



SEPTEMBER 2022

Ex ATHENA REBUS
Ex TIGER BALTIC EXPRESS

ROYAL ARTILLERY
TUG OF WAR

GUNNER

#oneregiment

The Larkhill-based team that supplies you Gunner.

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Gunner Rules

Guidance on Submissions

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

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

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

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GUNNER



SEPTEMBER 2022

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Front cover photo taken by
Michael Patrick

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Major (Retd) Dickie Davies RA
Royal Artillery Association Secretary

I wanted to take this opportunity to convey what an honour it is to be your Association Secretary, having officially taken over the role at the end of the Royal Artillery Assembly in Blackpool back in May. I have spent the last three months realising what a daunting but exciting prospect being the first new Association Secretary in 15 years is. During my 37 years' service much of which pre social media, Gunner Magazine has been the single point of contact and information to not only the serving Gunner Regiments, both Regular and Reserve, but also the Veteran Community and families. Back then I remember that the magazine was black and white whilst today, as I sit here writing, I can reference the last editorial online in full colour from the comfort of my home by simply tapping on 'thegunners.org' and whilst I can gain access to a multitude of information online, it is still to the Gunner Magazine I turn, either within the website or, more often than not, physically on coffee tables and in offices.

It is interesting, as whilst I learnt very quickly in my last job as Welfare Officer that many if not all our Service Personnel are online on various platforms. However, if you wanted to create a response or generate maximum interest, invariably it was a flyer, newsletter or poster that caught the attention and garnered real support. COVID has had a huge influence in that it has forced many, who may have been previously reluctant, online. It is comforting that for many within the veteran community, they can still pore over an actual copy of Gunner and see familiar Regiments and faces staring back at them.

Whilst this is reassuring, veterans are but one area of the community I am here to support. The Association is about Comradeship and promoting that 'Esprit de corps' across the Gunners and for a while now, I feel we may have lost contact with those currently serving or soon to retire. We are after all about Past and Present and to ensure the Association has a future and is here for those who, not only leave service tomorrow like myself, but equally those who will be arriving at Harrogate at the end of the summer. It needs to evolve and ensure it is as relevant to our serving Gunners and families as it is to our veterans and their descendants.

The Association has already evolved, having initially been welfare focused and even acted as an employment bureau for returning Gunners post World Wars and it is this ability to change that will ensure continued support and growth in future. Having been geographical and branch based for many years, I want to assure all, that if branches remain viable and well attended, they will always have a part to play in how we as an Association engage and support our communities. However, if we are to cast our net as wide as possible, we must attract those that find their comradeship and social activity via other outlets.

I am genuinely excited at the prospect of developing and growing more national and interest-based groupings, many of which currently exist. If you already get together sociably at a Regimental or Battery reunions, gather regularly as a team on a sport field, meet on occasion around a fishing lake or cycling Peloton, or simply enjoy weekends away with the family and other likeminded colleagues in camper vans. Then that's your comradeship. You are already organising and engaging, so why the need for a formal committee. Let us bring you under the Association umbrella for nothing more than awareness. You are out there and in the future if your group require assistance for planned activity, or dare I say someone within your gathering individually could do with some help and support, then you already have a link to a team that genuinely care.

I have a real passion for both the past and present members of our wonderful family of Gunners. When you think of the Association I am sure it will conjure up images of blazers and berets, gunner ties and pin badges and, whilst these will always be a valued and an intrinsic part of our community, my mission is that in the future you also imagine family, young and old, a real community to be a part of, which offers adventure, sports, activities, comradeship that not only reaches out and embraces the past but nurtures and involves the future. Now that is something I am sure you would all want to be associated with - your Association the RAA.



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Field Gunners do it with a bang !!!!



Group photo

Every year as part of the HMS COLLINGWOOD Open Day, Field Gun Crews from The Royal Navy, Army, RAF and our allies overseas come together to compete in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charities Field Gun Competition; an arduous event in which crews assemble, disassemble, fire and throw a 12lb Field Gun and Limber against the clock and each other.

The event can trace its routes back to the Boer War and the Siege of Ladysmith in 1899. Guns from HMS TERRIBLE and HMS POWERFUL were brought ashore, dragged over mountainous terrain and other obstacles in order to aid the British Army and relieve the siege which had lasted over 100 days.

The feats of these sailors became legendary, and the public wanted to see the acts of strength, power and agility performed by these brave men. So, in 1907, two Field Gun competitions were formed; Command Field Gun (which would be televised and performed at Earl's Court as part of the Royal Tournament) and Brickwood's Field Gun (which is what we see today).

On the 13 June 2022, 23 members of the Royal Regiment started their Field Gun journey. They were introduced to the kit and equipment: 900lbs of steel barrel, 450lb carriage, 350lb limber, 4 120lb wheels, six shells, four metal pins, two drag ropes and an extractor (or 'scratcher'). The combined weight equalled that of a car, with which the crew would perform a mixture of a demolition derby and ballet to take the equipment up and down the 95-yard track.

The lessons began in a slow and safe manner; box builds, wheel changes and lots of firing practice. Later, moving to the infamous box drop (removal of wheels from the limber whilst throwing the equipment), the double lift (simultaneously lifting and changing both sets of wheels; followed by throwing it forward) and the limber trap (sadly, no throwing involved here). Thankfully, all fingers remained intact, and no injuries occurred (tick VG to our No 1 Trainer, SSgt Holland).

Our first week culminated in a display for the Regimental Command groups to see what the



crew had been learning (as well as prove that it hadn't just been ice lollies and sunbathing) followed by a well-earned BBQ.

The crew moved to our new home, HMS COLLINGWOOD, on the 20 June. The training continued and became more intense as the weeks progressed. We completed full run after full run until our skills and drills were slick and ready to be put to the test against the other crews. Now, it was time for the competition.

As previously stated, the competition is part of the HMS COLLINGWOOD Open Day (although, many would argue that the Open Day is there as part of the competition). 10,000 people attended the competition on 2 July and the crowds roared as the crews marched onto the tracks to conduct their three heated runs followed by a final. Our heated runs were exceptional and placed us into the First Plate Final (for context, no first-year crew has ever reached the First Plate Final before) and against the RAF, HMNB Devonport, The Royal Engineers, HMS SULTAN and HMNB Devonport; All very established crews with a lot of experience and trophies under their belts.

The crew ran hard and fast in the Plate Final, achieving a time of 1:32.47 and clean (meaning no penalties were awarded) coming in third place for our final and ninth in the overall competition – way above the expectations for a first-year crew. The Gunners turned a few heads and have set the foundations for greatness in the coming years.

Three weeks of hard graft was over in an instant. The crew celebrated with beers, BBQs and paddling pools with our new-found friends in the Field Gun Community (HMS ALBION and HMNB Devonport are firmly on the Christmas Card list after a week of motivational chanting and dancing). The gun has been returned and waits for next year when the Gunners will return to HMS COLLINGWOOD and, hopefully, make the main final.

Awards. The following crew members were awarded for their performance within the RA crew.

LBdr Kane Marafono

32 Regt RA Field Gunner's Field Gunner

Gnr Jade Blackler

1 RHA Spirit of Field Gun

Bdr George Higgins

32 Regt RA No 1 Trainers Award

Gnr Daniel Emery

1 RHA Field Gunner of the Year

A special thank you needs to be made to the Royal Artillery Association, Royal Artillery Institution, Army Sports Control Board and Royal Artillery Display Fund. Without the guidance, mentoring and funding provided, we would not have been able to put our crew forward to the competition and compete as #OneRegiment against our friends and allies in the tri-service community and across NATO.

The Royal Artillery will be competing next year, and we are still recruiting more members for our crew as well as support members to help enable our activities. If you are interested, chat to any of your 'oppos' who took part this year, follow us on Instagram/Facebook on @GunnerFieldGun or Search for the 'Royal Artillery Field Gun Crew' on Facebook. Alternatively, contact me direct over MODNET at alexander.clark795@mod.gov.uk

by Capt A J Clark RA
FST Comd
97 (Lawson's Company)
4 Regt RA





Milestone: 800 hours of flying during Ex ATHENA REBUS



Earl and Countess of Wessex visit SBA Cyprus

Since September 2019, Ex ATHENA REBUS has been conducted at RAF Akrotiri as the mainstay of the live training for the Regiment. By April 2022, it was 57 (Bhurtpore) Battery's turn to take on the role of enabling the live flying currency of Watchkeeper Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) line pilots and the training of the next generation of Pilots and Ground Crew. During the deployment, the milestone of 800 flying hours during Ex ATHENA REBUS on the Watchkeeper RPAS has been reached. A pinnacle testament to the commitment of all the personnel, regardless of trade or specialism, who have rotated through the exercise.



"It's a fantastic achievement to have achieved 800 flying hours on Watchkeeper during Ex ATHENA REBUS. The pilots, ground crew, aircraft engineers, operations and G4 teams who have accrued these hours should be proud of what they have achieved and learned during that time. More importantly, it's a 47th Regiment Royal Artillery achievement from all of the Batteries. A real team effort and accomplishment."

Major MJ Martin RA, BC 57 (Bhurtpore) Battery RA

10 (Assaye) Battery and 43 (Lloyd's Company) Battery, alongside the pilots from 74 (The Battle Axe Company) Battery have all taken the lead role in accruing the important training and currency flying hours that also include all important take-off and landing events for both pilots and ground crew. This has been all the time enabled by 31 (Headquarters) Battery and 47 Regt RA Workshops. Similarly and significantly, the Royal School of Artillery (RSA), Thales UK,

Photo credit: Sgt L. A. Hughes, SNCO IC Photographic Section RAF Akrotiri



U-Tacs, Watchkeeper Force and JHC Aviation Standards have all supported the training of both Watchkeeper RPAS Pilots and Ground Crew, without whom the Force Generation of ground and air crews for 47 Regt RA would not be achievable. Truly, a successful consortium of positively motivated and collaborative organisations that enable such specific and nuanced training and qualifications.

Watchkeeper RPAS Ground Crew

Watchkeeper Ground Crews composite of eight-person teams commanded by an experienced Ground Crew Detachment Commander (GCDC) Sgt or above. Instruction, training and qualifications are delivered by RSA and 47 Regt RA instructors collaboratively. Requirements range from attention to detail, running the starting processes for the Watchkeeper RPAS, through to the setting up of the Automatic Take-Off and Landing System (ATOLS), positioning of landing arrestors and the taxiing of the air vehicle. It requires working alongside the pilots to ensure the Ground Control Station (GCS) is connected to the Watchkeeper RPAS equipment on the runway correctly and functioning as requested. Arrestors and the ATOLS in-particular are the work-intensive elements of the Ground Crew, requiring the positioning of long heavy cables across the runway, but it ensures the safety of the Watchkeeper during both take-off and landing.

"Working within a ground crew detachment in 47 brings with it exciting challenges. Learning the ropes would have been challenging had I not had an excellent team surrounding me, always willing to lend a hand whenever needed"

Gnr Charles Allsopp, 43 (Lloyd's Company) Battery Ground Crew

Watchkeeper RPAS Air Crew

Watchkeeper trainee pilots are currently

deployed on Ex ATHENA REBUS conducting initial training alongside experienced Watchkeeper RPAS counterparts conducting development training and gaining currency - many of whom have prior experience with Watchkeeper's Urgent Operational Requirement predecessor Hermes 450. Prior to the trainee pilots conducting their live flying training here they undergo rigorous theory and simulator training phase at the RSA in Larkhill and at the Watchkeeper Training Facility, utilising the Full Mission Simulators to ensure they receive the best training possible before live airborne sorties. Watchkeeper RPAS pilots have to understand everything about the air vehicle, including how best to use the Electro-Optical and Infra-Red payload to maximise effectiveness when deployed on operations.



"The knowledge of the system required is much greater than in my prior role as a Desert Hawk 3 operator. Working closely with a variety of ranks, many of whom are experienced pilots, has been an enjoyable experience, adding a much-needed purpose to the job and making the transitioning into RPAS and the pilots course much easier"

LBdr Daniel Chant, 74 (The Battle Axe Company) Battery trainee Watchkeeper RPAS Pilot

Watchkeeper Operations Staff

Any RPAS operation requires fully trained and capable Operations Teams who



facilitate live sorties and work in a Joint environment, with Army, Navy and Royal Air Force personnel to plan, co-ordinate and execute Watchkeeper RPAS operations and to disseminate information. The challenge for the three-person teams, made up of a junior officer, senior NCO and signaller is to maintain situational awareness while concurrently planning for the future and passing information both to commanders and to troops on the ground. During Ex ATHENA REBUS, this has included integrating with a range of personnel from across the Services to gain a better understanding of the operating environment.

“As a former Hermes 450 pilot now working within an Watchkeeper RPAS Operations Team, I bring a different type of experience to operations, bridging the gap between pilots within the GCS, ground crew and the operations room to provide accurate and relevant information to the right people. It’s enjoyable and its great being at the centre of RPAS activity in this way”

Bdr Daniel Morgan, 57 (Bhurtpore) Battery Operations Team



What should also not be forgotten, is the invaluable support of attached personnel from the Royal Logistic Corps offering their knowledge in sustainment, the Intelligence Corps who bring their knowledge and imagery analysis to the fore for end-users

and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers who offer their expertise in the form of both RPAS maintenance and servicing of the ground vehicle fleet helping to keep us operational.



Watchkeeper: The Future

With 800 hours surpassed, further hours will be accrued by supporting ongoing and future pilot courses, RPAS Aircraft Instructor courses and all Ground Crew courses while also building experience for the Operations and supporting staff. Once the current phase of Ex ATHENA REBUS completes for 57 (Bhurtpore) Battery, the Battery will look forward to a return to Larkhill for a training period in preparation for readiness before seeing what the future holds for 57 (Bhurtpore) Battery, 47 Regiment RA and Watchkeeper RPAS in 2023.

by 2Lt J P McGowan RA
Troop Commander
57 (Bhurtpore) Battery
47th Regiment RA

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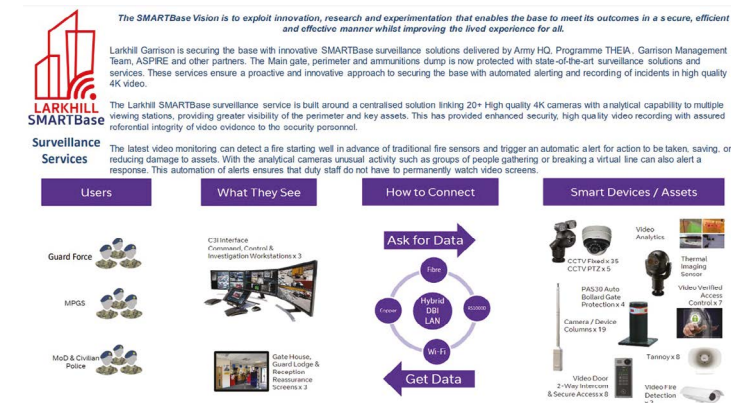
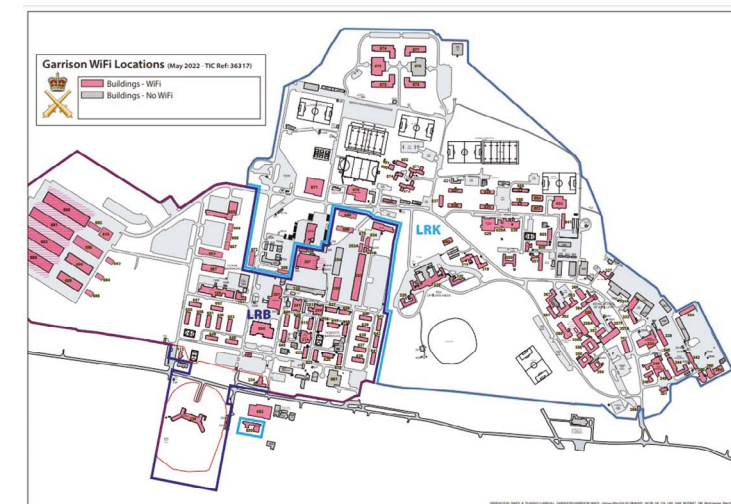


Defence Business Internet first came to Larkhill in 2016 and we saw immediately that this was a fantastic opportunity for the Royal School of Artillery (RSA).

With the help of our higher HQ at the Land Warfare Centre (LWC) and Army HQ we were able to begin installing DBI in the Eastern half of Larkhill (where RSA and the Royal Artillery Barracks are), first into classrooms, then office space and eventually other areas where we needed WiFi. Over the following years, we showed our willingness to engage in expanding wi-fi provision such that we were selected as the pioneer site for a new, and highly experimental project in partnership with British Telecom (BT) called ‘SmartBase’. Essentially, a trial for all sorts of digitisation enhancements to security, lifestyle and information exploitation but with the very useful side-benefit that ‘SmartBase’ has enabled us to expand the WiFi capability even further across Larkhill.

Providing support to the Western end of Larkhill (Roberts Barracks and later, the new Purvis Lines) was more difficult as there wasn’t a budget for this. 32 and 47 Regiments were the first to move into new buildings and with Army HQ support, we were able to install DBI in their RHQ and Bty block areas. When other Regiments moved into Purvis Lines, DBI quickly emerged as a necessity not included in the original build project; especially in mitigation for the lack of commercial mobile phone coverage (sadly but clearly, outside our control). A solution lay in providing WiFi calling through DBI and in concert with BT. Collaboration between RSA, the Larkhill Garrison Management Team, Army HQ, BT and Project Allenby Connaught has now expanded WiFi calling coverage to 80% of the Western part of Larkhill. By March 2023, 99% of Larkhill will have coverage, making it one of the best in the UK.

by Keith Brigstock
HEO, G6
Royal School of Artillery





Exercise TIGER BALTIC EXPRESS



Sailing the Baltic Sea

47th Regiment Royal Artillery have only gone and done it! For the first time in years members of the Regiment have formed a full sailing crew.



With high morale the crew set out to sail the Baltic Sea as part of Ex BALTIC EXPRESS,

but little did they know the course was about to change. After an engine fault during the previous leg, the new destination to set sail from was the Netherlands. Shortly after settling in, a new course was planned and the crew was ready for the off. After going through some skills and drills, including overboard drills, the 36-hour stint from Den Helder to Cuxhaven began. Now in routine, "the Eagle" set sail for a pleasant and calm crossing over the boarder to Germany. After two nights of sailing the group decided to continue full steam ahead and only stop off at Cuxhaven to refuel. They powered on through the Kiel Canal reaching their overnight checkpoint several hours later. This early introduction to sailing and overnight passages was a great experience for those novices within the crew. They finally got time to relax and take in the magnificent views along the Canal after slipping out of 'Watch routine'.



After an early sunrise, the crew set sail for the final time taking them through to the Baltic Sea where originally the expedition should have begun.



Despite the change of course, 47th Regiment RA took control and were able to deliver the boat in good order and efficiently, on time to the next on-coming crew to continue Ex BALTIC EXPRESS. Well done!

by Gunner Hey
31 (HQ) Battery
47th Regiment RA





Ex MALTESE FORTRESS 22



47th Regiment Royal Artillery view their history in Malta

Observing the gunfire at the Saluting Battery on Malta saw 31 (Headquarters) Battery of 47th Regiment Royal Artillery transported back to view their history in Malta during a Battlefield Study named Ex MALTESE FORTRESS 22.

On the 1st of March 1755, 31 Battery was formed and still stands to this day. Members of the Battery were given the greatest opportunity to visit the location of their Battery history, which remains the inspiration behind today's Battery logo.

The Battery was located in Malta from 1925 until 1943, where they manned the fire control and range finding system for the coastal defences, which was integral to the defence of Malta during the Second World War (WW2). Following the war, King George VI awarded the whole Island of Malta the George Cross for the heroism they showed during this period. It was the Battery's presence at this time that later inspired the combination of the George and Maltese crosses which was to be adopted as the Battery's emblem in 1990.

The trip started with a day out to Valetta where the Battery laid a wreath and paid their respects to the fallen soldiers in memory of all ranks of the "Royal Malta Artillery" who died during WW2. As the week progressed, one special privilege was given to Cpl Larbi RLC and represented the Battery in firing the Midday Gun at the Saluting Battery within Valetta, not only in front of the Battery and Battery Commander, but the public and tourists of Malta.

Over the next few days, the Battery explored other history areas within the Royal Artillery including; Fort Rinella the home of the 100-ton gun, military museums, such as the War Tunnels and the Lascaris War Rooms, and the new yet to be opened Malta Artillery Museum as well as the Maltese Aviation Museum to understand the advancements of aviation throughout the years. This not only allowed Battery members to learn more about the role of our predecessors in Malta, but also was an education into the importance of Aviation and



Air Defence to an outpost like Malta during a campaign such as Operations HUSKY and PEDESTAL during WW2. This was also an opportunity to do some analysis on what role the Battery does today as the Headquarters Battery in support of 47 Regiment operating the Watchkeeper Remotely Piloted Air System.

Overall, the Battlefield Study was a fantastic chance for all members of the Battery to experience an overseas trip and understand a bit more about their Battery history, as well as spend some time together, promoting cohesion, esprit des corps as well as identifying and learning the lessons of the past for the present and future.

by LBdr O'Malley
31 (HQ) Battery
47th Regiment RA





A lasting, never to be forgotten memory of the magnificence of the Aurora Borealis sweeping across a pitch-black sky in the Arctic



Gunner Eddie McMurray 4 RHA National Serviceman 1957-59

Having read the very interesting article on pages 16 & 17 of the May edition of the "Gunner", regarding the Norway Annual Winter Deployment - Training in the "High North" it brought back wonderful memories of long long ago, to my aged mind.

I was in the 4 RHA, as a National Serviceman 1957-59, at that time we had two young officers Lt James Templar and Lt Alan Payne. Mr Templar was the British Ski Champion, and Mr Payne was also a very good skier. Mr Templar became a General, and I believe Mr Payne became a

Colonel or a Brigadier.

It was decided, by them, that 4 RHA should have a ski team and a selection process was started.

After cross country running and every afternoon in the gym, for 4 or 5 weeks, the officers made a choice of 11, who would be trained to be our ski team.

On selection we were told we would be going to a new ski resort in Austria, a village called Saalbach, and we would be staying at a hotel called "The Haider" where we stayed (I think) 3 or 4 weeks.

We thought we were going to have a fabulous time at a beautiful ski resort in the Austrian Alps (like the holiday brochures showed), however, we were in for a great shock.

We were up at 6.30 am, had our breakfast of porridge (made the Scottish way with salt, covered in milk), toast and tea or coffee.

To start with, we were taken to the nursery slopes and taught the elementary moves, how to keep your balance, snow plough turnings etc.

This is what an Alpine holiday is about!!!

On the third day we were taken to a flat area at the bottom of the village, which was about 100m long. We then put on langlauf skis, we then formed two tracks for our skis and we went up and down and up and down. After a week or so we were going up and down for about 1 - 1.5 hours then we had a mug of very sweet tea, we had a break then for about 15 minutes and we would start again for about another hour, by that time we were really knackered, and we were dismissed



to rest up before lunch.

We lay on our beds for about 45 minutes then we had light lunch before we put on downhill skis. Next to our hotel there was a mountain with a ski lift, but we were not allowed to use it. We put our skis on forward bindings and made to climb up the mountain until we reached the ski station where we had the pleasure of skiing down the ski run.

By the time we were about to leave the hotel, we were climbing the mountain three times in the afternoon, after having spent the mornings at the bottom of the village on our langlauf skis.

About 15 years ago my wife and I decided to go to Saalbach again and we booked into the Haider Hotel. I took a number of photos which I showed to Frau Heider, she burst out laughing at one of the photos, which was a small baby in a pram. She said that the photo was of her husband, and she also had a copy of the photo.



Cook house in Hartz

After we got back to Hohne, we were told we were going to the Hartz Mountains to prepare for the Brigade and Divisional

championships, which were to be held at Winterberg.

This was a complete shock to the system, I can assure you, the accommodation was an old Nissen Hut with most of the insulation missing, with a small area partitioned off for the officers. There were two small pot bellied stoves one at either end and that was the heating.

About 15 metres away was a small hut with no window, just a bit of hessian hanging over a hole, this was our cook house (although the Regiment provided us with a cook, no expense spared)!

There was a small stream adjacent to us and we had to break the ice to get water for cooking and for us to wash.

I believe we were there for about 3 or 4 weeks, training the whole day with a rucksack with 17lbs of weight including a .303 rifle with 3 rounds in it.

We skied for 30 km and about 25 km we arrived at a station to shoot at 3 balloons red, blue, white and you could get 6 minutes off your time if you hit all the balloons. We did this in the morning and also in the afternoon.

Then it was off to Winterberg and to the championships which is what we had been training for.

These championships lasted about 10 days and we did rather well in both brigade and divisional championships and then it was then back to Hohne.

After that we thought we would be back to normal duties (and a well earned rest).

But that was not what the script said - about a week later, in orders. Seven of us were told to report to the gym (where



else) and what came next was a complete surprise, we were told that we were picked to go to Norway, and that a special group was being formed of about 30 soldiers of which we were part of and we were to be called "1st British Independent Ski Detachment".

We were told we would go to the arctic to be trained in survival by the Norwegian Army. This was the first experience of winter warfare the British army had taken part in.



Working the axe Gunner Trevor Jemmat chopping wood for the stove

We were useless! The wonderful equipment we had taken with us was useless. The tents in strong canvas with a tunnel to crawl into were replaced by the Norwegians with capes which, buttoned together, formed a tent supported by a centre hollow pipe at the bottom of which hung a drum in which you could light a small fire. We were snug as could be and of course the assembly was so light that it caused no problem to tow in the small sledge - called a pulk which we had as a means of transportation. We learned a lot.

The one thing we had was we were all super fit. We had been skiing for months, before which we had daily circuit training in order to make the team that was to compete at the army championships.

By coincidence that wonderful programme about the Marine Commanders, was shown and the survival course that they went through brought back wonderful memories, although the kit that they had was something to envy, the TV programme was basically similar to what we went through, although we didn't have to submerge in the water.

Many years later I did business with a Norwegian company and the CEO although 10 years younger than myself had been an officer in the Norwegian army and had been stationed at the same camp as I had been in. He got permission for himself and I to go to the camp and we stayed in the Officer's Mess for 4 days recalling wonderful memories.

I refer to an article in "The Times" February 18 2019 by Lucy Fisher, she said Gavin Williamson announced a ten year plan to increase the number of Royal Marines from 600 to approximately 900.

At the same time, I do believe, he said in a TV interview that the Commandos had played a part in the defence of North Norway, now for 50 years, and I think Prince Charles also made a comment to the same fact.

However, if I'm wrong I would like to qualify that, and in 1958 we were the first British troops to go to Norway as I have shown you, it was a wonderful experience.

by Gunner Eddie McMurray
4 RHA



DUNCAN ESSAY PRIZE WINNERS

1st Place - £1500.00 - Capt Park - 7 Para Regt RHA. The Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper talk about the importance of Interoperability with our Allies and Partners. What do we mean by this and how is this achieved in terms of Joint Fires and Effects?

2nd Place - £1000.00 - Lt Samuel Bates - 12 Regt RA. Post COVID-19, what are the command and leadership challenges likely to face our junior officers and soldiers over the next 5 years and what should we be doing to mitigate them?

3rd Place - £750.00 - 2Lt Chad Tumelty - 19 Regt RA. The Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper talk about the importance of Interoperability with our Allies and Partners. What do we mean by this and how is this achieved in terms of Joint Fires and Effects?

4th Place - £500.00 - Capt Wesley Schorah - 7 Para Regt RHA. The Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper talk about the importance of Interoperability with our Allies and Partners. What do we mean by this and how is this achieved in terms of Joint Fires and Effects?

Additional Prize - £250.00 - Lawson Podcast (Capts Joe Westcott, Daniel Ryal, Capt Nick Gandy) - 4 Regt RA. Post COVID-19, what are the command and leadership challenges likely to face our junior officers and soldiers over the next 5 years and what should we be doing to mitigate them? This entry was 5th overall but was the highest scoring Podcast, which was in itself judged to be worthy of recognition as a new departure from the traditional essay format.



IMPORTANT

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Please note that with effect from 31st October 2022, we will no longer be accepting cheques in payment for 'Gunner' and RA Journal subscriptions. This is in order to streamline our processes in the light of gapped staff posts and to reduce costs. If you have previously paid by cheque, you now need to set up a bank standing order. You can either do this via your online banking or using the form overleaf, which should then be returned to:

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If setting up online, our bank details are overleaf. If using this method it is important that you notify us when the standing order has been set up and provide us with the reference details.

If you have any queries please contact the editorial team:

Email: gunnereditorial@artycen.ra.mod.uk

Telephone: 01980 63 4204

If your standing order mandate has not been set up or received by 31st October 2022, we will assume you no longer wish to subscribe, and your subscription will automatically be cancelled.

You are able to view the magazine online via the RAA website [Gunner Magazine - RA Association \(thegunners.org.uk\)](http://thegunners.org.uk)

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Royal Artillery Yacht Club (RAYC) Dinghy Regatta



Col R Alston awarding the Loseby Trophy to LCpl S Williams RE and Gnr L Scales

Sun in the sky, the sound of sails being unfurled and the smell of neoprene in the air. Thursday 23rd June saw the 2022 Royal Artillery Yacht Club (RAYC) Dinghy Regatta get into full swing. While winds were light, it was a beautiful warm and sunny day as 62 Gunners from across the Royal Artillery gathered on the shores of Baker Barracks, Thorney Island ready for the 2022 RAYC Dinghy Regatta.

The Regatta, which is held annually, is open to novice and experienced sailors alike, from across the Royal Regiment. While some sailors attended just for the days racing, for many this week was their first experience of dinghy sailing and they had spent the week learning the basic skills required to sail solo. Thorney Island is home to the Army Inshore Sail Training Centre (AISTC), and it was here that the Gunners had descended en

masse one Sunday evening ready to start their Royal Yacht Association (RYA) Start Sailing course, the first qualification of the RYA sailing scheme. As ever winds can be fickle, but the instructors and students worked through both windy and calm conditions as the week progressed. Despite some soldiers spinning round in circles, capsizing, and wondering what on earth was meant by port, starboard, tack, gybe, broad reach and close hauled, by Thursday everyone was ready and eager to enter the Regatta.

Despite light winds on the day of the Regatta all sailors were full of enthusiasm and some good tight racing, set against the marvellous backdrop of Chichester Harbour, was had by all. 16th Regiment Royal Artillery claimed victory as overall Regimental winners, clearly utilising their home advantage to great effect!



In the single handed racing, where sailors raced Fusion 15 and Laser Pico dinghies, the results were as follows:

Dinghy Cup

- 1st Capt C Jefferson 4 Regt RA
- 2nd Bdr K Norton 7 Para RHA
- 3rd Gnr J Goodhand 16 Regt RA

The Pinchard Pot, awarded to the Best RA Junior Officer, went to Capt C Jefferson 4 Regt RA, and the Barron Cup for the Best RA Soldier to Bdr K Norton 7 Para RHA.

The double handed racing, in Laser 2000s, was particularly close and after 5 races (one discarded) the final positions were:

Team Racing

- 1st LCpl S Williams RE 36 Engr Regt
- Gnr L Scales 16 Regt RA
- 2nd Sgt A Perry 16 Regt RA
- Gnr A Morgan 16 Regt RA

- 3rd Capt B Busby 103 Regt RA
- Gnr O Jenkins 16 Regt RA

Congratulations to LCpl S Williams RE and Gnr L Scales for winning the Loseby Trophy. In addition, Best Endeavour was awarded to Gnr D Jones also of 16 Regt RA.

A fantastic days racing, book ended by a terrific week introducing and qualifying many to dinghy sailing. Thanks are due to Col R Alston for awarding the prizes, Gunner Sailing for organising the event, the fantastic AISTC staff for training and facilitating the Regatta, along with all of the competitors for their good spirited competition.

by Capt C H Jefferson RA
4 Regt RA

Would you like to get involved in sailing?

If you are interested in getting involved in Gunner Sailing, more information can be found at www.gunner.sailing.org. Where members of the Royal Regiment can join in with their inshore and offshore sailing, as well as windsurfing and kiteboarding.

The Army Inshore Sail Training Centre, also runs courses in windsurfing, dinghy sailing (including multi-hull and keel boat), powerboat, laserling, RYA First Aid and post-boarding. Courses can be booked as individuals or as units. For more information: www.sailing.army.gov.uk



Part of the team from Fighting Fourth (4 Regt RA)



Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS)



Sgt Yamikani Guba of 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (3 RHA) has been competing in the Heavy weight category +87 Kgs since the easing up of national lock down due to the pandemic.

Guba is currently on Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS) studying at Northumbria University. Master Guba is benefiting more from Northumbria University in Newcastle and has been an Elite Athlete from January 2022 to mid-June 2022, Guba has managed to attain 5 Medals as follows:

- Silver Medal at the 1st Premier Open Championship held at the University of Huddersfield on 19th June 2022.
- Bronze Medal at North East Open Championships held at Newtown Aycliffe Leisure Centre in Durham on 15th May 2022.
- 2x Gold Medal at the British Army Open Championships held in

Aldershot on 26th February 2022.

- Gold medal at the Horizon Open Championships held in Halifax on 6th February 2022.

Guba is the Army and UKAF World Taekwondo team Captain and now looking forward to the next competition in line: The 3rd Welsh International Championships to be held at the Sport Wales National Centre on 9th July 2022, Inter-Services in Portsmouth on 17th July and the British National Championships to be held at the English Institute of Sport Sheffield 24-25 Sep 2022.

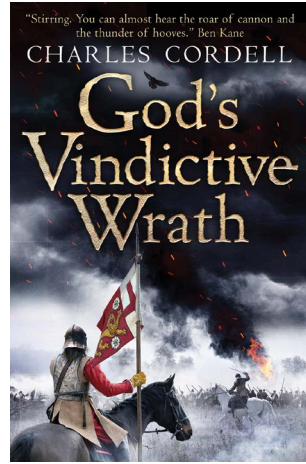
Sgt Guba was presented his Kukkiwon World Taekwondo 5th Dan / Degree Black belt by the Army Martial Arts Association (AMAA) President Maj Gen Eldon Millar MBE on 23rd February 2022, at the Army Combat Centre in Aldershot.

Master Guba is the highest graded Athlete in both UK Armed Forces World Taekwondo team and Malawi Taekwondo teams.





Author of God's Vindictive Wrath



Introduction:

This book is a highly recommended historical novel set in the opening weeks of the English Civil War, told from the viewpoints of people on both sides. Although no comparisons are explicitly made, it becomes clear to the reader that many aspects of the Great Britain of the 1640s have parallels in our present, as global warming, religious extremism, competition for resources, and widening inequality begin to tear societies apart. In both worlds, governments and rulers are forced to take the high-risk strategy of war to achieve their goals.

Charles Cordell's first novel, this is a gripping and well researched page-turner, with the extreme political and religious factionalism of the period represented. The degree of technical detail and accuracy in depicting the infantry, cavalry and artillery arms in action is what you would expect from a recently-serving military author. The face of battle and personal will to combat are explored in depth, making this a highly relevant read in the year of the 40th anniversary of the Argentinian junta's extreme gamble in invading the Falklands, and Russia's even greater jeopardy in invading Ukraine.

This debut novel has already received some great endorsements, not least from Ben Kane – the Sunday Times bestselling author of The Forgotten Legion, Hannibal, Spartacus and Lionheart series. General Richard Nugee describes it as, 'a fast-paced read that brilliantly

captures the fear, confusion and luck of battle for the soldier.'

What inspired you to write a novel?

I have always loved history. I think good historical fiction can be a great way to reflect on our own situation, as well as being a good way to learn a chunk of history. I started to write in a period of frustration – after almost back-to-back operational tours and as my Army career hit a speed bump. I looked for something else I could do, something different. I think it was good to have an alternative, creative focus – not just the Army.

Why this book – what is it about?

It is historical fiction. It is set in the first three weeks of the English Civil War, opening with the carnage of the Battle of Edgehill and ending at the Battle of Turnham Green on the edge of London. However, it is also a reflection of tribalism, 'culture war' and extremism today. It is not based on a single hero. In fact, there are no real heroes. There are also no complete villains. Its voices - ordinary men and women - face each other in the chaos of Britain in civil war. Ultimately, it is about war, how and why we fight.

How much research have you had to do?

Initially, I thought I would just write a commercial novel. I told myself I did not need to worry about the history. But the more I got into the period, the more I felt I had to do justice to it. There are so many extraordinary stories from the British Civil Wars. They just need to be told. In the end, I found I had to be true to the history, and the story is as accurate and authentic as I could make it. So – yes, this involved a lot of research, but I loved it. The danger is, an author can get lost in research and never really write. I hope I found the right balance. I also got up from the desk and walked the battlefields. This was one of the best bits, matching first-hand accounts to the ground. More recently, I had fun firing a cannon – absolutely brilliant. One of the key characters is a gentleman of the ordnance, a gun section



commander. I hope the descriptions of gunners and gun drill will resonate with your readers.

How have you drawn on your experiences?

Much of the writing draws on my own experiences, particularly operational deployments. The writing has been described as brutal. It is realistic. I don't believe in trivialising violence. The British Civil Wars were the bloodiest in our history – worse than the Great War of 1914-18. I have also drawn on time spent in overseas posts tackling extremism. The more I studied the 17th Century, the more I realised I was seeing the same issues and situations driving conflict today. Rapid population growth coupled with climate change, the Little Ice Age, led to collapsing living standards and decreasing life expectancy. People searched for answers, turning to more and more extreme political and religious ideas. Ultimately, the 1640s were the most violent period in history. Conflicts raged across the globe from Japan, through China and Eurasia to the Americas. We now know this period as The General Crisis. It included our British Civil Wars, as well as the Thirty Years War and the European War of Religion. The 17th Century was Europe's 'Golden Age'. But it was also a black age of religious persecution, slaughter, famine, disease and destruction.

How applicable are the skills you learnt as a soldier?

An author requires a mix of art and craft, to write and edit a manuscript. I think successful writers need a high degree of empathy and probably a dose of business acumen. However, I have found that plotting historical fiction can be a bit like intelligence analysis and a reversal of operational planning. Ultimately though, I think I have drawn hugely on the self-discipline and determination that we develop as soldiers. Without them, I might have fallen by the wayside long ago.

Soldier to novelist – has it been an easy move?

I think most of us face some difficulties in the transition to civilian life. However, this has been a steep learning curve. For an outsider,

the literary industry is frustratingly opaque. It has not been easy. It is a beautiful and a cruel world, filled with joy and bitter disappointment. I would implore anyone thinking of entering it to do their research first. The average author earns surprisingly little. Huge numbers of very good writers don't get published. Many good books receive no marketing support and go unread. Ultimately, there is a great deal of luck involved. I feel very fortunate to be published. I only hope that enough readers find, buy, read, enjoy and post positive reviews for God's Vindictive Wrath. If not, the chances of continuing to be published are slim.

What is your day and life like as an author?

It is a bit of a crazy mixture. In that way, it is not unlike soldiering. However, there are long, sometimes lonely, periods of research and writing at the desk. But these are broken by madly busy days giving book talks, signings and battlefield walks – all great fun. When I am writing, I like to be at the desk by about 09:00. I am not someone who writes at dawn. The problem is tearing yourself away when you are on a roll. I do sometimes have to get up in the middle of the night when an idea has come to me.

When will we see the next book?

I am busy writing book #2 of the Divided Kingdom series. If God's Vindictive Wrath goes well, it should be published early in 2023. In the meantime, I am close to finishing a short story that will bridge the gap between the two. It should be available as a free e-book soon.

Charles Cordell's Book:

God's Vindictive Wrath is published by Myrmidon Books. It is on the shelves in store in Waterstones, Blackwells, WH Smith and good independent bookshops. It is also available online via Amazon, Bookshop.org, Book Depository and Booktopia. Charles Cordell has pledged 2% of his royalties to be donated to Armed Forces charities. More details, first chapters and historical notes are on the website at: www.charlescordell.com.



Regimental Secretary - Charities Update

Royal Artillery Service Pay Giving Scheme (SPGS)

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

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

What is the SPGS?

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

How much do I Pay?

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

How is the money used?

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

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

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

- £95,000 on individual serving welfare from the RACF
- £156,000 for sport split between the RAI & RACF.
- £156,000 to regiments from the RACF / RAI
 - CO's grant - £2-5K – enhance those activities not covered by public funding.
 - Welfare grant - average of £4K for UWOs / ROSOs.
- £61,000 RA Mess (incl staff and insurance)
- £44,000 – Central Sergeants Mess (+ 25% directly from SPGS @ source)
- £35,000 on comradeship in batteries from the RAA (Up to £1500 per Battery).
- £24,000 on serving regimental events.

The overall total in direct support to the serving Regiment is just under £600,000

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

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

What happens when I leave the Regiment?

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



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

95% of the serving regiment contributed around £607,000 last year to regimental charities

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

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

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



Royal Artillery Association

Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance, National Memorial Arboretum

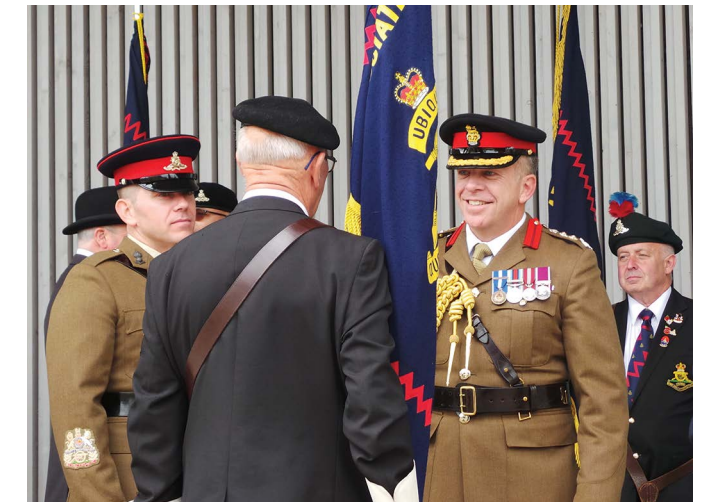
The annual Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance, organised by the RAA HQ staff, took place at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire on Saturday 2nd July 2022. The event attracted over 300 people; representatives from RHQ RA, serving regiments, veterans and their families.

The Honorary Chaplain of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, the Venerable Stephen Robbins CB, led the Service and wreath-laying ceremony in the Royal Artillery Memorial Garden. A most fitting service took place in the Aspects Building, at which Brigadier Mark Pountain CBE, Chairman of the RAA, read the lesson. At the end of the Service, Mr Jimmy Young received a presentation in recognition of his role as the Royal Artillery National Standard Bearer on his retirement from this prestigious appointment.

After the Service, the congregation moved to the Royal Artillery Memorial Garden where Brigadier M Pountain CBE, Chairman of the RAA and Colonel R C Harmer ADC, Regimental Colonel led the wreath laying ceremony and during which WO1 (RASM) Sanders L recited the Ode of Remembrance.

Music for the Service was provided by The Lancashire Artillery Band and Pipes and Drums, by kind permission of the Commanding Officer, 103 Regiment RA. Special thanks to everyone who made this day a success; WO2 (RABSM) Porter L, The Lancashire Artillery Band, Standard Bearers, members of the serving regiment and to veterans and their families who supported this event.

We look forward to welcoming you next year.





East Kent Branch

A Kent Police Community Support Officer has been hailed a champion for his work helping veterans in Thanet and the wider county.

PCSO Adrian Butterworth was recognised as an Armed Forces Champion 2022 at the Armed Forces Network's Together We Can Make A Difference conference held in May in Sussex. The award is given to people who have shown dedication and support to the Armed Forces community.

PCSO Butterworth works within the Thanet Community Safety Unit as a Crime Prevention Officer, and spends time visiting local groups and individuals to support and advise them on staying safe.

He is also an armed forces champion for Kent Police, and has assisted many veterans he's met in the community as well as those who have been identified as linked to the forces, via calls received through the Force Control Room. Last year he organised and led a group of volunteers to spruce up the War Memorial in Margate's Trinity Memorial Gardens in time for Armistice Day.

PCSO Butterworth, who served for nine years in the Royal Artillery, said: "I was not aware I was getting an award- it came as a complete surprise – I had no idea!



Tyneside Scottish Branch

The Tyneside Scottish Branch held a Beating Retreat on July 9th at McCracken Park, Gosforth, the home of Northern Rugby Club.

The occasion brought together branches affiliated to 101 Regiment RA, the Northern Gunners. Members of the Tyneside Scottish, Tynemouth Volunteer Artillery, Tyneside Branches, and the Northumbrian Volunteer Artillery Association enjoyed the sunshine to watch the event.

The City of Newcastle Pipe Band supported by the Pipes and Drums of the Tyneside Scottish, with buglers of Veteran Associations, conducted the Beating Retreat. The occasion being enhanced by a display of Scottish Dancing.

Beating Retreat has its origins in the early years of organised warfare when the beating of drums and the parading of Post Guards heralded the closing of camp gates and the lowering of flags at the end of the day.

The drummers call signalled the culmination of the ceremony, with the playing of retreat marches and the parade of Royal Artillery Association Standards.

The finale saw Pipe Major Andy Clark playing solo the Day Thou Gavest Lord has ended before Sunset was sounded by buglers from the Royal Artillery, Fusiliers, and Rifles Associations. The band and standards marched off with Colonel Matthew Carter, Regimental Secretary and Chief Executive RAA, taking the salute.

"Through my work in the force, if calls come to the control room relating to anyone who has served in the forces, as well as any police response, they will also be flagged to me. It doesn't matter if the veteran is young or old, victim or perpetrator, I will contact them and arrange a meeting over a cup of tea and chat.

"If I can help them, I will, perhaps they have issues with PTSD, mental health, or they are struggling to find a home or a job or they just can't settle back into civvy street after their time serving.

"They say a problem shared is a problem halved so, if they want to sound off without judgement or they need help, I will do what I can."

Inspector Ian Swallow of Thanet Community Safety Unit said: "PCSO Butterworth plays an important role in that he can use his own personal experience to connect with those in need who have military backgrounds.

Adrian collected his award on Tuesday, June 7 at the Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Conference in Folkestone. It was presented to him by Lady Colgrain, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Kent.

PCSO Adrian Butterworth is a member of East Kent Branch, RAA.



With the ceremonial complete, it was time to enjoy the comradeship of the Royal Artillery Association and a curry supper. Guests for the evening joining Colonel Carter were Honorary Colonel 101 Regiment RA, Honorary Colonel Ammar Mirza, Commanding Officer 101 RA, Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Linsdell, and RSM 101, Lee Kennedy.



The strong affinity between 101 Regiment and its affiliated Branches is reflected in the Regiment being awarded the Royal Artillery Association Cup. The trophy is awarded in recognition of actions and particular achievements of merit by a Regiment in support of the RAA.

Colonel Matthew Carter presented the RAA Cup to Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Linsdell during the evening.



The evening was rounded off with a presentation of a cheque for £310, raised from a raffle to the Royal Artillery Charitable Fund.



Royal Artillery Institution (RAI)

While there is little to report from the RAI in this edition, please see the details for the next Alanbrooke Lunch (6 October) and Alamein Dinner (21 October) in the notices section of this edition.

ROYAL ARTILLERY CHARITABLE FUND – SHRAPNEL COLLECTION

Shrapnel – "metal fragments from the explosion of a shell or projectile"

Shrapnel - "loose change"

Donate your unwanted loose change – in any currency – to the RACF

We have been offered a facility to process coinage in any currency in order to donate funds to the charity. Please send any donations to the RACF c/o the Regimental Secretary, RHQRA, Artillery House, Royal Artillery Barracks, Larkhill, SP4 8QT



RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

The RACF have awarded so far this year 484 individual grants to members of our Gunner family supporting with just under £378,000 in grants.

Out of that, £329,000 has been awarded to our Gunner veterans. The top areas where help was needed in our veteran community were household goods, mobility support and annual grants.

The remaining £49,000 was in support of our serving Gunners and their dependants. With the current cost of living crisis so many are finding day to day living a struggle, trying to pay for essential needs. Whether you are a pensioner, in work, or serving, if you are battling to make ends meet please do not suffer in silence because we are here to help. Recently we have seen a rise in the number of requests for help and we want to encourage more to reach out for our support. Your Regimental charity is here for you.

If you are a veteran contact SSAFA or the RBL on the numbers below, if you are serving you can also approach your Unit Welfare Office who can come to us.

For SSAFA please call 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion please call 0808 802 8080 to get a case up to us or contact us on either 0300 167 3998/0300 158 7035. We can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF-WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk, RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association (thegunners.org.uk)

25TH REGT RA, 38TH DISBANDMENT REUNION 2022



Fri 17 and Sat 18 June 2022 saw the 38th annual reunion of the disbandment of 25th Regiment RA. The event was held within the confines of 204 Battery RA, 101 Regiment RA, Kingston Park Reserve Centre, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. 25 Regiment were disbanded in 1984 in order for the reformation of 3 RHA. Its manpower was subsumed into 3 RHA and some of those transferred across are still serving today! It is a real testament to the tenacity of this diminishing band of brothers that we had circa 120 in attendance during the weekend – bearing in mind the age group is some 60+. That would have been considerably more had a number not cancelled at the last minute due to a variety of reasons. That said those who were in attendance had a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. More of the same next year and Steve Russell will be transmitting the dates in the coming months. But now onto 2024 – this sees the 40th anniversary of the disbandment and we are planning a much more high-profile event which will culminate with a commemoration/celebration service in Newcastle Cathedral followed later in the evening with a party in the Newcastle Labour Club private function room. In order to keep the costs low we are planning a mid-week event on Mon 24, Tue 25 & Wed 26 Jun 24. A generous benefactor has underwritten accommodation in two city centre hotels; the Vermont and the County and a note will shortly be sent out advertising the much-reduced rates with the option to pay up over the next 18 months. Further details on the 40th anniversary and advanced bookings can be obtained by emailing Steve Russell at steve_russell3@btinternet.com (there is an underscore between Steve and Russell) or going onto the Regimental Facebook page: "25 Fd Regt RA (Geordie Gunners)". We are really hoping this event will bring some reticent, reluctant friends out of the woodwork.



Date	Event	Location
2022		
20 Sep	RACF Welfare Committee	Larkhill
25 Sep	Dedication FM Vincent window	RMAS
05 Oct	RAA NEC	Larkhill
06 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
19 Oct	F&GP Committee	Larkhill
21 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
27 Oct	RA Awards Dinner	Larkhill
02 Nov	Charity Investment Committee	Larkhill
10 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Larkhill
13 Nov	HPC	London
22 Nov	42nd RA BoM	Larkhill
04 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill
09 Dec	YO Dine In	Larkhill
14 Dec	MG Committee	Larkhill
2023		
16 Feb	RA Gold Cup	Sandown Park
02 Mar	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
16 Mar	RAA NEC	Larkhill



CELEBRATIONS

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On 23 Sep 1972. Bdr C W Brawn (Chris) !7 Trg Regiment RA to LCpl V A Dale (Valerie) (nickname Biscuit) (WRAC) CVHQ RA at the Woolwich Military Academy Church

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.tm@gmail.com or call 07900 806235.

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

53 (LOUISBURG) AD BTY RA REUNION 2022

The reunion will take place on Sat 29 Oct 22 at The Castle Hotel, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester LE9 2AP Manager Paul and Rebecca Tel 01162 395 337 Book rooms under 53 Reunion. The event will include a raffle and auction with monies raised donated to designated charities. All other enquires - Mr Barry Guest organiser Tel 07931 300221 email rospabarry51@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.

RA CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE

The RA Ceremony of Remembrance will take place on 13 Nov at the RA Memorial Hyde Park. The event is open to all to attend. Anyone wishing to have reserved seats is requested to contact Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley, email emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or post to: Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley, RHQ RA, RA Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 8QT Please note seats will be reserved on a first come first served basis, tickets will not be issued. All retired members of the regiment who attend are invited at the end of the Ceremony to join the march past. All are required to be seated by 10.30am at the latest. In the event of wet weather, bring water proofs. There is no wet weather programme.

ST BARBARA'S DAY

The annual St Barbara's Day Church Service will be held in the Royal Garrison Church of St Alban with St Barbara, Larkhill on Sun 4 Dec. The Service will start at 11 am and is expected to last about an hour. Following the Service there will be a curry lunch in the RA Mess at a cost of £17.50 per head. Any serving or retired officers and families who wish to attend are requested to send their name, address, telephone number or email, car make, model, colour and registration number, to: Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley, RHQ RA, RA Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 8QT together with a cheque (payable to RAI). Alternatively, responses can be made by email to emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk and payments made by BACs to Sort Code: 30-11-75 Ac No: 00957269 Ref: StB(name) RAA Branches will be contacted directly to confirm attendance.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH THU 6 OCT 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. Our Guest speaker is General Sir Richard Barrons KCB CBE. 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 out 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:

- Philip Edward Stobold 21 May 2022
- Gnr Sophie Madden 10 June 2022
- Col M J H Hudson (Mike) 19 June 2022
- Peter John Lord 21 June 2022
- Lt Col J L Dawson (Jim) 23 June 2022
- George Richard Howard-Vyse 26 June 2022
- Lt Col D B W Jarvis (Derek) 1 July 2022
- Major John Joseph Cullen 10 July 2022
- Col N G S Gray (Nic) 17 July 2022
- Col R V Kelley (Dish) 17 July 2022
- Capt A A P N Rogers (Sandy) 19 July 2022
- Nick Dockree 19 July 2022
- Lt Col D W Hawes (Don) 31 July 2022
- George Sifleet August 2022

HAWES - Lt Col (Retd) William Donald (Gattonside, formerly Ettrickbridge). Died peacefully at Borders General Hospital on 31 July 2022. Donald, aged 85 years, dearly beloved husband of Vivienne, dear father of Katharine and Alastair, father-in-law of Lesley and proud loving papa of Susanna and Christina. Cremation service at Borders Crematorium. Donations if desired will be received for Chest, Heart & Stroke, Scotland.

RA Historical Society Autumn 2022 Programme

Timings	Lecture Subject	Lecturer	Registrations Close
THE SHRAPNEL LECTURES, FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER, LARKHILL			
1000 hrs	Whither Strategy, Grnad or Otherwise?	General The Lord Richards	Friday 7 October
1120 hrs	The Tsar's Army 1914-1917	Dr Spencer Jones, RA Historian	Ditto
1220 hrs	Broader academic view on the current Ukraine conflict(s)	Dr Rory Finnin, Senior Lecturer Cambridge University	Ditto
1400 hrs	RA Museum Update	Maj Gen Nick Eeles, Chairman	Ditto
1420 hrs	Up-to-date military perspective on the Ukraine Conflict	Sam Cranny-Evans, RUSI	Ditto
1520 hrs	Firepower: Making 21st Century Warfare Decisive - has this been the case in Ukraine?	Col John Musgrave, Military Historian	Ditto
ZOOM WEBINAR, WEDNESDAY 16 NOVEMBER			
1900 for 1930 hrs	The Brusilov Offensive in Russia, 1916	Dr Spencer Jones, RA Historian	Sunday 13 November

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.



Tom Carter



Tom alone, still in Loughborough, before passing away following a short illness in July 2022

Tom Carter was born in Loughborough and lived there for most of his life, the only real break being his service during World War Two. Born in January 1924 Tom was the youngest child of Thomas and Violetta, and their only son, he had seven older sisters. Tom's father, also called Tom, originally worked on a farm but moved with the railway from Oxfordshire to Leicestershire working as a builder.

Tom went to school in Loughborough leaving at fourteen to work in a shop, they were long days as he started at eight and stayed until the shop closed at seven thirty in the evening.

Tom remembers the announcement of World War Two, he was in church as the lead choir boy.

'On the morning of Sunday 3rd September 1939, I was in church as normal, being top lad in the choir.

The sidesman came in during the service and spoke to the vicar who announced that the country was now at war with Germany.'

In 1941 Tom joined the Civil Defence, and then also helped the local ambulance service before going out on fire watch.

'I can remember standing in Baxter Gate and watching the fires in Leicester and standing with my dad before I joined the civil defence, looking over Nottingham and it was red.'

In August 1942 Tom was called-up, he was eighteen-years-old. He signed on at the Post Office, intending to join the RAMC, but the army had different ideas. Soon Tom received instructions to join the 32nd Primary Training Unit at Alexandria, Dunbartonshire in Scotland. Within days he took his initial tests and was told he was to join the Royal Artillery.

'I was posted to Chester 212 Light Anti-Aircraft Training Regiment where I stayed for 10 weeks. I also learnt about the Bofors; 8 men and one sergeant in a gun crew. I did not go to the firing camp because there were too many men to go. Instead, I had to scrub the gym floor at Saughton Camp in Chester.'

'After this training, I got my first leave and on return, reported to Newmarket which was the HQ of 138 Light Anti Aircraft Regiment. This was a holding regiment.

From there I was posted to 454 LAA battery which was at Duxford, then a move to A Troop 470 battery at a

place called Warboys, which was a Lancaster Bomber Station.'

Tom moved to several locations across the country, serving from Devon to the Shetland Islands, but in June 1944 he was near Dover.

'We moved to the Dover area just before the invasion on 6th June 1944. That day the sergeant and bombardier were away, so I was in charge of the gun. The night before the move orders were put up, I was the orderly sergeant and had to make sure everyone was up.'

'On arriving in the Dover area, we were deployed near a village called Eastry. Not long after us, the Canadians moved in as part of the hoax that we were invading the Calais area. The area around Deal was all blocked off as if it was a holding place for tanks waiting to board ships.'

Tom did not leave the country until after VJ Day, when he went to Egypt, followed by The School of Artillery as it moved to Palestine, just north of Haifa.

On the 5th May 1947, he was demobbed and returned to Loughborough, initially returning to his old job in the shop before working at The Brush, where he stayed until he retired.

Tom married Jean soon after the war Tom and they would have two children, Carol and David, but sadly Jean passed away some years ago, he then married Beryl who had dementia and died last year.



Lieutenant Colonel T Simpson RA



Tom Simpson signed up for the Army in 1952 on his 16th birthday, and as usual at that time, the local Recruiting Sergeant came to fetch him from his parents' house. He asked Tom's mother whether she would provide a pack lunch for the young lad for the journey. His mother replied "Certainly not, he's yours now!"

Little did she know just how right she was. From that point onwards, for the next 39 years, Tom belonged to the Army, and the Royal Regiment of Artillery. They made a great partnership. He immersed himself in it, and it most certainly was in his blood. A soldier to his bootstraps, after leaving the Regulars at 55, a further 15 years as part of SSAFA allowed him to continue to serve others. Always giving, always advising, always helping.

From the day he received the Goschen Prize from The Duke of Gloucester and Field Marshall Montgomery at the Boys' Regiment Royal Artillery (later Junior Leaders Regiment RA), to when he acted as pall bearer for that famous old Gunner, Field Marshall Lord Ironside, the Army knew it had a star in its ranks.

The old Rudyard Kipling saying 'Smart as a Bombardier' might have been invented for him. It must have been early on when he invented a way of fastening his stable belt without undoing the straps, so as not to crack the shine of the bull – many others tried the same but failed, and the secret goes with him. He had a meticulous, but somehow unfussy attention to detail. It really mattered to him, and it made a huge impression on those around him.

A career at Regimental Duty saw him serve in long forgotten Regiments such as 43 Regt RA and 53 Regt RA, during which he undertook an operational tour during the Cyprus Insurgency, that tough but largely forgotten conflict. But it was his tour in 3 RHA that really set his career alight. Serving in Kenya and South Yemen alongside a generation of RHA Warrant Officer talent, most of whom made it to Lt Col. It was there that he really learned

his soldiering, and thrived on it, ending up as BSM of C Bty RHA. This was Tom at his best – Regimental soldiering. It was at that time that he embraced the true spirit and high standards expected of a Horse Gunner; something he carried through the rest of his life.

It was also during this time that he married Pat, and they formed such a rock-solid military partnership which is so vital to successful soldiering. And that partnership subsequently underpinned their approach to Tom's welfare following the deterioration in his health over the last 17 years of his life. Top notch planning, admirable stoicism, a bloody minded determination to keep going no matter what, and a great deal of affection.

Tom managed a unique feat of being RSM of not only one but two Regiments. He was promoted to WO1 so swiftly, that they had to search for a post for him while he waited to be RSM of 40 Fd Regt RA. So they appointed him RSM of the Honourable Artillery Company in London. At the time Tom was appointed, they had just been given orders to amalgamate the Gunner element of the Regt with the Guards element. You can imagine how sensitive a time it must have been. Tom thrived, and is fondly remembered by HAC Veterans to this day.



He was Mentioned in Dispatches for service in N Ireland in 1973 with 40 Fd Regt RA at the height of the troubles, while he was RSM. We all remember the huge numbers of shootings and bombings at that time. I do not know of any other RSM who received such an award for that campaign; certainly not a Gunner RSM. It was awarded for exceptional leadership under enormous pressure. A remarkable achievement.

It is as well to remember that by rising from the rank of Gunner to Lt Col, he went as high and as far as he could. Only a handful of soldiers ever make it that far, and very few do it with such skill as Tom, while at the same time retaining the deep respect – and the friendship – of both superiors and subordinates alike.

Never one to ostentatiously seek the limelight, Tom was content to let his actions and results speak for themselves. At the same time, he nurtured the latent talent of those around him, encouraging those who required improvement and guidance, and gently admonishing those who'd messed up. He had an instinct for getting the best out of people.

As a Commissioned Officer he continued to make his mark. When QM of 27 Fd Regt RA in Lippstadt in 1980 and later 1 RHA in Hohne, he dispensed the very best advice to the junior officers on

their first tour – not least of whom was the current Master Gunner St James' Park, Lt Gen Sir Andrew Gregory. He invited them to pop in once or twice a week for a coffee and chat in the QM's office, just before the official coffee break in the officers' mess. During those lengthy chats, he'd give them the gossip on what was going on in the Regt, who to be wary of and who to emulate. This also gave them warning about where they should be and when they should lie low. That gentle mischievous nudging was not lost on them – he enjoyed and encouraged their success and was always amused when they messed up, putting all their failures into context. Many of them never forgot the advice, and continued to pop into the QM's office for coffee and gossip for the rest of their careers. He had an inherent instinct as to what was right and what was wrong, and he could smell a wrong'un at a hundred paces.

The summary of an Army life is more than rank, exercises, operations and length of service. It's more about other fellow travellers; the friendships one makes, the shared experiences, and the impact one has on those around you. By any measure, Tom had a huge impact on those he touched. Serving with him was a privilege

enjoyed by many Gunners over the years, none of whom I'm sure failed to appreciate his professionalism, his guidance and above all, his friendship.

Tom and Pat – what a team they were together. Both fiercely proud of each other. One of the letters of condolence sent to Pat sums it up very nicely:

"The very mention of Tom's name takes me back to my boyhood, to Aden, to Kenya and to Germany. I will never forget this remarkable man."

A loyal soldier, an inspirational leader, a proud horse Gunner, a true friend, a wonderful husband and father. A remarkable man indeed.



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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.

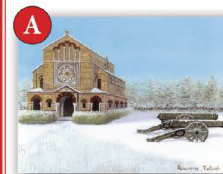
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT
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14th Regiment Royal Artillery, Tug of War Competition