



JULY 2022



Ex DESERT FALCON
Ex GERMAN CENTAUR

UK ARMED FORCES
EQUESTRIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

GUNNER

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

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

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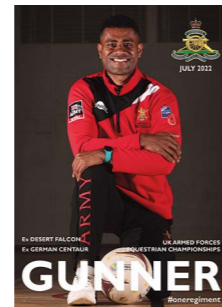
GUNNER



JULY 2022

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LBdr Dave Sunaki, 32 Regt RA
Front cover photo taken by
Graeme Main, Soldier Magazine

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Colonel Charlie Harmer ADC Regimental Colonel Royal Artillery

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your Regimental Colonel, in a publication I remember as being the first piece of literature I saw from the Gunners as I began my quest to join this wonderful institution of which we are all a part. We are so fortunate to have Gunner; it looks a little different these days – re-engineered and re-launched electronically and in hard copy, but is routinely filled with the news and exploits of our whole family. Articles and stories from our 21 units, deployed both across the globe and closer to home, in many cases doing things we never expected to do, but always achieving on a scale our forebears would be proud of. Articles, stories and advertisements from our sportsmen and sportswomen, our veteran community, our cadets and of course tributes to those we have lost. It remains an excellent publication and one we should be proud of.

I take over this role at a captivating time for the Royal Artillery. Although undoubtedly tarnished by Russia's ongoing actions in the Ukraine, this is arguably a moment of unparalleled opportunity for us, certainly in living memory. Front and centre in Future Soldier, multiple equipment programmes designed to 'Privilege the Deep' all have the Gunners at their heart. Reinforced further by CGS's speech at RUSI on 28th June where he announced mobilisation of the Army through boosting readiness, accelerating modernisation (including multiple Gunner capabilities), re-thinking how we fight and looking again at structures, the future looks bright for us.

Today, eight Gunner regiments are committed to seven Defence operations both overseas and at home, with many more individual augmentees even further afield. In the midst of this, 30th June saw the end of 1st Artillery Brigade and the standing up of the 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade Combat Team (1 DRS BCT) made up of Regular, Reserve and Hybrid units. Focused on the Army's deep fight, 1 DRS BCT will combine deep fires through M270 MLRS recapitalisation and the new Mobile Fires Platform (MFP), with the enhanced sensor suite provided by AJAX of the Royal Armoured Corps. Gunner surveillance and target acquisition, alongside and integrated with

improved electronic warfare, cyber capabilities and attack aviation will complete this unprecedented and potent package. 7th Light BCT has been bolstered by 4th Regt RA, 7 PARA RHA are growing to face the Very High Readiness demands placed on 16th Air Asslt Bde and 29 Cdo Regt RA are steering towards the Future Commando Force with Royal Marines now joining their ranks.

7th Air Defence Group, deployed across several theatres concurrently and with training underway on the new Mk 3 Aiming Unit for its High Velocity Missile Lightweight Multiple Launchers, continues to see demand for its services grow. The Field Army Troops Surveillance Group is seeing more PUMA UAS arrive to bridge the gap until the arrival of AQUILA, with Watchkeeper Force planning for a deployment to the USA in late 2022.

At home, The King's Troop RHA have been central to the Platinum Jubilee celebrations for Her Majesty The Queen, our Captain General, who has also very recently recognised the contributions of several Gunners in her Birthday Honours. Finally, gun salutes conducted by our Regular and Reserve soldiers in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Stonehenge have kept our soldiers in the public eye.

In having recently returned to the Gunners after a year away, I have been immediately struck, yet again, by the quality of our people in whatever they do and the pace at which they do it. I am deeply honoured to have been selected as Regimental Colonel and cannot wait to help to deliver against what has been asked of us, whilst also listening and where appropriate and necessary, acting on your behalf. Protecting our heritage, our family and encouraging and inspiring those who will follow us are all at the heart of what you will get from me.

My background, one that has enabled me to understand the pressures on our people and our families in detail, including my own, should provide me a solid foundation from which to do the Gunners justice throughout my tenure. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can, and you can be assured that the RASM, the RHQ and I are united in working for the good of the Gunner family - everywhere.



Press Release

Why is pension satisfaction improving?

Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO Forces Pension Society

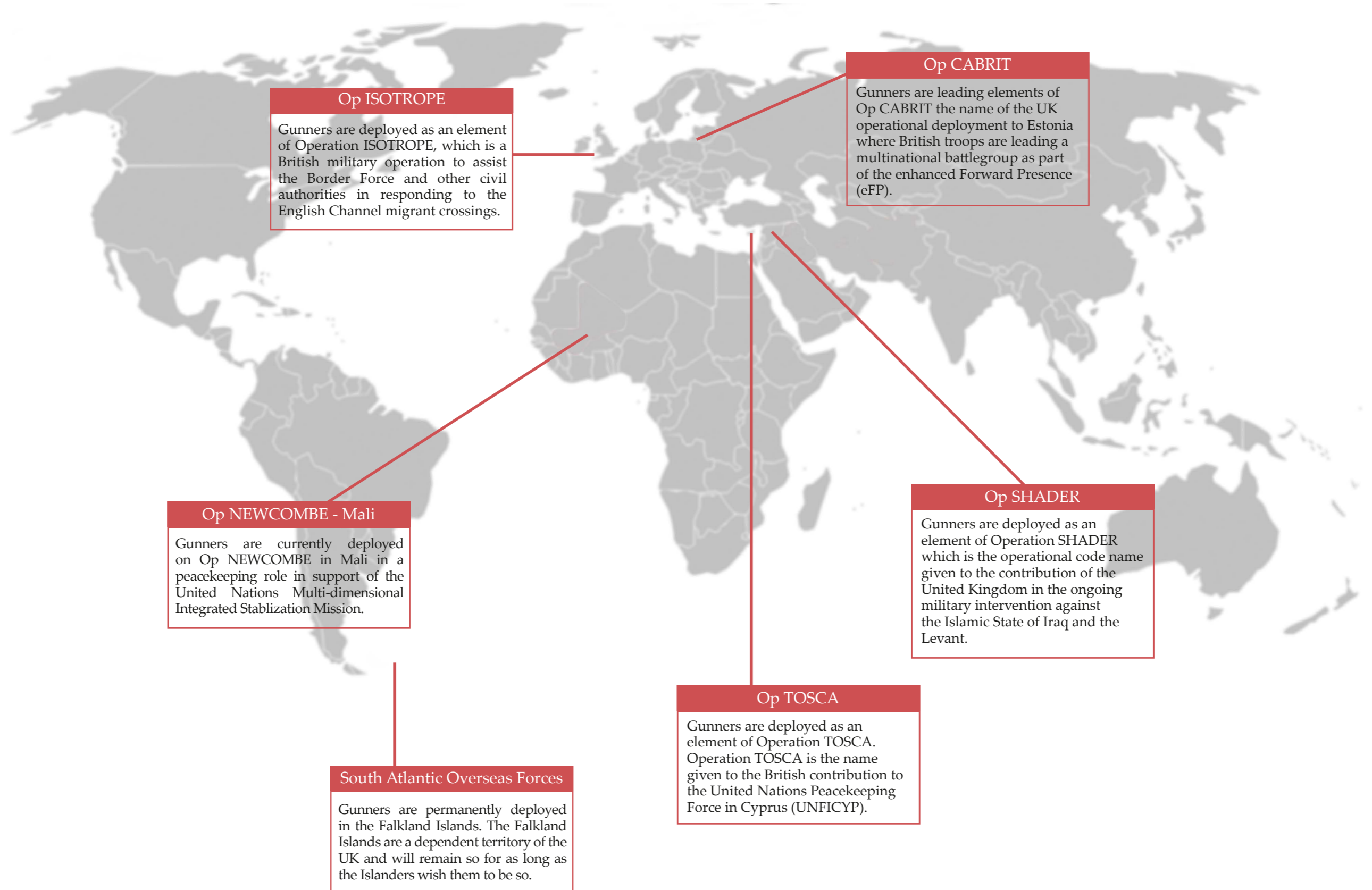
The latest Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey published in May shows an increase in pension satisfaction across all three services. Not since 2012 have the figures shown such a positive picture. That said, there's still a way to go, notably among those serving in the Royal Marines who recorded the lowest satisfaction level. But even here, there is a marked improvement over the past decade. There is no doubt that pension benefits have evolved and engagement with them has increased. Everyone serving is now on AFPS15 and that remains one of the best schemes in the Public Sector. We'd also like to think that the Forces Pension Society has played a modest part in helping to stimulate this improvement in pension awareness. So it's perhaps no surprise that our membership numbers have increased to the point where we're now heading toward the 65,000 mark.

For many years, we have advocated the importance of taking an interest in your pension – as we put it “it pays to understand your pension”. As the schemes have become more sophisticated, so has the mindset of the serving community. Those serving today are more demanding, more discriminating and more focussed on their long-term financial well-being. There's a wider recognition of the many trigger points in service careers where critical decisions may impact on what you receive when you leave. I recently outlined in an article to the media, some of the benefits inherent in AFPS15 and how you can take advantage of them. Additionally, there are unplanned events that need to be faced where a degree of expert guidance is helpful. That's why so many of our Members seek support from our team of experts, our Forces Pensions Consultants. Issues such as Medical Discharge, Divorce, Taxation, Early Departure Payments are among the most frequently asked questions. There are even more basic considerations such as choosing the best time to leave, which can make a significant difference to the pension you receive.

As the champions of Armed Forces Pensions for the past 75 years, we're here to help our Members make the best pension choices and to represent their interests where it counts, on the representative bodies for Armed Forces and Public Sector Pensions.

If you want to discover how to get the most from your Armed Forces Pension, join our growing number of Members by visiting www.forcespensionsociety.org – it could help to improve your pension satisfaction!

The Gunners are currently engaged on many overseas operations as formed units and individual augmentees.





NATO Non-lethal Technologies Exercise 2 (NNTEX)



Bel A400

During March 2022, 10 personnel from across 106th Regiment Royal Artillery deployed to Poligono Sperimentale e di Addestramento Interforze Salto di Quirra, or PISQ as it was more easily referred to, in Sardinia. PISQ, initially an air defence range, is now Italy and NATO's largest multi-domain live fire and test range, enabling a plethora of weapons and effectors to be used against a broad spectrum of targets. PISQ is located in the South East of Sardinia, with mountains dominating the landscape.

NNTEX 2 was the second phase of a Counter Unmanned Aerial System trial. The initial tests conducted pre-Covid pandemic, provided the baseline where All Arms Air Defence (AAAD) was used to engage and destroy small UAS (both fixed wing and quadcopter). The concept of the trial was to assess the effectiveness of Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) CUAS capabilities, using NATO partner warfighters as operators. There were 8 defence industry companies who were partnered with both UK and

Belgian (BEL) Air Force operators, along with BEL ISTAR and Artillery personnel and Italy's Drone Centre of Excellence, who provided the Red Team operators and drone targets.

Prior to deployment to Sardinia, a number of training serials were conducted with our partnered companies, which saw 106th Regt RA soldiers spending weekends in France, Newcastle and London. A varied degree of training was completed, however, there was sufficient time during the trial for further education and familiarisation prior to test scenarios commencing.

The UK was partnered with the following companies:

- Openworks Ltd, using the SKYWALL AUTO net cannon system.
- IXI Electronic Warfare, using the DRONEKILLER software defined radio frequency handheld jammer.
- Fortem Technologies, using the SKYDOME system, which comprised of a TrueView Radar, SkyDome manager C2 system and DroneHunter F700 attack drone.



- CILAS, using their LiDAR tracking system and directed energy weapon (DEW) / laser to destroy the target.

BEL operators were partnered with; BATS a jamming system, Smartshooter sighting system for small arms, FN Herstal m249 7.62mm stabilized machine guns and Delft Dynamics DroneCatcher. Whilst the title of the exercise included the term "Non-lethal", some of the effectors most definitely were kinetic and had lethal effects. CILAS's DEW / Laser being the cause for most concern, with NOTAMs effective up to 160nm radius and up to 80,000ft, constraining us to 45 min firing windows and the indignity of having to wear ridiculous looking goggles.

Given the pace at which UAS have been put to great effect by malicious actors in recent times, for example in Ukraine, the UAE and even closer to home at Gatwick, it was pertinent to assess all technologies commercially available. Thus, the scope of the trial was expanded to include kinetic effectors. The focus of the trial, however, was still on the low collateral options, with more points being awarded for superficial damage, capture and for maximum points, capture and retrieval for intelligence exploitation.

International travel during this post covid pandemic environment was somewhat of an administrative burden, thankfully the detachment successfully made it to the BEL AF airhead in Brussels in good order.



Bdr Murray and DJI Phantom



Flying out to Sardinia in a BEL AF A400M, was for many a first-time experience and indeed more comfortable than expected. In fact, for one of the soldiers, Gnr Key, it was his first time outside of the UK and indeed in an aircraft. Joining the pilots in the cockpit, whilst flying over the snowcapped Alps, is an opportunity not afforded on commercial flights these days, and I'm sure this experience will be etched in his memory.

Due to strict covid measures within Italy, the tempo for the trials was relaxed, due to capacity constraints on the range. Thus, there was plenty of time afforded to explore the island, with regular cultural visits to Tortoli and Cagliari. Despite being a Mediterranean island, the weather was not as expected, or should I say as advertised to trawl for volunteers, so trips to the beach and ideas of sun tans were mere pipe dreams. One of the cultural sites visited was the Commonwealth War Grave at Cagliari, where Sgt D McKerracher RA was buried. A wreath from 106 Regt RA was laid at his grave by Gnr Key, followed by a minute silence to reflect on the sacrifices made.

Working with the BEL AF and other NATO partners was very rewarding and great relationships were forged both on the range and in the local bars and restaurants, primarily due to our shared dismay at the food on offer in camp. Whilst this was a scientific trial, with a NATO Demonstration Assessment Team, there was a healthy degree of competition between UK and BEL troops and informally scores were definitely being kept. Initial hype was quickly replaced by concern, as the Red Team chalked up the first wins of the exercise. However, I'm delighted to say that the UK detachment were the first to put a score on the board and overall our partnered CUAS companies and operators proved most effective. LBdr Sheehan struggled to contain his glee at his first successful engagement, much to the frustration and dismay of the BEL operators.

Given the low observable nature of tactical UAS, due to their small radar cross section,

lack of IR emission (heat) and low operating altitude, the effectiveness of the detection sensor was crucial. It was evident early on in the trial that there was no one silver bullet to address the UAS threat. Due to the nuances of Pulse Doppler radar, quite frequently targets would drop track, causing the effectors to lose the target and relied on the operator to manually reacquire the lock on, which proved challenging. A number of companies relied solely on manual acquisition, which again is difficult without other injects providing situational awareness.

Fortem Technologies TrueView radar proved to be highly reliable and it leveraged a number of features to ensure targets were tracked. Micro Doppler "chirps" sent pulses of energy to better detect small objects (including moving rotor blades) and where a target drone was in the hover, DroneHunter with its own organic radar would "sway", in effect moving the radar and thus ensuring positive tracking, prior to engaging the target with its tethered net. CILAS also scored a number of successful engagements, with UK operators being the first to fire the laser outside of laboratory environments and at moving targets. Bdr Murray being the first soldier to fire the directed energy weapon and destroy a DJI Phantom, could this be a first for the RA?

At the end of the trial there was a Distinguished Visitors' day, where a number of serials were conducted to demonstrate the CUAS capabilities on trial, with representatives from all NATO countries in attendance. As is often the case, the demonstration didn't go perfectly, however, this merely emphasized the capability gaps. DroneHunter executed an impressive interception, returning the captured drone back to a drop off point mere meters away from the crowd. It also narrowly missed out on an engagement of a fixed wing UAS, due to interference from other companies systems which were still active, attesting to the challenge the congested emissions environment creates within the battlespace.



Overall the trial identified the current gaps in COTS CUAS capability, with feedback given to both NATO and the defence industry partners, which will hopefully shape future requirements and feature development with an ever changing UAS threat spectrum. Fortem and CILAS proved to be the most effective solutions, given the test criteria and scenarios which were conducted in poor weather tested both effectors and the Red Team to their limits. Following on from the initial base line exercise, which achieved a 16% hit probability, some of the CUAS solutions tested achieved a higher success rate, albeit at varying costs. However, whilst these systems proved successful, it was evident that AAAD, if practiced, can be effective and enhanced at relatively low cost with the adoption of Smartshooter sighting system.

As many will have seen from the current conflict in Ukraine, UAS of varying

complexity can be used as a force multiplier on the battlefield and CUAS capability is an area within UK Defence that will need more focus and investment. NNTEX 2 provided Army Reserve personnel from 106th Regt RA not only an amazing opportunity to travel, assisting with recruitment and retention, but also to engage in NATO level exercises. This develops their understanding of the air threat spectrum, improving their GBAD trade knowledge and enhancing their capabilities as Air Defenders.

by Capt T Bird RA
Ops Offr 265 Bty
106 (Yeomanry) Regt RA



SKYWALL



Exercise DESERT FALCON 22 (UAE)



Exercise DESERT FALCON has had several different incarnations over the years, partnering between British troops and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Presidential Guard to support the development of ISTAR tactics and doctrine. This year, 32 Regiment Royal Artillery were tasked as the lead unit to deliver a bilateral ISTAR exercise in the United Arab Emirates, working with the recently renamed FALCON Brigade. The exercise deploying an integrated ISTAR HQ with assets from 4/73 Battery RA, 14 Signals Regiment (EW), the Military Intelligence community, interpreters, and logistical experts and the Mini Uncrewed Air Systems (MUAS) personnel from 32 Regiment. All deployed soldiers and officers stepped into a world of Defence Engagement activities that few had experienced before. A total of eighty UK troops, from eight different UK units, navigating a complex set of COVID-19 testing rules, in three operating environments, across a 500km frontage, in another language. Alongside the primary task of relationship building, it was also an unmatched opportunity to operate MUAS in desert, urban and mountainous terrains, all within one exercise.

The month-long exercise began with a preparatory phase of Workshops, enabling lessons to be taught by operators from each capability to their Emirate counterparts. A small team of UK staff also set about learning the newly drafted FALCON Brigade ISTAR doctrine, to enable interoperability. With varied experience of ISTAR across the FALCON Brigade, and even more diverse levels of English, UK and Emirate translators were in high demand at this time. The art of Defence Engagement was a new role to most of the UK personnel and few had experienced or expected the soft skills that would be so central to the success of the exercise. There were certainly lessons learnt in both directions during the first phase – no one could dispute the FALCON Brigade take model building and the development of sand-tables extremely seriously, or that the Emirate forces have a different concept of time to British troops. An enormous amount of Arabic dates and qahwa (coffee) was consumed over this time.

On deployment of the fighting phase, some troops were transported by Chinook into the northern Ras Al Khaimah (RAK) mountains, whilst the remainder of the combined DESERT



LION Taskforce moved to the AL HAMRA desert in the south. One DESERT HAWK 3 (DH3) Detachment were given the challenge of manoeuvring across a vast desert area that was perfectly designed for the capability, deployed in mixed detachments with Falcon Bde soldiers accompanying every section. In the mountains, the Detachment had the task of working out how to fly in an environment that was at the limit of the capability operating envelope, with barely a patch of ground that was free from enormous slate shards or rocks. The single greatest lesson from this period was of the importance of multiple communication assets, in order to get the sensor information back to the ISTAR HQ as swiftly as possible.



The arrival of the Commanding Officer as the MUAS Flying Supervisor gave the Detachments a rare opportunity to fly DH3 inside one of largest urban training centres in the world. With high-rise buildings, dual carriageways and bridges that unfortunately made Copehill Down look like a toy city, the pilots and operators were able to launch and recover the system in a manner never employed before. The highlights were numerous and testament to the extraordinary technical expertise of the Detachments; landing a DH3 on the roof of a high-rise building, between lamp posts on a dual carriageway, launching from a tiny rooftop, or proving why the system is designed to break up on impact. All of this demonstrated that when given the chance to truly experiment and develop new skills, MUAS operators will exceed expectations of what is

considered possible, pushing their equipment beyond perceived limitations. This activity allowed the Detachments to develop their tactics and deepen their understanding of MUAS, which will benefit 32 Regiment as it retrains on the interim DH3 replacement, PUMA.

Having deployed on past iterations, 4/73 Battery RA brought an enormous amount of previous experience to the exercise. It was evident from an early stage of planning that the enduring relationship between the UK and Emirate long range patrols community was the bedrock of the exercise. The chance to operate in the mountains would not have happened without their engagement. In addition, the FALCON Brigade are still keen to innovate across ISTAR and having recently created an EW Company within their organisation, they were dedicated to the reciprocal mentoring and partnership provided by 245 Signal Squadron (EW).

Whilst the aim of the exercise may have been ISTAR integration, the real lessons came from the bold complexity of the task and more importantly, the soft skills that were developed and practiced. The deployment was a fantastic opportunity for the UK ISTAR capabilities to practice interoperability and integration with another nation's forces. Whilst there wasn't direct similarity between every asset or doctrinal approach, the processes were close enough for common understanding. However the opportunity afforded from the Emirate training areas, their diverse assets, and the cultural insights gained made for a genuinely stimulating exercise. The final, unexpected gift from DESERT FALCON 22 was the extended stay in Abu Dhabi and the chance to explore some of the UAE. Unsurprisingly, there were few complaints about being stranded in a hotel with a pool and a beach. A welcome chance to experience a different part of the world and broaden our soldiers and officers horizons following an extended period of lockdown and travel restrictions.

by 2Lt Rob Vanbeck RA
18 (Quebec 1759) Bty
32 Regt RA



Exercise GERMAN CENTAUR - HQ Battlefield Study to Hamburg 26-29 Mar 22



Hamburg Museum

“There is a merit to visiting historical battlefields that no amount of theoretical study can replace. Educationalists recognise that participation is the key to learning, and field study – with its unique and unutterably poignant mix of battlefield, cemetery, and memorial – talks to both intellect and emotion. This is not an optional extra: this, surely, is core business.”

Professor Richard Holmes

Ex GERMAN CENTAUR saw personnel from HQ 7 Air Defence Group develop an understanding of, and draw lessons from, Integrated Air Defence within a Total War setting. This Battlefield Study (BS) used the RAF's strategic bombing of Hamburg in July 1943 (Op GOMORRAH) as a prism to understand how UK Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) doctrine - currently in refinement by HQ 7 AD Gp - may be applied in peer conflict. In addition, the exercise served to broaden participant's professional development through

an underlying focus on GBAD operations in an urban environment, with a view to future doctrine development.

The BS was led by Lt Col (Retd) Jo Sharp, who is a lecturer at the German Staff College in Hamburg. His depth of knowledge in the subject and understanding of the terrain and language is second-to-none. These factors - twinned with his former career as an RA GBAD Officer – made him uniquely qualified to support Ex GERMAN CENTAUR. Furthermore the Royal Artillery Centre for Personal Development (RACPD) were invaluable in their support.

The BS was broken down into two distinct phases. Phase 1 consisted of student back briefs in order to situate and contextualise deploying personnel. Thereafter the group visited RAF Northolt for a tour de force by the head of the Air Historical Branch, Mr Seb Cox. He offered a detailed insight into the strategic background prior to Op GOMORRAH. Phase 1 culminated in a visit to the Air Power Museum at RAF Hendon, where Mr Cox provided a



bespoke tour showing the relevant aircraft. Further student presentations were delivered to explain how the Allied Bombers and German Night Fighters were employed in 1943.

Phase 2 was the visit to Hamburg, with specific focus on Integrated Air Defence Command and Control, Protection of Critical Assets and Information Exploitation. On day one the Hamburg City Museum was explored, to allow members to understand the significance of Hamburg as an industrial hub. Thereafter the group visited the Wilhelmsburg Flak Tower and its roof-top gun pits, where 88mm and 128mm Flak Guns had once been sited. There was a student-led discussion on the German Air Defence plan before breakout syndicate work analysing how we can best utilise deception to enhance UK GBAD warfare in the urban environment. What was remarkable is that, despite the sheer amount of rounds fired by the Flak Guns during each bombing raid, the Luftwaffe always managed to ensure ammunition stockpiles were replenished ready for the following night. This promoted discussion to on the GBAD missile resupply process and how it can be enhanced through efficiency and deception.

Day two saw the group visit an underground bunker preserved as a museum. The Curator gave a captivating tour describing the horrors of what it was like during the firestorm. Thereafter the group did a firestorm walk narrating harrowing eyewitness accounts in their real time locations. The afternoon involved a visit to the bombed out St Nikolai Church tower for a city overview and the adjacent Firestorm Museum, before ending with syndicate led discussion on the GBAD planning process.

On the final day the group travelled to the German Naval Base at Kiel. We were met by a Stabsfeldwebel (Warrant Officer) from the German Air Force who gave the group a fascinating tour of the German Air Defence Museum. This Museum had displays of German GBAD equipment from 1870 to 2022;

including East German/Soviet equipment still employed overseas. Thereafter syndicate discussion concentrated on how best to shape future MRAD doctrine, noting 7 AD Gp have recently replaced Rapier (SHORAD) with Sky Sabre (MRAD); a step-change in capability. The BS concluded with a visit to the mass civilian graves and the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery at Ohlsdorf, Hamburg, ending in a short wreath laying ceremony in remembrance of all those effected during Op GOMORRAH.



Ex GERMAN CENTAUR delivered significant benefit to HQ 7 AD Gp personnel. It provided an opportunity to question current thinking, develop ideas and expose areas for improvement. This enabled open discussion about future concepts and encouraged innovative thinking from all attendees. The BS also allowed an extremely busy HQ Staff the chance to take stock, reflect and exploit the opportunity for personal development. By completing the exercise, the group have been able to contribute further to the Formation's conceptual development. The BS was unique in that it principally viewed the prosecution of Op GOMORRAH from a German perspective as opposed to the British; an unusual but equally valid approach. The political, ethical and moral factors at play in 1943 had unfortunate parallels with current events in Ukraine, making the BS even more relevant, and indeed poignant. A fully worthwhile exercise and one to recommend to others in the Royal Regiment.



75th Anniversary of 12th Regiment Royal Artillery



12th Regiment Royal Artillery
75th Anniversary



75th Anniversary Regimental Photo

The 6th of April 2022 marked 75 years since the formation of 12th Regiment Royal Artillery. To mark the occasion, the Regiment planned a number of events including a Regimental photo. However, due to the unfolding events in Ukraine and much of the Regiment deployed as a result, the events were scaled down to reflect this.

The first event of the day was a photo in front of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess attended by both this cohort and the officers of the Regiment. Typically, the weather did not sympathise with the celebrations. However, as the RSM corralled everyone outside, the weather cleared for those all important 10 minutes allowing for a fairly undramatic photograph to be taken. Subsequently, the members of the Regiment filed into the dining room to sit down at their respective Battery tables for a lunch.

The RSM, WO1 Dunkerley, kicked off proceedings with a rundown of the Regiment's history since its formation in 1947, all the more fitting as the day also marked his last day in post prior to commissioning as a Captain. This was followed by a thanking from the Commanding

Officer, Lt Col Butt, and a notable summary of the recent, current and future commitments and deployments the Regiment has and will be involved in ranging from Op RESCRIPT to Op SHADER, to name just a couple. After this, each Battery presented on their individual histories, dating all the way back to 1747 in the case of 12 (Minden) Air Assault Battery.

A well earned curry lunch followed the speeches. The Regiment also had the pleasure of hosting the Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex, Mrs Susan Piper, who reflected on her fond experiences of Thorney Island, having served in the Royal Air Force, and the Regiment before presenting a number of awards to several members of the Regiment.

The events of the day made way for the preparation for the events of the evening. For the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess this consisted of a barbecue. They also welcomed in the Bombardiers and Corporals of the Regiment, who reportedly received a substantial amount of career advice to make the next step and gain a membership to the Mess.

The weather returned with a vengeance to make the



BBQ more of an inside affair, however, this didn't take away from the celebrations of those of the Regiment, the outgoing RSM and of the award winners.

On the other side of Thorney Island at the Officers' Mess, the evening celebrations consisted of a dinner night with a more celebratory party style than usual. Originally, the event was planned to cater for 120 people. Due to extant operational commitments the scale of the night was reduced but not in spirit!



Sgt Kydd - 75 Years Anniversary Officers' Dinner

The arrival of the partygoers saw Champagne welcome drinks accompanied by an impressive 3-piece string quartet due to an unfortunate spring-loaded door incident, which was followed by the calls for dinner. The mess staff delivered with excellent salmon pate, steak, and chocolate fondant courses. This was followed by a break for a very comprehensive firework display. A drone display aligned into a "75" was proposed as a fitting homage to the Regiment, but it turns out they don't come cheap! Port and cheese followed alongside dine-out speeches from Maj Hepworth REME and Capt Brennan RA.

Following the dinner, all gathered around the 1m² cake envisioned to feed 120 but now for 40. The CO's wife took great pride in cutting the enormous Victoria Sponge with a sword, as is customary, with the delegation taking slices far into the night as well as the next few mornings as it turned out.



Fireworks



Regimental cake

Overall, the events of the entire day provided an excellent and fitting opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the Regiment in both its rich past and its present.

by Lt Watson RA
12 (Minden) Air Assault Bty
12 Regt RA





A personal experience by Roland Hicke



Lt Roland Francis HICKES RA, photo taken 1939 following OCTU

This account of my personal experiences as a prisoner of the Japanese from 15th February 1942 until 15th August 1945 was written at the instigation of my cousin, John Hicke. Since his retirement he has worked diligently and long to produce a first class history of the Hicke family.

During my years working on the Burma-Siam Railway, 16,000 of my comrades died, many more died in other parts of the Far East as prisoners of the Japanese. Therefore this is bound to be a somewhat harrowing story. At this distance in time I have found it difficult to remember great detail, and so if the read is desirous of a fuller account I refer him to the following books written by officers whom I knew and with whom I shared the suffering:

1. The Burma-Siam Railway: the secret diary of Dr Robert Hardie 1942-1945.
2. Railroad of Death - John Coast.
3. Miracle on the River Kwai - Ernest Gordon.
4. Prisoner on the Kwai - Basil Peacock.

There is also a further book compiled by the famous artist Ronald Searle. I never met him although he was not far from me on the wretched railway. He was unknown as an artist at that time but his book included vivid drawings depicting the state to which prisoners were reduced.

Throughout the narrative I have referred to Siam and not the modern Thailand. This is purely because that is how the country was known at the time of which I write.

It will be appreciated that those of us who suffered so greatly and survived have built up a tremendous bond of unity and comradeship. As an expression of this a Far Eastern Prisoner of War Association was established after the war and branches formed throughout the country. I have been a member of the Halifax branch and the Bournemouth branch, the former being the area from which my territorial regiment was recruited and the latter as the location of my working and retirement life.

Wimborne 1993



Much has been said and written concerning the loss of Malaya and Singapore. I can only say that it was certainly no fun being a member of a defeated army.

Crucial in the debacle was the instant loss of air power, the small RAF presence was equipped with out of date aircraft such as Brewster Buffaloes and Swordfish. Too late in the day some Hurricanes arrived but barely had time to be removed from their packing cases. From the beginning Jap planes could bomb and strafe with impunity. Their pilots were brave and well trained with modern Zero aircraft.

All in a position to assess such matters had grossly underestimated the Jap strength. A crying example of this was the sending out into the China Sea of the Prince of Wales and Repluse without aircraft support. With no aircraft carrier anywhere near, these capital ships were quickly sunk with very tragic loss of life. Thus we not only lost control of the air but also of the seas.

In Malaya and Singapore there had been a garrison force for many years. This included a very fine freshly built Naval Base on Singapore Island overlooking the Johore Straits. The only snag was that there was hardly a naval ship occupying the base. On land there were some 15" gun emplacements which unfortunately were sited for the attack from the sea, they were useless for the actual attack that came through Malaya. It is easy to be wise after the event but the powers that be had always maintained that the jungle could be largely ignored, as long as the lines of communication through Malaya

could be held that would be sufficient. This theory proved to be disastrously wrong as the Japs demonstrated so tellingly. Later Wingate's Chindits, the XIV Army in Burma, the Australians in New Guinea and the Americans throughout the Pacific learned the lesson from the Japs that the jungle can be used effectively for fighting a battle.

I put our position on a par with that of the BEF in France early in 1940. The Germans caught them napping with the skilful use of fast moving armoured divisions. The allied forces were still thinking in terms of fixed positions and thus the Maginot Line mentality was their undoing. As with us a large number of the BEF spent the remainder of the war in captivity.

My unit, the 122nd Field Regiment Royal Artillery were armed with 4.5" howitzer field guns. We had arrived in Singapore in March 1941 and so had a reasonable period of acclimatisation before the Japanese War started on 8th December 1941. With the sticky heat found along the Equator this was very beneficial.

Those lessons have coloured my whole outlook ever since, they are particularly relevant today and explain why I am such a strong advocate of Cruise and Trident. As long as there is evil around, and I regard Communism in the same light as Nazism then I believe we must remain armed to the teeth. As long as the Soviets are opposed by an equal strength then I think there is a much better chance that they will be deterred from carrying out aggressive actions. I use "we" as referring to the West not just the UK.

I appreciate that many of the lessons I



learned about myself and about life were also learned by you with your experiences those many years ago, but I hope not so uncomfortably.

WELCOME TO RANGOON !!

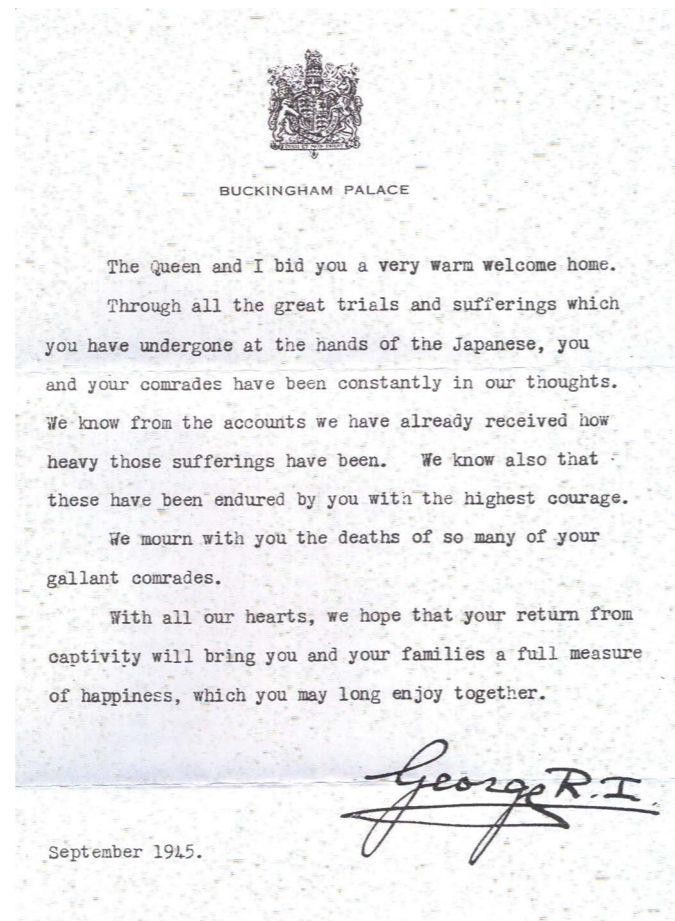
At last the day has come. Three years of darkness and agony have passed, and a new dawn is here, bringing with it for all of us deliverance from danger and anxiety, and for you above all freedom after bondage, the joy of reunion after long separation.

Through these long years we have not forgotten you. You have not been at any time far from the thoughts of those even who had no personal friends or relatives among you. We of the Red Cross have tried every way of establishing contact and relieving your hardships. Some provisions have been sent, and many messages despatched; but we do not know how much has reached you, for the callous indifference of the enemy has made the task well nigh impossible.

But now that enemy is beaten and you are free once more, we are doing all we can to give you the welcome you richly deserve and to make your homeward path a pleasant and joyful one. If our preparations in RANGOON leave something to be desired, it is only because the end has come sooner than we dared to hope and has found us unprepared. These deficiencies will be more than made up by your welcome in India and your homeland.

On behalf of the Indian Red Cross and St John War Organization we welcome you. May God bless you and send you home rejoicing !

GBCPO - No 34, Army (Asst RCC) 29-8-45-12,000-I



The Royal Regiment wishes to congratulate the following:

CBE

Brigadier Karl Ryan Harris - for his exemplary and selfless leadership of the Army BAME community, latterly through four years as chair of the Army Multicultural Network.

OBE

Lieutenant Colonel Jonathon Hugh Buxton RA – for his exemplary and selfless efforts as SO1 Unacceptable Behaviours, APSG.

MBE

Colonel Darren Michael Bishop VR RA - for his exemplary leadership as SO1 OTC, Sandhurst Comd Gp, RMAS.

Capt Robert David Goodman RA - for is exemplary efforts to support the successful deployment of WATCHKEEPER on Op DEVERAN and the re-establishment of a new UK flying locations at Keevil Airfield.

Major Josh Head RA - for his exemplary efforts as Chief of Staff Royal Corps of Army Music at a critical time of a large-scale and complex transition and transformation. .

Major James Allen Spelling RA – for his determination and inspirational leadership in the delivery of major Army equipment projects.

Major Nat Tyler RA – for his role as COS 7 AD Group, especially in the generation and preparation of personnel for five operations across the globe.

QVRM

Major Lee Patchell RA – to reflect 34 years of Reserve service during which is has shown unwavering commitment to the Army and his Regiment.

MSM

Staff Sergeant Louise Joanne Banton RA.

CGS's Commendation

Bdr L Z Dove - Recommended as a Sect Comd AFC Harrogate,

Capt Calvin Aylward – Recommended as Quartermaster (Technical), 20 Bty RA, 16 Regt RA



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Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, Royal Gun Salute, Caernarfon



On Tuesday 19th April 2022, members of 103 Regiment Royal Artillery journeyed to Caernarfon, Wales in preparation for the Royal Gun Salute, to honour Her Majesty The Queen's 96th Birthday and Platinum Jubilee. A mixture of personnel from across all Batteries within the Regiment came together to deliver a successful parade, sure to do Her Majesty proud.

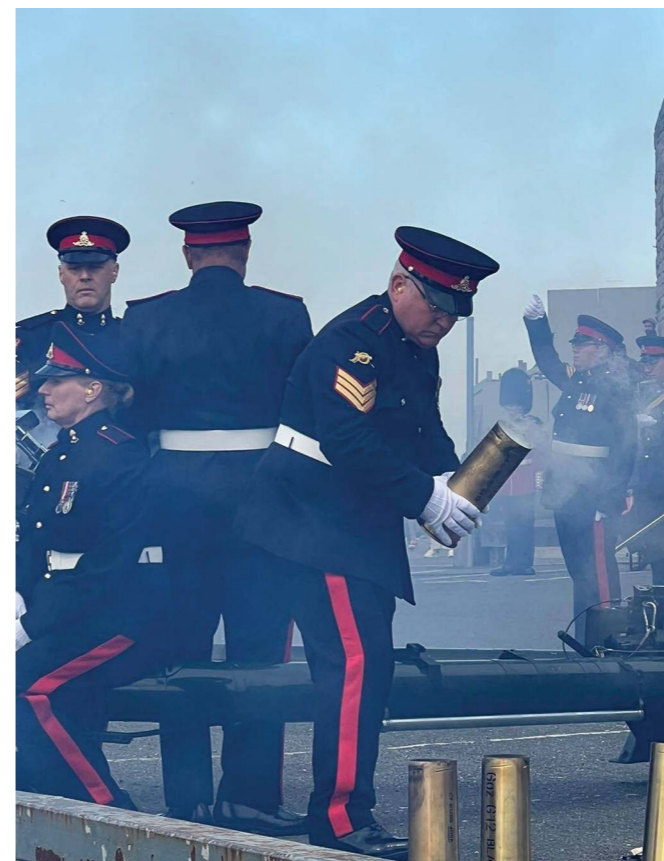
Well versed in the particulars of such a duty, the detachment commanders deployed their troops and saluting guns to North Wales, making certain their equipment and uniforms were parade ready. Plenty of time spent polishing boots, and sourcing the appropriate accoutrements for such an occasion, meant the highest standard of turnout on the day. Rehearsals began on the Wednesday, which for most was a remind and revise of some of the finer points of the parade. For some newer faces, this was a whole new challenge. After several run-

throughs, the Parade Commander was content, and the troops were given the evening to enjoy a nice meal somewhere local and complete any last fine tuning prior to the actual parade.

It was an early start on Thursday 21st April 22, moving the troops from RAF Valley to Caernarfon castle and beginning the initial setup of the parade. Once the guns were positioned, and spectators began to arrive, it was time for a quick change into No 1 dress and to form up ready to begin the Royal Salute. The sense of occasion was present in abundance. Caernarfon Castle providing an immense backdrop to the parade, and the Band of the Royal Signals providing a rousing soundtrack throughout the event. Once the Lord Lieutenant was in view, it was time to march on, and begin the parade. An immensely proud moment for the Regiment, the inspection began and VIPs were interested to know about who was on parade. After a brief



chat with the band, the Lord Lieutenant was content and gave permission for the Parade Commander to carry on and conduct the salute. All eyes were on the members of 103 Regiment, and all ears were eagerly awaiting the first gun to fire. 21 Rounds were fired Battery Right; one gun at a time, controlled by the Parade Commander, and assisted by a timekeeper and counter. Once all the rounds had been successfully fired, it was time for the final drive past of the dais and to recover back to respective sub-units. It was clear that many of the locals and those visiting Caernarfon, were impressed and entertained by the parade and the VIP guests certainly seemed to appreciate the efforts of 103 Regiment with all members of parade being Reservists.



It was truly an honour to contribute to Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, and the magnificence of the occasion was felt deeply by all. 103 Regiment look forward to conducting many other ceremonial duties in the future.



by Capt Becki Thomas RA
208 Battery
103 Regt RA





National Service looms after trials success



Photo credit: Graeme Main, Soldier Magazine

LBdr Dave Sunaki

It may have only been up and running for a matter of months, but the Army men's netball team is already making an impression on the national stage.

Leading light LBdr Dave Sunaki has been included in the inaugural England squad, which will meet for a training camp in the coming weeks as efforts to grow the sport continue.

The 30 year old was encouraged to attend a trials event by his Service teammates following some impressive displays with the military set-up and caught the eye of the selectors in a series of seven shortened matches alongside the best players in the country.

"I'm stunned, and it still hasn't sunk in that I have made the team."

"I think it will only become a reality when I take part in my first training session."

"There were around 70 guys at the trials - 80 per cent of whom play club netball every weekend and train two or three times a week. I only play when the Army plays, which is normally once or twice a month.

"But I do my own training and watch netball videos every single night so I can pick up the skills and drills needed for the game."

Sunaki, who has represented the Royal Artillery in rugby league and union, played different positions in his first four trial matches, before eventually making his mark at centre.

"I was aiming for goal defence or wing attack, but my Army coach kept saying that centre was my best position," he explained. "It is one of the hardest roles to play and is the only one where you run from one end of the court to the other."



"I was absolutely hanging in that final match, but I did not want to show it. I went there thinking I would play the best I could, have some fun and see how it goes."

"After the first couple of games everyone was saying I would get selected, but I didn't let the way I was playing go to my head as I was up against the top centres in the country."

"I'm still on cloud nine."

Sunaki's interest in the sport stems from his mother, who used to play back home in Fiji, and when he discovered the Army was launching a men's team, he was keen to get involved.

"One of the first things people ask when they meet a Fijian is 'do you play rugby?' and I want to get away from that stigma," the soldier, who also plays civilian volleyball, said.

"Netball is different. I'm quite good with my short sprints so I have adapted quickly, and I've managed to bring some of my skills from rugby to the court."

"Since I made the squad a lot of my friends have started to show an interest in netball, which is what I'm aiming for."

"We want to get more male athletes involved and they're already asking when the next Army trials are."

Sunaki was quick to thank his chain of command for allowing him to pursue opportunities in a new sport which has seen him benefit from the expertise of the Army women's set-up, led by head coach Lt Col Laura Ellis (REME). Current star Sgt Ellie Nawele (AGC (SPS)), has also helped.

"She takes time in the evenings to teach me more skills such as footwork, pivoting and ball work," he continued.

"I want to take this seriously and will not be playing any more rugby - you get too many injuries. Now it's all about joining up with England and seeing where that takes me."

Ellis said she was not surprised by Sunaki's call-up and hopes more male personnel will follow his lead and get involved.

"He is hugely talented," she added. "I have no doubt that there are more players like him in the Army, it is just a case of getting them to come along to trials for the squad."

The men's and mixed team will be involved in a new national competition over the summer. The latter will also tour the USA and Canada alongside the women's side, ahead of an Inter-Corps competition in October.



Photo credit: Graeme Main, Soldier Magazine



Service's Equestrian - Showing their class



Photo credit: Soldier Magazine

Service's Equestrian stars shine bright as quest for Military Honours resumes

Army riders returned to the saddle for the first military test of the new campaign at the UK Armed Forces Equestrian Championships.

Staged at Bury Farm Equestrian Club in rural Buckinghamshire, the event saw 112 soldiers from 12 cap badges go head-to-head with their forces rivals in a host of categories across the dressage and show jumping disciplines.

The contest formed the first of four legs in the Loriner Trophy, which will decide the Inter-Services champions for 2022, and represented the start of what is hoped will be a regular season after the disruptions caused by Covid in recent years.

Maj Fran Sykes RHA, secretary of the Army Equitation Association told of plans for the new campaign to have a more familiar feel, with the three single Service championships reverting to their traditional slots and tentpegging, also known as mounted skills at arms, resuming after a three-year hiatus.

"We had to run a condensed season in 2021," she explained.

"More than half of our fixtures were cancelled and we could not compete until July, so we ended up with a three-to-four-month window that featured as many dates as possible."

"We were one of the first five Army sports to resume after the first lockdown in 2020, but the focus was very much on individual riders, as opposed to what we are doing here, which is about developing people of all abilities."



"While this is the first event of the season, we can see that our riders have put a lot of hard work in over the winter months. There have been some great results across the board in dressage and show jumping and no individual or cap badge has dominated."

There is a friendly rivalry with the other Services, but at the same time it is competitive - everyone is out to show that they are the best."

A total of 280 military riders, plus representatives from the police and ambulance service, were in action over the two days and the Army won ten out of the 11 show jumping classes.

LBdr Liz Griggs RA said the result went to form given their rival's dominance in recent seasons, but it could have easily gone in her team's favour.

"It is a little bit disappointing," she added. "The scores between all three Services were incredibly close and it was anybody's on the day."

"While it is frustrating, when we looked at our final points we realised we had done okay."

"Army dressage is on the up and, from a Royal Artillery point of view, we've had more people at this competition doing both dressage and show jumping - two years ago it would only have been the later."

"I had ridden for years and was a hardcore show jumper, but then I had a lesson with the Army dressage manager who said I had potential."

"Within six months I had made it on the Army team at novice level. If you can ride you can do dressage and it is a sport that when you feel you are doing well you move to the next level and learn again."





Exercise GUNNER ETAPE 2022



Ex GUNNER ETAPE saw the Royal Artillery Cycling team deploy for a week of Road Cycling in Mallorca. On the morning of Friday 22nd April, the team departed to Mallorca to conduct training prior to the Army Cycling Road Race Series season. Led and organised by Bdr Jones 14 RA. On arrival we assembled our bikes at the hotel and conducted a short 30-mile ride to the lighthouse to ensure all bikes were in good working order, before we conducted our long rides in the saddle for the remainder of the week. This year we had three new members join the team Sgt Daniel Jeffery's 12 RA, LBdr Jack Collinson 5 RA, and Gnr Thomas Ball 26 RA. The training was all new to them and a great challenge not just for them but for all of us. Day 2 we rode 65-Miles up the Col de sa Batalla and over to the SA Calobra. An extremely technical road the riders did extremely well due to harsh conditions. Day 3 was a 90-Mile

ride, we rode up the Col de Femenia and down the Puig Major with a 9 mile descent and then back up the Col de Soller. It was a demanding day of climbing covering over 8000ft. Day 4 we rode 100-miles In loving memory of Maj James Beechey RA, he was widely known by the Gunner Cycling team and the Gunner community. He will be sorely missed by all. The penultimate day was an 85-Mile ride and we rode up the iconic Puig Major, 9 miles of climbing which tested the newer members and myself but was enjoyed by all. Finally, day 6 consisted of an easy spin but still 68 miles long. Getting the miles in the saddle before we departed back to UK. Overall, we covered 438 Miles and a total of 30,000 feet of climbing and climbed many of the legendary climbs Mallorca had to offer.

If anyone is interested in road cycling, please email dalejones804@mod.gov.uk



Date	Event	Location
2022		
02 Jul	RA Service of Remembrance	NMA
17-18 Jul	Festival of Sport	Larkhill
23 Jul	Army & RA One Day Event	Larkhill
Oct tbc	Awards Dinner	Larkhill
15 Oct	Army & RA Hunter Trials	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
2023		
16 Feb	RA Gold Cup	Sandown Park
16 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
12-14 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
13 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool
1 Jul	RA Service of Remembrance	NMA
4 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
9 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
12 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
3 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church



Royal Artillery Assembly

One Regiment - Two Cancelled Assemblies - Three Years Apart

The Return of the Annual Royal Artillery Assembly

After the enforced period of separation, it was with great anticipation, excitement and dare I say a little trepidation, that finally the Regiment came together. On the weekend of 20th-22nd May, the Royal Regiment of Artillery hosted over 350 Gunners, both serving and retired, along with special guests to join them in Blackpool at the Norbreck Castle Hotel for the AGM and Grand Gala Dinner.

After such an enforced break there was a very positive vibe as the early birds started to arrive throughout the Friday, the Hotel Conservatory bar quickly becoming a vibrant group, as members started to congregate and re-equate. The Friday evening saw the National Executive Committee coming together for The Master Gunners St James's Park Dinner which was also the first time the members had been able to dine together for several years. The NEC took the opportunity to invite a number of guests that included the Queen's Colour Standard Bearer Mr James (Jimmy) Young who will be stepping down in the role later this year and also Mrs Irene Baker whose husband James (Jim) a faithful supporter and proactive member of the NEC, sadly passed before Christmas.

The Assembly began with an address from The Master Gunner, Lt Gen Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL, who spoke passionately about the 'One Regiment' and how pleasing it was to see strong numbers of both past and present members in attendance. He closed with a very poignant acknowledgement of Falklands 40, by asking those veterans who served to stand at which point a spontaneous round of applause rang out around the hall. The Regimental Colonel, Col SJ Shepherd MBE ADC gave an inspiring and comprehensive round up of almost 3 years activity across the Regiment, covering almost every Unit and capability which was both informative and entertaining and accompanied by a wonderful slide show. The whole presentation was hugely appreciated by those assembled. In addition, SSgt Benville gave a confident and informative brief

with regards his recent deployment to Mali with 22 Bty 32 Regt RA. His enthusiasm was infectious, and he was able to engage with a large audience who probably didn't realise that this capability, role and type of deployment was being conducted by small teams within Gunners, it was a truly insightful presentation.

The annual awards this year were presented by The Master Gunner St James's Park. Each year various awards are presented to individuals as well as the Branch/Regiment for outstanding service and support to the RA Charities. There were many winners this year and Artillery House would like to send its warmest congratulations to the recipients of all the awards. Of note it would be remiss not to highlight two very notable awards and they were that of Royal Artillery Association Medal which was awarded to Mrs Catherine (Cath) Solly and the Royal Artillery Medal to Capt Allan Solly. Allan received this most prestigious award after an astonishing combined 19 Years of service as the Royal Artillery Secretary and Cath for her unwavering support to him during that period as well as her own dedicated service within the East Kent Branch. Both awards were a complete surprise to the couple who in turn received standing ovations from the Assembly. Utterly remarkable service from the pair of them and with Allan retiring as the Association Secretary role during the Assembly weekend, we all wish them both good luck and a well-deserved rest.

The RAA AGM was chaired by Brig Mark Pountain CBE who focused on RAA events and activities over past 12 months and how looking forward to greater opportunities are opening up, post pandemic. The Chairman was assisted and supported by the Regimental Secretary Col Matthew Carter who during his address the focus was more directed to the serving regiment and regimental events that bring past and present together highlighting how well The Royal Artillery Gold Cup at Sandown Park was attended this year and how it is becoming the premier reunion event across the Gunners.

The Standard Bearers Competition returned with a vengeance in the afternoon with 7 competitors vying for the top spot. WO1 (RASM) Sanders L who was attending his first Blackpool since recently taking



over the Senior Soldier position in the Gunners, pulled together a quality team to run, judge and announce the winners of the competition. Mr Mark Elliott from the Kingdom of Fife Branch took the top honours, in a repeat of his success last time the competition was held in 2019. The competition was hard fought, and acknowledgement must go to all but a mention of Mr John Boyd (Carlisle Branch) and Mr Mark Ballard (Newbury Branch) who came 2nd and 3rd respectively are worthy of mention and who made for such a close competition.

The Sunset Ceremony, which was attended by the Mayor of Blackpool, was spectacular. We as Gunners are truly blessed to be able to call on the Lancashire Artillery Volunteer Band, who were immaculately turned out including their many specific Gunner accoutrements to their uniform; that if it wasn't for their Royal Artillery alignment, we would have lost many years ago. The band were also once again ably supported by the Pipes and Drums, and it is with sincere thanks to 103 Regt RA who not only support with the band but also supply displays, manpower and equipment throughout the weekend.

It would be remiss of me to write this report without specific acknowledgement to all those who made this year's Royal Artillery Assembly such a resounding success, a whole host of individuals and small teams that come together to make the weekend such a worthwhile event.

Most of all, a huge 'Thank You' to you... The Association Members, Veterans and Serving Soldiers from across our Regiments who turned up and supported. The weekend completely exemplified the strong comradeship within the whole Gunner community and 'esprit de corps' that this and occasions like it seek to promote.

Look forward to seeing you next year, We'll Meet Again Date - 12th-14th May 2023.





RAA Secretary

I am Maj Dickie Davies, and it is an honour and a privilege to be able to introduce myself as the new Royal Artillery Association Secretary, having completed my handover programme from Capt Allan Solly during the Royal Artillery Assembly in Blackpool a couple of weeks ago.

It is hugely humbling to be taking over from Allan and I cannot begin to state how daunting it is given his combined 19 years' service in the role, and I acknowledge how the position has evolved under his stewardship during that significant time. A period I have understood and witnessed myself, having been significantly involved with the Association for the last 14 years as President of a Branch. I look forward to hopefully being a steady and trusted hand on the tiller in the coming years, during what I am certain will be a period of continued growth and possibly some diversification for the Association.

I look forward to working with you and supporting all our Regions, Districts, Branches and Affiliated Groups, as I start this journey and I am genuinely excited and enthused about hearing your thoughts, ideas and where relevant issues as we move forward together.

Whilst it was wonderful to meet a great number of you during the Blackpool weekend, I am supremely aware (even more important after the Pandemic restrictions), that my initial focus needs to be getting out and about and meeting you all and to this end please do not hesitate to contact me. I genuinely cannot wait to hear from you all...

Until then, sincere regards

Dickie

Davies, Richard Maj (RA RHQ-RAA-Sec) Richard.Davies557@mod.gov.uk

West Suffolk (Bury St Edmunds) Branch

Members of the Bury St Edmunds Branch attended the dedication service of the new VJ Memorial which was installed to remember those who served in the Far East during World War Two.

The new memorial was carved by Saxon Monumental Crafts after the Committee of the Bury St Edmunds Royal British Legion Branch obtained permission from the Rose Garden Committee and English Heritage. The costs were generously funded by the Bury St Edmunds Town Council.

In the photo from left to right is Joe Phelps, Major (Retd) Ian Tate (Chairman), Colonel (Retd) Roger Bowden MBE (President), Bob Ewington (Secretary and Branch President of the Royal British Legion) and Eric Davey.



Canterbury Branch

Canterbury Branch recently attended the D Day Service on 6th June in Folkestone to commemorate the 78th Anniversary. The RAA Standards of Canterbury (John Bishop), Kent District (Doug Kay) and Dover (Harry Hopper) were paraded, and a wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch by Dennis Gabb. The Mayor and representatives from the Gurkha Regt and local Regimental Associations were in attendance.



Norwich Branch

Lifetime Achievement Award – Colonel Ian Makin TD DL

In 2023 Norwich Branch of the Royal Artillery Association will be reaching their Centenary. For 50 of those years, Colonel Ian Makin has been the Chairman, which is an incredible achievement.

On 28th May, members of Norwich Branch and guests came together to pay tribute to Colonel Makin for the many years of service and dedication he has given to the Branch. He was presented with a Lifetime Achievement award by the Secretary of the Branch, Herbie Slaughter.

Colonel Ian Makin joined 303 Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry as a Lieutenant, raising to the rank of Major and BC of P Battery. When the number of RA regiments were reduced by the government in 1966, Colonel Makin became the first BC of 202 Battery in the newly-formed 100 Med Regiment, RA. He was later promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, becoming CO of the Regiment. For his service he was awarded the Territorial Decoration (and Bar). He subsequently became the Honorary Colonel of the Suffolk & Norfolk Yeomanry from 2000-2010.

He took over as Chairman of the Norwich Branch Royal Artillery Association in 1972. The Branch was failing at that time and he worked tirelessly to turn things around. Without his tenacity and determination Norwich Branch would not be in existence and this would be a great loss of support in this area for those in need. Furthermore, because of his achievement, the Branch is one of the most successful fundraisers within the RAA and following his success, he was then invited to serve as the Chair of RAA Welfare Committee, where his influence became even more widespread.

Whilst in this role and of his own volition, he ensured the upkeep and modernisation of Royal Artillery cottages, overcoming obstacles to achieve his aim of enabling low-paid, retired Army personnel to live in relative comfort and sanctuary. He achieved such success with this project here in Norwich and Colchester, that he was then asked to do the same in Bath.

Colonel Makin has achieved great success in whatever role he has undertaken and there have been many. He is an asset to any group or organisation that he is involved with.



Bolton Branch

Bolton Branch took part in the lighting of the beacon at Bolton Parish Church on Thursday 2nd June 2022 to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



Poole Branch

On 31st May Poole Branch enjoyed a jubilant afternoon Garden Party, with copious amounts of tea, sandwiches and cakes.





During the latter part of his service he received the great honour of being appointed ADC to HM The Queen, a position he held for 4 years.

The Association is very proud that he has held so many important appointments, especially as Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk, a County where he is held in great respect and esteem.

In Brundall, where he resides, he set up a lunch club for the elderly and was president of the Royal British Legion there for many years.

He also served as President of Norfolk & Suffolk Royal British Legion, Chairman of SSAFA Norfolk, Divisional Secretary of SSAFA and was Chairman of boards of Trustees for many other organisations, where he is highly regarded and valued by all members.

In 2005 Colonel Makin was awarded the RAA Certificate of Merit followed in 2012 by the RAA Gold Medal for his service to the Association. This most prestigious award is bestowed on very few.

His influence was wide because many of the organisations he served were not only nationwide but some worldwide. He influenced those who worked alongside him because he inspired them to achieve greater things and be of greater service. His dogged determination and drive to get the job done, has helped so many.

Throughout all of his undertakings, standing staunchly by his side was his beloved wife, Pat, who sadly left us in February this year. Pat helped in organising the many events he has been involved in and she is sadly missed.

Colonel Makin is, and always has been, a leader amongst men and many look up to him for guidance and reference. His unstinting selflessness and dedication are second to none; he stands head and shoulders above the rest in his service to others and is a great ambassador for the Royal Artillery Association.



Lewes Branch

Lewes Branch RAA held their Annual Dinner on Saturday 29 May 2022, 33 Members and their guests attended. They were joined by their Guests of Honour, WO2 (BSM) Pete Kinsey RA, the newly appointed BSM of their Affiliated Battery, 43 Bty (Lloyds Company) RA and the BG WO2 John Godwin-Smart RA, thus continuing in building their relationship with their Affiliated Bty and keeping relationships strong with The Serving Regiment.



Keeping relationships strong at the RA Assembly, Lewes Branch Vice Chairman David Harding and Secretary Mark Harding said farewell to our previous BSM, newly posted as RSM 47 Regt RA, WO1 (RSM) Stacy McGrath RA, and welcomed our new BSM WO2 (BSM) Pete Kinsey RA of our Affiliated Bty, 43 Bty (Lloyds Company) RA.



Newbury Branch

Newbury and District RAA Jubilee celebration, walking football event. Supported by both their affiliated Regiments 47RA and 14RA, wonderful evening of 'Comradeship and Competition'.



Founder's Day, Royal Hospital Chelsea – 9 Jun 22

After the disruption of the pandemic, Founder's Day



returned to its full glory at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Members of the RAA, Regt Col and the RASM joined family and friends to celebrate the day with the In-Pensioners. Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence KCVO CB ADC reviewed the Chelsea Pensioners on parade for the 330th Founder's Day.



Falklands 40 – 14 Jun 22

RBL Falklands 40 event was simply a reflective wonderful and thought provoking occasion that enabled our veterans of the war, to come together at an event dedicated to their service.



13 (Martinique 1809) HQ Battery Reunion Dinner

The Biannual Reunion weekend of 13 (Martinique 1809) Battery took place on 22-24 April 2022. Serving members and veterans of the Battery alongside their partners gathered at the Copthorne Hotel in Dudley. In the light of the global pandemic, the intent of the event was to celebrate and reunite past members; something the Battery and wider Army has been unable to do these past two years. It was also an opportunity to reintegrate the serving Battery members with our Veterans into what is a very important part of the Battery and its long history.

13 (Martinique 1809) Battery Reunion weekend

The weekend started on the Friday evening which consisted of all guests reminiscing and sharing stories past and present and remembering the times that they served over a drink or two.

The Saturday evening was a formal occasion, and

was started with speeches from the organiser, Mr Kevin Brookes-Usher. WO2 (BSM) Phil Kenny then presented the Battery's activities over the last couple of years, whilst our Axe bearers (Bdr Priestley and Gnr Nukuse) and Piper (LBdr Beveridge) added to the atmosphere and reflected the Battery heritage. The evening then concluded with a disco and a buffet. Music always manages to rekindle memories of times and the years that friends haven't seen each other were soon forgotten.

A huge thank you to the Royal Artillery Association for the assistance with supporting this event. Their support for Veterans and Serving soldier is second to none.

RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

So far this year the Welfare Grant Team have awarded 360 grants to members of our Regimental family and the grant total so far this year is £277,391. The area where most help was needed was with annual grants to those over state pension age. We have awarded £62,430 to help our older Regimental family members make ends meet. We have also awarded £53,485 in help to many in our regimental family, struggling to fund household goods such as cookers, carpets and other essential household items. We have also awarded a total so far of £37,933 to help with mobility support. Other areas where we have helped include funeral grants, help with critical household arrears, house moves, care home fees and house maintenance costs. If you have a concern about finding the money for something you need, please contact us. We cannot however help with private medical or legal fees. Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it.

Call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 to get a case up to us or contact us on either 0300 167 3998 or 0300 158 7035.

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

STOP PRESS: The RACF trustees have just agreed a £50,000 grant towards the cost of refurbishing the welfare centre at Sharpe Hall in Larkhill. Any similar projects being considered in your location? Please ask your UWO to consider making a bid.



Ms Julia Couchman is nominated for a Commanding Officers Coin in recognition of her long service to 210 Battery



Ms Julia Couchman is nominated for a Commanding Officers Coin in recognition of her long service to 210 Battery, the Battery Association, and the Cadet Forces of the West Midlands.

Ms Couchman has served as CO/AO to 210 Battery for 52 Years taking post as Clerical Officer (CO) later renamed Admin Officer (AO) on the 16 Feb 1970.

In that time, she has served in three RA Regts 104, 106 and 103 supported the re-rolling of the Battery from 40/70 Light Anti-aircraft gun through Blowpipe, Rapier, Javelin, HVM and now to 105mm light gun. And loyally worked for and supported fifteen Battery Commanders and Five PSAOs. She has maintained a high level of competence in her role throughout numerous process changes from type writer and filing cabinet to MODnet and admin applications always ensuring she provided the administrative support required by the Battery and serving personnel. Until 1990 Ms Couchman deployed on Annual Camps to run the Battery office in the field in support of the deployment.

It is worthy to note that Ms Couchman has volunteered to support many military organisations. She was a part time admin assistant with the ACF Wolverhampton for 20 years, working evenings and weekends and deploying in support of annual camps to provide admin support. She has also been secretary for the Chindit old comrade association and is the treasurer of 210 Battery Association.

In her 52 years Ms Couchman has been a loyal and trusted servant to the Battery, its Officers and Soldiers. She is trusted and respected by all the personnel she has ever worked with or for and a font of knowledge on Reserve policy, regulations and process. A sage advisor both up and down the chain of command in both a professional and personal capacity, motivating, directing and providing emotional support to her Battery members.

Julia is the heart and soul of the Battery the rock to which the battery has been anchored through many changes over the last 50 years.



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

REUNIONS

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

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

20 REGT RA 2022 REUNION
We will be holding our Reunion at the Holiday Inn Coventry on the weekend of 19th/20th August. General catch up on Friday evening followed by a formal dinner on Saturday. All former members of the Regiment and those attached at anytime are welcome to attend. For details, please email reunion.20regt@gmail.com or call/message David McDaid 07747 478179.

EXERCISE ONE WAY - G BATTERY - BAHRAIN TO UK 1966
In connection with the above, which included Ian Fowler and Alex Harley, would like to contact Chris Thomson and Mick Savage of G Para Bty (Mercer's Troop), part of 1 Para Group Bahrain/South Arabia in 1965/66. Please contact alex.h@btinternet.com

SCOTTISH GUNNERS REUNION DINNER
19 Regt RA will host the Scottish Gunner Reunion Dinner for serving and retired officers of both 19 Regt RA and 40 Regt RA in the Campbell VC Officers' Mess in Purvis Lines, Larkhill on Fri 23 Sep 22. Just as in previous years, this reunion will be for all members and generations of the Scottish Gunner officer family. This year's reunion should be seen as a perfect opportunity to get back together and celebrate a decade on the re-designation of both Highland and Lowland Gunners into The Scottish Gunners. Invitations will be sent throughout May and updates will be posted on our facebook page at "Scottish Gunners Reunion". If you wish to express your interest (and please do), double-check you are already on our mailing list or provide us with your details for the first time, please contact the reunion dinner secretary (preferably by email) Capt Abbie Lawrence on scottishgunnerreunion@gmail.com

ALAMEIN DINNER
The Alamein Dinner 2022 will be held on Fri 21 Oct at the RA Mess, Larkhill. The dinner will take the form of a Regimental Guest Night with partners 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 cost of the tickets will be £60 per head. For places apply to Jenny McGrath by email: jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk 01980 845788 and payment can be either: BACS: RAI, 30-11-75 00957269 (Please prefix payment reference with AD22) Cheque: made payable to the Royal Artillery Institution. Please note a first come first served basis applies.

ANNUAL MINI ASSEMBLY
The annual mini assembly will be held at The Palace Hotel in Buxton on 19-20 August 22 prices are 2 nights £150 per head, 1 night £80 per head, contact Jerry Mistry on +447941566969, email jerrymistry@hotmail.com

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH
THU 3 MAR 22



The next Royal Artillery Alanbrooke Lunch is on Thu 6 Oct 22 at The Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, regular and reserve, whether serving or retired. The lunches cost £62 and the price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after lunch. To attend the lunches you must be a member of the Alanbrooke Club. There is an annual membership fee of £10 but this is waived for serving officers. Members wishing to attend this lunch should make a bank transfer for £62 to the Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund (Sort code 30-11-75. Acc number 00568858) annotating your transfer with your initial and surname or send a cheque made to 'Royal Artillery Benevolent Fund' to the Regimental Secretariat 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



LAST POST

Notification of Death:

Maj R J G Millard January 2022
 SSgt Bill Hutchins 17 May 2022
 Peter Doyle 19 May 2022
 WO2 Alan (Geordie) Hall June 2022
 Billy Monaghan 10 June 2022

GOMEZ - Ron Gomez 1936-2022. Born in Calcutta in 1936, he moved to Twickenham in 1954 and worked for British Rail. He carried out his National Service from 1956 to 1958 with the Royal Artillery. Rejoined the Royal Artillery in 1959, reached the rank of Sergeant and served in Cyprus, Germany, Hong Kong and did 2 tours in Northern Ireland. After retiring from the Army in 1977, he lived in Westbury and worked for the London Underground until retiring in 2001. He moved to Invergordon in 2003, an enthusiastic Legion member he helped revive the Invergordon branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland and served on the committee as chairman up until he passed away on the 14th of May. He was a keen fencer and had a love of horses which he shared with his wife Alison. Our thoughts are with Alison, his daughters Caroline, Sarah and Rosemary.

and later in 55 (West Lancashire) Division (a coincidence, as DV had served as ADC to the then GOC of this Division in 1941). Included in a draft to the Middle East in 1943 and posted to HQRA 31 Indian Armoured Division, he served in Egypt, Syria, and the Lebanon until transferring to 5 Division in 1944. Thereafter he served in 91 Field Regiment in Palestine, Italy and finally North West Europe. Post war postings included flying tours in 654 Air OP Squadron (Italy), and 651 Air OP Squadron (Palestine). N Battery (The Eagle Troop) 4 RHA. Staff College, 1952. BM 2 AGRA (Canal Zone). BC 50 Medium Regiment 1 AGRA (including 1 year in N W Cyprus in the IS role). MA to CinC AFNORTH, Norway. DAAG RMAS and Defence Attaché in Addis Ababa. He retired in 1974. Col Desmond was Co-Author of "The Three Great Retrospective Medals 1793-1840 awarded to Artillerymen". Author of "The Hanoverian Guelphic Medal" and of an abbreviated version published in Germany. Author of "Troop Records of the Corps of Royal Artillery Drivers 1794-1822" and a number of articles in the RA Journal. He was also editor of The Dickson Mss Volumes 2,8,9,10 & 11.



VIGORS - Lt Col Desmond Doyne Vigors passed away on 10 May 2022 at the age of 101. Lt Col Desmond was commissioned into The Royal Artillery in February 1940 after training at the RMA, Woolwich and 122 OCTU, Larkhill. All bar one of this intake were sent to Yeomanry, many units of whom were being converted to artillery. He served in the UK from 1940 to 1943 in the two ex-Yeomanry Field Regiments of Guards Armoured Division and in their offshoot 192 Field Regiment

RA Historical Society Spring 2022 Programme

Date and Timings	Type of Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Registrations Close	Cost per Head
Fri 29 Sep to Mon 2 Oct	Battlefield Tour	Operation MARKET GARDEN 1944: Arnhem and Nijmegen	Lt Col Tim Ventham	To be notified	See Prospectus
Mid September	Webinar	To be notified			
Fri 21 October	Shrapnel Lectures: Four lectures with buffet lunch at Larkhill	Russia and Ukraine: historic, current artillery and urban lessons	Lt Col Peter Thompson	Fri 7 Oct	To be notified

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



Capt Ian MacLucas



In early 1975 the communist-inspired insurrection in Southern Oman's Dhofar province had already lasted 10 years. The armed forces of His Late Majesty Sultan Qaboos faced a tough, well-motivated and determined enemy, or adoo in Arabic, whose expertise with small arms and heavy weapons, complete mastery of the brutal terrain that was their home ground, and frugal logistic requirements made for a formidable challenge to the mission to secure Dhofar for civil development. The Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) were led from Force commander to sub-unit by loan service and contract officers, most of whom were British. Loan service and contract officers flew SOAF's aircraft and commanded the warships of the Sultan's Navy. British Special Forces provided critical support, particularly in leading groups of Surrendered

Enemy Personnel or Firquat, who were invariably used as scouts and guides on ground operations.

In January 1975 it was decided to mount a significant ground and air operation – Operation DHARAB ("blow" in Arabic) - targeting a totemic and usually well defended stores and sanctuary complex known as the Sherishitti Caves in the west of Dhofar. A large force based on a reinforced Omani infantry battalion – the Jebel Regiment (JR) - with an armoured car squadron and an artillery battery was assembled to the north west of the main objective; generous air support was allocated. The artillery battery was D Battery Oman Artillery (D Bty OA) equipped for the operation with eight 75/24 mm pack howitzers in two troops and with one 25 pounder to fire smoke and illuminating ammunition. One of D Bty's Forward Observation Officers (FOO) was a loan service Gunner officer, 27 year old Captain Ian MacLucas. MacLucas and his Omani FOO party were grouped with 2 Coy JR.

The operation got off to a slow start: despite negligible enemy interference the intermediate objectives took much longer to secure than had been expected.

Infirmity of purpose and over-caution ceded the initiative to the adoo such that by Day 3 of the operation, 6 January 1975, they had been able to muster considerable reinforcements. At around midday 2 Coy JR took over as the battalion's lead company and a short time later HQ 2 Coy was brilliantly ambushed west of the objective. MacLucas was wounded in the first contact, along with 2 members of his party. He later gave his own recollection of his experience – isolated and immobile - during what must have been an excruciating and truly terrifying afternoon:

"An RCL exploded about 5 yards behind me smashing my right ankle so I wasn't going anywhere soon. The adoo sniped at me for about 4 hours. The damage to my shoulder, arms and the top of my spine prevented me from firing (my rifle) even when a target appeared. Towards the end I saw 4 adoo coming over the ridge and I thought I might get one or two. I pulled the rifle to my shoulder although I could feel the shoulder crunching. Despite knowing that they were a sitting target I was simply unable to fire. I was also a bit sleepy due to loss of blood."

Just before last light, displaying great bravery and



determination, the British commanders of the remaining companies assisted by air strikes and near continuous and skilfully directed fire from D Bty's guns were able to manoeuvre their companies close enough to the casualties to organise evacuation by helicopter to the Field Surgical Team at RAF Salalah. It is said that the RAMC warrant officer responsible for triage took one brief look at Captain MacLucas' prone, blood caked body and instructed his team to put him to one side - until MacLucas recovered his presence of mind sufficiently to protest in forcible terms that he was in fact still breathing and was planning to do so for the foreseeable future and beyond. He was moved quickly into surgery where he spent some hours being stabilised. It was decided that he should be evacuated immediately and he was flown out of Salalah the next morning. By then it was clear to the surgeons that he was unlikely ever to walk again.

Ian David MacLucas was born in Cairn Ryan, Stranraer on 19 November 1947, the sixth of seven children and only son of Norman and Gladys (nee Mason) MacLucas. After school at Prior Park, he was commissioned into the Royal Artillery as a University

Cadet on 10 September 1966. He read Chemistry at the Royal Military College of Science and on completion of his YOs' course he was posted to 2nd Field Regiment Royal Artillery, an Abbot regiment from BAOR, temporarily stationed in Barnard Castle. In March 1972 2 Fd Regt was sent to West Belfast for a 4 month Op BANNER deployment during which Lieutenant MacLucas' patrol was ambushed and he seriously wounded by a rifle bullet that ricocheted into his right femur. Following recovery and rehabilitation during a brief spell in the Junior Tradesmen's' Regiment in Troon his choice of two years' loan service in SAF for his next tour was endorsed. After his Arabic course he found himself in Dhofar in September 1974 commanding a troop of D Bty's 25 pounders at Sarfait on the Yemeni border where he remained until re-deployed for Operation DHARAB.

From Oman, MacLucas was evacuated first to the RAF hospital at Akrotiri in Cyprus and thereafter to the Queen Elizabeth and then Cambridge Military Hospitals. When it became clear that he had suffered devastating, life-changing wounds in the ambush he was moved to Stoke Mandeville hospital for specialist treatment and

rehabilitation at the National Spinal Injuries Centre. By April 1975, just 3 months after he was wounded, he had substantially recovered his formidable upper body strength and had fully mastered locomotion by wheelchair on which he could soon outrun his fiancée and most of his many visitors. He was invalided out of the Army on 17 November 1975.

With all the fortitude, determination and equanimity that had characterised his military career he turned his mind to a new life after the Army as a twenty-seven year old paraplegic. For a profession he chose accountancy for, as he said, he could do it sitting down and there was little likelihood of his being shot again. He joined Sheen Stickland in Farnham, rising to become a Senior Partner and head of their tax division before setting up his own practice which he continued until his retirement in 2014.

He had met and fallen in love with Sarah Thorne in 1973, before he went to Oman, when she was an advertising executive at the Evening Standard. Characteristically he considered the possibility of eloping with her but his future wife demurred largely because one of her sisters had already taken this course



and she had no wish to inflict further anxiety on her family. Instead they agreed to postpone their wedding until after his loan service was over; Sarah ordered her wedding dress on the day that he was wounded. They were married in November 1975 after which they lived for some years in London, before moving to Chichester and eventually settling near Liphook in Hampshire. Sarah and Ian had two daughters: Jeni is a science teacher, and mother of Ian's two grandsons; Amy works for a pharmaceutical company preparing technical publications. Both were to play pivotal roles in supporting and sustaining their adored father during the increasing frailty and illness of his last years. After 21 years together Ian and Sarah decided to live separately. In later life his frequent companion was Kathe Persson, a close friend whose three children - Linda, Sandra and Carina - had been to school with Jeni and Amy. Both Sarah and Kathe survive him.

His roving intellectual curiosity led him in several different directions. Flying was one: he gained his private pilot's licence and flew light aircraft, becoming a trustee of a charity for aviation paraplegics. Military history was another:

both the American civil war and WWII in Italy, where his father had escaped from captivity as a POW, were some of the areas of his expertise - besides going some way to slake his thirst for international travel. Rugby was always important - as a fast, strong and skilful former player and a passionate Scotland supporter he rarely missed a televised match in which Scotland were playing. He was a wicked practical joker at a distinctly schoolboy level. For recreation, western films competed with TV sitcoms about both of which he was disconcertingly knowledgeable. He played the guitar although not in public. He liked a lie-in on Sundays.

Ian MacLucas was clever, thoughtful, incisive, friendly and funny. His overriding priority was his family - his daughters and his beloved grandsons with whom he was at last able to share boys' interests. Always stimulating company, he enjoyed long lasting friendships with men and women, drawn from his two professional careers and more widely. Above all, he was universally held in the highest admiration for the indomitable courage and unbreakable spirit that he displayed during Operation DHARAB and for 47 years thereafter, coping mostly

uncomplainingly and without rancour with a profound physical disability that would have shattered lesser men. Almost everything can be learnt about an individual's character from watching them deal with sudden, violent and catastrophic misfortune; by any measure Ian MacLucas surpassed all possible expectations that anyone could have had of him.

In the presence of his immediate family and fortified by the rites of the Holy Church, Captain Ian MacLucas died, aged 74, in the Royal Surrey County Hospital on 7 January 2022.

A memorial service for Captain MacLucas is to be held in Hampshire on 24 July 2022. Anyone who wishes to attend should contact the Assistant Regimental Secretary Royal Artillery or the Chairman of the Sultan's Armed Forces' Association <https://www.oman.org.uk> for further details.





Alexander Weatherhead OBE 1931 - 2021



Alexander Stewart Weatherhead OBE, TD, sportsman, soldier, sailor, solicitor. Born: 3 August 1931. Died: 26 September 2021, aged 90.

Sandy Weatherhead was a man of character who lived his life well. He was born in Edinburgh, the elder son of Keneth Kilpatrick Weatherhead and Katharine Stewart Weatherhead, who had met as students at Edinburgh University. "KK" served in the Great War and then became an actuary, head of the Scottish Mutual. Katharine was a leading figure in Scottish and international women's hockey.

Sandy loved rugby, whether as a player, referee or spectator. He played 1st XV for Glasgow Accies, was awarded a Blue at Glasgow University and played for Glasgow against Edinburgh in the regular derby fixture. Six Nations matches were a priority in his calendar even at the end of his life. With hockey-playing daughters, he was their greatest supporter, often accompanied by his expert mother, with her signature shooting stick and tartan blanket.

Sandy was sent to Aden for National Service where, as 2Lt RA, the young men of the company with whom he served taught him what a privileged life he led - a lesson he never forgot.

Sandy then joined the Territorial Army and rose to the rank of Colonel. He commanded units in Port Glasgow and the OTC at Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities before being appointed TAVR Colonel Lowlands and ADC to the Queen.

His military experience shaped him in many ways: Sandy never went anywhere without polished shoes and every event in life was planned with military precision. Most importantly, it was the source of his greatest friendships - there was a merry band who would gather around the dinner table, often with Sandy cooking, and tell stories, roar with laughter and appreciate each other's good company.

The sea was a passion, springing from family summers spent on Iona. He had deep knowledge of the West Coast, where he regularly cruised with friends and family, taking both children to sea just weeks after their birth. When Sandy stepped on his boat, he was in his element. He left port with the wind in his hair and a broad smile on his face.

Sandy was a solicitor. He attended Glasgow University, graduating with an MA in 1955 and LL.B in 1958. He trained at McGrigor Donald before moving to Tindal Oatts & Rodger, ultimately becoming senior partner. His contribution to the law went far beyond his own firm. He was an active member of the Law Society of Scotland from 1958, joining the Council in 1971

and becoming Honorary Vice President in 1983. He served on the Royal Commission on Legal Services in Scotland (1976-1980), was a Temporary Sheriff (1985-1992), and was appointed Dean of the Royal Faculty of Procurators, Glasgow, in 1992. In 1973, with remarkable foresight, he helped found the Society for Computers & Law, serving as Chair from 1982-84. In 1985 Sandy took huge pride in the award of OBE for Services to the Legal Profession.

Beyond all these achievements, Sandy was a family man. He was a confirmed bachelor until he was 41 but on 26 August 1972 he met a visiting Canadian, Foye Organ, at his godson's christening in Fintry. Just 12 hours later Sandy proposed, and after a night's reflection, Foye accepted - a crazy decision that neither of them ever regretted.

They married four months later in Toronto and returned to Glasgow to set up home in the lower flat of his family home on Partickhill Road. Two daughters were born, Foye Katharine, in 1974 and Alison Jane, in 1975. Sandy's life was now fully rounded out.

Sandy celebrated his 90th birthday last summer, surrounded by his family and the wonderful carers at Erskine Glasgow, his home for the last two years of his life. He supped on champagne and ate chocolate cake. Though much of his memory had been lost to dementia, he was still the warm, calm, caring gentleman he had always been.

On 26 September, the anniversary of his father's death in 1979, Sandy died. What a significant, remarkable coincidence - he was well organised to the end!



LEARNING FROM OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

FIELD ARMY STANDING ORDER 3003 UPDATES

The Army Future Force is set to become more agile, more integrated, and more expeditionary, ready for the next challenge and not the last. This evolution highlights the necessity for continuous adaptation and being ready for change.

FASO 3003 V3 seeks to direct the Field Army's operational and training lessons process. Principal updates include:

- **Local Lessons Log (L3s):** Clearer direction reinforcing the purpose and content of L3s.
- **Lessons Capture:** Clearer direction on how to identify and exploit issues identified from operations and all training across the Field Army.
- **Learning Loops:** Reinforcing your understanding of lesson ownership, quick-loop resolution, and the lesson escalation process.

"WISE PEOPLE LEARN WHEN THEY CAN; FOOLS LEARN WHEN THEY MUST"

DUKE OF WELLINGTON

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT AKX MODNET-FASO 3003



Contact us:
LWC-LXC-0Lessons-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk
Mil: 94381 8815 Civ: 01985 84 8815

MEETING THE ARMY RESERVE

Today as we were out exploring the community, we noticed that 212 - Highland Bty Royal Artillery had come to Montrose and was set up in the Highstreet. We were very excited as we saw the tanks, trucks and displays they had set up. We headed over to and got the chance to speak to them, finding out more about what they and their machines do.

212 Battery is an Army Reserve based in Arbroath, with troops also located in Kirkcaldy and Lerwick. They have been around for over 50 years, celebrating their 50 Year anniversary back in August 2019.

The Troops were very kind and invited us over to have an up close supervised look. This was a very exciting and special learning experience for us.



29 COMMANDO REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY

UNITED WE CONQUER
148 (MEIKILA) COMMANDO FORWARD OBSERVATION BATTERY

As part of Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron Group, you will deliver Joint Fires and Targeting to 3 Commando Brigade and play a pivotal role in shaping the battlefield. You will infiltrate the area of operations as part of a small team of specialists by parachute, submarine, raiding craft, light armoured vehicle, or ski.

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7 Para RHA

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A CONCISE HISTORY of the ROYAL REGIMENT of ARTILLERY.

Written for Gunners by a Gunner. Revised and Extended.

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY

Mike Watson

Summaries:

- Battery honour title actions.
- Acts of Gunner gallantry.

Annexes:

- Battery and Regimental WW1 and 2 titles
- Gunners - who achieved fame as Gunners.
- Gunners - who achieved in other fields.
- Links - with the Honourable Artillery Company, former Infantry and Yeomanry Regiments.
- Woolwich and Larkhill heritage.

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**ONCE A GUNNER
ALWAYS A GUNNER**

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A message from;

*Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL,
Master Gunner St James's Park*



On the 306th Anniversary of the formation of our parent Regiment on 26th May 1716, the Master Gunner St James's Park extends his personal greetings and sends best wishes to all Gunners, serving and retired, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and of the Commonwealth Royal Regiments of Artillery, for Artillery Day on 26th May 2022.

This anniversary year is further significant as it not only marks our Captain General, Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee but it also saw the 300th Anniversary of the granting of the Royal title to the Regiment by King George I, on 1st April 1722.