his Son David and Grand Children Colin and Adam.

THOMAS - Brigadier J F Thomas CBE. Thomas certainly had a varied career but he was a humble man and soldier first. He joined the Army as a trooper in the lifeguards (following on from his father who was an old contemptible) and was selected via OCTU for an emergency commission to join the Army Commandos (No 6). He was badged Welch Regiment and when the commandos were disbanded, No 6 were sent to join 1 Para where he served in Palestine. He was injured and returned to the Welch to recover. He joined the gunners serving in Larkhill, Barton Stacey, Barnard Castle, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Germany. Units include 33 & 66 Airborne Light Regts, 22 Counter Bombardment Troop on the border in Hong Kong (58 Medium Regiment), 61st Light Regt but certainly 248 Battery/H Tp in Korea. He used to be a regular attendee at the Airborne Gunners dinner. His son certainly attended one with him when it was under the eagle eye of Bill Moore who knew Thomas from another guise. He eventually transferred to the RMP. He played rugby at Army, County and club level (at 7 in modern parlance and 15 in his time) including Aberavon, Blackheath and Taibach - he reportedly took his beloved Cotton Oxfords with him everywhere. He also said he was selected to play for Wales but had a motorcycle accident and was then sent to the Far East. His family have a cap at home but can't anchor it to a match. He was born in Margam and grew up in Sandfields Port Talbot, one of his schoolfriends was Clive Jenkins the politician and Richard Burton was a contemporary. He started his working life with the Port Talbot joinery firm G H Page as an apprentice before joining the army. He is survived by his wife, son, 2 daughters, 8 grandchildren and a great grand daughter.



Major R G McKenna 1940 - 2020



Boy's regiment took them to Colchester with 47 Regt where Roger commanded 3rd Light Battery. Two tours of Northern Ireland followed, the later one as second in charge of the regiment. Here Roger's acute knowledge of the human condition coupled with his dry sense of humour stood him in good stead.

A posting to Larkhill in 1978 saw a new battery to command, 1st The Blazers.

Then a tour in Gütersloh as 2IC of 47 Regt 1980 saw a departure from the mainstream with a posting to Benbecula population 1884 plus the McKenna family. It was a different way of life on the Hebrides, Roger being able to adapt to the local mores with little difficulty.

The Benbecula posting saw Roger's famous encounter with an air drop of frozen chickens, a lasting effect of which was to make active service a challenge. But fortuitously his path returned to Bristol as training officer of the GVA. This shortly became his final Battery Command and here he was at last BC of an independent battery free of regimental constraints. This was a time of expansion for the TA with manpower equipment and budgets on the rise. Roger soon placed his stamp on the battery. He was aware of the particular characteristics of TA soldiers.

The GVA flourished under his command, becoming one of the foremost units in South West District. He took an active role in bringing on young officers and a whole generation of us learnt to lead but also to love our soldiers. Many of Roger's young officers went on to long TA and in some case regular careers. They could be identified by the Roger style spotted hanky in the left cuff! The BCs quarter became a second home for a number of subalterns with Roger's drinks cupboard and Paul's larder bearing the brunt.

On leaving the army Roger then brought a touch of efficiency to the role of Bursar as befits a retired major. This was followed by valuable work in the prison service where his former interest in intelligence bore fruit.

In retirement Roger was a voracious reader with a taste for military and historical works. He was a besotted grandfather. A genial host he regaled guests with anecdotes, drink and good humour. His decline in health was born bravely and here he was supported by Paula's unswerving devotion. His final days were in the Bristol Royal Infirmary and he was at peace, the staff arranging for him to sit with Paula on his last afternoon.

He is remembered with great affection at The Artillery Ground, home of the GVA.

Roger was born in Bristol where he attended St Brendan's and having passed from the care of the Christian Brothers looked for an interesting past time joined the Gloucestershire Volunteer Artillery. There he developed a first link with the Army and decided to enlist. The recruiting posters stated Join the Army and see the world.

While many saw only Monchengladbach Roger served in Barnard Castle, Singapore, Hong Kong, Borneo and Korea. Borneo involved active service and Korea the UN honour guard. After commissioning at Mons and winning one of the prizes he was posted to Menden where he met Paula who was serving with the WRVS. Their honeymoon was travelling with the Regimental Ski team.

Paula and Roger moved to 27 Regt at Leipzig one of the regular moves that followed military life in those days. A rapid swerve away from the



Lieutenant Colonel D J Bender



Lieutenant Colonel Derek Bender who died on 27 December 2020 aged 89, will be better known to most readers as the Chairman and latterly Vice-President, of the Royal Horse Artillery Association. Derek however, had a very long and distinguished career in the Royal Regiment having joined the Boys' Battery in 1945. At that time, the battery was stationed in Cambridge Barracks Woolwich. Not surprisingly perhaps, Derek did exceptionally well in his time as a Boy Soldier. He was a particularly good sportsman, excelling in particular at Boxing and Hockey.

'On mustering to the ranks' Derek joined 5th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery until the early 1950s when he was posted to 4th RHA where he remained for almost ten years. During his time with 4th, he quickly rose to the rank of TARA Sergeant in 'F' (Sphinx) Battery. The pinnacle of his sports career perhaps was

when the regimental hockey team, of which he was a key member, won the Army Hockey Cup in the late 1950s. After a tour at RMA Sandhurst as an instructor he returned to the regiment as the Regimental Survey Sergeant. Promotion to WO2 soon followed and a few years later he was made RSM of a TA regiment. Commissioned toward the end of the 1960s, he was granted a Regular (QM) category commission and by 1972 was serving with 19th Field Regiment RA in both BAOR and Northern Ireland. He was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977.

Derek was very much a career 'flyer' and it was no surprise to anyone when he was promoted early to the rank of Lt Col (QM). Indeed, he was the youngest Lt Col (QM) in the Gunners at the time. He moved on promotion to take up the post of SO1 at the MOD PB6 at Stanmore in 1979 and was responsible for QM category commissions and the career planning of WOs commissioned from the ranks. He remained in this post until he retired from the Army in 1986. On retirement Derek and his wife Leni, moved to South Wales, where he took up an RO appointment at HQ Wales, Brecon. During this period, he became successively Secretary

and Chairman of the RHA Association and after a short break from the committee became the Welfare Secretary until once again being elected Chairman. Derek was a life-long member of the Association, joining soon after it was reformed in 1946. In 2003 he was awarded the Royal Artillery Medal in recognition of his lifetime service to the Regiment and the RHA Association. Derek was a true 'Horse Gunner', an outstanding soldier and a great friend to many. He will be very much missed by all who knew him.

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NHS

mental health care for veterans

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

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

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

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

RA Historical Society Autumn 2021 Programme

Date	Type of Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Registrations Close
Wed 22 Sep 1930 hrs	ONLINE WEBINAR	US Civil War Field Artillery	Dr Spencer Jones RA Regimental Historian	Fri 17 Sep
Wed 20 Oct	THE SHRAPNEL LECTURES 2021			
Morning	Face to Face Lecture, Newcome Hall, Larkhill	Op TELIC 1 Counter Battery Fire	Col Craig Palmer plus 5 Regt RA and 7 Regt RHA speakers	Wed 6 Oct
	Buffet Lunch in the Newcome Hall			Wed 6 Oct
Afternoon	Face to Face Lecture, Newcome Hall, Larkhill	The Royal Marine Artillery	Lt Col (Retd) George Gelder RM	Wed 6 Oct
Wed 24 Nov 1930 hrs	ONLINE WEBINAR	To be notified		Fri 19 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



COMPETITIONS

The closing date for all competitions in this month's edition is Monday 11 October 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

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

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

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

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| ADDITIVES | FACTORY | PRESERVING |
| BOTTLING | IRRADIATION | REFRIGERATION |
| CANNING | PASTEURISE | SMOKING |
| CURING | PICKLING | UHT |



Bath at War 1939-45 is a comprehensive account of the city's experience of the conflict, covering in detail life on the Home Front set against the background of the wider theatres of war. The narrative of that global struggle is given with a focus on the ordeals endured by the people of Bath, as they cheered their men and women fighters off to war, welcomed thousands of evacuated men, women and children to the city, and faced the full might of Hitler's Luftwaffe.

The Royal Artillery played an absolutely vital, though often forgotten, part in the British armed forces successful operation to recapture the Falkland Islands in 1982. The actions of the artillery were recorded by one young officer in a journal which he kept before, during and after the conflict. Second Lieutenant Tom Martin was a Command Post Officer with 29 (Corunna) Field Battery RA which deployed to the South Atlantic in 1982 as part of the Task Force dispatched to retake the Falklands.



Date	Event	Location
2021		
14 Sep	Sunset Ceremony	Larkhill
16 Sep	Central Sgts' Mess E2 Dinner	Larkhill
30 Sep	Hail & Farewell	Larkhill
06 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
07 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
14 Oct	Awards Dinner Campbell Mess	Larkhill
21 Oct	Central Sgts' Mess Dinner Night	Larkhill
22 Oct	RA Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
24 Oct	Gunner Sunday	Royal Hospital Chelsea
11 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster
14 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park
30 Nov	RA Winter Party	Larkhill
05 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill
10 Dec	Subalterns' Dining In	Larkhill
2022		
17-21 Jan	RA RMAS Cadre	Larkhill
5/6 Feb	Reserve Conference	Larkhill
17 Feb	Royal Artillery Gold Cup	Sandown
9-11 Mar	WO1's Convention	Larkhill
16 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	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
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



The Chief of the General Staff's Commendation

Maj D F W Tickner RA CMgr, FCMI, CBIFM, MCGI, NDipM, ASyI

In the New Year Honours List 2021, Maj (now Sqn Ldr) Tickner is commended for his exceptional work as the focus for Diversity and Inclusion within the Basing and Infrastructure Directorate for the past 2 years. Entirely voluntarily, he has provided hours of his personal time advising and supporting numerous members of the organisation and wider Army HQ and throughout has been a pillar of compassion and selfless commitment. An inspirational demonstration of leadership and care for others which thoroughly deserves recognition.



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Elements of 7th (Parachute) Regiment RHA are deployed on Op PITTING, Military Support to the evacuation of British Nationals and Afghan staff eligible for relocation, from Kabul in Afghanistan.