



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND
ASSOCIATION JOURNAL 2025
VOLUME 22

CONTENTS

Contributions

We welcome letters, articles and comments from our readers. If you have questions to ask or a story to tell that will be of interest to The Royal Regiment of Scotland, please contact the Regiment through our website www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org

All contributions are accepted at the editor's discretion and may be edited.

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Next Edition

Units are asked to submit material for the next journal covering activities throughout the whole of 2026 by 31 January 2027. Further details will be provided nearer the time. Views expressed in this journal, unless stated otherwise, are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of The Regiment, The Army or the Ministry of Defence.

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REGIMENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Colonel-in-Chief

His Majesty The King

Deputy Colonel-in-Chief

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal

Colonel of the Regiment

Major General RRE Lindsay CBE

Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

Major General AP Reilly OBE

Major General RSJ Hedderwick

Brigadier LJ Drummond MBE

Brigadier GC Wearmouth OBE

Brigadier N M Wight-Boycott OBE

The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel O Bridle

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One S Paterson
/ Warrant Officer Class One LJ McConachie

The Black Watch, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel RA Smith

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One M Robb

The Highlanders, 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel GW Muir MBE

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One GR Allison /
Warrant Officer Class One R Ritchie

Balaklava Company 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders)

Officer Commanding: Maj NK Cargill MVO / Major TH Blair MBE

Company Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class Two CR Marr /
Warrant Officer Class Two G Brown

52nd Lowland, 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Honorary Colonel: Major General AABR Bruce CB OBE VR DL

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel LJ Curson

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Office Class One A Welshman
/ Warrant Officer Class One S Whitehead MC

51st Highland, 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Honorary Colonel: Major General (Retired) PC Marriott CB CBE DL

Commanding Officer: Lieutenant Colonel DM Robertson

Regimental Sergeant Major: Warrant Officer Class One A Bright

Regimental Headquarters

Regimental Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) JD Tink



FOREWORD BY THE COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT



Major General R R E Lindsay CBE
Colonel of the Regiment
The Royal Regiment of Scotland
Regimental Headquarters
The Castle
EDINBURGH
EH1 2YT

12th February 2026

To all Members of our Regimental Family

Well done to all of you on continuing to deliver great results in another incredibly busy year for our Regiment. As ever, we find ourselves at the centre of the Army's efforts. The breadth of our Regimental activity is such that we continue to excel across a wide range of roles, including preparing for operations, training partner nations, conducting ceremonial activity or serving as the Resident Infantry Battalion in Cyprus. Whilst our Regiment is geographically spread, there remains an unbreakable bond of unity across all of our Battalions and amongst all of us serving at E.

As you all know, 28th March 2026 is the start of our 20th year and it's right that we mark the year with events that build for the future, whilst reflecting on the considerable accomplishments of the Regiment to date. It's set to be an incredibly exciting year which launched with the great success of The Troops documentary with over 250,000 viewers across Scotland.

There is a significant amount in the year we can all be involved with across our Battalions, the Regiment and at a national level. From sporting events to Freedom Marches across Scotland, we are keen to celebrate and showcase the very best of our Regiment. The Regimental Rally in March, and the unveiling of the Regimental statue in June, are keystone events and ones I hope will attract the widest of audiences. I would encourage all members of the Regiment, with friends and family, to get involved as much as possible.

Indeed, there is much to be proud of over the last year and I would encourage you all to reflect on what we have achieved since our formation. Whether you have been part of the Regiment since its inception, or have recently joined, you can all be incredibly proud of your service, sacrifice and dedication. For those of you who are deployed, I hope you seek strength from our collective achievements and can still find time to celebrate during this momentous year.

It is also deeply inspiring to read in this year's journal of the opportunities our Regiment has had to soldier, travel and fully embrace The Offer. I would ask you all to continue to embrace challenge at every opportunity in our bid to develop professionally, personally and continue to set the standard for others to follow.

As we approach our 20th anniversary, we have in many ways set the standard for ourselves. Our first chapter is one to be immensely proud of and I am confident we will approach the next with the same unwavering diligence, dedication and determination to achieve even greater success.

As ever
R R E Lindsay





REGIMENTAL ROLL OF HONOUR

OFFICERS

BARRIE, Walter Reid

24823176 Capt, b. Chryston, Lanarkshire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 11/11/2012.

1 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

McDERMID, John

561716 Capt, b. Glasgow.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 14/11/2007.

Attached 2 YORKS, formerly RHF.





SOLDIERS

BINNIE, Sean Conor

25171259 A/Sgt, b. Dublin.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 7/5/2009.

3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

COLLINS, Stuart James

30034943 Pte, b. Bellshill.

Died of wounds. United Kingdom 2/9/2021.

1 SCOTS.

DEMPSEY, Barry

25079101 Cpl, b. Ayrshire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 18/8/2008.

2 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

ELLIOTT, Kevin Robert Alexander

25136352 Pte, b. Dundee.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 31/8/2009.

3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

FLINT, Samuel Alexander

30158273 Fus, b. Blackpool, Lancashire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 30/4/2013.

2 SCOTS.

HETHERINGTON, Robert Murray

25232174 Pte, b. Houston, Texas, USA.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 30/4/2013.

7 SCOTS, attached 2 SCOTS.

JOHNSON, James Bradley

24958609 LCpl, b. Chatham, Kent.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 28/6/2008

5 SCOTS, formerly A and SH.

KENNEDY, Scott

25164918 Pte, b. Dunfermline.

Killed on operations against insurgents. Iraq 28/6/2007.

3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

KERR, Jamie William

25208345 Pte, b. Dunfermline.

Killed on operations against insurgents. Iraq 28/6/2007.

3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

MASON, Thomas

25202313 Cpl, b. Bellshill, Lanarkshire.

Died of wounds. United Kingdom 25/10/2009.

3 SCOTS, formerly BW.

MATHEWS, Jonathan William

24937064 Sgt, b. Edinburgh.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 28/7/2008.

4 SCOTS, formerly RS.

McDONALD, Sean Gordon

25110838 Pte, b. Toronto, Canada.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 7/2/2010.

1 SCOTS, formerly RS.

McLAREN, Robert McLean

30029105 Pte, b. Buckstone, Derbyshire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 1/6/2009.

3 SCOTS, formerly RE.

McLAREN, Scott

30105449 Pte, b. Edinburgh.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 4/7/2011.

4 SCOTS.

MILLAR, Stuart Angus Finlayson

24914269 Sgt, b. Clackmannan.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 31/8/2009.

3 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

MOORE, Johnathan

25183149 Cpl, b. Bellshill, Lanarkshire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 7/2/2010.

1 SCOTS, formerly RS.

O'DONNELL, Craig

25146937 Pte, b. Alexandria, Dunbartonshire.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 4/9/2006.

5 SCOTS, formerly A and SH.

PIKE, Michael John

25141952 Cpl, b. Okehampton, Devon.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 3/6/2011.

4 SCOTS, formerly HLD RS.

POOL, Joseph McFarlane

25175213 LCpl, b. Dumfries.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 5/9/2010.

1 SCOTS, formerly KOSB.

SAVAGE, William Thomas

25170821 Cpl, b. Irvine, Scotland.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 30/4/2013.

2 SCOTS, formerly RHF.

VATUBUA, Joseva Saqanagonedau

30065586 Pte, b. Fiji.

Killed in action. Afghanistan 1/1/2011.

5 SCOTS.



THE SCOTS ASSOCIATION

President:

Lieutenant General (Retired) Sir Nick Borton
KCB DSO MBE

Chairman:

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Jonathan Tink

Secretary:

Major Ian Cordiner

2025 was another standout year for the SCOTS Association, with strong attendance across all major events and a real sense of momentum throughout the community. Our well established fixtures again anchored the calendar, each delivered with growing professionalism, warmth and Regimental pride.

The year opened with a record turnout at the SCOTS Rally Weekend, followed by a successful Annual Golf Day in June and an outstanding Race Day at Musselburgh in September. As always, the Association was proudly represented at national remembrance events throughout November, upholding the traditions that define our Regimental family.

**SCOTS Rally Weekend**

The SCOTS Rally Weekend continued its rise as the flagship Regimental gathering. The weekend opened with the Black Hackle Dinner at the New Club, Edinburgh – selling out in record time and filling the venue with energy, pride and familiar camaraderie.

With no formal event on the Saturday night, attendees enjoyed a rare pause before Sunday's commemorations, with some attending the Pizza and Pint night.

Due to roadworks on the Royal Mile, the Muster, March and Remember began beside St Giles' Cathedral, where the food van was a welcome addition. Serving SCOTS and veterans then stepped off in strong numbers, marching together down the Royal Mile to the Regimental Kirk at Canongate.

The Rally Weekend continues to grow in stature, reaffirming its place as the central annual gathering for the SCOTS family.



SCOTS Association Pint & Pizza Night

The Pint & Pizza Night proved a simple but hugely successful gathering, uniting serving personnel and veterans over food, laughter and shared stories.

Free pizza and a couple of pints helped set a relaxed tone, but it was the company that mattered most. With two Generals in attendance offering thoughtful words of appreciation, the evening reinforced the enduring bonds of the SCOTS family – bridging generations and reminding all present that their service is recognised and valued.

SCOTS Race Day

The 2025 SCOTS Race Day at Musselburgh was one of our strongest yet, attracting serving SCOTS, SCOTS veterans and veterans of our antecedent regiments – many joined by partners and families.

The Association again sponsored The Royal Regiment of Scotland Trophy and The SCOTS Association Cup, with guest presenters awarding prizes to the winning trainers. The day delivered the familiar and much loved mix of racing, tradition and Regimental camaraderie.



SCOTS Association Golf Day

Held at Strathmore Golf Centre, this year's Golf Day brought together 25 golfers from across the SCOTS, antecedent regiments, and the RAF for a relaxed and good humoured day on the course.

After bacon rolls and coffee, players set off under shifting weather – rain in the morning, sunshine by afternoon – adding to the challenge and the laughter. Prize giving followed a warm meal and plenty of banter.

Winners

- Best Scratch Player:
LCpl Jonny Stevenson RVM, 2 SCOTS
- Best Handicap Player:
CSgt Scott McGregor, 7 SCOTS
- Wooden Spoon:
Maj Ian Cordiner, RHQ SCOTS

Next year marks 20 years of SCOTS, with an even bigger turnout planned for 18 June 2026.



London Field of Remembrance

At the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey, the SCOTS were represented by four attendees, including the Regimental Secretary. The team ensured the SCOTS plot was impeccably presented, maintaining the dignity and respect befitting the occasion.

During the visit, the Regimental Secretary met HM The Queen, who spent time speaking with representatives during her walk through the garden.



London Cenotaph Parade

The SCOTS Association once again took its place at the National Service of Remembrance in London. The contingent, led by the Association President, marched with pride, meeting old comrades on Horse Guards before stepping past the Cenotaph with heads high and boots biting the tarmac.



The Parade was a dignified, well coordinated and well attended event, reinforcing our strong and valued presence at this national act of remembrance. Afterwards, members and families gathered at The Coach House Reception Lunch for food, drinks and shared company – an opportunity to reconnect and reflect together.



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND TRUST

The Royal Regiment of Scotland Trust exists primarily to enhance the efficiency, welfare, and overall benefit of the Regiment, with a particular focus on serving soldiers, veterans, and their dependants in need of assistance. The application of trust funds continues to align with the Deed of Trust for The Royal Regiment of Scotland, and the trustees allocate the capital and income.

Welfare

The SCOTS Trust provided welfare support, directly benefitting Serving Personnel (SP), veterans, and their families. This funding was directed towards essential welfare initiatives, including contributions to the Army Benevolent Fund and Poppy Scotland, as well as the provision of wreaths for commemorative events throughout the year. Funds were strategically distributed to ensure timely and effective support for beneficiaries. By disbursing payments directly to suppliers, the Trust expedited assistance, addressing urgent needs without delay. Collaborative efforts with other charitable organisations further amplified the impact of these initiatives, enabling additional contributions and extending the reach of support to those in need.

SCOTS Association

Support to the SCOTS Association through the SCOTS Trust was also provided. This funding benefitted serving personnel, veterans, their families, and the Regiment as a whole, supporting events such as the Remembrance Sunday lunch, Association events, the Association Rally, and other requests. These gatherings play a vital role in fostering camaraderie, providing timely support, and nurturing a sense of belonging within the SCOTS Association. They offer opportunities for attendees to reconnect with old friends, forge new relationships, and honour the memory of those who have passed. Such events significantly uplift morale, strengthen personal and collective ties, and contribute to the overall well-being and unity of the Regiment. A cohesive and motivated Association is essential for future success, fostering a culture of positivity, regimental pride, and mutual support.

Battalion and Individual Grants

The professionalism and well-being of the Regiment's officers and soldiers were enhanced through regimental grants. These grants supported adventurous training, sports, and other collective activities, enabling soldiers to develop new skills in

challenging environments and excel in individual and team pursuits. Annual and Christmas grants were provided to Battalion Commanding Officers to benefit their personnel and fund Christmas lunches for soldiers. Additional grants supported the Soldier Academy, fostering a strong sense of belonging among SCOTS soldiers under training. Adventurous training and sports remain critical to enhancing the Regiment's fighting power and the health and well-being of its soldiers. Funds were allocated to support participation in activities such as skiing, sailing, ultra-marathons, cycling, golf competitions, and shooting events. These activities not only enhance operational readiness but also contribute to soldiers' physical and mental well-being during periods between deployments and exercises.

Communications

The Trust funded enhanced communications, benefitting the internal SCOTS audience through redesigned and cost-efficient SCOTS Association Newsletters and an enhanced SCOTS Journal. The journal serves as a comprehensive record of the Regiment's activities and will inform the writing of Regimental History Volume One. Both publications, available on the SCOTS website and app, ensure consistent communication and updates, supporting the regimental strategy. RHQ SCOTS also underwent a visual refresh, with updated artwork, wall vinyls, and professional imagery installed in offices and corridors to better portray the Regiment's role and enhance the experience of recruits and visitors. To further support communications objectives, the Regiment continued to employ the professional services of Grayling, a commercial marketing company. Grayling managed communications and created content for print and social media, resulting in significant media coverage across TV, print, radio, and podcasts. This boosted the Regiment's profile, identity, and standing within local communities.

Engagement

Engagement with local authorities and organisations remains a priority, supporting recruitment and assisting veterans as they reintegrate into their communities. Funds were allocated for engagement activities, which included meetings with politicians and civic leaders, participation in events and ceremonial parades, including

accepting the Freedoms of four Scottish councils, and strengthening ties with the Scottish Rugby Union, where SCOTS bands performed national anthems and soldiers engaged with our communities and promoted the Regiment. The Regimental Mascot also played a key role in engagement activities, gaining a significant social media following and enhancing the Regiment's visibility.

Fostering Identity and Belonging

To foster identity and belonging among the 200 newly recruited officers and soldiers, they were supplied with SCOTS-branded physical training clothing, regimental tartan belts, rank slides, and recognition flashes. These items instilled regimental pride, cohesion, and a lifelong sense of belonging within the SCOTS family.

Digitisation and Information Sharing

The Trust supported digitisation needs in FY 24/25, refreshing the SCOTS website and app to improve functionality, engagement, and communication. Key benefits included enhanced user experience with intuitive navigation, improved veteran support through streamlined content and dedicated resources, increased engagement via regularly updated content and integrated social media, operational efficiency through simplified content management and strengthened regimental identity through modern design. The SCOTS app has become a centralised communication platform, streamlining administration, improving accessibility, and fostering community cohesion. Its modular design ensures scalability for future needs.

Heritage

The Trust provided a grant to the Museum of The Royal Regiment of Scotland to promote regimental heritage and culture. This funding supported a successful learning programme delivered on-site at Edinburgh Castle, in communities across Scotland, and online, new resources for primary-age students to understand the Army's role in society, bespoke activities for SCOTS families during deployments and a temporary exhibition, The British Army and Ukraine, in partnership with the National Army Museum, highlighting the Regiment's involvement in Op INTERFLEX. The Museum, which receives over 500,000 visitors annually (70% from outside the UK), remains a vital public face of the Regiment, ensuring the SCOTS brand is internationally recognised.



From left to right: Sian Povey, Hilary Wight, Sharon Beck, Allison Spark, Zoe Carmichael, Capt (Retd) Scott McFadden, Lt Col (Retd) Jonathan Tink, Jodi Beard, Gillian Craik, Paul Hanlon, Maj Ian Cordiner

The year started with the departure of Barry Wylie, our SO2 Welfare Officer, who left the Civil Service to pursue a career with ScotRail. His time in RHQ was short lived but memorable for several different reasons but crucially for the excellent relationships he established with the families of our soldiers Killed in Action in Iraq and Afghanistan. This was followed in the Spring with the retirement of Brenda Ross, our lady in the North, gallantly occupying our last remaining outpost in Cameron Barracks, Inverness. Brenda has served the Regiment for eleven years and was instrumental in the effective running of RHQ (North), the tracking of all SCOTS on strength whether regular, reserve or FTRS and in ensuring all members of the Regiment received regular communications from RHQ on news and events.

The annual SCOTS Rally in March kicked off with a lively SCOTS Officers' Black Hackle Dinner Night in the New Club, Edinburgh. This was followed by our Muster, March and Remember from Edinburgh Castle, down the Royal Mile to the Canongate Kirk for a service. In November a strong contingent of SCOTS Association veterans marched at the Cenotaph led by our President, Lt Gen Sir Nick Borton KCB DSO CBE. The Association Golf Championship at Alyth remains as popular as ever and the numbers attending our annual Association Race Day at Musselburgh continue to rise.

The Regiment was honoured to receive the Freedom of Falkirk and the Freedom of Argyll & Bute, further recognition as to how

high the Regiment is held within our communities. The parades were well received by the locals and the affection shown by the crowds and the hospitality post the parades was very well received by our Jocks.

RHQ received welcomed reinforcements with Maj Ian Cordiner joining as SO2 Welfare, Sian Povey as SO2 Internal Communications and Engagement and Hilary Wight as the Assistant Curator for our museum. There was little time for them to settle in given the nature of the Regimental programme, but they picked up their remit with ease and have become worthy additions to the team.

The Regiment embarked on a new venture this year when RHQ was approached by STV Studios who wanted to scope making a documentary on life in the Regiment. After BBC Scotland commissioned the documentary work started in earnest on casting for characters (of which the Regiment has many) and identifying activities which would portray the Regiment as a modern, war fighting and highly capable unit. The documentary, "The Troops" was aired in November and the reviews and viewing figures indicated it was a success in reaching our target audience and further cementing our professional reputation and belonging in Scotland.

The end of the year saw the launch of The Royal Regiment of Scotland Heritage Appeal. The purpose of the appeal is threefold. First, to raise funds for a SCOTS

statue to be unveiled in West Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh in 2026. Second, for the redevelopment of our museum in Edinburgh Castle to be opened in 2031 and third, and most crucially for the enduring benevolence of our veterans and their dependants. The launch was held at a spectacular event in Mansion House courtesy of the Lord Mayor of the City of London. Guests enjoyed a superb dinner and were entertained by the Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and our Pipes and Drums. It was the perfect launch with a significant amount raised towards our Heritage Appeal.

Next year sees the Regiment reach its 20th anniversary since its formation on the 28th March 2006 with many events planned to celebrate the occasion. The SCOTS Rally will be the focus for our celebrations on formation day. In the summer, the Regiment will parade through Edinburgh, exercising its Freedom of the city and unveil the SCOTS statue in West Princes Street Gardens. Our 20th anniversary celebrations will end with a Beating Retreat and Cocktail Party in December in London. 2026 promises to be memorable year for the Regiment, our serving soldiers, our veterans and families.

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) J D Tink



SCOTS

www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org



2 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

In last year's journal I described the defining characteristic of that year as dispersal – individual groups spread all over the globe. This year has been the opposite. We have been lucky to spend most of our time as a coherent group with an unrelenting focus on our task as part of the Forward Land Forces (FLF) Brigade in Estonia. As ever, our soldiers did the Regiment proud from Germany to Salisbury Plain, to Estonia and then Kenya, with a few stops in between. They continue to amaze and inspire me, and I could not be prouder of them and their achievements.

The first half of the year was devoted to preparing for and then achieving validation as an FLF Battlegroup. In the first six weeks of the year, this took the form of Company training in Scotland and a tough exercise in Brecon. Through the usual appalling weather, it was a necessary return to the core purpose of a light infantry battalion. I was most heartened to see some excellent interaction between our rifle companies and our specialist platoons. As we looked towards our larger exercises later in the year, these were the crucial foundations. At the same time as the fighting troops were being drenched in the Welsh mountains, Battalion Headquarters were in icy Sennelager as they went through CAST in Germany. Our confidence and competence boosted we headed for Salisbury.

Here we would be validated from a UK perspective for our FLF task. The first few weeks saw the Battalion living in a tented camp which, despite the heroic efforts of our Quartermaster's Department, left a little to be desired in terms of the creature comforts. However, we conducted some excellent Battalion training. It was also great to see the unique bonding that takes place when soldiers live together as a captured audience.

After four weeks of Battlegroup training, we deployed for the three-week FTX. This was the first validation exercise of its type to occur for around a decade as a Brigade HQ, two of its Battlegroups, and supporting elements "went into the box" to fight Task Force Hannibal (TFH). As a result, the intensity varied from manic to sedate as

parts of the entire organisation were tested in turn. Perhaps a true reflection of war throughout history! Adding to this realism were the constant attentions of enemy armour in the guise of Challenger tanks and drones with their ubiquitous buzzing. Aided by some favourable weather and that Jock determination to get the job done, the Battalion performed excellently and achieved the goal of validating as an FLF Battlegroup.

An immediate effort then began, to recover and prepare our vehicles and heavy equipment for sea transit to Estonia in a matter of days. It was a gargantuan effort, and it is times like these when the criticality of the Battalion's enablers is made so obvious. Our HQ Company departments deployed first and recovered last from the exercise and worked tirelessly to make sure we would be in good order for our next challenge in Estonia. They deserve special mention. I am also particularly thankful for those attached arms who are so important in tying it all together. Our RAO Department, REME mechanics and armourers, medics, and logisticians are often working in understaffed departments as single points of failure. I do not underestimate the pressure they are under and how hard they work.

And so, in April we headed by plane, boat, bus, and train to Estonia for the final part of our validation pathway. The exercise was the perfect chance to rehearse our defensive role in exactly the type of terrain that we would expect to operate in if activated. We also had the unique opportunity to pit our wits against American, Swedish, and Estonian "enemy forces". Once again, the Battalion performed well, and the Brigade was validated by LANDCOM. We were also lucky enough to have the camera crews for "The Troops" documentary follow us to Estonia. Hopefully the series gave our loved ones a greater insight into what we do when we disappear for months on end!

Once again, we packed up our equipment and recovered to the UK. This marked the end of our validation pathway, and we officially assumed our FLF task in July

before departing for some well-earned leave. This was followed by our annual festival of fitness and our very important family's event on Assaye Day in September. We so rarely get to show our appreciation for our loved ones and the vital support they give us.

The last part of the year was devoted to mastering the task at hand. This meant increasing our understanding of the enemy, the mission, the environment, and some exciting new equipment that was becoming available to the Battalion. In October and November, we were presented with the chance to make great strides in three of these areas when we deployed to Kenya to act as Task Force Hannibal (TFH). To get under the skin of Russian tactics whilst experimenting with new equipment was priceless, even if the terrain and environment differed somewhat from Estonia. The Jocks enjoyed the freedom afforded to TFH and the Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) Platoon achieved several firsts for Field Army units during First Person View missions. There was also time for some excellent Adventure Training, including a trip up Mount Kenya. Meanwhile we were honoured with a visit from Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal to those remaining in Glencorse.

This brought another busy year to an end, and if we are honest, we gave very little time for people to focus on their own personal and professional development. Something we hope to rectify in 2026. Even so, there were some fantastic achievements. These ranged from achieving a Scotland Rugby League Cap, a top student on SCBC, and a fantastic Regimental Boxing night where the 2 SCOTS team was hugely successful.

So, I will finish with a heartfelt thank you to our soldiers, who even when under pressure and amid a hectic schedule continue to achieve awesome feats.

Lt Col Ollie Bridle



Lt Col Ollie Bridle



SOLDIER PROMOTIONS

Warrant Officer Class Two to Warrant Officer Class One

Haveron	Devine
---------	--------

Colour Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class Two

Bannis	McGuiness
--------	-----------

Sergeant to Colour Sergeant

Dunsmore	Grandison
Smart	

Corporal to Sergeant

Anderson	Burton
Bolatiki	Butcher
Crawford 83	Davidson 79
Devlin 79	Livingstone
Mchinnie	Murdoch 37
Wood	Weir 06

Lance Corporal to Corporal

Allan	Allison
Avella	Blake
Byrne	Cathro
Docherty	Edwards
Foley	Hornby
Limbu	Magar
Miller	Rai
Rana	Reid
Rutherford	Salacakau
Sangerman	Thapa

Private to Lance Corporal

Aale	Bates
Bete	Bolton
Boulton	Bryden
Campbell 28	Campbell 56
Campbell 84	Canakaivata
Carroll	Desouza
Eltom	Emslie
Fowler	Fraser
Gordon	Laurie
Limbu	Littlefair
McEwan 83	McEwan 80
Miller	Mitchell
Modeste	Rai
Ritchie	Robinson
Sansonna	Tawanayavulala
Shankland	Thomson
Waibuta	



EXERCISE WESSEX STORM



Jocks advancing across Salisbury Plain.

Salisbury Plain

March 2025 saw 2 SCOTS deploy to Salisbury Plain to participate in Exercise WESSEX STORM, one of the British Army's premier large-scale collective training exercises. Designed to test units against the demands of modern warfare, Ex WESSEX STORM places a particular emphasis on urban operations, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) warfare, and combat in trenches and complex wooded terrain. The exercise incorporates both live firing and blank firing tactical scenarios in order to rigorously evaluate British Army regiments and supporting arms in preparation for contemporary warfighting. Throughout the exercise, realism was a constant priority, with training serials designed to replicate the pressures, uncertainty, and tempo of conflict against a capable and adaptive enemy.

For this iteration of Ex WESSEX STORM, 2 SCOTS formed the primary training audience, alongside 1 LANCS and a range of attached arms. Together they were pitted against a familiar but formidable opponent, the Welsh Guards. Acting as a modern, foreign, thinking enemy, the Welsh Guards provided a credible and challenging opposing force that forced commanders and soldiers alike to constantly reassess their plans, adapt to evolving threats, and fight for every tactical advantage. This adversarial structure ensured that the exercise was not merely a scripted sequence of events, but a competitive and demanding test of skill, resilience, and leadership at all levels.

Preparation for Ex WESSEX STORM began well before boots hit the ground on Salisbury Plain. In the months leading up to

the deployment, 2 SCOTS undertook an extensive programme of training designed to build combat readiness and cohesion across the Battalion. This included Battalion-level live firing camps, where soldiers honed their marksmanship and weapons handling under realistic conditions, as well as Section and Platoon-level training conducted in Brecon. These serials focused on small-unit tactics, command and control, and operating effectively in difficult terrain and harsh weather conditions. Each stage of training built upon the last, ensuring that by the time the Battalion deployed south, soldiers were confident in their drills and commanders were comfortable manoeuvring their teams in complex environments.

In addition to the training burden, the logistical effort required to deploy the Battalion to Salisbury Plain was significant. A monumental manoeuvre of equipment, stores, and vehicles was conducted to ensure that 2 SCOTS arrived in good order and fully prepared to fight. This movement was a test in itself, demanding close coordination between the Battalion, the Quartermaster's department, and supporting units. Every rifle, radio, vehicle, and ration had to be accounted for, loaded, transported, and unloaded efficiently. The success of this deployment was a testament to the professionalism and experience of the logistics chain, which remains a critical but often unseen enabler of operational effectiveness.

Upon arrival, 2 SCOTS were based in East Avon Camp, a sparse location consisting primarily of a large hangar and little else in the way of permanent infrastructure. What could have been a significant challenge was

instead turned into a demonstration of ingenuity and teamwork. Through the hard work and determination of the Company Quartermaster teams and the Battalion QM's department, "Tent City" was rapidly established. Rows upon rows of tents were erected, creating a temporary home for the Battalion in the middle of Salisbury Plain. When the main body of troops arrived, some joked that they had been mistakenly sent to Glastonbury Festival rather than a military exercise. However, instead of music stages and food stalls, soldiers were greeted by the unmistakable sound of Company Sergeant Majors bellowing instructions as they worked tirelessly to get their Jocks accommodated, fed, and ready to train.

The challenges of field living soon made themselves known. The dry, dusty ground of East Avon Camp quickly transformed into a bog once the inevitable rains swept across the Plain. Mud became a constant companion, clinging to boots, webbing, and morale alike. In response, extra housekeeping measures were put in place within each tent, with ponchos rigged over bed spaces to keep kit dry and serviceable. These small but vital adaptations reflected the reality of operating in austere conditions and reinforced the importance of discipline and attention to detail. Once camp was fully established and the entire Battalion was concentrated in one location, the conditions were set for the exercise to begin.

The live firing phase of Exercise WESSEX STORM marked a significant milestone for 2 SCOTS, as it introduced new and evolving aspects of modern warfighting. One of the most notable additions was the integration of drones into the live firing ranges. For the



EXERCISE WESSEX STORM *continued*



UAS imagery.

first time, soldiers were exposed to the challenge of engaging targets suspended from flying drones over their defensive positions. This innovation reflected the changing character of warfare, where the aerial threat is no longer confined to fast jets and helicopters but includes small, agile, and often difficult-to-detect unmanned systems.

Charlie Company distinguished themselves during this phase. In a standout moment, they successfully engaged and destroyed the drone system itself using a General Purpose Machine Gun. This achievement highlighted both the adaptability of the soldiers and the effectiveness of well-rehearsed drills under pressure. It also underscored an important lesson: while drones represent a new and complex threat, disciplined soldiers with conventional weapons can still counter them when properly trained and led.

In today's rapidly evolving battlefield, drones have emerged at the forefront of combat and are increasingly transforming how wars are fought. No longer limited to reconnaissance roles, drones now conduct surveillance, targeting, strike missions, and even logistical tasks across the battlespace. The ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia has starkly demonstrated their impact, with both sides employing drones extensively to gain tactical and operational advantages. Recognising this shift, 2 SCOTS have begun incorporating greater drone usage into their training, both to exploit

their capabilities and to develop effective countermeasures. Exercise WESSEX STORM provided an ideal opportunity to roll out and test these concepts in a realistic, high-pressure environment.

The benefits of drone integration were felt across the entire Battlegroup. From FIND missions that located enemy positions, to STRIKE tasks that supported offensive action, drones proved invaluable in enhancing situational awareness and decision-making. Even the A1 echelons, responsible for logistics and resupply, made use of drones to improve force protection and maintain awareness of potential threats. This holistic integration demonstrated how emerging technology can support every aspect of combat operations, not just those at the sharp end.

Another key lesson drawn from current conflicts and incorporated into training was the evolution of trench warfare. The exercise featured a new style of trench, expertly demonstrated by the Assault Pioneers and supported by detachments from the Royal Engineers. These modern trenches differed significantly from traditional designs, incorporating more timber than the familiar "wriggly tin" and featuring a combination of turns, varying depths, and reinforced sections. The intent behind these designs was to reduce vulnerability to incoming munitions and drone observation, reflecting the realities of the modern battlefield.

While the Jocks were impressed by the

ingenuity and effectiveness of the new trench designs, enthusiasm was somewhat tempered by the considerable time and effort required to construct them. Digging on Salisbury Plain is notoriously difficult, with a chalky subsurface that resists even the most determined spade work. Nevertheless, during the defensive phase of Exercise WESSEX STORM, 2 SCOTS put theory into practice. With the assistance of mechanical diggers and a great deal of manual labour, soldiers broke through the chalk and established robust defensive positions capable of withstanding sustained enemy pressure. This phase reinforced the enduring importance of fieldcraft, endurance, and teamwork, even as technology continues to evolve.

As the exercise progressed, the cumulative effects of two weeks of intense training began to take their toll. Long days, disrupted sleep, challenging weather, and constant tactical pressure left the Battalion physically and mentally exhausted. However, this fatigue was accompanied by a deep sense of satisfaction and pride. 2 SCOTS had performed strongly against a capable and thinking enemy, demonstrating resilience, adaptability, and professionalism throughout. The exercise confirmed that the Battalion could operate effectively under pressure, in harsh environments, and against a determined opponent.

Exercise WESSEX STORM also highlighted the successful integration of new equipment and capabilities across the Battlegroup. These developments mark an exciting step forward for the Jocks, aligning them with the British Army's broader vision for modernisation. In particular, the effective use of drones reinforced the decision to establish Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) platoons across the Field Army, and confirmed that 2 SCOTS are ahead of the curve in embracing this change.

The Battalion's time on Salisbury Plain concluded on a high note with a well-earned barbecue, providing an opportunity for soldiers to relax, reflect, and celebrate their achievements. During the event, the Commanding Officer presented awards recognising hard work, dedication, and outstanding performance. Special mention was made of those soldiers who managed the notable feat of capturing the Welsh Guards' Commanding Officer during the exercise. (It was understood the Welsh Guards Command Post was fighting a collective bout of dysentery at the time, so he was probably quite pleased to spend some time in the Jocks' company.)

During the long journey back to Edinburgh, the soldiers took the opportunity to reconnect with the outside world and catch up on the news they had missed while in the field. Reports of escalating Russian attacks in Kharkiv served as a stark reminder of the importance of the training they had just completed. The events underscored the necessity of rigorous and realistic preparation for the challenges of modern conflict. With a deployment to Estonia on the horizon, the Battalion's focus would soon shift to applying the lessons learned on Salisbury Plain to their next operational task.

In summary, Exercise WESSEX STORM proved to be a demanding, realistic, and invaluable training experience for 2 SCOTS. It tested the Battalion across the full spectrum of modern warfare, from live firing and trench defence to counter-drone operations and sustained field living. Most importantly, it demonstrated that 2 SCOTS remain a capable, adaptable, and forward-thinking Battalion, ready to meet the challenges of the modern battlefield wherever they may arise.

Capt Harry Bolton



UAS launched from a building.



Reconnaissance Platoon.



EX GALLIPOLI FUSILIER

In early December, forty soldiers and officers of 2 SCOTS stood on a beach at Gallipoli, having exchanged the windburn of Scotland for the sunburn of Turkey. There, a Turkish guide with an Australian accent delivered a detailed, count-by-count analysis of the actions that had taken place on that very beach 110 years earlier. It was at this location that the Royal Dublin Fusiliers landed in rowing boats, while the Royal Navy deliberately ran the SS Clyde aground on a sandbank offshore, enabling men of the Royal Munster Fusiliers and the Hampshire Regiment to assault directly onto the beach. Contemporary accounts describe blood-stained water and sand as 300 men of the 700-strong landing force were cut down during the assault. The scene served as a stark reminder of the brutality of the First World War and the realities of large-scale, industrialised, peer-on-peer conflict.

2 SCOTS travelled to Turkey to conduct this battlefield study with a clear purpose. In the context of the current global security environment and the British Army's renewed focus on conventional warfare, a study centred on the First World War offered valuable operational and tactical lessons. More specifically, 2 SCOTS currently hold a readiness commitment as

NATO's Forward Land Force, committed to deploying to Eastern Europe against Russian aggression. This meant that the soldiers and officers of 2 SCOTS felt a particular professional affinity with the British force deployed to Gallipoli in 1915.

Captain Finn Holland invested a significant amount of time and effort into planning and delivering the study and deserves considerable credit for organising an exceptionally effective and professionally executed programme. The study involved visits to numerous landing beaches across the Gallipoli Peninsula, where the practical realities and challenges of amphibious operations were examined in detail. The group also visited most major battle sites, with highlights including walking the length of Gully Ravine and exploring the well-preserved trenches at Johnson's Jolly.

Johnson's Jolly proved particularly striking, especially given the re-emergence of trench warfare in Eastern Ukraine. In places, the ANZAC and Ottoman trenches were separated by less than 20 metres. The combination of physical terrain and eyewitness accounts brought to life what is now a quiet and reflective location. Accounts of the lived experience in the trenches were especially thought provoking

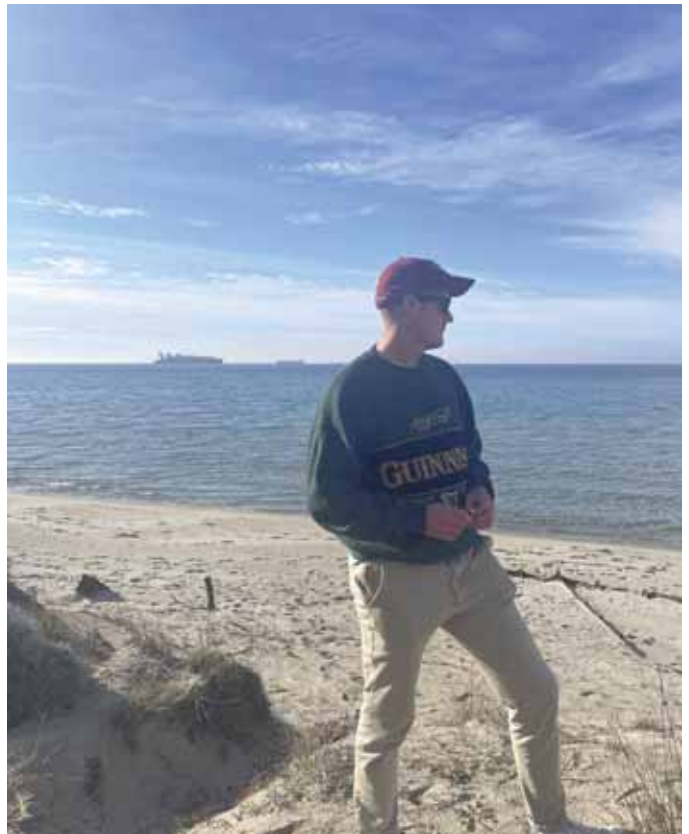
and it was clear that it struck a real chord with everyone from the Jocks to the Commanding Officer. The study reinforced the realities of large-scale warfare, during which over 58,000 Allied soldiers were killed in under a year. A central lesson was the impact of insufficient initiative at all levels of command, which significantly contributed to the failure of the campaign.

Although the Gallipoli Campaign formed the primary focus of the visit, travel plans enabled the group to explore Istanbul for a full day before departure. A guided tour provided insight into the city's rich history, with highlights including the Basilica Cistern, Hagia Sophia, and the Blue Mosque. There was also time to visit the Grand Bazaar and palaces at Topkapi. The visit concluded with a traditional Turkish Testi Kebab, served in sealed clay pots and ceremonially opened at the table. With the Jocks well fed on their favourite kebabs, valuable conceptual parallels drawn with 2 SCOTS role today, and Christmas silly week beckoning back at Glencorse, it was time to go home.

Lt Andrew Sands



TJ, our tour guide, in full flow at the Achi Baba Heights



CSM Galloway on Cape Helles



EXERCISE HEDGEHOG - ESTONIA



2 SCOTS at the end of Ex HEDGEHOG (Given the proximity to the Russian border, very few photos were taken).

In May, 2 SCOTS deployed to Estonia for Exercise HEDGEHOG, known locally as Siil. This is Estonia's largest military exercise and one of NATO's most significant training events in the Baltic region, designed to test mobilisation, reinforce deterrence, and coordinate multinational forces on the Alliance's eastern flank. In 2025, it brought together more than 16,000 personnel from 12 countries, including regular troops, reservists, volunteers, and NATO partners, in a vast rehearsal of the collective defence Estonia would rely on in the event of a crisis. For 2 SCOTS, it provided a month of demanding field training, exposure to new equipment, and an opportunity to demonstrate the Battalion's high readiness and professionalism in an unfamiliar environment only 35 miles from the Russian border.

The journey into Estonia was intended to highlight the Army's ability to rapidly move a battalion-sized force (in tandem with several other battlegroups) across Europe at short notice. In practice, it became a memorable gauntlet of transport methods that ranged from the mundane to the downright historic. While a few fortunate individuals enjoyed civilian flights from Edinburgh Airport, the majority of the Battalion travelled by road or rail. Those in the coach convoys spent long hours rolling across the heart of Europe, encountering

every possible interpretation of motorway services along the way. Others boarded a sequence of trains that seemed to age dramatically with every border crossed. By the time the final Soviet-era carriages rattled into Estonia, complete with yellowed 1970s maps and windows that opened wide enough to climb out of, the whole journey felt like a living museum exhibit.

Those escorting the vehicle fleet across the North Sea endured ferry crossings that tested even the hardest stomachs, while the airborne party experienced the RAF's unique approach to passenger service. Yet regardless of the method of travel, morale remained strong. With the war in Ukraine still ongoing, soldiers recognised the relevance of deploying to the Baltic region. There was a genuine sense of purpose at the prospect of training in conditions that mirrored those faced by a neighbouring nation still locked in conflict with Russia, and of contributing to a multinational exercise many times larger than anything conducted at home.

Upon arrival in Estonia, however, the initial excitement dimmed slightly when the Battalion reached Reedo Camp, its home for the duration. The accommodation could best be described as functional in the strictest and most minimal sense. Heating was not so much present as implied, and

the infrastructure made clear that this was no holiday. Yet, in typical 2 SCOTS fashion, humour was found in everything. The shared hardship only added to the camaraderie, and before long the Jocks had fully embraced the spartan nature of their temporary home.

Before the main exercise began, several days of preparation were spent becoming familiar with a new communications system replacing Bowman. For many, the initial reaction was scepticism. Bowman's reputation meant expectations were low, and few believed a replacement would offer meaningful improvement. Surprisingly, the new system proved a major leap forward. It offered far greater reliability, enhanced mobility, and dramatically improved situational awareness thanks to a real-time digital interface showing the live location of friendly elements. It quickly became clear why 2 SCOTS had been selected as a trial unit: the system represented the most significant technological improvement to frontline communications in decades. Once soldiers had gained confidence with the equipment and completed refresher training on trench fighting, the Battalion was ready to begin the exercise.

The field phase took place in Estonia's dense forests, a challenging environment that demanded disciplined movement and



EXERCISE HEDGEHOG *continued*

careful concealment. The Battalion's mission centred on constructing and defending trench systems mirroring those used by Ukrainian forces to slow Russian advances. These positions required days of labour to dig into deeply uncooperative soil, build overhead protection, and establish interlocking fire positions. Fortunately, the Jocks were assisted by two Estonian contractors whose mastery of the JCB bordered on artistic. Under their guidance, the Battalion created fortified positions of such immaculate quality that they were ultimately able to not only repel just about everything the enemy threw at us, but to do so in relative comfort.

The opposing forces were drawn from a range of NATO allies, including Estonian regulars, Swedish troops, Latvian elements, and supporting units equipped with armour, drones, and electronic warfare capabilities. The scenario was built around the realities of modern combat. Drones were omnipresent, forcing constant discipline in concealment and movement. Electronic interference added a further layer of complexity. Attacks came with a level of coordination and persistence that kept the defenders alert at all times. This realism made the training exceptionally valuable, providing soldiers with first-hand experience of the types of battlefield

threats increasingly common in contemporary conflicts.

Despite pre-deployment promises that Estonia in spring would offer mild weather, perhaps even warmth, the climate made its presence known almost immediately. Rain fell with remarkable consistency, soaking trenches, kit, and spirits alike. When the rain paused, snow occasionally drifted in, a helpful reminder to everyone just how far north they were.

Interactions with other NATO forces were limited due to the scale of the exercise, but there was still plenty to observe. The Swedes made a strong impression – highly professional, aggressive in attack, and extremely well-drilled. The Estonian officer cadets, by contrast, displayed enthusiasm but had limited battlefield impact. Reports came in that American units elsewhere on the exercise were struggling with threats posed by the French, who took great delight in electronically smashing their Bradleys to pieces. Though humorous from a distance, these differences between allied doctrines and capabilities reinforced the importance of regular multinational training.

Throughout the exercise, the Jocks performed to their usual high standard. Despite working with new equipment, operating in unfamiliar terrain, and

enduring near-constant bad weather, 2 SCOTS demonstrated adaptability, discipline, and professionalism at every stage. Their defensive positions held firm, their communications were effective, and their integration with NATO partners was seamless. The experience highlighted both the Battalion's readiness and the crucial role it plays within the wider context of NATO's deterrence posture in the Baltic region.

Exercise HEDGEHOG was far more than a routine training deployment. It was a large-scale demonstration of NATO's commitment to defending Estonia and the wider Alliance. For 2 SCOTS, it marked an important milestone in what is likely to be an enduring focus on the Baltic states in the coming years. The lessons learned from this first deployment will inform future iterations, refine procedures, and further enhance the Battalion's capability to operate in the region. What remains absolutely clear is that regardless of conditions, challenges, or unfamiliar terrain, the standard of soldiering within 2 SCOTS is consistently exceptional.

Capt Finn Macpherson



EXERCISE HARAKA STORM - KENYA



The Platoon Commanders of Charlie Company contemplate the view.



A 2 SCOTS soldier counter attacks the airfield.

From September to November 2 SCOTS returned to the visceral heat, physical beauty, and environmental brutality of the Kenyan training areas to provide an enemy force during 1Bn Welsh Guards' (1WG) validation exercise, Ex HARAKA STORM. Previously biennial visitors, 2 SCOTS had endured a Kenyan hiatus since 2019 and subsequently many of the Jocks and JNCOs were heading for their first experience of Africa. Indeed, in the novel role of a Russian doctrine-following Task Force Hannibal (TFH) rather than that of the primary training audience under validation, the entire Bn was excited at a new opportunity.

Somewhat paradoxically, Ex HARAKA STORM was the Bn's first major exercise following 2 SCOTS' assumption of readiness as NATO's Forward Land Force (FLF). This is the UK's commitment to deploy soldiers in defence of Estonia as part of a wider deterrence of Russian aggression in the Baltic states. The dissonance between Baltic ice and Kenyan fire was a natural initial conclusion; however, the absolute imperative for excellent basic soldiering professionalism is common to all austere environments. Similarly, the expeditionary nature of a Kenya deployment, the cultural interplay with a host nation, and the extended lines of communication back to home base were excellent parallels between the exercise at hand and our NATO commitment.

The Enemy

Credible and exciting training demands a credible and exciting opposition, and in 1WG, 2 SCOTS found exactly that. A brother Bn from across 4X, 1WG provided the TFH enemy role to support 2 SCOTS' validation on Ex WESSEX STORM earlier in 2025 so Ex HARAKA STORM found the Battalions in reversed roles and with our Jocks keen to settle some scores. In overview, 2 SCOTS

deployed 200 soldiers, comprising of a BHQ, two small Rifle Coys, and a small reconnaissance screen, which faced off against the full 700 soldiers of the 1WG Battlegroup. In capability terms, 1WG were peers as kindred pioneers of the new Dismounted Data System (DDS) equipment, a truly revolutionary leap in communication and C2 capabilities for light forces. Where 2 SCOTS had a wider distribution of battle winning DDS equipment down to LCpl level, 1 WG had a superior stand-off ability through their seemingly incessant drones which generated a swift and lethal recce-strike complex. Finally, in a comparison of experience, 1WG were still relatively inexperienced in the ways of Kenya fighting compared with the hard-earned, polymathic Kenya wisdom of 2 SCOTS' SNCOs and Staff Captains upwards. Scene set, 1WG's peer capabilities and superior mass made for exactly the sort of underdog duel and training opportunity that canny 2 SCOTS relish.

The exercise was delivered by British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) with backfill from individual augmentee observer mentors and host of industry contractors to support the synthetic training wrap and test new equipment. As TFH, 2 SCOTS were under the notional command of BATUK who played our Brigade and directed us to plan and fight in a Russian style and within the constraints imposed by BATUK. In the context of our FLF readiness role, this was an excellent opportunity to play our enemy and look at British troops through their perspective.

The Exercise

The 2 SCOTS Main Body packets arrived at their final destination of Nyati Barracks in Nanyuki after an extended route out that included an overnight coach trip south from Glencorse, deployment through RAF

Brize Norton, an overnight stay in Kifaru Barracks in Nairobi and, then a long bus tour north on the Kenyan motorway. In contrast to this 48-hour test, individual movers or latecomers enjoyed a Edinburgh-Nairobi civilian flight, compressing their travel window to a more manageable 18 hours. Nyati Barracks had developed significantly since the Bn last saw it in 2019; however, the exercising troops area of camp was a ghost town because 1WG had already deployed into the field before our arrival. Regardless, once arrived each soldier was welcomed with a good meal and orientation brief delivered by the hard-working advance party under the command of Capt McNally and Capt O'Neill which transitioned the travellers' focus to the next task: acclimatisation.

The 2 SCOTS acclimatisation pathway was eight days of prescribed walks in increasing states of dress and bearing increasing amounts of weight around the perimeter of Nyati Barracks. This critical but repetitive programme was excellently delivered by LCpl Foot to the entire Bn of 200+ as well as several attached arms and miscellaneous Bde staff. In doing so, LCpl Foot walked c. 240kms and showed the best of our junior commanders in terms of dedication and professionalism. The result of this acclimatisation pathway was a fighting force prepared to exert themselves at high intensity in the new climate. In the margins of acclimatisation, the Bn prepared to deploy into the field through training areas recesses and low-level training, including urban drills in the impressive new training village within Nyati Barracks.

After two weeks acclimatising, the Bn deployed into the field on Lolldaiga Training Area. Soldiers new to Kenya were apparent by the expression of awe etched on to their



EXERCISE HARAKA STORM - KENYA *continued*

faces as they saw the native fauna from the TCVs. The Bn established a 2 up, BHQ back defensive formation in the eastern edge of the training area and waited for orders from Brigade. During this lull, the soldiers bedded into the reality of living in the bush: the razor-sharp blinding bushes; the alternating heat and torrential rain; the growing complacency at seeing incredible animals each day; and the primordial fear induced in those on stag whilst being observed back by wild reflective eyes. When Brigade orders arrived, A Company were selected for the first action, a deliberate airfield defence in the north. For two days A Coy prepared positions, rehearsed counter attacks, and fought an increasingly intense covering skirmish against 1WG recce. This recce battle was an indicator of the commitment and aggression of both sides and saw multiple strikes and raids on dismounts and vehicles. Prisoners of War (POWs) were taken and Cpl Cathro had to use a mini flare to protect his Observation Post (OP) from an elephant which was presenting a real-life threat. The point of greatest tension in the action was when enemy recce had broken through to gain eyes on the airfield, setting conditions for the main assault. Adopting absolute battle discipline, A Coy achieved complete concealment in the bottom of their trenches with zero resupply. Fortunately, just at point of climax, both the exercise scenario and A Coy's best laid plans of deception were shattered when a cavalcade of exercise staff, contractors, and visitors simultaneously arrived on OC A Coy's trench to ask whether the battle had started! Order resumed, A Coy duly identified a BG FUP and forced a reset by decimating the entirety of the 1WG BG in an FUP. Ultimately 1WG relaunched on to the objective and prevailed through a bloody 12-hour battle where they were delayed and degraded by the excellent planning and drills of A Coy.

Despite withdrawing, 2 SCOTS continued to probe the enemy with Platoon level raids delivered by A, C, and ISR companies over a 72-hour period. These were an excellent opportunity for junior commanders to show initiative, as evidenced by the number of POWs taken and the use of respirators for CBRN deception. This pressure on 1WG fixed them whilst 2 SCOTS BHQ planned the next action: a BG counterattack. 2 SCOTS BHQ opted for a plan that prioritised intensity over mass, with A and C Coy twice rotating through 12-hour attack windows in order to keep 1WG in constant contact with a Coy-sized enemy for 48 hours. BHQ analysis assessed a feature directly south of the airfield to be vital ground, designated

Obj GOLD which became the primary objective for the Rifle Coys. What followed was a torrid 48 hours for both the attackers and defenders with repeated expeditions to fight to the summit, only to be thrown off by counter attacks or the arrival of the next Rifle Company. The jagged crevasses of the feature were formidable in the dark leading to some difficult real life casualty evacuations, but the Jocks did not flicker and kept pushing until 1WG lost the hill and C Coy could launch on to the airfield. As directed by BATUK, this 48-hour period culminated in a notional CBRN attack with the bloodied but unbowed Jocks fighting to the end over punishing terrain with respirators on.

After a 1WG raid on to a tenacious C Coy PI in defence, 2 SCOTS had the opportunity for a 36-hour rehabilitation period whilst the exercise flicked to a different area. Through an incredible G4 effort, the 2 SCOTS enablers were able to recover A, C, and ISR Coy back to Nyati Barracks for meals, laundry, and showers. BHQ nobly elected to spend their rehab in the field where they were treated to a laundry service and BBQ-in-the-bush. Refreshed and recovered, 2 SCOTS launched against the beleaguered 1WG during their traverse from the airfield to the central corridor of the training area. C Coy Pls, augmented with excellent recce, sniper, drones, and machine gun capabilities, fought three isolated delay actions as 1WG crossed the obstacles and the Dragon's Back ridgeline. The integration between 2 SCOTS Rifle Platoons and the battle-winning capabilities of the Screen was cemented in this hard fighting. Following BATUK direction, the final C Coy Platoon surrendered with their bergens in order to test 1WG CPERs chain. Some ingenuity enabled Sgt Craig to share all of the locations of 1WG Coy HQs, BHQ, and A1 as he echeloned back as a PoW. These were subsequently targeted by 2 SCOTS and Bde fires to the detriment and frustration of 1WG plans. However, 1WG had their revenge in the next action when 2 SCOTS were directed to repeatedly launch attacks on an exposed attack bearing against 1WG Main Defensive Area (MDA). This scenario sought to replicate the poorly planned Russian wave attacks of Eastern Ukraine and test 1WG's capacity to endure, sustain, and resupply against an attack who is content to take extremely high casualties. 2 SCOTS dutifully attacked uphill for 48 hours and were dutifully slaughtered in waves.

The final tactical phase of the scenario had 1WG batter their way south down the central corridor against a series of defensive positions. Firstly, a deliberate defence of Crossing Point ALICE saw C Coy

augmented by the ISR screen, machine guns, and even a disruption group made up of Staff Captains from BHQ. This force packet of c.100 soldiers degraded 1WG BG to 30% effectiveness through a series of spoiling attacks and extensive use of fires. Cpl Avella, C Coy MFC, deserves a notable mention for accounting for the majority of 1WG casualties. Following this action, 2 SCOTS consolidated and established a final stand at a BG Main Defensive Area (MDA) in the South of the training area. Alas, the best laid plans of BHQ were unravelled in the awesome, climactic fires assigned to 1WG which degraded 2 SCOTS effectiveness to c.15% before first ground contact the kinetic actions concluded with a highly successful 2 SCOTS counter attack notable for an incredibly high risk vehicle 'thunder run' which caught 1WG by surprise and broke in to their trenches. In a final test of the 1WG resupply chain, the entirety of 2 SCOTS BG surrendered to 1WG in waves. OCs marched their Companies under the dirge of the bagpipes and awkwardly tendered their submission. 12 hours later, the SCOTS POWs experienced the bliss of liberation and ENDEX.



2 SCOTS soldier enjoys four days of kayaking on the river Tana.

Amidst post exercise recovery, 2 SCOTS exploited every opportunity to pursue adventure training (AT), community engagement, and small team socials. Highlights for the lucky few were a successful summiting of Mount Kenya and charity work to lay new paths at a special school for children confined to wheelchairs.

2 SCOTS happily returned to this excellent training venue in support of a professional and proud BG's validation 1WG. Our TFH role materially improved our ability to use the battle winning experimental kit of DDS and appreciate our enemy's perspective. We achieved our role, enhanced our reputation, and retained our hard fighting Jocks.

Maj Mat Rupasinha



BATTALION HEADQUARTERS

Battalion Second in Command
Major Hamish Waring

Adjutant
Captain James McWilliams
Captain Lachlan Broad

Operations Officer
Captain Luke Allwood

Operations Warrant Officer
Warrant Officer Class Two John Haverson
Warrant Officer Class Two Michael Donnell

Regimental Signals Officer
Captain Christopher Smyth
Captain Tom Oakes

Intelligence Officer
Captain Finbarr Holland

Assistance Intelligence Officer
Colour Sergeant Robert Ellis

Training Officer
Captain Tom Purslow
Captain Hayden Thompson

2025 was a year of two halves for BHQ. The first half was manically busy, and the second half was frantically busy. We kicked the year off in style in Germany, completing CAST in sub-zero temperatures as we schemed about how we would defeat the troublesome Donovians. Capt Chris Smyth did a marvellous job of establishing and collapsing Command Posts at a rapid rate as we all gave him advice on how to do his



OC Fire Support Coy and the Staff Captains.

job and manage rebros. From Germany, we took ourselves straight down to Ex WESSEX STORM and proceeded to live in an environment that resembled the Arctic. CSgt Bob Ellis discovered a key part of his role was ensuring that the Officers' administration did not explode too far beyond their bedspace, and he was hard pressed to keep them in line. A great time was had hiding from drones on Ex WESSEX STORM, and Capt Luke Allwood kept CO's Tac constantly on the move. Halfway through the exercise he decided to take a different approach, and started hunting the drones with rage and fury that would have made Leonidas proud. Ex WESSEX STORM wrapped up in style, and we felt we deserved a well-earned break after four months on the Plain. Luckily, the Field Army felt the same way, and thought we could do with some time away in Estonia to reset.

And so we packed ourselves off to Estonia for six weeks to do it all again. The more adventurous volunteered for the trainborne approach, and under the command of the Supreme Train Commander Maj Shepherd the adventure began. Four days on various trains through Europe was like inter-railing with a Soviet twist, as the age of the trains regressed as we headed further East. In Estonia much excellent work was done. The Regiment was filming the "The Troops", and

most of BHQ spent every hour of the day hiding from cameras and worrying that they would be overheard saying something outrageous that would be recorded forever. Some of us took the opposite approach, and spent the entirety hunting out the camera team. Luckily, we got through unscathed, apart from Maj Shepherd declaring on national TV "Army hot chocolate is better than anything Harrods has to offer". After a wonderful time in Estonia, it was time to return to the UK, where much conviviality was had back in our beloved Glencorse Barracks. Summer was kind to us, and we returned to work full of enthusiasm and vigour. The second half of the year saw us deploy to Kenya to be enemy for the Welsh Guards. With cunning plans and a bit of imagination, we produced plans that infuriated the Guards. The Staff Captains were set loose at one point and through sheer blind luck rather than skill managed to find the full Welsh Guards BG and delayed them by three hours 4km in front of the FLOT. Kenya culminated in a Thunder Run that Field Marshall Rommell could have learnt a thing or two from, and we returned to the UK feeling it had been an excellent job well done. A successful year of conducting the Bn for BHQ, with much joy, laughter and many a tale to tell for the deskbound part of the Bn.



Setting up Main HQ inside a disused Soviet ICBM bunker.



Men at work inside Main HQ.



A COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major C Wilkinson

Company Second in Command:

Captain F Macpherson

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two M Donnell

Warrant Officer Class Two D Bannis

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant M Carroll

Colour Sergeant D Boag

1 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant H Bever

Lieutenant S Pruszewicz

1 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant S Boyle

Sergeant A Devlin

2 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant S Steven

Second Lieutenant S Setling

2 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant C Prime

3 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant J McKell

Second Lieutenant M Sandiford

3 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant M Anderson

What a year! From a soldiering perspective, things don't get much better than 2025. Preparing for our Forward Land Forces (FLF) readiness commitment in Estonia has been our enduring focus, and the Company has responded exactly as you would expect of the Jocks: with quiet graft, good humour and remarkable ingenuity. The first half of the year built relentlessly towards this, through a battle group validation exercise on Salisbury Plain and a NATO validation exercise in Estonia, before a 'bonus' exercise in Kenya in the second half of the year, playing enemy forces and continuing our warfare development journey. The result has been a genuine reinvigoration of our conventional warfighting capability, particularly our mastery of defence and small team actions in complex, forested environments. We are unequivocally ready to deploy to Estonia to deter and respond to Russian aggression if necessary.

The year began with a protected period that gave us the space to rebuild our conventional warfighting skills following understandable skill fade after preparation for, and deployment on, Op SHADER in 2024. Starting with the fundamentals of low-level fieldcraft and developing robustness that only Brecon in January can offer, we progressed quickly through section, platoon and company-level actions in preparation for our validation.

Exercise WESSEX STORM (February–March) provided our initial validation, beginning with an extremely well-resourced company live firing exercise at a scale rarely seen. Defence was the clear focus of the live firing exercise and the final battle group exercise: digging trenches, laying obstacles, and thorough planning for reinforcement and withdrawal – which proved to set us up

well for our Exercise HEDGEHOG. A new communications suite was introduced on Exercise WESSEX STORM, offering huge leaps forward in situational awareness, planning and execution, and it has begun to transform the way we exercise command and control. Alongside that, the persistent threat from enemy surveillance and strike drones was played out effectively across the exercise. This forced us to develop procedures to conceal ourselves from an aerial threat and devise 'actions on' to react rapidly to drone sightings.

Deployment to Estonia on Exercise HEDGEHOG (May) was the final exercise on our validation pathway ahead of assuming FLF readiness. Exercising in-country compelled us to think harder about how we would occupy ground and sharpened our appreciation of the terrain we may be asked to operate in. We were impressed by the realism, speed and aggression of our NATO allies who played enemy; as a result, we learned important lessons about what it actually feels like to be assaulted by armoured units through forested terrain and over obstacles we had deemed to be impassable. Many of the actions were conducted at platoon and section level due to the dispersed nature of the Company's defensive position. Our junior leaders excelled, and the ingenuity of the Jocks when faced with sub-tactical dilemmas was exceptional. Much of the exercise was documented in the STV Studio's documentary 'The Troops', where A Company's LCpl Biggart and Fus McMillan assumed leading roles and represented the Battalion superbly.

Our enemy task on Ex HARAKA STORM in Kenya provided a welcome stint in warmer climes. The heat, altitude, terrain and



WO2 Donnell delivers the Company CSS paragraph in deployment orders at Avon Camp on Salisbury Plain Training Area.



The Jocks conduct trench clearance rehearsals ahead of the final exercise in Estonia.

tempo of the exercise refined our conventional soldiering skills further but, most importantly, gave us an intimate grasp of Russian doctrine and tactics. The exercise also afforded the opportunity to continue our warfare development with experimentation on new equipment and tactics. The new communications capability was expanded further, and we put it through its paces at increased ranges. In addition, surveillance drones were distributed to company level, encouraging us to develop and refine their tactical employment in offensive and defensive actions. Some unique Adventure Training opportunities and an excellent Company day-out at Fairmont Mount Kenya Safari Club were fitting ends to an arduous exercise.

A year of this intensity only happens with first-rate enablers, and we are immensely grateful for the hard work of our G4 team: CSgt Carroll, Cpl Lyon and LCpl Jennison. First in and last out, they have shouldered the brunt of a busy year where we jumped from one exercise to the next in quick succession.

There has been significant churn in 2025. Our CSM changed in the summer when we welcomed WO2 Bannis, while WO2 Donnell moved over to the Operations Warrant Officer role in BHQ. Also, we welcomed CSgt Boag back to A Coy and bid farewell to CSgt Carroll, who began his new role as an instructor at the Infantry Battle School. Lieutenants Bever, Steven and McKell made way for Pruszewicz, Setling and Sandiford

to assume command of 1 Platoon, 2 Platoon and 3 Platoon respectively. Sgts Prime and Anderson now enter their second year in role, providing important continuity, while Sgt Boyle made way for Sgt Devlin as 1 Platoon Sergeant.

There have been notable individual achievements this year too. Congratulations must be offered to LCpls Fowler, Eltom, Littlefair and Thomson for their completion of PNCO cadres and subsequent promotion to LCpl, with a special mention to LCpl Littlefair, who was awarded top student on his cadre. Congratulations also to LCpl Kersey, who has successfully completed his Section Commanders Battle Course – no mean feat during an extremely cold snap in Brecon. We also took great delight in cheering LCpl Thomson to victory in his bout at the Regimental Boxing Night in December, a superb high note on which to end a remarkable year.

As we look to 2026, we will capitalise on our high baseline and work to optimise for our FLF commitment in Estonia. Our priorities are clear: to sharpen our ability to fight and survive in a war, deepening our mastery of defence and continuing to invest in our exceptional junior leaders. If 2025 was about rebuilding and validating, 2026 will be about refinement – turning hard-won competence into consistent excellence.

I am immensely proud of what A Company has achieved this year, grateful for the effort and dedication of all ranks throughout and forever indebted to the continued support and sacrifice made by families and loved ones.



A Company show off their team flags at the end of Exercise HARAKA STORM in Kenya.



ISR COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major J E Donkin

Major M C Rupasinha

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two P Grant

Warrant Officer Class Two G M McGuinness

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant G Brown

Colour Sergeant K Swindle

Reconnaissance Platoon Commander:

Captain J Gillespie

Reconnaissance Platoon Second in Command:

Colour Sergeant G M McGuinness

Colour Sergeant R McClelland

Anti-Tank Platoon Commander:

Captain N McCrae

Anti-Tank Platoon Second in Command:

Colour Sergeant C Simon

Colour Sergeant A Dunsmore

Sniper Platoon Commander:

Colour Sergeant J Coxon

Colour Sergeant G Smart

Sniper Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant G Smart

Sergeant S Boyle

Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant H Bolton

Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems Platoon Sergeant:

Sgt C J Davidson



ISR Company on Ex HEDGEHOG.

ISR Company have come to the end of a very successful year. We successfully delivered our core roles of FIND and STRIKE on several major exercises in the UK and abroad. This year has also seen the first year that we have had our Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) Platoon. We said farewell to Major Donkin and CSM Grant in summer as they moved onto diverse pastures new. We welcomed Major Rupasinha as the new Company Commander and were pleased to see WO2 McGuinness move from the Reconnaissance Platoon to Company Sergeant Major.

In early January we deployed as a company to Brecon on Ex WESSEX CYCLONE, this was an excellent opportunity for the platoons to return to their tactical roles following Op SHADER 18 in 2024. This was followed by a period of Company integration with rehearsals of how we intended to operate as a consolidated screen.

The Company then deployed to Salisbury Plain to the luxurious tented Avon Camp for Ex WESSEX STORM. ISR immediately set to work to support Battalion validation. Recce Platoon took part in training in Corsham Mines to rehearse their OBUA and close contact engagements. Anti-Tank Platoon tested the ranges of the Tactical Effects System and rehearsed maintaining thermal camouflage in the Anti-Armour Battle. Snipers tested quad bike insertions to the limit whilst the RPAS Platoon set to work understanding how best to employ vehicles to support their drone flights. Ex WESSEX STORM saw the introduction of DDS ATAK to the company, this new technology has revolutionised how we operate as a screen

allowing situational awareness at all levels like never before.

Following Ex WESSEX STORM the Company deployed to Estonia for Exercise HEDGEHOG. This involved an extensive land move by train from London St Pancras. The train journey proved to be a highlight for many of the soldiers given the novel nature of arriving in theatre. The conduct of the company was highlighted on the BBC series 'The Troops' in which Sgt Crawford's exploits provided great entertainment for all involved. The Company trialled the employment of multi-disciplinary Skirmish Sections. This integrated the Recce, Snipers and Anti-Tank Soldiers to layer their effects and deliver disruption forward of the battalion main defensive areas. The soldiers took great pleasure in showing off their individual skill sets to their peers whilst targeting 'enemy forces' from Sweden, Latvia, Estonia and France. Trialling a new concept delivered interesting outcomes with small teams of determined soldiers going out of their way to ruin the best laid plans of the assembled Baltic militaries. The SNCOs and Platoon Commanders of all the platoons led a valiant quad borne reinforcement of the C Company trenches in the modern equivalent of a cavalry charge.

On return from Estonia the Company enjoyed some well needed time in camp. All platoons supported a 'Look at Life' Week for rifle company soldiers to understand the roles of each platoon. This served as a useful opportunity to bring some new faces into the company. The Anti-Tank Platoon qualified thirty soldiers from the wider Battalion in the use of the Javelin to upskill



soldiers in Anti-Armour Warfare.

After a well-earned summer leave period, the Company's efforts switched towards Exercise HAKA STORM in Kenya. Here we delivered enemy for the Welsh Guards Battlegroup as Taskforce Hannibal. In this role ISR Company went out of our way to ensure that the Welsh Guards had the most challenging ISTAR battle possible. This was a fantastic opportunity for the company as many of our soldiers had never been to Kenya, and was in fact Fus Law's first trip abroad. The Company gave the Welsh Guards a difficult time throughout the exercise, highlights including the complete destruction of the Welsh Guards Recce Platoon and the capture of their radios. This led to Cpl Cathro delivering some light musical entertainment over the radio to the wider Welsh Guards BG.

Kenya provided additional opportunities for

ISR to conduct experimentation. The RPAS Platoon continued to pioneer the use of drones. Defence contractors 'Helsing' and 'Stark' deployed to Kenya to demonstrate and trial their latest systems including Artificial Intelligence supported One Way Effector Drones to strike targets on Laikipia Training Area.

On the ground the Anti-Tank Platoon worked with ARX Systems to trial their Gereon Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGVs) to support the screen. Here they trialled a surveillance UGV and logistics UGV. The platoon successfully remotely drove the surveillance UGV 10km into an observation position to support the battlegroup efforts against the Welsh Guards. It was refreshing for the troops to understand where the state of the art of equipment lay.

Whilst the majority of the Company were deployed to Kenya, we had various

individuals attending and supporting courses around the world. LCpl Raivou from the Sniper Platoon achieved Top Student on the Sniper Operators' Course, an outstanding achievement on a demanding cadre where only 6 of 34 candidates successfully passed. Further success was seen from Sgt Crawford achieving a distinction, and an Instructor Recommendation, on the Jungle Warfare Instructors Course in Brunei. The highest award of the year was won by Sgt Davidson for his actions during a drone attack on OP SHADER 18. For this he was awarded the Kings Commendation for Valuable Service.

The troops have had a successful year working towards and delivering ISR excellence. They have earned their Christmas leave period with another busy training year ahead.



Overlooking the mists of Kenya.



C COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major S Wright

Major R Hill

Company Second in Command:

Captain T Oakes

Captain S Steven

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two WCS Galloway

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant R Cook

7 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant A Brophy

7 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant K Stevenson

8 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant D Light

8 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant A Craig

9 Platoon Commander:

Lieutenant A Sands

9 Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant S Santosh

The British Army's returning focus to a Cold War-style warfighting mission, defending eastern Europe within NATO and against Russia, has been heralded since 2022.

However, 2025 was the year that the Clansmen of Charlie Company 2 SCOTS first truly lived that transition. Through the first ice of January Brecon shell scrapes, to the chilling rain of Ex WESSEX STORM's Salisbury Plain, to the Baltic bite of Ex HEDGEHOG's Estonian forests, the cool night breezes of Kenya's Lollaiga mountains, and finally finishing with a frosty boxing night back in Edinburgh, the Jocks of Charlie Company metamorphosed in to new cold warriors.

The journey began at that crucible of heroes: Brecon in January. The Jocks' low level individual drills were refreshed by both the challenges of the environment and the excellent training package designed by the Company Second-in-Command, Captain Tom Oakes. In time honoured fashion this progressively built the training from individual to small team and eventually Platoon tactical actions. However, this routine pathway was made dynamic and relevant through the integration of drones and the Bn's experimental C2 equipment, the groundbreaking Dismounted Data

System (DDS). This DDS allowed every Jock to get a live feed of the rest of the Company in a Google Earth-style display through a ruggedised mobile phone that attached to their body armour. The Jocks showed a genuine passion for innovation and ownership of this new equipment reflects their understanding of DDS' battle winning capability. Through this fusion of the timeless and the nascent, Charlie Company were swiftly validated by BHQ to progress on to a Bn validation phase on Ex WESSEX STORM in Salisbury Plain.

On Ex WESSEX STORM, Charlie Company faced the intense violence of a contemporary exercise scenario, effectively planned by the Collective Training Group (CTG), and with enemy delivered by an enthusiastic 1st Bn Welsh Guards. Embraced as realistic and meaningful training, Ex WESSEX STORM was only the first of three major exercises that the Charlie Company Jocks would complete in 2025. After a brief Easter leave to rehabilitate equipment, recover sore bodies, and consolidate lessons, Charlie Company deployed to Estonia on Ex HEDGEHOG, a mission rehearsal exercise in preparation for assumption of a NATO readiness commitment in summer. After



Sergeant Major Charlie Company relaxes with his personal piper, Lt Light.



A triumphant Charlie Company at Endex.

the briefest of reception, staging and onward integration packages, Charlie Company found itself back under ponchos in trenches as forward right Company of 2 SCOTS' Main Defensive Area (MDA). The Charlie Company Jocks finished their time in Estonia with a Company day out in the main cultural city, Tartu. After a full 20 minutes appreciating the timeless medieval architectural delights of the city and interesting urban trees, the Charlie Company Jocks progressed to sampling the local restaurants before returning to camp, ready to fly home.

After five full months of near continual exercise, Charlie Company returned to Glencorse for a welcome six weeks of barrack routine before summer. The highlight of this was Op TEAMWORK, ably delivered by Lt Sands. This Army-wide development day saw the Clansmen given the opportunity to feed back their concerns and ideas to the chain of command whilst also reflecting on their individual role in ensuring the Bn achieved the upcoming readiness task.

The return from summer leave brought change in the command structure with Major Richard Hill returning to C Coy as Officer Commanding and Captain Stewart Steven promoting across from A Company. Thanks to the mentoring of Company Sergeant Major Galloway and the exercise-grizzled Platoon HQs, the disruption was minimal which allowed the Jocks to initially focus on a three-week Bn fitness concentration, the Festival of Fitness. During these three weeks the Jocks were

treated to double fitness sessions, a plethora of sporting opportunities, and education briefs on nutrition, mental health, sleep, and sport psychology. Charlie Company were well represented during the annual Jocks vs NCO's football Match with Fus Ross, Fus Thomson, and LCpl Lumley putting in good showings. Unfortunately, any chance of Charlie Company building a good football reputation was dashed by the Charlie Company Officers in the annual Officers' Mess vs Sergeants' Mess football match in the Walter Barrie cup. Perhaps next year. Similarly, Lt Brophy led a fantastic AT expedition, chivvying a group of petrified jocks up the dolomites on Ex DOLOMITE FUSILIER. Simultaneous to Festival of Fitness, Fus Campbell, Fus Miller, and Fus Shankland spent this period excelling on a Junior NCO cadre. Similarly, Cpl Limbu, LCpl Magar, LCpl Tamang, LCpl Gurung, LCpl Lynch, and LCpl Cowan attended the Infantry Instructors' Training Cadres (formerly the skill at arms element of SCBC at Brecon) and passed.

After Festival of Fitness the focus moved to an impending deployment to Kenya on Ex HARAKA STORM however alongside the distraction of a task to participate in the Assaye Day Parade in front of the Bn's families. The return of Cpl MacDonald and Cpl Paul from AFC Harrogate provided critical command oversight as the Jocks alternated between G4 Kenya prep, parade prep, and the revolving door of dental and audio appointments to maintain readiness standards. The highlight of Assaye Day saw Sgt Stevenson and Sgt Craig deliver an Oscar-worthy reenactment of the Bn on the

parade square in front of the Colonel of the Regiment and hundreds of invited families and guests. Having duly worn three hats at once, Charlie Company deployed to Kenya for a barnstorming Ex HARAKA STORM.

The year ended with a jarring return from a relatively warm Kenya to a freezing Glencorse in November and was mostly sports focussed. Whilst the Company had been away on Ex HARAKA STORM, several Clansmen had stayed back for the Bn Boxing camp to attempt to fight at the Regimental boxing night in December. Through their dedication and talent, Fus Glover, Shankland, Ross, Massey, Christie were selected for a fight. This meant that exactly half of the entire Regimental Boxing night fights featured Charlie Company fighters. Let alone the fact that four out of five won their bouts, they all impressed by their professionalism to earn a fight and their bravery inside the ring. Similarly, Fus McMurray and Lt Light chased greatness in downhill ski racing on Ex FROSTED BLADE, the Infantry Skiing Championships. Fus McMurray earned a silver on the B Hill and, at the time of writing, both have progressed on to the Army semi-finals on Ex SPARTAN HIKE.

2026 appears to hold a less frenetic exercise schedule for the Clansmen of Charlie Company. However, between the strong team culture of the Company, individual clansmen's drive for professional excellence and the Bn's enduring readiness task, these cold warriors know they owe it to themselves to be ready to fight.



FIRE SUPPORT COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major Edward Shepherd

Major Malky Morrison

Company Second in Command:

Captain Arthur (Hayden) Thomson

Captain Angus Calder

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two Chris Andrews

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant Richie Muir

Colour Sergeant James Coxon

Officer Commanding Mortars:

Captain Alex Cartwright

Lieutenant Harvey Bever

Second in Command Mortars:

Warrant Officer Class Two Sam Donnachie

Colour Sergeant Marc Tulley

Officer Commanding Machine Guns:

Captain Luke Carver

Second in Command Machine Guns:

Colour Sergeant Grayham Hayworth

Pipe Major:

Colour Sergeant Joe Davies

Drum Major:

Sergeant Thomas McKay

Sergeant William Crawford

Fire Support Company experienced a demanding, varied and operationally significant year, further reinforcing its reputation as a formation that thrives when operating independently at reach from the Battalion, yet delivers decisively when integrated as part of the wider combined arms team. Frequently dispersed, often tasked at short notice, the Company demonstrated adaptability, professionalism and a quiet confidence built on robust training, shared experience, and strong leadership at every level.

Throughout the year, a clear and consistent focus was placed on achieving and sustaining a deployable standard under the Forward Land Forces (FLF) construct. This was not viewed as a single milestone to be achieved and then set aside, but as a continuous process requiring discipline, realism, and honest self-assessment. Through progressive collective training, demanding validation events and a relentless focus on fundamentals, Fire Support Company maintained combat effectiveness and ensured it remained well positioned to support Battalion outputs whenever required. This approach fostered a culture of ownership and accountability, reinforcing the importance of maintaining standards regardless of location or task.

Overseas deployments formed a major component of the Company's activity and provided a valuable opportunity to evaluate capability in realistic environments. Personnel deployed to Estonia on Exercise HEDGEHOG, operating in austere conditions alongside NATO allies. The exercise tested soldiers physically and mentally, with prolonged periods in the field (and in camp...), limited infrastructure and challenging weather conditions. Operating within a multinational framework reinforced the importance of clear communication, mutual understanding, and professional competence. The deployment also attracted wider public attention when the Officer Commanding featured prominently in the television programme 'The Troops,' providing an authentic insight into modern soldiering and showcasing the professionalism of those serving on the Alliance's eastern flank.

Further overseas commitments saw approximately sixty-five soldiers from Fire Support Company deploy to Kenya on Exercise HAKA STORM. Conducted in demanding climatic conditions, although familiar terrain to most, the exercise placed considerable physical demands on all involved. Despite these challenges, the

Company delivered a strong and credible performance throughout. Soldiers adapted quickly to the environment, maintaining standards, discipline and tempo while operating at extended ranges. Feedback from directing staff and supported units was consistently positive, reinforcing confidence that Fire Support Company remained capable of generating and sustaining effective combat power at short notice. The deployment provided further reassurance that the Company stood ready to support the Battalion whenever called upon.

Ceremonial duties provided a contrasting, but no less demanding, strand to the year. The Battalion's Assaye Day celebrations were preceded by a Fire Support Company-led parade to exercise the Freedom of Argyll and Bute, formally received by the Colonel of the Regiment. Finding additional rehearsal time alongside an already demanding programme proved challenging and tested the patience of the Company Sergeant Major. However, the final standard achieved reflected immense credit on all involved and demonstrated the Company's ability to transition seamlessly between operational focus and ceremonial excellence.

The Pipes and Drums maintained a relentless operational tempo throughout the year, representing the Regiment with distinction both at home and overseas. Commitments ranged from competitive events to Remembrance commemorations, stretching from Qatar to Nigeria. Wherever they performed, they did so with professionalism, precision, and pride, ensuring the Regiment's presence was both seen and heard, and consistently well received by audiences and host nations alike, perhaps a bit more bugle practice though!

Physical development and wellbeing remained a priority and were reinforced through the Festival of Fitness. The initiative provided soldiers with a valuable opportunity to focus on sport, conditioning and recovery amid an otherwise demanding training and operational programme. The festival was warmly welcomed across the Company and contributed positively to morale, resilience, and cohesion, reinforcing the importance of maintaining physical and mental robustness throughout the year.

The year also marked a period of notable change within the Chain of Command. Leadership transitions were conducted smoothly and professionally, ensuring



General Salute at the Bestowing of the Freedom of Argyll and Bute.

continuity of standards, culture, and momentum. Command passed from Major Ed Shepherd to Major Malky Morrison while Captain Angus Calder assumed the role of Second-in-Command. Within Mortars Platoon, Lieutenant Harvey Bever took command, supported by Colour Sergeant Tulley coming in from 7 SCOTS. The Pipes and Drums also saw Sergeant Crawford

appointed as Drum Major following the move of Sergeant McKay to the piping school. Each transition was managed with clarity and purpose, allowing the Company to continue operating effectively throughout the period of change.

As the Company looked ahead, it did so with confidence and clear intent. A demanding programme of high-intensity

conventional training lay on the horizon, designed to sharpen warfighting skills, reinforce collective standards and further enhance operational readiness. Fire Support Company entered the coming year ready to meet future challenges head-on, remaining a dependable, capable, and formidable asset in support of the Battalion, the Regiment, and the Army.



PIPES, DRUMS AND BUGLES

Pipe President:

Major Edward Shepard

Major Malcom Morrison

Pipe Major:

Colour Sergeant Joe Davies

Drum Major:

Sergeant Thomas McKay

Sergeant William Crawford



2 SCOTS on the Esplanade.

January began with a series of live firing exercises at Barry Budden, ensuring the platoon met the required standard for Ex WESSEX STORM. The team successfully completed day and night firing. Meanwhile, the Pipe Major embarked on a 12-hour journey (thanks to Storm Éowyn!) to Tunisia to perform at a Burns Night event at the High Commissioner's Residence.

Upon his return, he quickly rejoined the platoon for a build-up exercise in Brecon. The rifles and sights were then set aside as preparations began for the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess Burns Night. A mini band, led by Cpl Foley and Cpl Crawford, delivered an outstanding performance, complemented by the Pipe Major's spot-on portrayal of "the drunken piper." His act was so convincing that the Pipe President had to intervene to stop some guests from escorting him out of the mess!

After a brief period at home to spend time with family, the platoon joined the rest of the Battalion at Avon Camp for Ex WESSEX STORM. The team showcased their expertise in mobility, counter-mobility, and survivability, contributing significantly to the battle group. The command team familiarised themselves with the communications system and found amusement in the BGLO's chat net messages about defence store quantities. During the defence phase, the Jocks truly proved their worth. Cpl McEntee and LCpl Edwards led their sections in denying

routes and blocking roads, while LCpl Nugent and Fus Brady worked tirelessly with their light wheeled tractors, digging in the entire battle group. Fus Brady, having spent so much time in the cab, was reluctant to return to manual labour!

Back at Glencorse, the platoon enjoyed a well-deserved Easter leave, reconnecting with friends and family. After a short turnaround, the team embarked on Ex HEDGEHOG, Estonia, travelling by train across nine countries over three days to reach Reedo Camp. Once there, they quickly adapted to their mission as part of 4 LBTC. They spent several days fortifying the battle space before moving to a reserve location, awaiting the dreaded call over the net. To everyone's surprise, the call came more frequently than expected, plunging the platoon into intense action, including retaking captured trenches alongside rifle companies. Cpl Crawford undertook a daring and highly successful solo anti-tank mission, achieving a "K-Kill." Special mention goes to TV star Fus Milne, who managed to leave half the platoon stranded with a TCV that had a dead battery.

Unfortunately, LCpl Huxter was unable to join the exercise, as he was tasked with the prestigious but demanding role of Piper to the Honour Guard at the Greenville Scottish Games – a duty he was deeply disappointed to miss the deployment for!

Upon returning to the UK, body armour and bergens were swapped for bagpipes and drums as the team took part in



DMaj McKay spinning another inspiring dit.



Pipers and State Banquet.

Freedom Parade in Falkirk and the Linlithgow Marches. These were followed by Holyrood Week, Gun Salutes, and a couple of Officers' Mess Dinner Nights. Amidst these events and other battalion activities, the team also began preparations for this year's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

In July, the pipers travelled to Windsor to rehearse and perform at the State Banquet for President and Mrs Macron of France, marking the first time 2 SCOTS had been invited to play at such a prestigious event. The Pipe Major reached out to former Pipe Majors, WO2 Gurung and CSgt Gilles, as well as PMaj Huxter from 154 RLC, who had performed with the band during the 2024 competition season. All were eager to join the occasion. Due to some changes in band personnel, additional support was brought in from Capt Gillespie, Lt Stevens, and 2Lt Light. A Sunday night rehearsal helped calm the nerves of those less accustomed to high-profile events, and the performance went smoothly a few days later. During their downtime, the team enjoyed exploring Windsor and were warmly hosted by the outgoing and incoming Sovereign's Pipers, WO1 Burns and WO1 Reid, respectively.

August brought the arrival of the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. A hectic week of rehearsals was followed by three weeks of performances to sell-out crowds across twenty-five shows on the Castle Esplanade. This month also marked a change in leadership at the front of the band, as DMaj McKay moved on to a new role at ASBM&HD as Drum Sergeant. Stepping into the role, DMaj Crawford was promoted to Sgt and appointed Drum Major on the very first day of rehearsals. He embraced his new position with confidence and was arguably the smartest Drum Major on

parade! The entire band delivered an outstanding performance throughout the demanding month and eagerly welcomed the well-deserved three-week summer leave that followed.

In true band fashion, the first week back was a busy one, featuring the Honour Guard for President Trump at Windsor Castle, the RSM's Dine-In, the Freedom of Argyll and Bute, and the Assaye Day Parade. Meanwhile, an Assault Pioneer team, led by the newly promoted Cpl Edwards, deployed to Kenya, while the rest of the band joined 4 SCOTS in Cyprus to perform a Beating of the Retreat, welcoming them to the island. Cpl McEntee attended the Assault Pioneer Platoon Sergeants' Course and successfully passed, though perhaps best to keep him away from demolition calculations! During the Remembrance period, the PMaj and DMaj travelled to Tunisia (this time for more than

twelve hours, thankfully), LCpl Seiwright and Fus Clements visited Ypres, and Cpl McEntee deployed to Islamabad, Pakistan.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to LCpl Seiwright and Fus Jones, who join us from 4 SCOTS and 3 SCOTS respectively, as well as LCpl Emslie, Fus Potts, Rankin, and Laughlin, who are currently attending the AA Class 3 Pipers Course after transferring from A and C Companies. At the same time, we bid farewell to LCpl Grubis, who joins the FSp Coy G4 team, and to LCpl Nugent and Fus Cooper, who have moved to the Mortar Platoon. Best of luck to LCpl Sujan Rai, who has transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals. Finally, a fond farewell to Fus Milne, who is leaving the service to pursue a career in aviation in Canada - a word of caution to all: perhaps avoid flying with Air Canada for the time being!



DMaj Crawford leading the way.



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major IA MacLachlan

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two L Gemmell

Company Quartermaster:
Colour Sergeant Grandison

This year has been another demanding one for 2 SCOTS Headquarter Company, playing a key role in supporting Battalion deployments. These included the Ex WESSEX STORM validation on Salisbury Plain from January to April, immediately followed by a Brigade Exercise in Estonia, and a deployment to Kenya from September to November, acting as the enemy for 1 WG.

As always, Headquarter Company has led the way in planning and executing these complex deployments, ensuring the Battalion achieved all critical training objectives while also prioritising the welfare and personal needs of the Jocks. The Kenya deployment was a prime example of this balance. The Battalion worked tirelessly during the exercise, providing a formidable and determined enemy for 1 WG. Following this, they enjoyed an exceptional adventure training package, expertly organised and delivered by Sgt McLean (RDS Sgt).

BHQ and the QMs consistently demonstrated strong leadership



The QM(T) and RSM taking a break from catering duties.

throughout. The QM(T) and RSM were particularly appreciated for not only serving the outstanding meals prepared by Sgt Townsend and his team of chefs but also for sharing their worldly wisdom and, on occasion, some excellent banter. Rumour has it that some even likened them to the two old men from *The Muppets*!

Upon returning from Kenya, the departments immediately focused on preparations to support The Royal Regiment of Scotland Boxing Night on 10 December. This significant event had been in the planning stages since March, all while managing ongoing deployments. SSgt Fleming led a SCOTS Boxing Camp, successfully assembling a team of skilled boxers to deliver an impressive showcase of twelve bouts. The event was a resounding success, made possible by the exceptional individuals who form what we proudly call HQ Coy (High Quality Company).

We bid farewell to the outgoing OC, Maj Tony Ronaldson, as he completed his service, and welcomed Maj Iain MacLachlan, who transitioned from QM to OC HQ. CSgt Vakuru also departed, with CSgt Grandison stepping into the role of HQ Coy CQMS, supported by his reliable assistant, Cpl James, who returned from ITC, alongside LCpl Black.

It has undoubtedly been a busy year, but the performance of HQ Company has been nothing short of outstanding. As OC, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for their hard work and, more importantly, for the exemplary way they have approached their tasks with leadership, dedication, and a constant focus on the Jocks and others.

Truly, a high-quality Company!



HQ Company prepare for the Regimental Boxing Night.



CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:

Captain C Smyth
Captain T Oakes

Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:

Warrant Officer Class Two P Walker

Battlefield Systems Manager:

Colour Sergeant D Cave

Company Quartermaster:

Colour Sergeant D Bannis
Colour Sergeant A Baird

Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant A Mcpherson
Sergeant J Eadie

2025 has been an exceptionally busy and productive year for the CIS Platoon, highlighted by deployments on three exercises: Ex HEDGEHOG, Ex HARAKA STORM, and validation on Ex WESSEX STORM. Alongside these demanding commitments, the platoon successfully introduced the new DDS radio system and other advanced communication technologies within the Battalion, mastering a wide range of new skills in an impressively short period.

The year began with an intense period at Sennybridge for the Company RSDCs, while most of the platoon participated in CAST in Germany. Shortly after, the Bn deployed to Avon Camp on Salisbury Plain for Ex WESSEX STORM. The platoon arrived, primarily in ageing FFRs, to a cold and muddy Avon Camp in February, which resembled a 'tent city in the Somme.' This former ammunition compound became home for three months as the Bn undertook its validation pathway in preparation for FLF and Ex HEDGEHOG. During this time, the platoon quickly adapted to eDSA, a relatively new data system for chat networks and friendly forces tracking. Despite harsh conditions and a challenging enemy force, the platoon performed exceptionally, playing a pivotal role in the Battalion's successful validation. However, further challenges lay ahead.

Following a well-earned Easter leave, the Bn deployed to Estonia for Ex HEDGEHOG. Upon arrival, the platoon faced initial connectivity issues but soon received the new DDS radios, hoverfly rebroadcast drones, and advanced power systems. This deployment offered the platoon a unique opportunity to become the first CIS Platoon in the Field Army to train with and operationalise these cutting-edge technologies. After intensive training delivered by Rowden and the UAS Platoon, the CIS team integrated the new equipment into the Bn's operations. DDS became the

primary communication system, and the exercise was a resounding success, with the new radios receiving widespread praise from both the platoon and the wider Bn.



Members of the CIS relaxing in Kenya after Ex HARAKA STORM.

As autumn arrived, the Bn enjoyed some winter sun during Ex HARAKA STORM in Kenya. This exercise marked the platoon's first opportunity to independently employ the new equipment without external support, further enhancing their expertise and operational capability. It also allowed platoon members to take on various roles within the Coys, with Cpl Webster notably stepping in as a Sect Comd for Charlie Coy HQ and delivering impromptu junior officer development sessions on mast operations.

Throughout the year, the platoon said goodbye to several valued members. The RSO, Capt Smyth, and CQMS, CSgt Bannis, moved on to new roles during the summer, while Sgt Muil and Cpl Copland left the Army to pursue new opportunities. The platoon also welcomed CSgt Baird as the new CQMS, who joined the Bn from 1 RANGER, bringing a wealth of experience to the team.

2025 has been a year of remarkable achievements, challenges, and transitions for the CIS Platoon. Their ability to embrace new technologies, excel in demanding exercises, and contribute to the Bn's operational success has been truly outstanding.



The CIS Platoon 2025.



QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster (Main):

Major I MacLachlan

Major A Campbell

Regimental Quartermaster (Main):

Warrant Officer Class Two S Whitehead

Warrant Officer Class Two J Haveron

Quartermaster (Tech):

Captain A Campbell

Captain S McNally

Regimental Quartermaster (Tech):

Warrant Officer Class Two D Devine

2025 has been another challenging yet rewarding year for the QMs Department, as we worked tirelessly to provide maximum support to the Battalion's G4 requirements. A key focus was the deployment to Ex WESSEX STORM on Salisbury Plain from January to April for validation. This required significant effort from the entire team, who were tasked with constructing a fully operational tented camp under the leadership of the previous QM(M), Maj MacLachlan, and RQMS(M), WO2 Whitehead. The camp was equipped with power, heating, showers, an internal laundry, a field kitchen, and a dining hall.

Simultaneously, the Department managed a substantial influx of stores and vehicle platforms from 32 units across the UK, including weapons and equipment. This was a monumental task, overseen with precision by SSgt Whitwham.

Following Ex WESSEX STORM, the Department swiftly dismantled the tented camp and immediately prepared for a Brigade Exercise in Estonia from April to June. This involved packing and transporting all platforms and stores for shipment to Estonia. The team worked tirelessly to meet the tight deadlines set by the previous QM(T), Maj Campbell, and RQMS(T), WO2 Devine, with additional support from LTF, who provided facilities for platform maintenance.

The Estonia exercise allowed the Department to fully test its G4 echelons, working closely with Brigade logistical units to ensure the efficient supply of stores and equipment to subunits in defensive positions. The exercise also highlighted the

need to adapt to operating from buildings rather than the wooded areas typically used on Salisbury Plain. While this presented some challenges, those who established themselves in the buildings made the most of the opportunity to create a comfortable environment.

After returning from Estonia, the team enjoyed some well-deserved leave before preparing for the next deployment to Kenya from September to November, where they acted as the enemy for the Welsh Guards. The reduced G4 team, led by the new QM(T), Capt McNally, and RQMS(M) WO2 Haveron, with support from CSgt Gurung, Cpl Stewart, and Sgt Townsend, delivered outstanding G4 support. Their efforts ensured that our soldiers had the best possible experience during the deployment.

The Catering Department has once again excelled this year. In addition to their regular duties in camp, they supported numerous internal and external tasks, including all exercises. Despite being a small team, they consistently delivered exceptional results, particularly when operating out of a field kitchen in the middle of SPTA, where the standard of food remained impressively high.

Finally, congratulations are in order for both of our RQMSs on their well-deserved promotions to WO1.

The QMs Department has faced a demanding year, but the dedication, hard work, and professionalism of the team have ensured the continued success of the Battalion's operations.



QM (Main) receives his Ex WESSEX STORM personal supply of chocolate.



SMC Marchwood RoRo loading Ex HEDGEHOG.



LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

Artificer Quartermaster Sergeant:
Warrant Officer Class Two D Robertson

**Light Aid Detachment Second
in Command:**
Staff Sergeant C Mulrooney

2025 marked a significant year for the LAD as it finally consolidated into a fully formed Equipment Support organisation, having previously operated in small teams to cover multiple deployments. As 2 SCOTS progressed through the FLF validation pathway, the Battalion received a substantial uplift in equipment, which coincided with a reduction in the LAD workforce due to the transition from Light Mechanised Infantry to Light-Role Infantry. This left the detachment with the challenging task of preparing over two hundred vehicles for Ex WESSEX STORM, followed immediately by the deployment to Estonia on Ex HEDGEHOG. True to REME character, the team rose to the challenge with determination, duty, and the quiet understanding that no one else was going to do it.

Despite the reduced workforce and significant workload, the LAD maintained vehicle availability above 90% throughout the deployment cycle. This impressive achievement was made possible through effective planning, disciplined work routines, and a collective willingness to tackle challenges head-on, even when some equipment seemed determined to test their patience. Lessons learned during Ex WESSEX STORM preparation phase, particularly around fault prioritisation and streamlining repair processes, were quickly implemented and proved invaluable during the deployment to Estonia.

After returning from Estonia and enjoying a well-earned leave period, the LAD initially anticipated bidding farewell to over one hundred loaned vehicles that had demanded significant attention throughout the year. However, this anticipation was short-lived when it was confirmed that the fleet would remain on their books. While this news prompted a moment of collective reflection (and perhaps a hint of resignation), it was quickly met with good humour and the reassurance that the team was already thoroughly familiar with the vehicles. Meanwhile, a small LAD team deployed on Ex HARAKA STORM, where their performance, bolstered by the experience gained earlier in the year, was exemplary. From the outset, they demonstrated readiness, confidence, and competence.

The LAD also said goodbye to several valued team members over the course of the year. Cpl Clayton left to pursue a career in the civilian engineering sector, while Sgt Gilling was assigned to the Royal Lancers following a well-deserved promotion to Staff Sergeant. Cpl Mackie moved to DSEME to begin Artificer training, and Cpl McIntyre, after an outstanding performance on all deployments, left the Army to join the Scottish police force. Finally, the AQMS, WO2 Robertson, IC LAD, completed his colour service. Despite being offered VEng (Long), one look at the 2026 2 SCOTS FOE was enough to convince him that ending his remarkable career on a high note was the wiser choice.



MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Motor Transport Officer:

Captain Scott McNally

Captain Ryan O'Neill

Motor Transport Warrant Officer:

Warrant Officer Class Two A Duncan

Motor Transport Platoon Sergeant:

Sergeant R Burton

Over the past year, the Motor Transport (MT) Platoon has once again demonstrated its vital role as a cornerstone of Battalion operations. From supporting a diverse range of exercises and deployments to spearheading a cultural shift in Equipment Care, the team has consistently delivered excellence, often under significant time constraints. Balancing operational support with fleet maintenance has tested the platoon's foresight, flexibility, and autonomy, enabling them to maximise their collective expertise. Unsurprisingly, the team rose to the challenge and delivered outstanding results.

2025 saw several key changes within the department. Capt Ryan O'Neill took over as Motor Transport Officer (MTO), continuing the excellent work of his predecessor, Capt Scott McNally. Sgt Ross Burton was confirmed in the role of MT Sergeant, while Cpl Allan and LCpl Roger joined the team from A Coy and C Coy, respectively. These new appointments bolstered the platoon's capability and cohesion, ensuring they were well-prepared for the demanding year ahead.

The MT Platoon's performance during Ex WESSEX STORM was a particular highlight. Operating under complex validation conditions, the team showcased exceptional technical proficiency and adaptability, ensuring smooth movement control and operational support. Their efforts were instrumental in enabling the Battalion to achieve its objectives, despite the challenges of a dynamic exercise environment and the constant threat of a live enemy. The exercise was tough, exciting, and bitterly cold, with the MTWO earning a special mention for managing the fleet while sporting his full PHR as warm kit (though perhaps some cam cream would have been a good addition!).

While still deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM, the team began planning for Ex SPRING STORM, which involved a road move of 100 platforms from Edinburgh, in preparation for the Battalion's deployment to Estonia. The scale of this task was immense, but thanks to the meticulous planning of then-MTO Capt Scott McNally (a fan of a good PlanEx), the move was executed flawlessly. Despite tight timelines, the MT team demonstrated exceptional foresight and problem-solving skills, maintaining momentum and delivering results critical to mission success. Their efforts highlighted the department's ability to integrate

seamlessly with the wider Battalion plan while upholding the highest standards of safety, compliance, and efficiency.

Following Ex SPRING STORM, the focus shifted to Ex HARAKA STORM in Kenya, which brought the challenge of deploying the Task Force Hannibal BG using an aging BATUK Green Fleet. At the same time, the team embraced their role as Task Force Hannibal, adopting Russian tactics to provide 1WG with a memorable fight. A1 deployed with 24 platforms and a diverse mix of personalities, presenting the MTO with a fresh set of challenges. A special mention goes to Sgt Burton, who discovered that tying his spoon to his combat shirt prevents it from being lost – a level of tactical ingenuity we might call "semi-non-tac."

Reflecting on 2025, the MT Platoon's professionalism, resilience, and teamwork have been exemplary throughout a demanding year. As we look ahead to 2026, the MT team stands ready to face new challenges with the same dedication and excellence, continuing to provide critical support to the Battalion.



The QM Tech and MTO conducting some battlefield analysis.



ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS (STAFF AND PERSONNEL SUPPORT) DETACHMENT

Regimental Administrative Officer:
Major J Willden

Detachment Commander:
Lieutenant S Brunyee

Regimental Administrative Warrant Officer:
Warrant Officer Class Two S Sanderson

Financial Systems Administrator:
Staff Sergeant E Lewis (assigned out Sep 25)
Staff Sergeant J Paterson (assigned in Oct 25)

Staff Support Supervisor:
Sergeant M Langman

Personnel Support Supervisor:
Sergeant L Tsenkos (assigned out Sep 25)
Acting Sergeant C McIntyre (covering from Sep 25)



The Detachment on a rare day when everyone was present.

This has been an incredibly varied year for the Detachment in contrast to 2024 when the focus was almost solely on delivering support to operations. Whilst deploying small teams on multiple overseas and UK based exercises, there have been many opportunities to get away and do different activities, all of which have been grasped willingly with both hands.

It should be recognised that on each of the Battalion's three large-scale exercises in 2025, there has been one constant from the RAO Department, and that is A/LCpl O'Brien who has delivered tirelessly throughout them all. A challenging deployment to Estonia was successfully supported from a Pers Admin perspective due to her total professionalism and willingness to provide that vital support at all times.

With multiple arrivals and departures into and out of the Detachment – such is the nature of attached arms – there has been the loss of some incredibly competent individuals either on promotion or moving on to different challenges. Throughout this, the Detachment has maintained its outputs and flourished with the injection of enthusiastic individuals. This year we have said goodbye to; SSgt Lewis (on promotion), Sgt Charles (on promotion), Sgt Tsenkos, Cpl Weatherston, LCpl Flint, Pte Chalkley (on promotion), and Pte Hodgson. We have also had the pleasure of welcoming; SSgt James Paterson, Sgt Langman, Cpl Clarke, LCpl Simpson, Pte Beckett, Pte Bennett, Pte Molloy, and Pte Wiles. A huge congratulations must also go to WO2 Sanderson who has been selected for promotion to WO1, and A/LCpl O'Brien who has been selected for promotion to LCpl.



A/LCpl O'Brien and LCpl Simpson enjoying the Kenyan scenery.



ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS (STAFF AND PERSONNEL SUPPORT) DETACHMENT *continued*



Cpl Clarke receiving his commendation from Lt Gen C Collins DSO OBE.

This churn of personnel has presented opportunities for leadership and mentoring. In this endeavour Cpl McColl has delivered in spades and has rightly been recognised in the Corps' Annual Coaching and Mentoring Awards where she received the highest recognition, the Col Nick Carrell Award. A fitting acknowledgement for an individual who is fully committed to improving the professional capacity of those who work with her. On the theme of recognition,

congratulations must also go to Cpl Clarke who has been recognised for his dedication to charitable causes with a three-star commendation in the King's Birthday Honours List. He continues to give up his own time to raise money for different causes including the Who Dares Cares 21-mile Kilt Walk and spending evenings and weekends raising money for the Scottish Poppy Appeal; an incredible display of selfless commitment.

Extra-curricular opportunities have been fully exploited also with the majority of the Detachment having been able to get on either the Battalion's skiing expedition to the French Alps, the Battlefield Study to Gallipoli, Turkey, or both in some cases. Two members of the Detachment, Cpl McColl and Pte Molloy took the opportunity to travel to Nepal on a sports tour, embracing the culture and occasionally playing basketball.



Pte Molloy and Cpl McColl (left to right) on tour in Nepal.

There have been long days and evenings spent ensuring that the Battalion is ready to assume its readiness commitment to Nato's Forward Land Forces. Maintaining this for a large unit such as 2 SCOTS has been a challenge but one that the team has shown dedication in rising to. That a large proportion of the Detachment have exploited opportunities to get away on extraordinary activities is a testament to their professionalism and pursuit of professional development. In summary, it has been another great year for the Detachment.



UNIT AID POST

Regimental Medical Officer:
Major EL Bettison

Regimental Aid Post Sergeant:
Sergeant KN Morrison

Regimental Nursing Sergeant:
Sergeant J Jones



LCpl Poyser on top of Mount Kenya.

2025 has been a dynamic and demanding year for the department, marked by changing personnel, deployments, and force preparation. Despite these challenges, the department has remained steadfast in its mission to deliver high-quality medical support to the Battalion, ensuring soldiers are kept in the fight.

At the start of the year, the department deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM, making Salisbury Plain its temporary home. During this exercise, the team welcomed Sgt Morrison and LCpl McCabe, who were quickly integrated into the group. The department provided both real-life medical support and exercised as troops throughout the deployment, implementing the 'Treat as you Train' model for the first time. During the final training exercise, the combat medical technicians seamlessly assumed their natural roles within the Coys, delivering trauma and primary healthcare on the front line. LCpl Poyser's exceptional efforts were recognised with the Commanding Officer's coin.

This year, the Unit Aid Post (UAP) adopted a new approach to healthcare delivery in the field, experimenting with replacing the traditional UAP tent with a portable Unit Aid Post housed within an SV. Dubbed the "R1 SV" project, this initiative aimed to enhance the UAP's manoeuvrability and responsiveness to emerging threats, enabling it to move rapidly across the battlespace as part of A1. This innovative approach demonstrated the department's adaptability and commitment to improving medical capability in dynamic environments.

Additionally, the UAP underwent both its medical validation and Health Assurance Framework (HAF) assessment during Ex WESSEX STORM. The team dedicated significant effort to these evaluations, which resulted in outstanding outcomes. The UAP achieved a high pass mark for field care delivery and earned full HAF assurance (the highest grade possible and the best result in the Division). This success is a testament to the ongoing hard work and professionalism of the team.

The UAP next turned its focus to Estonia, rapidly reconfiguring medical modules and personnel within a limited timeframe while simultaneously preparing the Battalion with the necessary Force Health Protection (FHP) measures. This often-required adapting practices to deliver FHP in challenging field conditions.

Upon arrival in Estonia for Ex HEDGEHOG, the UAP once again utilised the R1 SV template with great success, delivering exceptional Role 1 care to both the Battalion and the Brigade. Meanwhile, the Company medics faced a different set of challenges during Ex SPRING STORM, operating with limited shelter from the elements. Despite these conditions, they provided outstanding clinical care within the Coys, demonstrating resilience and professionalism in adverse environments.

Following Estonia, elements of the UAP prepared for deployment to Kenya for Ex HARAKA STORM. During this period, the department welcomed Major Bettison as the new Regimental Medical Officer. Her arrival coincided with a particularly busy



2 SCOTS

UNIT AID POST *continued*

time, as the team balanced FHP preparation, CMCR delivery, and participation in the Festival of Fitness. The CMTs also dedicated their expertise to the Battalion by teaching Joint Team Medic courses, further enhancing the medical knowledge of soldiers.

During the deployment to Kenya, the UAP successfully managed the medical support for Taskforce Hannibal. The CMTs gained valuable clinical experience, working with

aeromed assets, managing musculoskeletal injuries, and excelling in the treatment of trauma and tropical diseases. Their efforts ensured the highest standard of care for the deployed force.

This year also marked a significant and poignant moment with the amalgamation of the Royal Army Medical Corps and Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps into the Royal Army Medical Services. This transition brought a new TRF, cap

badge, and stable belt, symbolising the unity of the Corps. The UAP commemorated this historic event with a small ceremony at Edinburgh Castle, held alongside 3 RIFLES UAP. This reflective occasion provided an opportunity to honour the many achievements of those who have served within these historic Corps and was a fitting way for the department to close out a remarkable year.



2 SCOTS UAP at Edinburgh Castle for the RAMS parade.



WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Unit Welfare Officer:

Major Bob Whyte
Captain Steven Paterson

Assistant Unit Welfare Officer:

Colour Sergeant Gillies

Welfare Junior non-commissioned Officer:

Corporal Tait
Welfare Clerk
Mr Ross McDermid

The past year has been a challenging and fulfilling time for the 2 SCOTS Unit Welfare Office, characterised by change, growth, and steadfast support for our Service Personnel and their families. With the departure of Maj Bob Whyte, the department welcomed Capt Steven Paterson as the new Unit Welfare Officer, providing much-needed relief for CSgt Gillies, who admirably held the fort during the interim period. Despite these changes, the Welfare Office has continued to excel, delivering essential support during the Battalion's commitments on Ex WESSEX STORM, Ex HEDGEHOG, and Ex HAKA STORM.

Over the past year, the Welfare Office has provided support throughout pre-deployment training, overseas exercises, and operational readiness. The team has worked tirelessly to ensure that soldiers, their families, and the wider community remain connected and supported, even during the most challenging times. A wide range of events and activities has been organised, catering to all ages and interests, fostering a strong sense of community and belonging.



2 SCOTS Halloween party



2 SCOTS Welfare Team Xmas party

Key highlights of the year included the eagerly anticipated Assaye Family Day, as well as the Halloween and Christmas parties, and the ever-popular Christmas market. These events brought families together, creating cherished moments of joy and connection. The annual AWS residential scheme was another standout success, offering children the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities and



2 SCOTS Christmas market

challenges at Scots Corner and the surrounding areas, including a memorable trip to Blair Drummond Safari Park. Under the dedicated guidance of our AWS Community Development Worker, Gina, the children thrived in an environment filled with fun, learning, and camaraderie.

As the Battalion returned from a series of major exercises, the celebration of Assaye Day provided a perfect opportunity to unite the community. The family day was a tremendous success, featuring a vibrant programme of activities such as weapon displays, a performance by the Fijian Choir, and a mesmerising Kukri dance by our Commonwealth community. These contributions showcased the rich diversity and cultural heritage that make our Regiment truly unique.

The Welfare Office's efforts extend beyond large-scale events. Special recognition goes to Ross McDermid, whose meticulous management of the contact house and hall bookings has been pivotal to the success of welfare events, particularly the Christmas market. Gina continues to run the youth clubs every Tuesday evening, offering a safe and engaging space for our young people. During the colder months, the monthly Veterans' Breakfasts, organised and run by Cpl Tait, have continued to grow, while the Friday Coffee Mornings have provided a warm and welcoming environment for connection and support.



2 SCOTS Veterans' breakfast

As we look forward to 2026, the 2 SCOTS Welfare Team remains dedicated to its mission of supporting our SP, their families, and the wider community. We are immensely proud of all that we have achieved together and are excited to build on this strong foundation. On behalf of the entire team, we wish you all a happy, healthy, and successful year ahead.



OFFICERS' MESS

President Mess
Committee:
Major Hill

Half an exercise, half an exercise,
Half an exercise in CBRN dress,
All through the valley of Imber,
Crawled the exhausted Officers' Mess,
"Take heart my Subbies!
Charge for some leave!" CO did stress,
Through an antisocial first six months,
Crawled the exhausted Officers' Mess.

"Take heart my Subbies!"
Such enthusiastic teletubbies,
Hoping one day to become kept hubbies,
They learned that warfighting is their primary chore.
Theirs not to bucket reel,
Theirs not to enjoy a liquid meal,
Theirs but to kill with bombs and steel,
Through the grim realities of our time,
Strode the warfighting Officers' Mess.

Ex WESSEX STORM to the left of them,
An Estonian Ex HEDGEHOG to the right,
Would the trans-European train deployment in front of them,
Prove a pure Millennial McAuslin delight?
Taking a leisurely lunch in the Suwalki gap,
Somehow the Trainborne Officers did not snap,
As they rolled into the Baltic freeze,
As they chugged into another exercise with ease,
Rail-rode the resolute Officers' Mess.

Flashing by in a blink,
HEDGEHOG made us think,
The world stands on the brink,
Of a savagely hot war fought in cold climes.
And the solution to such existential angst?
Learned from the 1913 generation contemplating France,
Is to bond ourselves stronger on our return.
Focussed on making the summer calendar a going concern,
Returned the prodigal Officers' Mess.

Tony Ronaldson's leaving do to the left of them,
The Summer Ball to the right of them,
Six weeks of barrack in front of them,
The Mess recovered.
Planning to re-enact the fall of the Berlin Wall,
We built a Check point Charlie nice and tall,
While the world of good taste wondered.
Under the watchful eye of LCpl Wallace in Stasi dress,
Partied the techno-loving Officers' Mess.

Outgoing PMC Donkin leaving for Kuwait,
Incoming PMC Hill felt the pressure of following a great.
Fortunate to have Finn Macpherson as his first mate,
As the summer churn saw the Mess family sundered.
Goodbye to Wright, Donkin, Milne, and Shepherd,
Returns less likely than the rest of the departing herd.
But replaced in the building where they had grown
into men,
By a new crop of talent ready to deploy to Kenya again,
Refocused the ready Officers' Mess.

In Africa we did what we do,
Skills learned in January just as true,
As we fought Welsh Guards with no quarter due,
In the Messes ancestral home of the Kenyan bush.
Back to a cold Glencorse for a hasty St Andrews,
Kenya diets taking pressure off the seams of our trews,
Then straight to the RHQ reeling ball with flair,
Revelling to the pipes of Gibraltar and Black Bear,
Regimentally revelled the Brose-soaked Officers' Mess.

A final week hosting a French BHQ as a guest,
Satisfied with a year of hard-earned success.
Appropriate skewered by the Sergeant's Mess,
With Michael Sandiford bringing honour to the role
of annual sacrifice.

Grateful for our home and help,
Having retained all of our junior whelps,
What a year of adventure for a few Chelsea celts.
Towards a 2026 full of fighting and fun,
Turns the ready Officers' Mess.

A magical year that will not fade,
Every members' individual contribution was made,
A lifetime to look back and wonder.
Honour the year we have had,
Next years' journal entry may be penned from Leningrad,
Onwards the 2 SCOTS Officers' Mess



Risk assessments did not exists at Iwo Jima OR the establishment of the 2 SCOTS Summer Party.



The subalterns before the Dine out of Major Tony Ronaldson.



WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS

Presiding Member:
WO1 (RSM) Lee McConachie

President of the Mess Committee:
WO2 (CSM) Lee Gemmell

As January 2025 approached, the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess returned from a well-deserved Christmas leave, ready to tackle the new year with two clear goals: shedding the festive pounds and preparing for Burns Night 2025.

Preparations for Burns Night had begun six months earlier, with WO2 (CSM) Lee Gemmell leading the charge as Chief Cronie. His energy and commitment ensured every detail was perfected, and the event was delivered with style. As always, the evening featured LEs looking suitably sheepish as WO2 Shaun Whitehead MC delivered the Address to the Guests, sealing their fate. The award for the best poem went to Sgt Kieran Stevenson for his outstanding rendition of *Killiecrankie* – a performance that proved, without a doubt, that 'that boi can sing!'



HOTO of the Regimental Cane from WO1 Steven Paterson to WO1 Lee McConachie.

In July, the Mess saw a change in leadership as WO1 (RSM) Lee McConachie took over as Presiding Member from Capt Steven Patterson. The Mess extended heartfelt congratulations to Capt Patterson on his commissioning and wished him every success as he transitioned to the 'dark side' as an LE Officer, taking up his new role as UWO.

The Walter Barrie Cup remained a significant and emotional event in the Mess calendar, honouring the memory of the late Capt Walter Barrie. The day began with a Battalion remembrance parade, followed by a fiercely contested football match against the Officers' Mess. True to tradition, the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

conducted a thorough warm-up, while the Officers arrived with more hope than preparation. Once again, the Mess emerged victorious, retaining the trophy and sending the Officers back to their Mess with their tails between their legs.

On 30 October, 2 SCOTS had the privilege of welcoming Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to Glencorse Barracks for her first official visit to the Battalion as Deputy Colonel-in-Chief. Despite half the Battalion being deployed on Exercise HAKA STORM in Kenya, those remaining worked tirelessly to ensure the visit was a success. The Quarter Guard, commanded by CSgt Stuart McGregor, underwent rigorous rehearsals and inspections to meet the high standards required for such an occasion.

Her Royal Highness was greeted by WO2 Lee Gemmell, who accompanied her to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess to meet its members and soldiers. The visit concluded with the planting of a tree next to one planted by the previous Princess Royal, Princess Mary, in 1929. The highlight of the day came when Ruebie, daughter of WO2 (RAWO) Steph Sanderson, presented a posy to Her Royal Highness with charm and grace, effortlessly stealing the show.

December brought excellent news for the Mess, with three Warrant Officers receiving promotions to WO1 – a remarkable achievement. WO2 Steph Sanderson was appointed RSM UOTC Glasgow, WO2 (RQMS M) John Haveron became RSM 3 SCOTS, and WO2 (RQMS T) Dean Devine took on the role of RSM Soldier Academy North. The Mess congratulates them all and wishes them every success in 2026.

The year concluded with a relaxed Christmas gathering organised by WO2 (CSM) David Bannis, providing Mess members and their families with a chance to unwind before the Christmas stand-down period. While the event was low-key, it was a fitting end to a busy and successful year, though it's safe to say that WO2 Bannis may not be in the running for IC awards at future functions!



Princess Royal Visit – Princess Anne enjoying her time with SCOTS.



CORPORALS' MESS

Presiding Member:

Warrant Officer Class Two Dean Devine

President of the Mess Committee:

Corporal Jack Livingstone

Corporal Alistair Renwick



Early fireworks display to mitigate a noise violation from the council.

In July, just before summer leave, Cpl Livingstone handed over the role of President of the Mess Committee (PMC) to Cpl Renwick, ushering in a new chapter for the Corporals' Mess. The transition followed a highly successful Western-themed summer party at Glencorse Barracks. The event was a resounding success, with exceptional effort put into the setup, earning widespread praise for its vibrant atmosphere and meticulous attention to detail.

After the summer break, the Corporals' Mess convened its first meeting of the new term, forming a full committee to manage responsibilities ranging from property maintenance to planning the Christmas function. The reopening of the bar was celebrated with a lively 'Bring a Boss Night,' attended by members of the Officers' Mess and Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. The event was a great success, setting a

positive tone for the months ahead. From that point on, the Mess bar opened every Tuesday while the battalion was in camp, fostering camaraderie and a sense of routine.

One of the first major tasks for the new PMC was organising the William Savage Memorial Cup, an annual event held in honour of Cpl William Savage, who was tragically killed in Afghanistan in 2013. As in previous years, his wife and son attended the event. To add a more personal touch, the committee introduced a post-match buffet and drinks, allowing players and guests to come together and celebrate William's life in a meaningful way.

The event, while solemn, was a fitting tribute. The Jocks defeated the Corporals' Mess to claim the cup, and the day concluded with light-hearted awards,



including 'Player of the Match' and the humorous 'Donkey of the Match,' which was awarded to the linesman – enough said.

Attention then turned to the annual Christmas Ball, the highlight of the Mess calendar. Once again, the event was held at the O2 Academy at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange, where the staff provided exceptional support throughout the planning process. Generous contributions from local businesses and Mess funds ensured an impressive selection of prizes for attendees.

This year, the PMC introduced a meaningful new initiative: a charity fundraiser in support of Families' Activity Breaks (FAB), a charity closely linked to Cpl Savage's family. FAB provides free, activity-based holidays for bereaved military families, helping them rebuild confidence and create positive memories after loss. A premium prize bundle worth £1,000, including signed Scotland and Hearts football shirts, vouchers, cash, and more. Each attendee, including guests, made a minimum donation in an envelope with their name, and one was drawn as the winner. The initiative raised an impressive £800, showcasing the generosity of the Mess and its dedication to supporting military families.

As 2026 begins, plans are already underway for future events. With strong momentum and a renewed sense of purpose, the Corporals' Mess looks forward to another year of teamwork, community, and meaningful fundraising.



Members relaxing and enjoying the event.



SCOTS

www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org



3 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD



3 SCOTS BG – Ex Bull Storm

NATO. Warfighting. Russia. Three words that Commander Field Army (CFA) has made clear will define the Field Army's focus for the near term. As such, 2025 is a year for 3 SCOTS that has been shaped by this sharpened focus – a focus on the British Army's core purpose of 'fighting and winning wars on and from the land.' Something, I am pleased to report that the Jocks are up for! Thus, whilst 2025 has been another busy year – as the following pages will tell – it is a year that has been both meaningful and one spent with webbing on, cam-cream applied, and doing what we joined the Army for as Infantrymen: soldiering.

January 2025 began where we left off at the end of Operation INTERFLEX in December 2024 – training members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – by training hard ourselves, to once again be a credible and competent infantry battlegroup within 11 Brigade. 3 SCOTS had been recently aligned to Exercise BULL STORM – the first *Brigade* level exercise to Kenya in decades. The exercise saw 3 SCOTS Battlegroup, complete with artillery, engineer, logistics and medical attachments, operate alongside 1 R ANGLIAN underneath HQ 11 Brigade, against an OPFOR made up of 3 RIFLES (also of 11X). But it was the hard yards of training in the Highlands in the depths of winter between January and April

that laid the foundations for the subsequent successes in the heat (and rain!) of the Kenyan bush. Live firing, being fit for purpose – hard 'tabbing', alongside refining tactical actions and the execution of command and control, were all practiced, and practiced again. Yet as Greg Norman's trope of "the more I practice, the luckier I get" is so often evidenced, the same can be said of 3 SCOTS. From glowing reports at the Command & Staff Tactical Training Exercise, through to some demanding company-led training – such as the 12-mile Operation Fitness Test (RAF Regiment need not apply), meant that the Battalion – and subsequently Battlegroup – arrived in Kenya, ready.



The two-month deployment to Kenya represented some of the most privileged training opportunities that exist across the Field Army. Through a progressive training programme designed by Capt Marty Gray and the Trg Wing, the Companies were able to absorb increased complexity and challenges posed. Thus, when after a month in the field, the Final Training Exercise (FTX) commenced, the Battalion was able to achieve the first 'TL-Foxtrot' validation in over a decade (Battlegroup within a Brigade context) with relative ease – and room to spare. Whilst of course, remaining humble! When 'ENDEX' was called, the opportunity to reflect on what the Battalion had achieved was clear: as Commander 11 Brigade stated of his "best unit in the Brigade", it was a battalion that had redefined itself over the previous six months. Following some well-earned Adventure Training and R&R, where I am pleased to report nobody died or were arrested, some time to re-inculcate in barracks routine was taken. From an excellent Highland Games – organised by the outgoing UWO – Captain Ian Carlise, to whom must go our heartiest congratulations for his award of a Chief of the General Staff's Commendation, through to some much-needed social bonding, and a four-week summer leave; plenty of opportunity existed to reverse the weight loss of Kenya! Thus, with 'warfighting' firmly front and centre, it was soon time to add the 'NATO' and 'Russia' aspects to the year's focus.

Operation TARASSIS was a bumper sticker that reflected the efforts of the Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ), in Northwood, to cohere a series of deployments and activities across the Euro-Atlantic JOA throughout the latter half 2025. Under a Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) framework, and arriving relatively late to the party, Exercise FOREST GUARDIAN, was 11 Brigade's contribution to this multi-domain effort to deter adversaries in the

region and reinforce strategic messaging from the geopolitically relevant country of Latvia. As the Battlegroup deployed, 3 SCOTS recovered from Kenya and redeployed to Latvia within four working weeks. Arriving in September, and working alongside elements of the Latvian Armed Forces, the Battalion was able to refine its warfighting credentials but with the added privilege of operating alongside key industry partners that provided some of the capabilities seen used with devastating effect in Ukraine, such as high-end drones.



The two-month deployment to Kenya represented some of the most privileged training opportunities that exist across the Field Army.

Thus, pairing 'technician alongside tactician', 3 SCOTS Battlegroup integrated with the Canadian Army – though sadly not The Black Watch of Canada – as well as Italian Army personnel deployed under the NATO Multinational force to Latvia. Having demonstrated that the UK could project forces with relative ease and integrate with key allies and partners in the region, the Battalion recovered back to the UK following taking in some of the highlights of the region – including a display in Riga from the Pipes & Drums. Thus, 2025 really has been spent contributing to NATO, warfighting and countering Russia.

With such a fulsome 2025, it is appropriate to recognise individual success.

Congratulations go to those named in the King's Birthday Honours List, 2025, New Year Honour's List 2026, and Operational Honours List 64. Maj James Farrall was awarded an MBE from his time in Army HQ and Captain Tony Topping was recognised with a Chief of Staff Field Army's commendation for his support to force protection and safety. Meanwhile, Major Christopher McRobbie and WO2 Blake were awarded a Land Component Commander's Commendation and Capt Marty Gray was awarded a Joint Commander's Commendation: recognising their exceptional operational efforts on Op INTERFLEX. The promotion front was equally successful with WO2 (RQMS) Campbell being selected for WO1 (RSM) of Aberdeen UOTC, and WO2 (RQMS) Arnold – currently serving with 1 RANGER – being selected as WO1 (RSM) 7 SCOTS. Like London busses, the Beige List promotions arrived at once, with A/Maj Tom Thorpe, Capt Marty Gray and Capt Danny Hillan, all toasting their successes. Thoroughly deserved, and all a reflection of the professionalism and dedication of those individuals and the wider 3 SCOTS team. And on the AT and sport front, over 75% of the Battalion conducted some form of AT – particularly in Kenya; similarly sport is still high on the agenda – with two ski teams deployed: one to Sweden and France on the demanding Nordic ski championships, with an Alpine team returning to the 'arduous' Ex FROSTED BLADE in Val d'Isere, France. Finally, with such a busy year, it was all the more impressive to see LCpl Burr, and Ptes Gordon and Penado, represent the Battalion at the Regimental boxing night. In sum, no matter the challenge, the Battalion and red hackle will continue onwards – watch out for 2026!

Lieutenant Colonel Rob Smith



SOLDIER PROMOTIONS

Warrant Officer Class Two to Warrant Officer Class One

Arnold
Campbell
Reid

Colour Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class Two

Lilley
Miller
Sloan

Sergeant to Colour Sergeant

Brown
Chadburn
Christie
Dagleish
Miller
Muir
Russell

Corporal to Sergeant

Finlayson

Lance Corporal to Corporal

Carrington-Porter
Dunnett

Private to Lance Corporal

Appiah-Kubi
Bruce
Chalmers
Dye
McCarthy
McMaster
Millar Thompson
Moffitt
Mortimer
Spiers
Turner



OPERATIONS AND EXERCISES - KENYA AND LATVIA

Modern infantry battalions are increasingly faced with the need to generate core warfighting competence while simultaneously adapting to rapid technological modernisation. This was the key challenge faced by 3 SCOTS in 2025, as the battalion sought to prove its warfighting credentials on Ex BULL STORM in Kenya (May – July) whilst also supporting wider 11 Brigade modernisation through a deployment to Latvia under SJFHQ and the Joint Expeditionary Force. Whilst both exercises occurred in starkly different environments, they collectively enabled the battalion to test the physical endurance and cognitive ability of our soldiers and commanders within a conventional Battle Group context whilst also introducing how modernisation initiatives – digital command systems, enhanced ISR and autonomous systems impact on the way we fight.

Having been placed at the fore of 11 Brigade's transition from Security Force Assistance to a modern warfighting formation, Kenya provided an ideal setting to test the institutional foundations of the Battalions capability. The expansive terrain, extreme heat and limited infrastructure support imposed immediate physical and logistical strain and forced a return to the fundamental soldiering skills. Navigation, section cohesion and disciplined field craft were essential to success. Working initially under an internal training programme created by the Battalion Training wing during the CYCLONE phase of the land training system, sub units were faced with a series of battle lanes focused on manoeuvre, dispersion and endurance that challenged our junior commanders to make decisions, balancing mission objectives against the resources available in order to set the conditions for success in the Brigade led STORM FTX phase.

If the CYCLONE phase set the conditions for success, then STORM reinforced a timeless lesson; modernisation cannot compensate for weak leadership and poor cohesion. Training serials were designed to degrade comfort and deny predictability, whilst the extended period in the field limited opportunities for rest, mirroring the realities of prolonged operations whilst challenging the physical limits and organisational culture of the battalion. Where other units within the brigade struggled, however, the Jocks excelled. Delivering a first-class performance built on

a unit cohesion grounded in trust, initiative and mutual support underpinned by physical readiness and a focus on doing the basics well. From seizing the airfield at objective gold to defending five ways, the subunits consistently proved that proper planning and preparation prevents poor performance.

If Kenya had proved the value of doing the basics right, then Ex TARASSIS in Latvia proved how modernised capabilities can enhance performance. Deployed as part of the Land Component of the Joint Expeditionary Force, the 3 SCOTS Battle Group fresh from TL F validation in Kenya faced the more cognitive challenge of integrating improved ISR assets, digitised C2 systems and uncrewed platforms into our way of fighting as we led the next steps of 11X modernisation. Set against NATO's eastern flank and supported by allied partner forces and number of mission partner companies, the intent was clear: to test how a modern infantry force fights thinks and integrates in a contested environment.

Latvia provided an ideal environment to test, these capabilities. Dense forest, dispersed CNI and open agricultural space demanded an adaptability from our soldiers that is difficult to replicate in the UK. The presence of the wider NATO FLF mission in country also provided an opportunity to operate alongside NATO allies and regional partners, exposing the soldiers to the complexity and realities of modern warfare whilst reinforcing the importance of interoperability.

Having proved our conventional warfighting credentials as a Battle Group in Kenya, preparation for Ex TARASSIS was focused on understanding how the battalion could integrate the modern systems we would be provided with once deployed. Uncrewed systems were embedded to the lowest level, from MUAS platforms to uncrewed ground vehicles they became routine assets for the subunits rather than niche capabilities. Deployed in both reconnaissance and wider security roles the emphasis was not simply on using technology for technology's sake, adversary and reduced risk to our own force.

From the initial phases of the exercise, the digitised C2 platforms proved their worth. Shared digital maps and planning products

allowed a common operating picture that facilitated commanders understanding not just of their own manoeuvre but that of the adversary and partner forces in parallel, enabling faster co-ordination and improved battle space management.

As the exercise progressed the wider impact of autonomous systems became clear. UAS and UGVs extended the platoons reach, detecting the enemy beyond visual range and feeding live imagery directly to commanders across all levels. This enabled commanders to make rapid informed decision and the pace of relevance to the adversary's action, ensuring we always remained in their OODA loop. This change in the character of conflict forced the Jocks to adapt continuously throughout the exercise refining procedures and capturing lessons in real time to support not only themselves but also future 11X units in the build up to PCC 6 in 2026. Perhaps more importantly though the exercise highlighted that modernisation is a journey rather than an end state. Whilst technology accelerated decision making and improved understanding overall success remained dependant on disciplined soldiers, empowered leaders and trust across the battle group.

The deployment on Ex TARASSIS was a fitting conclusion to a year that demonstrated that with the right focus and unity of effort a battalion can shape its own destiny. Transitioning from a SFA battalion in 2024 to a validated and modernised infantry force capable of fighting and winning in a NATO context in eastern Europe has been a significant achievement. Whilst this journey is not the end of transformation for 3 SCOTS it has been a decisive step forward. It has brought back confidence in our warfighting capability alongside building trust that modernisation will deliver a real time operational advantage that will enable us to operate at speed in an increasingly complex battlespace. As the battalion heads into 2026 focused on future operations it does so with a newfound sense of belief and purpose that will ensure it remains the standard for others to follow.

Major M A Dobson



ALPHA (GRENADIER) COMPANY - FORT GEORGE

Officer Commanding:
Major TM Thorpe

Company Second in Command:
Captain G Drummond

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two G Lilley



Alpha Grenadier Company Lolldaiga Training Area Ex Bull Storm.

Longstanding tradition means it is impossible to begin a Regimental Journal article with any line but: Another busy and demanding year for the Grenadiers...": and the perennial favourite is still hard to beat. With the battalion's first full scale brigade level validation exercise in 13 years in Kenya and a novel deployment to Latvia as part of the UK's contribution to Ex FOREST GUARDIAN, busy and challenging is exactly what 2025 has been, with the other usual addendums of rewarding, surprising and fun.

For A Coy, the later half of 2024 was dominated by Op INTERFLEX – a six-month task supporting the training of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. While UK based this deployment still involved a sustained period away from homes and families, and focusing on a supporting training to others rather than our own. By contrast 2025 saw a return to a singular focus on rebuilding and refining the battalion's warfighting capability in a conventional setting, in preparation for validation testing in Kenya in the summer.

For the Grenadiers January to May covered a developing programme of conventional "green" training building from individual patrol skills up to company actions. Having spent a considerable period with our STTT hats on, training and mentoring it was now time for everyone to put on their cam-cream and focus on their own professional output – the shoe firmly on the other foot!

After a high-tempo four month round of ranges, exercises, navigation practical and lessons it was time for the off and the first week of May saw the company on the usual 12 hour bus ride to Brize Norton ready to deploy on Ex BULL STORM – the first full brigade level validation exercise for the battalion in over a decade.

Deployment to Kenya is always a memorable experience, the opportunity to experience a totally different culture and environment, and the slightly surreal feeling of training in a giant safari-park surrounded by truly astonishing wildlife. For many of the younger members of the company this was their first deployment to BATUK, and they took all available opportunities to explore. Cpl Watt on his 6th visit was unaccountably less keen to look at the wooden animals available for purchase in the halfway house...



ROC Drills and Rehearsals during the run-out phase.



As ever the Jocks behaved flawlessly in the field, and lessons continued to be learned along the way (including surprisingly that you cannot always frighten off a lion in your harbour with a blank GPMG). After a great many miles, a great many encounters with big wildlife, small wildlife and thornbushes, and a great many sets and reps across all infantry activities the company delivered a truly credible performance contributing to an outstanding post exercise report for the battalion.

Surprises of course, come in various forms, and any early arrival saw LCpl Doak taking a surprise flight home from the AT package to greet his partner and their first child in hospital. Many congratulations to him and to the other new father LCpl Nobel.



Maxwell Shield Winners.

Back to a surprisingly sunny Fort George (though rather less warm than Lolldaiga) there was just time for the essential fixtures prior to summer stand-down. The always hard-fought Maxwell Shield competition saw A Company defend its title for the second year running. Rumour has it that a third success will see A Company CQMS adding the trophy to his property check... only time will tell.



The MG Platoon enjoying itself.

Following on from the post exercise recovery, some well-earned AT trips and some even better-earned leave the Grenadiers reassembled in Aug ready for the next stage. Removing our jungle hats and picking up our woolly socks the next task for the company was rather further north – Latvia to be exact, as part of the battalion deployment on Op TARRASSIS – part of a broader sweep of NATO readiness and deterrence exercises.

With a focus on modernisation and integration of technology Op TARRASSIS provided a perfect opportunity to review how the right equipment can support the bread-and-butter soldiering tested and exhibited in Kenya. From unmanned vehicles for casualty extraction and resupply to remote cameras to sensor drones the suit of equipment was wide ranging and the Jock displayed their usual adaptability in rapidly getting to grips with it, operating it in role and providing high-quality feed-back for the lessons log.



Alpha Company and their Latvian partners.

Prior to Christmas leave the Company again refocussed – preparing for future deployments with a refresh of individual readiness and ITRs (MATTs in old money) ready for the next stage of the mission ready training cycle in quarter 1 2026.

A truly exception year of effort: refocussing on traditional soldiering, delivering in spades in Keya and developing the cutting edge of warfighting in Latvia the soldiers in Alpha Company have continued to demonstrate the levels of professionalism, adaptability, grit, (and even sporting prowess) they always have. No doubt this article will begin next year reflecting on “Another busy and challenging year”.



BRAVO COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major McRobbie

Major Callard

Company Second in Command:

Captain Duff

Captain Calder

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two Mcfadden

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant Mcternan

5 Platoon:

Lt Tamlyn

Sergeant Gray

Anti-Tank Platoon:

Captain Broad

Lieutenant Gillespie

Colour Sergeant Gordon

Sergeant Livingstone

"Here am I, send me!". Whether it be excelling on Ex BULL STORM, holding the reputation of the Red Hackle high in Latvia or getting ready for future operations in 2026, Bravo Company have been at the forefront of the Battalion main effort this year.

With the Battalion's deployment to Op INTERFLEX in the rear-view mirror, Bravo Company started the year by turning their focus to their own training in preparation for Ex BULL STORM. Through the wind and rain of the Highland winter the Company reminded themselves of the core soldiering skills that they had spent a degree of time away from as an SFA Bn. Although this was a hard re-introduction to the basics, most would grudgingly agree to the usefulness of the package in hindsight. Bravo Company also came away with the coveted Duke of Rothesay's Dirk.



Maj McRobbie settling in for another 'O' Group on Ex BULL STORM.



Bravo Company trying to negotiate on Ex BULL STORM.

Ex BULL STORM showed the fruits of the Company's labour in TL A-C. The hard training they had endured paid dividends as they went through live firing, and Coy level exercises in Kenya. The exercise saw the Battlegroup deploy for 6 weeks in the field. BATUK billed this as arduous and testing and it certainly proved to be. Bravo Company however, rose admirably to the test. With a focus on defensive and delaying operations, the Jocks had plenty of time to

get familiarised with entrenching tools and sleeping in confined trenches, as well as being probed for snacks by the wildlife. Some encounters included Hyenas taking their turn to wake Pte Donnachie up for stag, as well as Baboons stealing Pte Bracewell's Peltors. There were also complications to be worked through with the TES equipment with some trying to end the argument of who had killed who the old-fashioned way. Despite these frustrations, the Jocks proved themselves more than worthy of their TL-F validation through the same pluck and cheerfulness in the face of adversity that their forebears would have recognised.



The troops ruin their night vision on Ex BULL STORM.

With the exercise over, the Company managed to exploit some of the finer aspects of being deployed to Kenya. On offer were Kayaking and Whitewater rafting, as well as trips into Nanyuki to quench their considerable thirst.

Following the Company's return from Kenya, some well earned rest and recuperation was warranted. Highland Games in the glorious summer setting of the Fort was well received, even if there were some dubious results in the games! Bravo Company were almost certainly given a Land Rover full of Jerry Cans to drag! Summer leave swiftly followed which couldn't have been more deserved.

A quick turnaround was required to get the Company able to deploy to Latvia on Ex TARASSIS where we would support a JEF exercise demonstrating our commitment to Latvia and other JEF partners. The exercise gave the Jocks an opportunity to get their hands on a variety of new kit and experiment with different ways of using it. This included ATAKs, unmanned ground vehicles and drones. For some, the experimentation went a little too far when the Battalion was forced to form an extended line to find a rather expensive and large drone which had taken a diversion into a tree. The Coy 2IC however,



ENDEX before a few beers on Ex BULL STORM.



Atk PI try to figure out how many Javelins can fit on one UGV on Ex TARASSIS

discovered what was left of it! The exercise ended with a demonstration to a variety of distinguished individuals including the UK Ambassador to Latvia and 2* Generals. The demonstration largely being led by Bravo Company went off without a hitch with F18s starting the serial with a "gun run" and the "enemy" in the form of Canadians and Italians from the eFP BG dying well. After their success in defeating the enemy, an RnR package was due with Sgt Gray and others enjoying a football match against members of the Latvian football team, with others managing to find a Golf course and go kart drifting.

Since Latvia, the Company has been readying themselves for activity in 2026 with a merry go round of ITRs and driving courses. This period in camp could not be more deserved given the significant amount of time away over the last two years.

The exploits of the Company this year wouldn't have been possible without the exceptional efforts of the Jocks. There are however, some individuals who have departed and deserve a special mention. Maj McRobbie has finally hung up his Coy Comd boots after a three-year stint and is off to DPers as the XO. Captain Duff has

almost completed his round robin of being a Coy 2IC in every Coy in Bn and he moves onto Ops Officer. The Anti-Tank PI HQ move on with Captain Broad moving across to 2 SCOTS to take over their G1 as Adjutant, whilst CSgt Gordon made his way to 3 RWELSH as a PSI. Lt Barrie moved from 6 PI to Harrogate, although we look forward to seeing him back in the New Year as Coy 2IC, whilst Sgt Livingstone will bring his force of personality to recruiting. We wish them all the best of luck in their new roles and look forward to welcoming them back when the lure of the Fort proves too tempting.



Maj Callard checking his bearings... again on Ex TARASSIS.



Pte Petrie spies the CQMS on his way back with tuck on Ex TARASSIS.



3 SCOTS

CHARLIE COMPANY

Charlie Company began the year with a deliberate focus on developing its specialist capability, seeking to increase the number of qualified Reconnaissance Patrolmen and Sniper Operators through a series of support weapons cadres.

The period opened with low-level training in and around Fort George. Sniper Platoon concentrated on refining long-range marksmanship, routinely engaging targets out to 900 metres on the Tain ranges. More experienced members of the platoon, including Colour Sergeant Jamie Dougall, the Sniper Platoon Commander, extended this further by firing accurately out to 1,200 metres.

Concurrently, the Reconnaissance Platoon commenced its cadre with a demanding screening phase, incorporating navigation and physical fitness training, including an eight-mile loaded march. Successful candidates then progressed into a structured learning phase, during which junior soldiers were introduced to the fundamentals of rural and urban observation posts, along with core reconnaissance skills such as close target reconnaissance, contact drills and camera drills.

This instructional phase transitioned directly into assessment, with Charlie Company deploying to Otterburn Training Area. During this exercise, the Reconnaissance Platoon conducted a sustained observation post task, followed immediately by a Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise (CALFEX), culminating in the integration of support weapon effects to strike an enemy position.



Recon Patrolmen in Otterburn, Capt Smith, CSgt Morrison & Sgt Verrall.

The Battalion then entered an intensive period of Pre-Deployment Training in preparation for Exercise BULL STORM. Training spanned the full spectrum, from foundational skills such as camouflage and concealment through to Battlegroup-level planning, where Charlie Company's ISR subject matter experts made a significant contribution. The PDT phase concluded with a patrol competition, in which teams from both the Reconnaissance and Sniper Platoons achieved notable success.



A Sniper engages a target during the LFTT Phase.

Charlie Company subsequently deployed to Kenya on Exercise BULL STORM. The deployment proved highly successful, due in no small part to the effectiveness of the ISR assets provided by the Company. Reconnaissance and Sniper Platoons were integral to the Battlegroup achieving Training Level Foxtrot, with their FIND and STRIKE capabilities shaping the majority of actions conducted by the Fighting Echelons of Alpha and Bravo Companies.



Charlie Company get to grips with a UGV while operating a GHOST ISR Drone.

Following a short turnaround, Charlie Company redeployed to Latvia as part of the 3 SCOTS Battlegroup on Operation TARRASIS. Operating alongside Latvian and Italian forces, the Company took part in a series of demanding battle lanes against a capable enemy force provided by the Canadians. While the exchange of rations offered some light-hearted cultural diversion, the principal focus of the deployment was the testing and integration of modern battlefield technologies, including unmanned aerial systems, unmanned ground vehicles and dismounted situational awareness systems.

Special mention must be made of Privates Mortimer, Bodie and Derucki, who all performed exceptionally well on the Junior Non-Commissioned Officer Cadre, with Private Mortimer securing top student and returning to Fort George promoted to Lance Corporal.

On return from Latvia, Charlie Company rapidly expanded in size in order to reorganise as one of the two 3 SCOTS sub-units earmarked for deployment in the coming year. This has driven a demanding period of pre-deployment training, with soldiers refining pistol marksmanship, completing driver training and, when time allows, escaping Fort George for cold-weather hill training in the Cairngorms.



Hiking in the Cairngorms.



Charlie Coy pose in front of the Hammer & Sickles in Latvia where History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes.



DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major James Farrall MBE

Company 2IC:
Captain Angus Lindsay
Captain Andy Duff

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two Kenny MacFarlane

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant Grant Lilley
Colour Sergeant Peter "Kenny" Dalglish

Mortar Platoon

Mortar Officer Commanding:
Captain Will Dakin
Captain Toby Johnstone

Mortar Second in Command:
Colour Sergeant Jamie "Grandad" Rushfirth

13 Platoon

Platoon Command:
Lieutenant James Perkins

Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant Michael Finlayson

15 Platoon

Platoon Commander:
Lieutenant Will Jolleys

Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant Kyle Bruce



Delta (Light) Company on Ex TARASSIS

2025 for the Light Company can be succinctly described as one of a supporting function. The Company HQ and platoons worked tirelessly to meet every goal, task and preparation requirement set, to then work under a different company HQs throughout the year.

The first four months of the year were focussed on platoon level validation. Capt Dakin and CSgt Rushfirth (ably supported by Sgt "Foxy" Brown) ran a highly successful mortar cadre, working alongside the first battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment. Running the first mortar cadre in over two years was no small feat. Challenges with geography, ammunition and important safety qualifications were all overcome to achieve remarkable results, with only one soldier not qualifying due to matters outside of the platoon's control. This preparation and focus lead to the platoon being singled out as one of, if not the, most lethal platoons on Ex BULL STORM (Kenya). Capt Johnstone returned from his mortar course, assumed the role of OC Mortars on deployment, allowing Capt Dakin to step sideways (more to come on that).

Messrs Jolleys and Perkins arrived fresh-faced from Brecon, ready to step into command and the shoes left by Toby (moving to mortars) and Tom Beale, to Machine Guns. Diving straight in they shaped their platoons well, shaking off the remnants of Op INTERFLEX (instructing and demo troops for our Ukrainian partner forces) and creating small but effective rifle teams. As a final hurrah, before being posted to 4 SCOTS for another stint as Coy 2IC), Capt Lindsay organised Ex GOLDEN LIGHT, which validated the battalion's four rifle teams. For good measure he also ran the Battalion's initial assurance exercise for

Alpha (Grenadier) and Bravo Coys prior to departure – we wish him well!



Mortar Cadre Week



Mortar Live Firing



3 SCOTS

DELTA (LIGHT) COMPANY *continued*

Having performed so well, 13 and 15 Platoon were task organised to Alpha and Bravo respectively, to ensure they had the right structure and to set the standard for rifle team capability.

After some well-earned Easter Leave, the company HQ and Mortar platoon continued to prepare themselves for Kenya and Exercise BULL STORM, whilst 13 and 15 platoon looked longingly back across the parade square... Once in Kenya, the Mortar Platoon continued where it had left off, unfortunately unable to live fire, they trained on simulated and dummy equipment, practicing vehicle drills, rapid setup and collapse and dispersed action to focus on but a few. The company HQ, now with few troops to command, were charged with the assurance of all the rifle live-fire tactical training and delivery of the validation serials for Alpha and Bravo companies, as well as the platoons from Charlie company (recce, snipers and anti-tanks). The OC dusted off his RSO hat and helped with the refinement of battlegroup headquarters SOPs and rehearsals. Meanwhile, the company's CQMS, became 'camp jani' and ensured two battlegroups and all attached arms were well looked after in FOB SWARA.

For the actual battlegroup run-out and final-ex phase, some of company headquarters was again selected from a cast of one, to spearhead the development of simulated Uncrewed-Aerial Systems (UAS). Excellently named Task Force 42, the small team provided overwatch and strike capabilities throughout, much like that seen in conflicts around the world now, albeit simulated in Kenya. TF42 and the mortar platoon accounting for the vast majority of lethal effect during the exercise, demonstrating professionalism and initiative throughout. Not forgetting 13 and 15 platoon, whenever the company HQ came across them, they all had smiles, performed well and received plaudits from their receiving company. Their specific contributions won't be captured here, as they will be included in Alpha and Bravo companies' entries.

On return from Kenya, the company dusted itself down, welcomed 13 and 15 back into the fold and set about winning the coveted Maxwell Shield (inter-company sports competition)... or that's what it thought,



MFC Cpl Dibba & Drone Op Pte Saumaka in Latvia

being pipped by the Grenadiers by two points, some say a fix, others say someone made it look like the Light Company hadn't followed the exact instructions on the tug-of-war and the subsequent disqualification that followed.... Either way well done the Grenadiers, summer leave beckoned!

Returning refreshed (possibly, maybe) ... the company dived (as with the rest of the battalion) straight into preparing itself for Ex FOREST GUARDIAN/Op TARASSIS and a month-long deployment to Latvia. Billeted in an abandoned school, the platoons turned their hand to training in the colder and wetter climes than they had been working in a mere 2 months earlier. A very different terrain, thick woodblocks, challenging undergrowth, a far cry from the bushes, rocky outcrops and dust of Kenya! Regardless, the Jocks (as ever) threw themselves full speed at the challenge, contending with novel equipment, working with defence industry partners (as part of 11 Brigade and the Army's programme of modernisation) and tricky media (from local to global), getting in the way of fire-support positions, or being pre-seen by the enemy. There was a glimmer of hope that 13, 15 and the mortars would work together, but

alas, Alpha, Bravo and Charlie companies this time, needed the light company's prowess. 13 and 15 set off where they left in Kenya with A and B companies, whilst the mortars supported everyone on a number of training serials. Latvia concluded and a job well done; NATO messaging, a foray into 21st century warfighting with new technology and the company proving that Kenya wasn't a one-off and it can turn its hand to anything!

On return from Latvia, the company was dispersed formally. Placed into abeyance, the company was allocated across two task-groups in preparation for operations in Europe. Watching from afar, it has been a pleasure and delight to see the Jocks and Officers just getting stuck in and setting the example, irrelevant to the specific structure. 13, 15 and the mortars doing what they do best; credible warfighters, and with a smile, humble in their approach.

Early 2026 will bring a year of focussed preparation for the Battalion's operational deployment, where I am sure it (and specifically those from Delta Company) will succeed!



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major Paddy Marshall
Major Mikey Fairweather

Company Second in Command:

Captain Andy Duff

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two Andy Reid
Warrant Officer Class Two Barry Smith

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant Alistair Brown

This has been a year of adaptability, grit and just enough sleep to function. HQ Company has once again proven that adaptability is not just a desirable trait, it's practically our regimental sport. Balancing a relentless tempo of commitments at home and abroad, our soldiers have delivered professionalism, resilience and the kind of quiet determination that makes everything look deceptively easy. Whether training partner nations, supporting complex operations, or keeping the battalion moving in the right direction (and occasionally on the right side of the map), HQ Coy has been at the centre of it all.

From the UK to Kenya – Ex BULL STORM

No sooner had the dust settled on Op INTERFLEX than our focus pivoted sharply towards East Africa for Exercise BULL STORM, Kenya. The company's support to the Battalion through A2 and A1 Echelons was fast moving, constant and unrelenting, the sort of environment where HQ Coy traditionally performs at its best. The challenges were many, ranging from demanding terrain to logistical complexity, but the troops rose to the task with

characteristic determination. Their efforts ensured that the Battalion achieved the required competencies to progress towards upcoming operational commitments, all while working seamlessly alongside other 11X units and staff. HQ Coy's enablers across the staff branches proved indispensable throughout, showcasing the professionalism and depth of expertise that defines 3 SCOTS. Kenya tested us, stretched us, and in the end, reaffirmed what we already knew, when the pressure is on, HQ Coy steps up.

Latvia and Ex FOREST GUARDIAN – quieter setting, not a quieter task list

Barely pausing for breath, 3 SCOTS deployed to Latvia for Ex FOREST GUARDIAN, part of the broader Joint Expeditionary Force, Operation TARASSIS. While the tempo was less frenetic than Kenya (and the wildlife far less interested in stealing kit), the demand on the company remained significant. The QM's team excelled in establishing the "old school"

base location and somehow made it comfortable, or at least as comfortable as an abandoned school and Latvian forest in early autumn can reasonably be. Their work enabled the Med Team to begin qualifying the Battalion's team medics ahead of future operations, ensuring our soldiers remain as prepared as possible.

Holding the Fort – Rear Operations Group

While much of the company deployed forward, the Rear Operations Group (ROG) remained at Fort George to keep the Battalion's day to day functions moving smoothly. Too often overlooked, the ROG played a vital role in managing administrative requirements, preparing personnel for deployments and maintaining readiness for Op TEMPERER. Their efforts ensured that whether deploying, returning, or somewhere in between, every company across 3 SCOTS had the support needed to operate effectively. Quiet professionalism may not always get the headlines, but it certainly keeps the Bn functioning.

Reflecting on a year of commitment

Balancing such diverse and demanding tasks would test any organisation, yet HQ Coy has met each challenge with resilience, determination and no shortage of good humour. The company can be rightly proud of its contributions across every activity undertaken this year.

If the past twelve months have shown anything, it's that HQ Coy remains the backbone of 3 SCOTS, adaptable, relentless and always ready for the next task... after a strong brew, naturally.



The MTO Continuing to work on his art display for the makeshift bedroom.



Capt Marty Gray & WO2 Duncan Blake having a quick pose before orders.



CSM A Coy administrating in an old science classroom.



3 SCOTS

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:

Major Nicky Diciacca

Quartermaster Technical:

Captain Andy Hagger

RQMS (M):

Warrant Officer Class Two Allan Campbell

RQMS (T):

Warrant Office Class Two Andy Ritchie

QM's Platoon

Following the completion of OP INTERFLEX, the platoon enjoyed a well-earned period of leave. However, once that came to an end, the Quartermaster's Department quickly returned to full throttle, ensuring the Battalion was ready to deploy and participate in upcoming exercises, a challenge the platoon embraced to enable sub-units to excel in their own warfighting tasks.

Most of the platoon deployed to Kenya under the control of Capt Andy Hagger QM(T) on Ex BULLSTORM, some for as long as 11 weeks, where conditions were extreme and tested even the best soldiers. Alongside exercise participation and maintaining the battle rhythm with re-supply through the CQMS's, members of the platoon were fully engaged in LRS, sustaining morale throughout the arduous exercise. Notably, this allowed Sgt Hartland to avoid wearing combats for a significant period, keeping his own morale high while procuring equipment!

On completion of the exercise, while most of the Battalion enjoyed rehabilitation and recuperation, the QM's department worked tirelessly with Coy G4 representatives to account for and securely load all equipment into ISOs for the return journey to Fort

George.

Upon return, the Battalion stood down for summer leave, but normal routine resumed the day the ISOs arrived back from Kenya. There was no rest for the wicked, equipment was extracted, accounted for, and repacked into the same ISOs for Ex TARRASIS, all within five days. This time, members of the platoon deployed under Maj Nicky Diciacca, who stepped into the shoes of Maj Mickey Fairweather as Quartermaster.

Initially, RQMS(M) WO2 Campbell deployed to establish RLS contracts and set up the training location and accommodation, followed by the QM, Cpl Hawkes, and LCpl Parr. The Battalion soon arrived in Latvia, housed in a disused school in Vainode with 76 stairs over four levels, quickly becoming a competition to see who could climb them the most. The record of 100 ascents is held by RQMS(T) Andy Ritchie and Cpl Hawkes, though Andy finished 40 minutes ahead!

From this location, the Battalion moved to the Latvian training area to experiment with modern warfighting equipment, giving soldiers, young and old insight into its battlefield application. Due to the shorter duration compared to Kenya, it was soon time to account for and recondition equipment for the return journey to the UK. Under RQMS(T), this process had its stressful moments with civilian contractors and collection dates, but thanks to the accommodating Latvian G4 team, all 3 SCOTS and contractor equipment returned safely.

As the year ended, the platoon focused on JTR/ITR, IED, BCD, fitness training, and every audit imaginable, to ensure readiness for Op PSYMA in the new year. A task that will again see members forward and rear, enabling the Battalion without hindrance. Behind the scenes, the unsung hero of tailoring, Cpl Toni Moir, ensures the Battalion maintains correct insignia on combats and ceremonial dress, especially for Royal Household visits to Fort George.

The platoon also bids farewell and welcome to numerous members:

- CSgt Jackie Gray takes over from Sgt Richie Uttley, retiring from service.

- LCpl Lungu posts on promotion to 29 EOD Aldergrove.

- Sgt Singh joins from 658 Sqn Army Air Corps.

- LCpl Biumaiwai posts on promotion to 1 RIFLES.

Catering Platoon

The 3 SCOTS Catering Department has had an exceptionally busy year. Despite workforce challenges, they supported the Battalion during Ex BULLSTORM and Ex TARRASIS, where LCpl Biumaiwai excelled, earning a CO's Coin for his hard work. The team also provided catering for adventure training packages and several VVIP functions, most notably a luncheon for HRH The Princess Royal.

Sgt Ashford assumed the role of Unit Catering Manager in January following SSgt Smith's departure after three years as Catering Admin Sgt, successfully leading the department through LSA&I and LEA. We also welcomed LCpl Digitaki, posted in on promotion from 29 CDO, and bid farewell to LCpl Biumaiwai, who moves to 1 Rifles on promotion to Corporal.



RQMS (M) and QM (T) working hard in arduous conditions.



Post Ex reconditioning.



Post Ex reconditioning.



Ex BULLSTORM Pre Deployment administration.



CIS PLATOON

Regimental Signals Officer:
Captain A McMahon

Regimental Signals Warrant Officer:
Warrant Officer Class Two W Paterson

2025 has been a defining year for the CIS Platoon, marked by demanding training, operational validation, and deployment on operations where innovation, resilience, and professionalism were consistently demonstrated in support of 3 SCOTS Battlegroup.

The year began with an intensive period of Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) focused on preparing for Ex BULLSTORM. This phase was designed to rehearse and embed conventional warfighting CIS tactics, techniques, and procedures in line with current and emerging threats. The platoon worked closely with manoeuvre sub-units and supporting arms to ensure communications were fully integrated into battlegroup planning and execution. Emphasis was placed on operating in degraded and contested electromagnetic environments, rapidly establishing command and control nodes, and maintaining communications across extended and dispersed formations. PDT proved invaluable in sharpening technical skills and validating internal drills ahead of deployment to Kenya.

Ex BULLSTORM itself was the culmination of these efforts and served as the formal warfighting validation exercise for 3 SCOTS Battlegroup. Conducted in a geographically and climatically challenging environment, the exercise tested the battlegroup's ability to fight, survive, and command at pace. Throughout, the CIS Platoon played an integral role in enabling success. Despite austere conditions, long distances, and an active adversarial threat, the Platoon ensured reliable communications were available at all levels, enabling commanders to exercise command and control and allowing units to fight effectively. The exercise highlighted the critical importance of robust, adaptable CIS support and showcased the Platoon's ability to deliver under pressure.

Following the successful completion of Ex BULLSTORM, 3 SCOTS deployed on Op TARASSIS in Latvia. On operations, the CIS Platoon took a leading role in the trialling and implementation of new communications equipment and innovative technological software. This included experimenting with emerging systems designed to improve resilience, interoperability, and speed of information flow across the battlegroup and with allied forces. Operating alongside NATO partners, the Platoon demonstrated professionalism and technical expertise while adapting UK doctrine and capabilities to a multinational environment.

A key theme throughout Op TARASSIS was evolution. The platoon actively embraced innovation to counter the pacing threat posed by increasingly capable adversaries, recognising that success on the modern battlefield depends on staying ahead of rapid technological development. By balancing experimentation with operational reliability, the CIS Platoon helped shape how new capabilities can be integrated into future operations, ensuring the Battlegroup remained credible, connected, and combat ready.

In summary, 2025 has been a year in which the CIS Platoon proved its value time and again - from rigorous PDT, through demanding validation on Ex BULLSTORM, to forward deployment on Op TARASSIS. The professionalism, adaptability, and technical excellence shown throughout underline the Platoon's vital role in enabling 3 SCOTS Battlegroup to communicate, command, and win in an increasingly complex battlespace.



3 SCOTS

MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Motor Transport Office:
Captain Lee Dollimore

Motor Transport Second in Command:
Colour Sergeant Vananalagi

Motor Transport Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant Calderwood

In a year seemingly designed to test every climate, terrain and patience threshold available, MT Platoon proved once again why they remain the quiet engine behind success. From sweating through Kenya's sun-scorched dust bowls to braving Latvia's cold, wet training grounds, MT soldiers delivered dependable support with professionalism, resilience, and just enough humour to stay sane.

Ex BULLSTORM pushed troops and equipment to their limits. Kenya's terrain was unforgiving, the heat relentless, and the dust so fine it could probably clog a submarine. Yet the MT Platoon kept the wheels turning with Formula 1 pit-crew efficiency.

Working across dispersed locations, the platoon managed supply and demand, controlled vehicle usage, and coaxed life from machinery that frankly had no right to still be operating. Their adaptability and technical skill ensured tempo remained high, further cementing MT's reputation as the difference between mission success and mission cancelled due to mechanical sulking.

This period also saw a change in leadership: Capt McCarthy departed for new challenges and Capt Dollimore stepped straight into the whirlwind of Op TARASSIS preparations, leading the platoon into its next major commitment.

From Kenya to the Baltics, MT shifted gears to deploy 28 green fleet vehicles from the UK to Latvia. This was no simple "hook up and drive east" task. Vehicles had to be collected from multiple locations across the UK, turning the operation into a logistical treasure hunt, except the treasure was seldom where anyone said it would be, and the map appeared to have been last updated in 1998.

For a unit based in Inverness, it proved especially "character building." What began as a routine deployment became a national tour of service-station coffee, winding backroads, and conversations starting with:



Ex TARASSIS final road move checks.



On the Move.

"You're here for what vehicle?" Still, the platoon pushed on, determined to marshal all vehicles in time for the journey east.

Despite the odd breakdown and the occasional fuel mishap, the fleet arrived in Latvia without major drama (at least none that appeared in official reports!) In MT terms, that's practically miraculous.

Once in theatre, MT soldiers continued to sustain the fleet, enabling freedom of movement and seamless coordination with NATO partners. The deployment highlighted MT's ability to project capability at short notice while retaining every vehicle, driver and sense of humour.

Back home, focus shifted again as the MT Platoon delivered a packed training programme. Cat B and Cat C theory tests, 46 Cat C+E training slots, GS Cadres, ADR courses, and vehicle-familiarisation training all ran at pace, strengthening the unit's depth of skilled operators.

This investment is already paying off as the unit prepares for CAV conversion. The future force may be more digital and advanced, but it will still rely on people who can drive it, fix it, and calmly explain why the reversing sensors won't stop beeping.

From sustaining operations in austere environments to projecting capability across Europe and developing the next generation of operators, the MT Platoon has done more than keep wheels turning. They have laid the foundation for the Unit's future mobility, delivering professionalism, adaptability and the humour needed to face whatever comes next.



Taking Delivery of the CAV.



REGIMENTAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

Regimental Administration Officer:
Captain Danny Hillan

Regimental Administration Warrant Officer:
Warrant Officer Class Two Vicky Armstrong
Warrant Officer Class Two Leigh Nolan

Financial Systems Administrator:
Staff Sergeant Paul Clemerson
Staff Sergeant Matthew Bruce-Smith

Staff Support Supervisor:
Sergeant Augustine Habia/Ben Haining

Over the past year, 3 SCOTS Military Personnel Administrators (MPAs) have demonstrated that effective personnel support is a critical enabler of operational success. Through sustained professionalism, adaptability, and full integration within battalion activity, they have delivered high-quality administrative output while contributing meaningfully across operations, training, sport, adventurous training, and defence engagement.

The year commenced with deployment on Ex BULLSTORM in Kenya, where the MPAs were embedded within a demanding and high-tempo training environment. Operating in challenging climatic conditions, they delivered vital personnel administration in direct support of the Battalion, ensuring continuity of welfare, discipline, and administrative processes. This deployment strengthened their appreciation of the operational context in which personnel operate and reinforced the importance of resilient, responsive administrative support in austere and dynamic environments.



Charitable Contribution

Alongside their core responsibilities, the MPAs actively supported charitable engagement activities in Kenya,

contributing to fundraising initiatives and community support projects during the deployment. These efforts enhanced relations with local communities and demonstrated the Army's commitment to responsible overseas presence, cultural awareness, and positive defence engagement. The MPAs involvement reflected both professional pride and an understanding of the wider role the Army plays beyond training and operations.

Following Ex BULLSTORM, the MPAs undertook adventurous training (AT), rock climbing in Kenya. This was a demanding physical and mental challenge. This activity developed individual confidence, trust, and teamwork, while reinforcing the value of controlled risk in building resilience, adaptability, and mutual support within a small team.



AT Rock Climbing with Ptes Gyasi-Mensah & Moody

Operational momentum continued with participation in Ex TARASSIS in Latvia, where the MPAs delivered professional personnel administration within a multinational NATO framework. Working alongside allied forces in a strategically significant region, they gained valuable exposure to multinational procedures, deployed administrative systems, and the complexities of operating within a coalition environment. Their contribution ensured seamless personnel support and directly enabled battalion effectiveness throughout the exercise.

Closer to home, the MPAs played a central role in a Remembrance football match held in Fife, supporting an event that combined sport, commemoration, and community engagement. The activity reinforced enduring links between serving personnel, veterans, and the local community, while



Pte Gyasi-Mensah in action at the Remembrance Football Match

honouring the sacrifice and service of those who have gone before.

The year concluded with Ex INFANTRY NORDIC SWORD in Sweden, during which the MPAs undertook demanding cold weather and ski training in arctic conditions. Operating in extreme climates required determination, teamwork, and mental robustness, further developing their confidence and ability to support personnel in some of the most challenging environments faced by the Army.

Collectively, these activities represent an exceptional year for 3 SCOTS MPAs. They have consistently delivered excellence in their primary administrative roles while fully embracing the opportunities of battalion life. Their professionalism, versatility, and commitment exemplify the high standards of the Adjutant General's Corps and the wider Army, highlighting the essential contribution Military Personnel Administrators make to operational readiness and Defence outputs.



LCpl Lort on Ex INFANTRY NORDIC SWORD in Sweden



LCpl Lort in action on Ex INFANTRY NORDIC SWORD in Sweden



MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Regimental Medical Officer:

Surgeon Lieutenant Commander C Jervis RN

Medical Staff Sergeant:

Staff Sergeant G Rai/ Staff Sergeant S Cole

2025 saw the medical department support 3 SCOTS return to a war-fighting footing after completion of their successful contribution to Op INTERFLEX. Over the course of the year the department was able to demonstrate its versatility to deploy to both cold and warm weather environments to deliver both routine primary and emergency care, alongside force healthcare protection and medical training. This article reflects on the key achievements over the period as well the challenges faced by the department.

In the early part of the year, two of our Combat Medical Technicians (CMTs), LCpl Gregory and LCpl Campbell, were lucky enough to be able to travel to Norway to participate in a Special Forces Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) course with the aim of learning how to soldier and deliver effective medical treatment in arctic conditions. This skillset is increasingly important as we see climate change open up new routes for exploitation by our adversaries in the far North. The course was a particularly steep (but enjoyable) learning curve for the CMTs, learning firstly how to Nordic ski and then how to transport casualties and equipment using Nordic pulks. The CMTs were instructed in avalanche drills as well as how to find and treat casualties in the deep snow, including appropriate methods of handling and warming patients in transport. Notable challenges included learning how to hydrate and eat to fuel properly in such austere conditions as well as the complexity of using seemingly basic medical kit in sub-zero temperatures (with IV fluids and medication frequently freezing). Finally, the

training exercise provided opportunity for the CMTs to forge particularly positive working relationships with our multinational partners, including doctors and medics from American, Swedish and Norwegian special forces.



On the move in Norway on TCCC.

On completion of the training exercise in Norway, the focus of the medical department turned towards preparing in all respects to deploy in warmer environments, in support the battalion's deployment to Kenya on Ex BULLSTORM. This included education on the dangers posed in the environment (including those from animals, heat illness, infections as well musculoskeletal injuries from the arduous terrain), alongside practical training on casualty care including Battlefield Advanced Trauma Life Support (BATLS) refreshment and prolonged field care given the potentially extended casualty evacuation chain due to the vast distances involved.

The eight-week deployment on Ex BULLSTORM during May and June represented one of the largest exercises with 11 Brigade, incorporated multiple units operating simultaneously in a particularly high-tempo environment. During the deployment, the medical department provided comprehensive medical care, including primary healthcare, trauma management and both real-life and simulated casualty evacuation support. The Regimental Aid Post (RAP) was tested in its readiness, clinical capabilities and operational procedures, whilst striving to ensure seamless integration with supporting units across the brigade.



LCpl's Campbell & Gregory in Norway on TCCC.



Med Team stretching off! Ex BULL STORM.



Med Training in A1 Ech on Ex BULLSTORM.

The CMTs found it particularly challenging to operate in the austere conditions in Kenya but were all able to rise to this. The pre-deployment training proved to be particularly valuable as they were faced with a high number of bites, skin rashes as well as many musculoskeletal injuries. It is testament to their evaluation and treatment skills that they managed to keep the majority of soldiers with minor injuries on the ground and able to continue with the exercise. The validation element of the exercise proved to be particularly testing, with significant sleep deprivation and enduring pindi chana aloo for three meals a day. Theft of boots and daysacks by wild animals were common although luckily there were no animal attacks during their time on the ground in Kenya. Despite the challenges faced, the CMTs managed to maintain a high level of morale both amongst themselves and the soldiers – a

key contribution towards the battalion receiving such positive feedback in its validation. LCpl Campbell was fortunate enough to receive the Commanding Officer's coin as recognition for her attitude and resilience throughout the exercise.

Following some well-earned post deployment leave, the medical department deployed to Latvia in support of Ex TARASSIS. This showcased the battalion's ability to deploy to Eastern Europe at short notice and work alongside our Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) allies with the emphasis on modernisation on the battlefield. The medical department demonstrated its skill and efficiency in repurposing a building of opportunity (in this case the kitchen of a disused school) into a fully functioning and effective RAP. The experience gained during Ex BULLSTORM contributed to the improved

planning, team cohesion and adaptability that were necessary for this. Early communication with host nation partners allowed positive relationships to be fostered, allowing seamless hospital care to be delivered when required and further enhanced the RAP's operational effectiveness.

Both during the deployment to Latvia and on our return to Fort George, the medical department has striven to maximise force preparation for 2026's operational commitments. Delivering Joint Team Medic (JTM) to the battalion has been at the forefront of this, to ensure that each and every soldier is competent in delivering effective casualty care at the point of injury if required. This training for the battalion will continue throughout the coming year whilst the CMTs look to revalidate from BATLS competency to the new TCCC model.



Setting up the RAP on Ex TARASSIS.



LCpl Campbell keeping a close eye on the Team Medic training.



UNIT WELFARE OFFICE

Unit Welfare Officer:
Captain Baz Roberts

Assistant Unit Welfare Officer:
Colour Sergeant Steven Elvin

Welfare Junior NCO:
Corporal Boa

Community Development Worker:
Miss Charlene Bleakley



Celebrating Fiji Day with vibrant traditional attire, cultural displays and unity.

In July 2025, I had the privilege of assuming the role of Unit Welfare Officer for 3 SCOTS, with CSgt Steven Elvin joining as Assistant Welfare Officer in October 2025. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Capt Ian Carlisle and CSgt John Fay for their professionalism and dedication during the handover process, which ensured continuity of care for our soldiers and families.

The past twelve months have been both dynamic and rewarding for the Welfare Team. Despite the Battalion's operational commitments on Exercise BULLSTORM in Kenya and Exercise TARRASSIS in Latvia, our focus remained firmly on supporting families and maintaining community cohesion. Welfare activities thrived, with families enjoying trips to Landmark Adventure Park, the Highland Wildlife Park, and a variety of local outings and entertainment. These events provided opportunities for families to relax, connect, and share experiences during what can often be a challenging time.

A particular highlight was the extraordinary work of the Community Adult Craft Club, which produced a stunning Poppy Display at Fort George as part of the AWS Poppy Project. Initially envisioned as a simple poppy field, the project evolved into a creative and ambitious installation, showcasing the talent and commitment of our community. This initiative not only demonstrated artistic skill but also reinforced the sense of unity and pride within the Battalion.

Within the Welfare Centre, we have invested in continuous improvement. The

introduction of The Coffee Pot café, run by a dedicated group of spouses five days a week, has created a welcoming space for social interaction. Community fitness classes have grown in popularity, promoting health and wellbeing, and we recently introduced a dependants' sports massage service, which has been well received. These initiatives complement our ongoing youth activities, social events, and family engagement sessions, ensuring that welfare provision remains diverse and inclusive.

Looking ahead, preparations are already underway for next year's deployment. Our aim is to build on recent successes by delivering a robust program of family support, welfare events, and community engagement initiatives. We will continue to enhance facilities, expand wellbeing services, and work closely with partner

organisations such as AWS to provide comprehensive support for soldiers and their families.

The past year has demonstrated the resilience and unity of our community. From adventurous outings to cultural celebrations and facility upgrades, we have delivered something for everyone. The commitment shown by families, many of whom volunteered their time to help run major events, has been truly inspiring. Together, we have created a strong foundation for welfare support that will serve us well in the months ahead.

As we move forward, our focus remains clear: to provide the best possible support for our soldiers and their families, ensuring that no one feels isolated during deployments and that our community continues to thrive.



A stunning Poppy display at Fort George honouring remembrance.



3 SCOTS families enjoying the sunshine at Fort George during the Highland Games.



LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

Artificer Quartermaster Sergeant:
Warrant Officer Class Two Tim Bridger

Armourer Senior
Non-Commissioned Officer:
Staff Sergeant Mark Armstrong

Delivering Operational Excellence at Home and Abroad

The Light Aid Detachment (LAD) of 3 SCOTS, has once again demonstrated its professionalism, adaptability and commitment to operational success during a demanding year of training and deployments.

The year began with deployment to Kenya on Ex BULLSTORM, where 3 SCOTS operated in austere and challenging conditions designed to test soldiers and equipment alike. Throughout the exercise, the LAD played a critical role in ensuring consistently high equipment and vehicle availability across the Battalion. Operating with limited infrastructure, extreme heat and difficult terrain, the LAD's ability to diagnose faults, conduct repairs and keep the Battalion mobile was a decisive factor in the overall success of the exercise. Their efforts directly enabled the manoeuvre elements of 3 SCOTS to train effectively, maintaining momentum and realism throughout.

Ex BULLSTORM also highlighted the character and professionalism of LAD personnel beyond their technical expertise. During the deployment, Sgt McPhail encountered a locally employed civilian suffering a serious medical emergency. Acting swiftly and decisively, Sgt McPhail administered critical, lifesaving first aid, stabilising the casualty until further medical support could be arranged. His actions reflected the highest standards of soldiering, compassion and leadership, and served as a powerful reminder that British soldiers represent their Unit and the Army wherever they operate.

Following Kenya, the LAD redeployed later in the year to Latvia on Ex FOREST GUARDIAN, supporting 3 SCOTS as part of NATO's collective defence efforts on the eastern flank. Once again, the LAD delivered outstanding results, maintaining high vehicle availability despite the contrasting environment, increased operational tempo and demanding training serials. Their professionalism ensured that equipment readiness never limited the Battalion's ability to train, integrate with allies and deliver combat-ready forces.

The year concluded with well-deserved recognition for the sustained contribution of LAD personnel to operations. During a formal presentation, Wider Service Medals were awarded by HRH, The Princess Royal, to WO2 Bridger, Cpl Walker and LCpl Sanford. This prestigious recognition reflects not only individual dedication, but also the collective effort and impact of the LAD in enabling operational success across multiple theatres.

From the heat and dust of Kenya to the forests of Latvia, the 3 SCOTS LAD has consistently delivered excellence. Their technical skill, adaptability and commitment exemplify the vital role of REME support within the Battalion, ensuring that 3 SCOTS remain ready to fight and win whenever and wherever required.



THE OFFICERS' MESS

President of the Mess Committee:

Major Toffer McRobbie

Major Tom Callard

Secretary:

Captain Andy Duff

Captain Ben Calder

2025 started with a bang, or at least a snap in the Red Hackle Day Football Match with the PMC putting in some tasty challenges before getting injured himself! Although the Officers' Mess lost the match, some individual performances hopefully burnished sporting reputations. The day concluded with the mess hosting the senior NCOs and demonstrating that athleticism is as much a part of bucket reeling as it is football.

The mess managed to fit in a Ladies Dinner Night in April for our better halves. An enjoyable night all round with the dining room packed out and a great way for us to say thank you for putting up with all the challenges the Army offers!

Following Ex BULLSTORM, time was ripe for a statement event in the glorious summer setting of the Fort. With the Battalion marquee set up becoming a Livers In main effort for the week preceding, it proved to be a large burden to pull together, but one that the mess rose to the challenge of. It was certainly worth it too, the weather was fantastic and the guests were treated to the most impressive aspects of life in the Fort, with the Pipes & Drums providing a set, the marquee being put to great use for both dinner as well as reeling and the sun never really setting. An event then, that displayed the Fort in its finery, but more importantly that the "shop window" of the Battalion, the Officers' Mess, was in fine fettle after a demanding year on INTERFLEX and Ex BULLSTORM.

The party carried on too, with the marquee staying up for the marriage of Stu Smith to Maddie which the vast majority of the mess also attended. Congratulations to them.

Around the margins of the Battalion deployment to Latvia, it was time to resurrect Jocktoberfest. The setting under the Officers' Mess arches engendered the right vibes, even if they were slightly chilly vibes near the end of the night! The Oompah band did a fantastic job of corralling those who would rather have hung around the beer kegs and the mess staff provided some fantastic Bavarian food. Once again though, the event couldn't have happened if it wasn't for the sterling efforts of the Livers In who managed to seal off the arches as best they could from the wind and create a great bierkeller setting.

With the end of the year fast approaching it was time for traditional patch carols (thank you to those who hosted) as well as games in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. Never an advert for fair play, this year was no exception with the Officers' Mess being treated to truly revolting variations of Soy sauce in one of the games.

As the final event of the year, we were honoured to host HRH The Princess Royal as part of her visit to the Battalion, even managing to fit a photo with her into her busy schedule. Thank you again to the contributions members have made to the social fabric of the mess and good luck to those members who replaced the Red Hackle with a Black one this year. We look forward to seeing you back soon.



The Mess host HRH The Princess Royal



WARRANT OFFICERS' & SERGEANTS' MESS

**President of the
Mess Committee:**
Warrant Officer Class Two
G Lilley

The last six months in the Sergeants' Mess have been nothing short of eventful, energetic, and occasionally chaotic, in other words, entirely normal for us. From ancient gods to modern cocktails, competitive football to festive mayhem, the Mess has kept spirits high, standards (mostly) maintained, and traditions well and truly alive.

We kicked off the period in style back in July, when WO2 (PMC) Grant Lilley orchestrated a summer function themed around the *House of Greek Gods*. And naturally, as any good mythological gathering demands, the Mess was treated to a pantheon of costumes, questionable interpretations of "Greek-inspired" décor, and a few members who took the theme far too literally. By the end of the evening, the highlight wasn't the costumes or the decorations, it was CSgt 'Kelty' White discovering the punch bag machine and treating it like a personal calling. What began as a casual tap to test quickly escalated into a full blown demonstration of "controlled aggression" as he attempted to set what he insisted would be a Mess wide record. What truly stole the show, however, was the chariot racing paired with what can only be described as "archery on the move." The plan sounded simple enough on paper, teams racing homemade chariots while attempting to fire arrows (foam-tipped, thankfully). In reality, it quickly descended into the sort of glorious chaos that will be retold for years. Chariots veered off course, archers forgot entirely about aiming, and at least one team appeared to be re enacting a scene from *Ben Hur* without prior rehearsal. It was absolute pandemonium, endlessly entertaining, and arguably the funniest spectacle the Mess has produced in recent memory.

October brought a shift from the divine to the decadent with our Cocktail Making Night. This proved, once again, that giving senior NCOs access

to shakers, spirits, and minimal supervision results in both innovation and hazards. The enthusiasm was undeniable — technique, less so. Several members discovered that the "dry shaken" method does not mean shaking until the lid flies off, and one particularly ambitious participant attempted what can only be described as a mojito inspired assault on the senses. Nonetheless, morale was sky high, the bar team maintained admirable composure, and everyone left with at least one new skill (though for some, that skill was "how not to make a cocktail").

As winter rolled in, so did the Christmas chaos, a week packed tighter than the Regimental diary in inspection season. The highlight was, of course, the Officers vs Sergeants Games Night. Under the guise of good natured inter rank bonding, the evening quickly evolved into an opportunity for the Mess to demonstrate its traditional superiority. The games were competitive, the banter was relentless, and the officers did their noble best to keep up. Christmas spirit was abundant; Christmas sportsmanship, slightly less so.

Speaking of competitive spirit, the Sergeants' Mess also faced off against the Officers' Mess on the football pitch, and in a plot twist that shocked absolutely nobody, we beat them. It was a match filled with solid teamwork, tactical genius, and at least three moments that could have been sent straight to VAR if any of us trusted technology that much. The officers left with heads held high, and we left with bragging rights, which, frankly, are far more valuable.

All in all, it's been a lively, memorable 12 months for the Sergeants' Mess, full of camaraderie, questionable decisions, and the unwavering professionalism we're famous for... once the photos are edited.



Summer Ball.



SCOTS

www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org



4 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD



The CO and RSM Ritchie enjoying the sunset during the Duke of Rothesay's Dirk patrol competition

This year was undoubtedly marked by our unit move to Cyprus. We are now based at Dhekelia Garrison, a sharp change to the previous decade in Catterick, but most have coped well with the blue sky and beaches!

The year commenced with a deployment to Romania from January to March on Exercise STEADFAST DART, NATO's largest land exercise of 2025. This was an exercise designed to test our role in NATO's Allied Reaction Force, with a focus on mobility and being first to the fight.

The Exercise entailed driving 1000 kilometres from the port in Greece in our Foxhound vehicles to Romania, the training area being a stone's throw away from the Ukrainian border. We then trained alongside five different multinational partners, including combined arms training with Romanian armour, and trench clearances with the Spanish and French. This culminated in a demonstration of NATO capability.

The weather was bitterly cold, but as always, the Jocks delivered and thrived in

hardship. One other highlight of the Exercise was the Sergeants' Mess hosting a Burns Night for our multinational allies – a far larger crowd many were used to performing in front of! We then returned back to Greece, proving our ability to redeploy at pace. A really good exercise and one that served as an excellent end to our time at NATO readiness.

Back in North Yorkshire, preparations for our move to Cyprus ramped up significantly as we validated in both public order training, critical for our time at regional readiness, and staff training. Packing up a unit is a significant undertaking, especially when we still had around 182 platforms to handover to units across the British Army. The work conducted by the G4 team, led by Maj Gary Main and Capt Stevie Main was exceptional. We then moved out of our home for a decade, Boulton Barracks, and departed for Cyprus in numerous waves.

We are the Regional Operations Battalion in Cyprus, ready to react to any crisis within 48 hours in the Middle East, Africa and Southern Europe. In addition, we had

soldiers deployed across the Middle East from the outset, offering great opportunity for the Battalion to gain operational experience.

Our time on Cyprus has started extremely positively. Aside from the professional opportunities, living in Cyprus offers great advantages to foster an ever-closer community. A hugely successful Highland Games an undoubted highlight, but many have grasped the chance to travel, and continue to pursue challenging physical events, including entering the Scottish Island Peaks Race as well as numerous ultramarathons.

As always a full year, but a fantastic programme and with a second year as the operations battalion beckoning, more opportunities will undoubtedly follow for the Jocks. In early 2026, I will hand-over command to Lt Col Al Phillips MC and wish him and the Battalion every success in the future.

Lt Col Muir MBE



EX STEADFAST DART - ROMANIA

The start of 2025 was a very busy time for 4 SCOTS as the battalion deployed on Exercise STEADFAST DART – NATO's largest exercise of 2025. Exercise STEADFAST DART was an opportunity for the Allied Reaction Force (ARF) to practice deployment to, and rapid reinforcement of, NATO's eastern flank. In the role of the ARF's vanguard battlegroup, 4 SCOTS deployed to eastern Romania, some 20km from the Ukrainian border to demonstrate our projection capability. Spread across three training areas throughout Romania, 4 SCOTS conducted training with NATO partners from France, Spain, Turkey, Greece, and Romania whilst proving throughout that 4 SCOTS are ready and will be *First to the Fight*.

The exercise was the culmination of a year of NATO readiness for 4 SCOTS and a chance for the battalion to demonstrate its professionalism in an international setting to our NATO partners. From the initial road move from Catterick to the port, to the collection of vehicles from Alexandroupoli in Greece and the ensuing 700km drive to nearby the Romanian/Ukraine border with Ukraine, the battlegroup exercised its ability to project and sustain itself overseas. Once in camp the battalion made themselves at home in a bespoke camp able to sustain

the 4 SCOTS battlegroup in an unforgiving Romanian winter, where temperatures regularly dipped well below zero. When QM Major Gary Main wasn't busy sustaining the 4 SCOTS battlegroup, he could be found checking the thermostats in the accommodation tents in his issued deputy-dog thermal hat.

As the lead unit for the exercise, 4 SCOTS had the pick of the training area and a surplus of training supplies, allowing the battalion soon to set about conducting training with a particular focus on trench clearances and utilising light-mechanised tactics. A particular highlight was seeing Jocks conducting a live clearance of a purpose-built trench system that replicated the trenches seen in Ukraine – then progressing further to conduct the same live trench clearance at night. Progressing further to combined-arms live training involving Romanian tanks and F-16 fighter jets, British 105mm artillery and 81mm mortars, the battlegroup conducted a live delay action in front of the world's media, with LCpl Killorn piping out of the trenches as the showstopper. I encourage you to search for Ex STEADFAST DART on YouTube to see some of the excellent media output from the battalion, and to see 4 SCOTS proudly representing The Royal Regiment

of Scotland on the international stage.

Away from the trenches, the RSM and CSM Delta Company led a Burns Night for our NATO partners, celebrating the life and literature of Scotland's favourite Baird. This was well received and, while there were undoubtedly some language challenges from Scots into Romanian, French and Spanish, the crowd had a wonderful evening, and a good time was had by all. Over the deployment strong relationships were developed with our NATO partner nations, improving interoperability and exchanging techniques that makes the coalition stronger.

Upon conclusion of Exercise STEADFAST DART, the battalion recovered back to the UK, with the vehicles again travelling some 700 km back to Greece before being shipped back to Boulton Barracks. Once complete, the battalion took some well-earned leave, before attention focused to the next major series of events – getting 4 SCOTS ready and validated to move to Cyprus in order to assume duties as the Regional Standby Battalion in August 2025.

Captain Alexander Lambert





4 SCOTS

A NEW CHAPTER FOR 4 SCOTS: CYPRUS BOUND

On 28 June 2025, the first members of 4 SCOTS boarded flights to Cyprus, an opening act for a unit move planned across whiteboards, spreadsheets, and countless briefings for nearly two years. For the Battalion, part of 7 Brigade Combat Team (BCT), this would be a full two-year assignment in the Mediterranean. For our people, it would be a life changing experience, having spent a decade in Catterick Garrison.

During those final weeks in North Yorkshire, the camp felt different, Soldiers sorted, packed, and rechecked kit, the offices and working areas were stripped bare and the burden of handing over a vast LMI fleet around the entire field army commenced. On top of that, the welfare office's phone rarely stopped ringing. Capt Andy McLellan and the Welfare Team delivered support and family briefs to over 130 families, covering schooling, healthcare, housing, pet travel, and even the realities of Mediterranean summers. The questions ranged from practical to personal, as this was new to a lot of our soldiers and families.

40 ISO containers rolled into Bourlon Barracks and transformed the parade square into a staging ground for our departure. Forklifts hummed, pallets clattered, and soldiers worked in steady rhythm under the direction of WO2 (RQ) Scotty Pew. Each container swallowed the essentials of battalion life, company & personal stores and all the equipment that keeps an infantry unit operational. Finally, when the doors swung shut and the seals locked into place, it marked more than just a logistical step; it was the moment our life in Catterick began its journey to Dhekelia, Cyprus.

My part in this was both administrative and human. As the RCMO, I had to rebalance the Battalion to meet the requirement for Cyprus. On paper, the number looks clean and easy to manage, in reality, it meant careful conversations, some coordination and safeguarding of capability. By the time the pre-advance party deployed to Dhekelia, we had the team we needed and the structure to succeed for the next 24 months, in the full knowledge that we would return.



Alexander Barracks, 4 SCOTS new Home.

Bourlon Barracks had been home to so many, so we marked the end of the era with a "Farewell to Bourlon" party. The Officers' Mess gathered for an evening of tradition, reflection and pride in what we had achieved over the past 10 years, supporting the unit, Garrison and wider community. The following night, the Sergeants' Mess celebrated in its own way: a lively occasion full of camaraderie and humour, these nights were more than social fixtures; they marked our time in Catterick and the importance it has had on so many.

The pre-advance party, under control of Maj Nigel Garcia (QM) took over Alexander Barracks, assumed responsibilities from 1 RIFLES, and brought order to the thousand details that make a handover seamless: accommodation allocations, equipment acceptance, armoury procedures, classrooms, vehicles and the myriad permissions that keep a camp functioning. Concurrently, the Ops team under the careful guidance of Capt Elliott Honeyman, ensured that all G3 planning and takeover was complete so we could assume our first 12-month rotation immediately on Flag Change Day. When the main body arrived, the handover felt less like a changeover and more like a relay the baton passed smoothly, momentum maintained.

The families are the heart of any move. The first weeks in Cyprus brought simple victories: finding the right shop for uniforms, identifying the best route to school, learning how to keep houses cool, discovering where to walk at sunset. The



Flag Change between 1 RIFLES & 4 SCOTS in Aug 25.

Welfare Team, having spent months readying everyone for these moments, turned preparation into presence. They weren't just answering questions; they were building a community that could thrive in new surroundings.

This is our first whole unit move since returning from Germany in 2015 and settling into Bourlon Barracks. Ten years later, we depart not as we arrived, but stronger, resilient, and ready for the demands of the next chapter. Standing now in Dhekelia, the Mediterranean breeze carries a different cadence than the Yorkshire winds. We are at once the same Battalion and a different one, defined as ever by the people in it.



Turtle Beach AXB Aug 25.

Cyprus is not just a posting; it is an opportunity to demonstrate the professionalism that define 4 SCOTS. The containers have been unpacked, the camp is alive, and 4 SCOTS has taken its place as the Resident Infantry Battalion in the ESBA. We've carried our history with us, and we'll make more of it here. The chapter has begun.

Captain Craig Taylor, RCMO / QM (T)

SHARPENING SKILLS IN THE DESERT: A TWO-MONTH SNIPER TRAINING MISSION - SAUDI ARABIA



From 05 October to 28 November, a small team embarked on a Short-Term Training Team (STTT) deployment to Dammam, Saudi Arabia, delivering a specialised sniper skills course to the Saudi Ministry of the National Guard (SANG). Led by Captain Alex Lambert, the mission brought together expertise from across the British Army, with soldiers from 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (3 PARA), and the Royal Dragoon Guards (RDG) joining forces to provide world-class training to a key strategic partner.

The two-month deployment was set against the dramatic backdrop of Saudi Arabia's vast desert landscapes, offering a unique and challenging environment for both trainers and trainees. The mission's primary aim was to enhance the SANG sniper capabilities, focusing on advanced marksmanship, fieldcraft, and tactics. The course was designed to equip the SANG soldiers with the skills needed to operate effectively in a variety of operational scenarios, from long-range engagements to reconnaissance.

The training programme was both intensive and comprehensive, covering a wide range of sniper techniques. Students honed their marksmanship skills, learning to engage targets at extreme distances with precision and accuracy in the picturesque Al-Hassa ranges. They also developed their understanding of camouflage and concealment, mastering the art of blending into the urban environment to remain undetected. Tactical movement, observation, and target acquisition were key components of the course, ensuring the trainees were well-prepared for real-world operations.

The deployment wasn't without its challenges. The extreme heat and arid conditions of the Saudi desert tested the endurance of both trainers and trainees. However, these challenges only served to strengthen the bond between the British, interpreters and Saudi soldiers, fostering mutual respect and camaraderie.

Away from work every effort was made to conduct defence engagement activities, from attending dinner parties at the British Embassy, to celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the USMC at the US Consulate, and finally by attending a Saudi wedding in traditional attire. A great few months away and another part of the world that now knows the professionalism and character of the Jocks.

Captain Lambert





4 SCOTS

VISIT OF DEPUTY COLONEL IN CHIEF OF THE REGIMENT – THE PRINCESS ROYAL

Ahead of our departure to Cyprus, there were many who took an interest and wished us well. But none were as astute or wise in their counsel as our very own Deputy Colonel-in-Chief, HRH The Princess Royal, who paid a visit just before we set off. On arrival, a guard of honour led by Lt Coutts helped pay the proper compliments. Cpl Clarkson then showcased public order training to demonstrate our preparedness for the potential demands of serving as the Regional Standby Battalion. This was

followed by a visit to the DCCT wing and then the Welfare Centre to meet the families of the Battalion who would soon be undergoing the move to Cyprus (for many of whom it would be the first time living abroad). The visit concluded with a stop at the Officers' Mess, where the Princess Royal admired her father's portrait as Colonel-in-Chief of the Highlanders. In all her interactions with members of the battalion, Her Royal Highness displayed kindness and genuine interest, as well as a remarkable

lack of concern for the extreme heat that seemed to troublesome fair-skinned Jocks. It remains an honour and privilege to maintain the deep-rooted connection this Regiment and Battalion has with our Royal Family, and we look forward to upholding this proud tradition as we serve overseas.

Lieutenant S Owtram

BEATING THE RETREAT

As an annual tradition within the battalion, 4 SCOTS had the opportunity to make our 2025 Beating the Retreat event special and unique in a multitude of ways. Firstly, that it presented the opportunity for wider community involvement through inviting Cypriot locals to witness their first Beating the Retreat event – allowing us to utilise the influence of our Pipe Band the truest sense of the meaning of Defence Engagement. In a slight change to tradition, the event also allowed the messes to exhibit recently purchased Tropical Mess Dress (dress state 11A for the aficionados amongst you) – the sultry, sweaty evening climate informing a decision for the Officers' Mess to abandon the traditional Blues Patrol attire for the occasion. Perhaps most importantly however, the opportunity arose for the involvement of the pipe bands of both 2 SCOTS and 1 Scots Guards to swell our own Bn pipe band numbers and allow for greater depth, louder music and an altogether more impressive display to what a SCOTS resident Bn in Cyprus can offer.

With many new arrivals joining the Bn over the preceding year, hosting the event gave a great opportunity for those who hadn't previously witnessed our pipes and drums in their full pomp and ceremony an excellent opportunity to see what it was all about (the band themselves fresh from a busy summer on the Tattoo circuit). With fresh impetus instilled into members of the battalion to consider the pipe band as a future career option, there can be little



doubt that a number of those in attendance from Bn will be seeking an opportunity to join soon and represent our battalion and regimental traditions in Cyprus and further afield too!

With Commander British Forces Cyprus, Maj Gen Bewick, taking the parade and a number of the staff from supporting and higher headquarters also in attendance, the Beating the Retreat event marked a statement to our arrival on island and through the sounds of three battalions bands coming together marked the beginning of what will no doubt be a stint in

Cyprus full of opportunity to show value, professionalism and flair for the 4 SCOTS Pipes and Drums. A special thanks must go to all the participants from across the three battalions represented for their ability to pull off such an exuberant display so soon after a busy summer and a period of well-earned leave – perhaps offerings of whisky received afterwards in the Officers' Mess made it all the more worthwhile.

Captain C Jenkins



HIGHLAND GAMES



Hldr Jones-Reid cheering on the Delta Coy anchor – "Ramumu's at the back, at the back!"



Lt Ritchie receives the 20Kg burden from LCpl Barron to start the final lap of the Burden Race for Support Company.



The Support Company competitors celebrate receiving the Highland Games trophy after a hard-fought competition!



Support Company competitors pose for a photo after successfully winning the final event, the Tug-o-War before hearing the final result and becoming overall winners!

4 SCOTS arrived in Cyprus through July and August 2025. The Unit move has brought into greater focus one of the Battalion's priorities: living as a community. With our new rhythm of on and off-island commitments, operations underway and families settled into life in the sun, it was time to formally introduce the Battalion to the wider British Forces Cyprus community, and all of those who support it. One of 4 SCOTS keystone events came to Dhekelia – the Highland Games.

This year's event took place on Saturday 4 October 25 and was planned and led by Maj Lindsay and WO2 Gracie (OC and CSM HQ Coy). Serving as the perfect opportunity to demonstrate who we are, and what we can do – in a kilt, hardly the most appropriate attire for the sweltering Mediterranean heat. Track and field events, including cabers, hammers, weights, strongmen, tugs-of-war, and the Pipes and Drums, all in glorious Cypriot weather provided excellent spectator viewing. With teams from across the island

taking part there was a strong spirit of competition, and the Commanding Officer's worst fears were almost realised, before Sp Coy managed to hold off a team from 1 PWRR and take the overall win. Friendly competition, the cultural stands, fantastic food, children's races, and bouncy castles galore really helped build that community spirit; and having been supported by BFBS throughout, the day came to a fitting closed with musical acts (namely a Cypriot Michael Jackson tribute act, which I assure you was better than it sounds) and a foam party!

All in all, a fantastic day was had by all, both competitors and spectators alike, and no doubt we can now aim to achieve even more and repeat the success of the day in 2026.

Major T Lindsay



4 SCOTS

THE DUKE OF ROTHESAY'S DIRK

Every year Delta Company HQ has the privilege of leading the planning and delivery of the Duke of Rothesay's Dirk, the Battalion's inter-platoon patrol competition, commonly known as "The DORD". In a slight amendment to the format, this year was set as a continuous tactical action. The six patrols from Task Force Hector were released at intervals over 36 hours with the mission to search Obj DON, the ruins of Paramali village at the southern end of the Western Sovereign Base Area training estate, before conducting a reconnaissance of Obj SPEY, the Fragnia Sotras Dam at the eastern end of the area. Of course, en route the mission changed to include urban clearances, advances to contact, anti-ambush drills, counter-explosive ordnance scenarios, casualty handling, pinpoint navigation, incredibly challenging terrain, and a best effort, 2-miler finish. The patrols covered c.40kms, and contended with steep terrain, sharp rocks, spikey vegetation, and the Cyprus sun. I refute all allegations that the climb of Heartbreak Hill (1:3 slope) was anything but strictly necessary!

These events don't work without absolute dedication from the teams, but perhaps more importantly from the support staff. Capt Serpell, CSM Tavaga, CSgt Tora, Cpl Joseph, and Cpl Wheelton pulled out all the stops, and delivered a high-quality training event. As always, the CIS Platoon were early

on the ground to ensure workable comms across the training area, with great credit to the team led by CSgt Hague, and Sgts 'Chief' Omondi, and Kemp. Stand leads from the Trg Wing, and A, B, and Sp Coys gave up significant time in planning for their part in the competition and execution was exceptional. Particular credit to Sgt Robertson, Cpl Forbes, and LCpl King, whose C-EO stand put all levels of the patrol through a testing, high-pressure scenario.

Although all the teams put in strong performances, there was one which consistently outperformed its competitors. H21A, a remarkably junior team with only one JNCO, commanded by Lt Owtram with Sgt Nasavu alongside, emerged as the 2025 DORD Champion Platoon. They have a spring in their step, and even larger targets on their backs for next year.

Major J Graham



Hldr Weeks and 2Lt Rawcliffe patrol towards a stricken vehicle, deep in a minefield.



Cpl Webb's smiles run contrary to the words exchanged at the top of "Heartbreak Hill".



Clearing Paramali under the watchful eye of WO2 Alexander.



BRANCH ASSOCIATION

The inaugural 4 SCOTS Branch event was held at the Royal British Legion, Dhekelia Station, on Friday 21 November. Organised by the Branch Committee, the evening brought together more than 100 serving soldiers and former SCOTS veterans for food, drink and music. The Pipes and Drums closed the night with a superb set of rousing tunes.

Special thanks go to the Branch Vice Chair,

Sgt Cook, and committee members Cpl Joubert, Cpl Robertson, Cpl Devlin-May, LCpl Cook, Hldr Bruce and Hldr Couper for delivering an excellent event.

The branch will form a new committee in 2026 and look to run a few more events.

WO1 (RSM) R Ritchie



All ranks of 4 SCOTS came together for a great night.



The CO and RSM chat about the glory days with former SCOTS Cpls, Kris McAleese and Neil Ferris.



Sgt Van Der Walt and Cpl Joubert hard at work whilst Hldr Bruce "supervises" with a can.



The P&Ds rounded off the night with some tunes.



4 SCOTS

A COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major G Burnett
Major S McCauley

Company Second in Command:

Captain K Boyle
Captain A Lindsay

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two C Grant
Warrant Officer Class Two H Cairns

1 Platoon:

Lieutenant M Whitfield
Sergeant Ashmore
Sergeant Morgan

2 Platoon:

Lieutenant C Price
Second Lieutenant J Doherty
Sergeant J Barclay

Machine Gun Platoon:

Lieutenant Coutts
Colour Sergeant Cumming
Sergeant Robertson

The men of A Company have had an extremely busy year, which saw them deploy from Catterick, North Yorkshire to Romania via Bulgaria and Greece. If that wasn't enough, then to pack up their lives in the United Kingdom and move to the Island of Cyprus to assume our tasking as the Regional Operations Battalion.

With the move to Cyprus, we have bid farewell to Major Grant Burnett and WO2 Connor Grant and welcomed the reunion of Maj Scott McCauley and WO2 Harvey Cairns as OC and CSM respectively. With the team now fully established, we are looking forward to taking all that Cyprus and the wider region can throw at us in our stride and hope to have a happy and exciting two years on Island.

1 Platoon

Another busy year for 1 Platoon. After a strong finish to 2024, highlighted by Hldr Murray winning the A Coy top jock competition and several strong performances in the Charles Morpeth XC that secured the A Coy win, we moved into 2025 striving to stay at the top.



We began the year preparing ourselves and the Foxhounds for the colder climates of northern Romania on Ex STEADFAST DART, a multinational exercise designed to test the deployment speed of NATO's Allied Reaction Force. Much of January was spent in the garages, learning cold-weather skills from the Battalions SMEs and ensuring the Foxhounds were fully prepped and ready to embark on their journey from the UK to Greece, where we linked up with them for the onward move to Romania.



1 Platoon - Ex STEADFAST DART

Once deployed, 1 Platoon got stuck straight in focusing heavily on trench clearing drills and developing ways to use the Foxhounds as effectively as possible in the new environment. We spent a week operating alongside a Romanian company, learning each other's TTPs and conducting joint training serials. The exercise culminated in 1 Platoon taking point of the 4 SCOTS element during the DV day, conducting a live attack onto a trench system alongside support from the French Paras, Spanish Legion and Romanian armour, attack helicopters and F16s.

On returning to the UK, the Foxhounds were handed over to their next custodian to allow the platoon to shift its focus to preparing for the unit move to Cyprus. Alongside the packing and dispatch of kit, 1 Platoons focused on public order training ahead of our validation. This offered a new type of training, allowing the platoon to do something a bit different and get stuck in against the other companies during our validation exercise.

Throughout the year, members of 1 platoon maintained their involvement in Battalion's running team. As well as

continuing to smash the Army's Cross Country races, members of the platoon took part in the Island Peaks race in the Scottish Western Isles, the Glen Lion 50km Ultra and running the West Highland Way to name a few.



CQB in Bahrain

After a short time acclimatising to our new home in Cyprus, 1 Platoon - along with elements from 2 PI and Recce PI - deployed to Bahrain on Op KIPION, taking over the role of Force Protection role at the UK Naval Support Facility from 1 PWRR. For most of the platoon, this was their first time working with the Royal Navy and brought a wide range of new training opportunities for the lads, especially the chance to get regular range time to develop CQB skills on the indoor range and in the US Coast Guard Boarding team's "Boat in a Box" Facility. As well as training alongside the Americans, we were shown around the HMS Lancaster, a Type 23 Frigate - after which the consensus being that living in a trench remains preferable. The 10 weeks deployed to Bahrain provided stability and allowed the lads to get into a strong phys routine and get out to see Bahrain.

Now back from Bahrain, the platoon is into the training cycle, taking part in a number of low-level platoon and company exercises and contributing lads to the Company's team for the annual DORD Bn patrol competition. As we approach Christmas, we are taking over as Lead Company of the Regional Standby Battalion, returning to R1 after a long stint as NATO's ARF.

1 Platoon is looking forward to another busy are varied year ahead, with opportunities to train and deploy across the region.

2 Platoon

It has been fast start to life on the Island within 2PI. From landing in the summer, the Platoon has enjoyed the various tasks, trawls and exercises provided by the battalion. We started with a strong performance in the annual Caber Feidh.

Where Platoon members not only pushed the limits of their marksmanship but also team cohesion and camaraderie.



Moving into October, this saw the Platoon set off on Exercise Desert Oryx in Oman. Once arrived we were received positively and immediately got to work. Between mounting guard, QRF, playing enemy and many taskings in between, the troops put in an unbelievable amount of effort across the whole month. They were rewarded with ranges on the C8 and opportunities to get hands on with the KS-1, along with top of the range medical training.



The troops also conducted a dry pub quiz towards the end of the exercise and Hldr Tavaga delivered an extremely interesting and detailed battlefield study on The Battle of Mirbat (1972), specifically the actions of Sgt Labalaba, whose memorial we visited. Lessons such as military knowledge tests, presentations and BCD practice were delivered by Cpls Christie and McGurk across the month helping to develop the tactical mindset of the troops.



This also acted as revision for those participating on the next JNCO cadre in the new year. After a successful time in Oman and not much rest, we quickly turned ourselves around and set our sights on the DORD. After stepping off early on Monday morning and finishing at the same time on Tuesday the effort put in by the troops was exceptional, culminating and shown by finishing with the second fastest 2-mile time across the participating teams.



We are now prepping for a busy festive period taking over as LCG and looking to maintain the high standard of work achieved so far with our time on island. It must be noted the exceptional work of Sgt Robertson in prepping the troops for Ex DESERT ORYX and his extremely professional care of them during the exercise. Sgt Barclay has also been a great addition to the company and has hit the ground running by integrating well, setting the platoon up for success on the DORD and LCG.



Ex STEADFAST DART: A Machine Gun Platoon Perspective

NATO's largest exercise of 2025, Ex STEADFAST DART, brought together British, Romanian, French, and Greek forces in a multinational display of military cooperation and capability. The exercise involved a significant logistical effort, with vehicles shipped across Europe to Greece, where troops from 4 SCOTS collected them before embarking on a challenging road move through Greece and Bulgaria, culminating in Romania.

For the Machine Gun (MG) Platoon, the exercise proved to be an invaluable training opportunity, offering a mix of live and blank firing scenarios that tested and enhanced their operational readiness.

During the Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT) phase, the MG Platoon played a critical role, providing covering fire from their Jackals to support company and platoon-level attacks. This phase allowed the platoon to gain

essential experience in delivering accurate and effective fire while manoeuvring their vehicles. The dynamic nature of the exercise required the platoon to adapt to the movement of friendly forces as they advanced, sharpening their coordination and situational awareness.

The blank firing phase further broadened the platoon's skill set, enabling them to refine their light role capabilities alongside their mounted training. This dual focus ensured the MG Platoon remained versatile and prepared for a range of operational scenarios.

Ex STEADFAST DART was a resounding success for the MG Platoon, providing a unique platform to develop their proficiency in both live and blank training environments. The experience gained during this multinational exercise will undoubtedly enhance their effectiveness in future operations.





4 SCOTS

B COMPANY (BRAITHREAN)

Officer Commanding:
Major J Fish

Company Second in Command:
Captain G Sandiford
Captain A Lambert

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two S Alexander

Company Quarter Master Sergeant
Colour Sergeant C Smith
Colour Sergeant I Essoo

5 Platoon:
Lieutenant S Owtram
Sergeant D Davis

6 Platoon:
Lieutenant B Richardson
Second Lieutenant H Russell
Sergeant G Cook
Sergeant A 'Bongo' Boyle

7 Platoon:
Lieutenant E Clarke
Lieutenant E Johnston
Sergeant S Degei
Sergeant J Nasavu

Tech Team
Sergeant Hauley
Corporal Menzies
Corporal Ephraim



Braithrean Company Complete on the SMARDAN training area, ROMANIA, during Exercise STEADFAST DART.

Introduction – Major James Fish (Officer Commanding)

I am incredibly fortunate to have extended my time in post as Officer Commanding of the Braithrean Company. Alas, this will be my last year, as I will not be allowed to extend for a fourth!

2025 has been one of significant challenge. When preparing for Op HALIFAX (the move to Cyprus), you would normally expect a six-month run-in. But that was also the exact time that B Company was deployed, with the rest of the Battalion on the NATO Operational Rehearsal of the Allied Reaction Force in Romania. That meant the Braithrean only had half the normal amount of time to prepare for our unit move to Cyprus.

And not content with simply moving to Cyprus, it was B Company that was selected to be the first on the line and assume Operational Readiness from 1 PWRR, standing by in case Defence needed to intervene in the Middle East. Having lived it, it would be difficult to overstate the tests—not only of soldiering, but of administration as well—that all of this placed upon not just the Officers and Soldiers of Braithrean Company, but their families.

So, before you rush off to read about the adventures of the Braithrean in 2025, firstly a huge thank you to all who have served in B Company this year. We have said farewell to some significant personalities: Capt Gregor Sandiford (selected for Adjt 6 SCOTS), Lts Euan Clarke, Ben Richardson, and Sgt Degei (off to train recruits—heaven help us!), CSgt Chris Smith (CQMS), Sgt Garry Cook (back to the Reconnaissance Platoon) and significant numbers of Section Commanders, including Josh Menzies, Bryan Feenan, and Steven Butcher, all of whom have promoted.

We have also added to the Braithrean Family, welcoming back Capt Alex Lambert and Sgt Josua Nasavu. It has been a

privilege to serve with them all. There should also be a special mention for Lt Simon Owtram, who, with his wife Alice, welcomed their first child into the world out here in Cyprus. The early reports are good—they have a future member of Braithrean Company in the making!

Early 2025 – Exercise STEADFAST DART & DACIA – Lt Simon Owtram (5 PI Comd)

Braithrean Company began 2025 with the Battalion, deploying as part of NATO's vanguard to Romania on Ex STEADFAST DART. Journeying through Greece, Bulgaria, and Eastern Romania, B Coy alone headed north to Transylvania for Ex DACIA. We were hosted, not by Nosferatu, but by the Spanish Ejército de Tierra and worked with the French Armée de terre. The Spanish gave paella and soup; the French had us as their frères d'armes. Deploying on frozen ground, we faced Romanians with BTR-80s to boot. Expectations were low, but the Foxhounds and their drivers impressed, managing off-road driving with some slipping and sliding. However, the exercise could not be conducted solely from behind the wheel and the soldiers of the Braithrean dismounted and soon found the going on foot had its own challenges.



Harbouring post bear encounter. Hldr Hill swore he saw two yellow eyes whilst on stag.



Whilst patrolling up a track to meet the enemy's right flank, 5 PL were expecting to deny the armoured capabilities of the Romanians, instead they had something grizzlier in store. Three brown bears running directly towards the patrol at a canter, 'actions on bear' had not been briefed in orders but the response from the point man, Hldr Bovingdon, was spot on – he opened fire. The bears were averted and the mission continued and concluded with a newfound respect for and friendship with the 3rd Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment and reassured that the 'UK is ready'...

Middle of 2025 – Operation HALIFAX, the move to Cyprus. Lt Edward Johnston (7 PI Comd)

The middle of 2025 was a busy period for B Company, as with the rest of the Battalion, due to Operation HALIFAX. This operation marked the Battalion's move from Catterick to Cyprus. As new members of the Battalion quickly discovered, logistics (G4) "doesn't just happen." It was all hands-on deck to ensure Bourlon Barracks was left in good order and that we were ready to assume our duties in Cyprus.

For B Company, this meant our CQMS, CSgt Smith, worked tirelessly to pack up the company—from the offices to the accommodation blocks. His efforts ensured we were well-prepared to hit the ground running.

This preparation proved vital as B Company was the first to assume the role of Lead Company Group (LCG) upon our arrival in Dhekelia. Taking on this responsibility from 4 August 2025, we were held at 48 hours' notice to move. During this time, B Company manned guard duties at Alexander Barracks and Dhekelia Station, while also conducting low-level training in



The Braithrean completing a Try Dive not long after arriving on Island and flying(?) the flag for the Regiment on the Mediterranean Sea floor.



B Company Soldiers knocking down targets during the Cyprus Operational Shooting Competition.

the available time. All of this was done while waiting for the proverbial "balloon" to go up.

As our time as LCG came to an end, B Company achieved notable success in September by representing 4 SCOTS in the Cyprus Operational Shooting Competition. The company won the knock-out falling plates competition, bringing home silverware and demonstrating that, as a light role infantry battalion, we are ready to operate in the region if required.

End of 2025 – Operation KIPION, Bahrain. 2Lt Harry Russell (6 PI Comd)

In October, a platoon from B Company, 4 SCOTS, relieved A Company as they deployed to Bahrain as part of Op KIPION—the UK's long-standing commitment to promoting peace and stability in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. The platoon primarily deployed in a Force Protection role, based out of UK Naval Support Facility alongside the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, working closely with the US, Bahrain Armed Forces, and a multitude of other global allies.

Despite being deployed in the Force Protection role, B Company used the facilities available and proximity to our US allies to conduct valuable training, engaging with partner nations to enhance our traditional soldiering. These included working closely with the US Coast Guard to refine the platoon's low-level urban warfare skills, conducting battlefield casualty drills with subject matter experts, and all things theory—from navigation to tactics—learning from one another and strengthening interoperability.

Aside from working hard, the platoon made the most of being based in Bahrain, with some going sailing and tasting the local cuisine, while others opted for the less traditional Nando's or Cheesecake Factory.

In a testament to their exceptional performance throughout the year, Highlander Hill and Highlander Macdonald were formally—or in Hill's words, "finally"—promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal by the Commanding Officer of UKNSF. Their hard work throughout the deployment has been exemplary, demonstrating the leadership potential and commitment necessary for their new roles. The



1 Section, 5 Platoon, showing the US Navy how to pull a Fire Truck, on Op KIPION

promotions were well-deserved, and exciting times lie ahead for both individuals.

In a significant professional development opportunity, Lance Corporal Hill and Private Mottershead delivered a comprehensive 30-minute regimental presentation to the UKMCC command group (Royal Navy Officers ranking from Major equivalent through to Colonel). The presentation, which covered various aspects of our regiment's history, current role, and traditions, was exceptionally well-received and offered two young soldiers the chance to revise their regimental history and brief to some pretty senior officers!



Lt Commander Donbavand MBE was fortunate to promote LCpls Hill & Macdonald whilst they were deployed to the UK Naval Support Facility in BAHRAIN.



4 SCOTS

B COMPANY (BRAITHREAN) *continued*

It has not been all work and no play, and to round off our time in Bahrain the platoon held an end-of-deployment smoker. This saw 5 Platoon come cap in hand to the UKNSF Welfare Fund asking for beer tokens. Fortunately, our naval friends were feeling generous, and we spent the day at a 5-star hotel before returning to camp to spend time (and all our beer tokens) at the Oasis Bar—a favourite for cheap beers and karaoke sessions.

Summary – Major James Fish (Officer Commanding)

As you can see, the Braithrean have delivered everything that has been expected of them this year. At times it has

been draining, but there have also been some significant achievements that serve as tangible rewards for the hard work and dedicated, quiet professionalism of those who serve in B Company.

The first came not long after we had arrived in sunny Cyprus. The reason Lt Edward Johnston was selected to lead the Battalion Team (entirely comprised of Braithrean Jocks) in the BFC Operational Shooting Competition was that it was B Company that was once again crowned Cabar Feidh shooting competition champions for the second year in a row.

But something even more striking has recently occurred. Most recently (at the

time of writing), and for the first time since 2009, a composite platoon drawn from across the Company was crowned the DORD Patrol Competition winners. It was an incredible effort from everyone, but special mention must be given to LCpl Shearer. As the only JNCO in the team, his leadership was outstanding.

Finally, and for the final time as OC B Coy, thank you to all who have made my time back in 4 SCOTS—and especially Braithrean Company—both professionally fulfilling and enjoyable. And thank you, the reader, for taking the time to keep the living history of this amazing sub-unit alive by reading about our (mis)adventures.



The B Coy team during the Cabar Feidh – not only did the 2025 competition test shooting, but all aspects of weapon use/handling, including blind folded assembly.



Hldrs Osbourne, Anthony, Gallagher, Lt Johnston, Hldrs McCarthy, O'Brien and LCpl Shearer, deployed somewhere, on an aircraft carrier, in the Middle East as part of the Braithrean's new role in Cyprus.



D COMPANY (THE CLAN)

Officer Commanding:
Major J Graham

Company Second in Command:
Captain M Serpell

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two E Buntine
Warrant Officer Class Two A Tavaga

Company Quarter Master Sergeant
Colour Sergeant G Tora

13 Platoon:
Lieutenant D Coutts
Second Lieutenant B Rawcliffe
Sergeant N Crawford

14 Platoon:
Lieutenant F Ritchie
Lieutenant L Donovan
Sergeant C Bearman

15 Platoon:
Lieutenant T Stephens
Second Lieutenant E Donnachie
Sergeant P Ellis
Sergeant R Gillin

Tech Team
Sergeant Mason
Corporal Jaata
Corporal Ephraim
Lance Corporal Secka



The Clan, Smardan Training Area.



HdLr Fielding on top cover with the Romanians.



HdLr Grogan on Pyla Ranges during Ex CLAN SHADOW.

Our last Company update spoke of the dominant role that Very High Readiness had played in all of our lives. 2025 saw the preparation, training, packing, checking, re-packing, put to the test with the Battalion's deployment on Ex STEADFAST DART. The exercise in Romania, by ferry and plane, and by Greece and Bulgaria, was a hugely rewarding experience. Our high vehicle availability rate throughout the deployment was testament to the hard work of all crews, and in particular the Tech Team who trained them; this despite the challenging terrain, sub-zero temperatures, and high mileage forced upon the platforms. The exercise was a -16 °C whirlwind of live firing, trench clearances, fighting in woods and forests, and combined arms manoeuvre with Romanian armour. All before the recovery to Greece, the ferry home, and significantly our farewell to the Foxhounds for the next 2 years. It was also the time to say farewell to CSM Buntine as he came to the end of an eventful 2 years in post. Fortunately, his move to the Battalion's RQMS(T) role has meant he's been heard across the Battalion even when he's not been seen. Equally fortunately, CSM Tavaga more than capably stepped into the breach in preparation for the administrative maelstrom to come!

Which brings us to Cyprus... Although training in sub-freezing temperatures is perfect preparation for a two-year tour in the sun, with us facing a new role on island, the Regional Standby Battalion re-rolled to the Regional Operations Battalion, the Company needed to be put through the paces of Mission Ready Training Centre (MRTC) delivered Public Order validation at Whinny Hill. Although a new experience for many, the Jocks took to the training like ducks to water.

Equally comfortable kicking shields and launching missiles, as absorbing (and delivering!) punishment in the shield wall. Along with handing over vehicles to other 7X Battalions, and packing personal and Company property into containers, The Clan also took a last opportunity to soak up some of what the North of England has to offer. Sgt Bearman planned and delivered Ex CLAN PEAKS, a navigation exercise around the Lakes 10-peaks, a challenging route and a reminder if needed of what our future Light Role training might look like. This was swiftly followed by the Battalion's inter-Company competition, racing around the Yorkshire 3-peaks. Less of a climb, but twice the distance and infinitely wetter! This training was a fitting marker of our time in



4 SCOTS

D COMPANY (THE CLAN) *continued*



Sgt Ellis and Cpl Mackinnon lead the Company around the Yorkshire 3-Peaks.



The Clan advance guard during Ex CLAN PEAKS.



Hldr Bird: '1000 yard stare' champion 2025.



Hldr Prout entertaining the troops at the Turtle Bar.

North Yorkshire ahead of the temporary pause to our time there.

Although it doesn't feel that we've been here long, the Company arrived in Cyprus at the beginning of August, time has already flown by. We've been through 2 of the 3-way rotations (Follow on Company Group 1 and Lead Company Group), conducted several weeks of dry and live firing, organised and competed in the Duke

of Rothesay's Dirk patrol competition, and deployed more than 30 soldiers on operations in the region. So far island life has presented a huge variety of opportunities, and whilst it can be a challenge to be separated from families and friends for such a long period of time, you can't argue with accommodation 50 metres from the Mediterranean Sea! We've had a full change over of Platoon

Commanders, with Lts Ritchie, Stephens, and Coutts moving onto the Battalion's support weapons platoons, and Sgt Ellis has taken up a temporary role in the Training Wing to support the JNCOs prepare for their Brecon Battle Courses. The Clan, a continuously evolving beast, has had a cracking year, and is set for the challenges of 2026 – Very High Readiness, Operational deployment, and Ex JEBEL STORM.



SUPPORT COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major Dunlop
Major Welch

Company Second in Command:

Captain Calder

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two Boyle
Warrant Officer Class Two Charles

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant Cairns
Colour Sergeant Tagica

Mortars:

Captain Jenkins
Captain Clayden-Spence
Colour Sergeant Dick

Anti-Tank:

Captain Watson
Captain Stephens
Colour Sergeant Grant

Recce:

Captain Hand
Captain Ritchie
Colour Sergeant Ashmore

Snipers:

Colour Sergeant Tagica
Colour Sergeant Russell
Sergeant McBlain
Sergeant Lewis

Assault Pioneers:

Pipe Major Roberts
Drum Major Minto



Cpl Mario using a Romanian AK variant weapon system during interoperability training with the Romanian 151 Bde during Ex STEADFAST DART.

In a predictably busy year with a renewed Field Army focus on Support Weapons capability and a unit move to the Mediterranean, 2025 has allowed Support Company build on its technical excellence and welcome in new talent drawn from across 4 SCOTS, the wider Regimental family and the Union Division. The company has continued to deploy on every major battalion exercise as well as running dispersed cadres from Cyprus to Salisbury Plain. The year began with the company deploying to Romania with the rest of the Battalion on Ex STEADFAST DART, a deployment that presented the rare opportunity for genuine international support weapon integration. On return to the UK the focus shifted to prepare for the unit move to Cyprus but concurrently saw Support Company SNCOs and Officers redeployed to Ex WESSEX STORM as Observer Coach Trainers for 2 R ANGLIAN allowing them to share their experience and doctrinal understanding with another 7 Bde unit. Next came some well-earned Summer Relocation Leave and the move to Alexander Barracks (AXB) in Cyprus. Support Company quickly established itself on island in preparation for a multitude of

regional operations and readiness commitments before starting distributed cadres for the Mortar and Anti-Tank Platoons. For those new members of the company, the cadres allowed a vital opportunity to learn their craft and test themselves as newly inducted members of 4 SCOTS' senior company; for those more familiar with the role it was an opportunity to develop themselves as mentors and prepare for future career courses at the Combined Arms Manoeuvre School (CAMS). Alongside the plethora of commitments and deployments many soldiers and officers were also able to attend promotion qualifying courses; notably Sgt Gilson received an instructor recommendation on the Mortar Platoon 2IC course.



The Mortar platoon live firing under a rare blue sky on Salisbury Plain.



Recce and Sniper Platoons take advantage of some of the limited shade during a navigation training exercise on the ESBA.

The Mortar Platoon finished the year with their cadre, combined with 2 R YORKS, the cadre was split between a novel backdrop of Cypriot winter sun and the familiar rain and sleet that comes with a November exercise on Salisbury Plain. The first phase, conducted in the Eastern Sovereign Base Area (ESBA), focused on developing weapon handling and the drills required to operate



4 SCOTS

SUPPORT COMPANY *continued*



The Mortar Platoon at the end of their Live Fire on Salisbury Plain with some of the 2 R YORKS Mortar Platoon.

as an effective mortar line as well as conceptual training with junior commanders. This stage of the cadre finished by taking advantage of the AXB Beach Bar for a night of pizzas and team building before the move back to the UK. Onwards from RAF Brize Norton to Salisbury Plain for an offer of exceptional live fire ranges at the cost of a 25°C temperature drop; for a little under two weeks the Mortar Platoon conducted live firing, testing their low-level skills and drills as well as the platoon's ability to disperse barrels and increase their survivability. With the third and final week in the UK came the infamous Heavy Carries coupled with some experimentation and sUAS integration with 2 R YORKS as the Fd Army experts in future optimisation.

The Anti-Tank Platoon also delivered their cadre in Cyprus, combined at times with our neighbouring Infantry Battalion on the other side of the island, the 1 PWRR. The Anti-Tank Platoon refined their skills with a period of conceptual and simulated training in AXB before deploying on a two-week final exercise in the Western Sovereign Base Area (WSBA). The harsh terrain and limited natural foliage presented a challenge to any Anti-Tank Platoon to sight Observation Posts (OPs) effectively. The Detachment Commanders had to become inventive in their planning and sighting to overcome these restrictions. Going forward those

lessons learned will prove vital for future exercises in Cyprus and potential deployments across the region in the future. The second week of the final exercise offered the chance to integrate into the 1 PWRR Headquarters Command and Staff Training (CAST), working to an unfamiliar Higher Headquarters provided real world training value to those commanders on the ground, simulating the reality of working in a combined arms scenario while deepening our relationships and interoperability with the only other British infantry battalion in Cyprus.

The Recce Platoon has undergone a significant uplift with an inflow of 10 new members to the platoon and 6 promotions since the beginning of the year, highlighting the talent within the platoon. With this uplift the platoon training programme has focused on the basics to enable the Recce Platoon cadre at the beginning of 2026 which will set the conditions for them to operate as the lead force element of the 4 SCOTS Battlegroup on return to the UK. In addition, tactical development the soldiers of the Recce Platoon have continued to develop themselves personally completing challenging sporting events across the world, notably Hldr Cushing who completed an Olympic distance Triathlon in Thailand after picking up the sport only 3 months before the event (resulting in only minor physical repercussions!).

The Sniper Platoon has seen a similar amount of promotional success with four of the 16 strong platoon promoting into their role. Since arrival to Cyprus the platoon has had a new Platoon Commander and Platoon Sergeant after the incumbents moved on to CQMS Sp Coy and to the 2 SCOTS Recce Platoon respectively. Due to the churn of personalities the Sniper Platoon cadre will also be conducted in the early part of 2026, in the meantime the platoon has been focusing on the fundamentals of navigation and shooting. Taking full advantage of what Cyprus has to offer the majority of the platoon completed the Basic Parachute Foundation Course.

Finally, the Assault Pioneer Platoon has continued to be extremely busy balancing their duality as musicians and infantry soldiers. In their latter guise they have partnered on several occasions with the Royal Engineers to share our skills as infanteers with their engineering aptitude. On Ex STEADFAST DART the platoon developed and tested new methods of trench defence and assault techniques and later successfully completed a training package on Ex BULLS PIONEER with 32 Engr Regt which covered a number of Assault Pioneer fundamentals. These deployments have enabled the platoon to remain competent in their combat role and prepare for their own cadre on island in 2026.



Hldr Cushing exiting the water ready to start the 40Km cycle.



Anti-Tank Platoon step off from the drop off point onto their final exercise.



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major A Cunningham
Major T Lindsay

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two D Dunnachie
Warrant Officer Class Two G Gracie

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant G Watson

Stores Team:

Corporal C Mitchinson
Corporal M Daumeke
Lance Corporal R Cook

2025 presented a series of demanding and exciting challenges for HQ Coy with departments being relied upon to support and enable the constant high output in support of the Battalion throughout our time held at R1 readiness as NATO's Allied Reaction Force whilst concurrently planning and executing a unit move under OP HALIFAX.

The first half of the year focused on Ex STEADFAST DART which saw most of HQ Coy enablers deployed via Air and Surface across Europe as a Light Mechanized Infantry Battlegroup into Romania to conduct a multinational ARF projection to the eastern flank of Europe. Throughout Ex STEADFAST DART CSgt Watson would be re-tasked during this period assume the role of rifle company CQMS, leaving behind his G4 team to prepare for the battalions move to Cyprus on OP HALIFAX.

During this period the battalion would bid farewell to the CSM WO2 Dunnachie and welcome in WO2 Gracie over from BHQ as the OPSWO to assume the role of CSM where he was responsible for forming a ROG and directing the initial groundwork for the battalion's recovery and preparation to handover Bournon Barracks.

When the battalion returned from Romania, we would also be saying farewell to Maj Cunningham following an illustrious 30+ year career in the army and welcoming Maj Lindsay from MRTC who would take post on the battalion's arrival in Cyprus.

Due to Cpl Mitchinson's hard work throughout the reporting year, specifically during the handover of Bournon Barracks, he was successfully selected for promotion to Sgt and would move on to become 4 SCOTS MT Sgt. He would be succeeded by LCpl Daumeke, also selected for promotion and we would welcome LCpl Cook across from the RDS to the armoury.

Leaving the colder climates of a North Yorkshire, the company successfully deployed to slightly hotter climates in Alexander Barracks, Dhokela to set up home for the following 2 years, doing so we would welcome fresh faces in the form of a new LAD and Catering team.

It didn't take long for the jocks to make themselves heard on the Island. Both the CSM and OC had been busy planning and executing the battalion's big arrival through the delivery of a successful Beating the Retreat followed by the planning and execution of the biggest Highland Games the battalion has seen since the Germany days. Both were met with great reception from across Dhokela station and BFC.

As ever, HQ Coy will remain the backbone of the battalion, ready to react and support the needs of the battalion whatever the task

Major T Lindsay



4 SCOTS

QUATERMASTER DEPARTMENT

Quartermaster:

Major Nigel Garcia (Mercian)

Quartermaster (Tech):

Captain Craig Taylor

Regimental Quartermaster (Main):

Warrant Officer Class Two Scott Pew

Regimental Quartermaster (Tech):

Warrant Officer Class Two Eddie Buntine

Royal Logistics Corps LST Commander:

Staff Sergeant Andrew Chokotho

ET Colour Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant Tagarisa (R Yorks)

Quartermaster's Platoon Sergeant, Ammunition SNCO and Barrack Manager:

Sergeant Marc McKiddy

Clothing and Post NCO:

Corporal Seruliwaliwa

ET Corporal:

Corporal Valenitabua

ET Corporal:

Corporal Jatta

Master Tailor:

Corporal Anson

LST Second in Command:

Corporal Killiraki

Royal Logistics Corps LST:

Lance Corporal Kabbah

Royal Logistics Corps LST:

Lance Corporal Plaice

Driver QMs:

Highlander Horne

Tailor Second in Command:

Highlander McEwen



Members of 4 SCOTS QM's department preparing ORP for issue during Ex STEADFAST DART in Romania.

War of Logistics

Logistics has played a decisive role in the war in Ukraine, shaping both operational success and strategic outcomes. The ability to sustain forces with ammunition, fuel, food, and medical supplies has been critical for both sides, especially given the vast distances and harsh conditions on the front lines. Modern warfare in Ukraine has highlighted that logistics is not just a support function but a core element of combat power, influencing troop morale, operational tempo, and the capacity to exploit battlefield opportunities. In short, the war in Eastern Europe has reaffirmed that the War of Logistics often determines the limits of strategy.

4 SCOTS QM's Department has consistently demonstrated exceptional logistical foresight, delivering outstanding results across multiple complex logistical problems. Whether supporting the Battalion's deployment on Ex STEADFAST DART to Romania at the start of the year, moving over 200 vehicle platforms across Europe and more than 1,000 personnel as part of the battle group, or executing a complex unit move under Op HALIFAX, relocating soldiers, families, and regimental property over 2,000 miles to Cyprus, the department has risen to every challenge. Every member of the team, from Main to Tech, worked tirelessly to ensure the Battalion remained fully prepared to meet the Commanding Officer's intent. This commitment was most evident during Ex STEADFAST DART, a NATO exercise that significantly enhanced the Battalion's ARF capabilities. Among the department's notable achievements, 4 SCOTS Workshop secured the top ranking in the Army for vehicle readiness and spare parts availability: an accomplishment driven by the exceptional efforts of CSgt Tagarisa and SSgt Chokotho. The department also played a pivotal role in coordinating and

supporting over 1,000 personnel across dispersed locations following Ex STEADFAST DART. Additionally, Sgt McKiddy deployed as part of the Port Task Group to Greece, assisting with the repatriation of more than 800 vehicle platforms and ensuring all were bio-cleaned to the required standard. Equally critical were the contributions of the catering team. Aply led by SSgt Carr and Sgt Black, the chefs successfully planned, resourced, and managed a complex £400,000 budget covering infrastructure, rations, and materials for approximately 1,500 deployed service personnel across multiple locations during Ex STEADFAST DART. Their ability to liaise effectively with both military and civilian agencies ensured seamless delivery of support, with zero failures recorded and all training objectives achieved. These combined efforts underscore the department's professionalism, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to operational success, cementing 4 SCOTS QM's Department as a cornerstone of the Battalion's effectiveness. All of this could not have been possible without the unflappable leadership of Maj Gary Main, ably supported by Capt Stevie Main the QM (T); the wider Regiment owe you a debt of gratitude.

Unit Move to Cyprus

Following the conclusion of Ex STEADFAST DART, the unit's focus shifted to the complex logistical challenge of relocating soldiers and families over 2,000 miles to Cyprus our "immovable aircraft carrier." While a considerable amount of operational planning was conducted behind the scenes under the leadership of the QM(M), the success of this move ultimately rested on the efforts of the RQs. At this stage, I would like to acknowledge WO2 Scottie Pew (RQMS(M)) and WO2 Eddie Buntine (RQMS(T)) for their outstanding execution of the tactical actions that enabled the



Handing over the vehicle fleet to 1 Rifles prior to the Op HALIFAX unit move to Cyprus.



Members of 4 SCOTS QM's department enjoying the sun in Cyprus and taking a well-earned break following the Op HALIFAX unit move to Cyprus.

unit's relocation. Countless hours were dedicated to completing the notoriously frustrating Master Import and Export Lists (MEIL) within strict deadlines to ensure compliance and readiness. Their diligence ensured that all 45 ISO containers were correctly prepared and packed for the RoRo sailings, meeting every critical deadline without compromise.

Alongside the unit's move to Cyprus, the QM's Department also had the significant task of handing over the Equipment Entitlement (EE) to 1 Rifles and transferring Bourlon Barracks to 1 R Yorks. This was no small undertaking and involved a complex G4 process, but it once again highlights the quality and professionalism of the department. RQ (T) Buntine and CSgt Tagarisa led from the front from the Tech side, meeting every deadline and upholding the regiment's strong G4 reputation.

Whilst the unit move was a significant undertaking, it also had to meet a critical timeline: the takeover of Alexander Barracks (AXB) and the EE before assuming the Regional Standby (RSB) Commitment in Cyprus. The takeover of AXB and EE was completed swiftly, thanks to the "can-do" attitudes of both RQs, supported by the G4 assurance provided by SSgt Chokotho. The RSB deadline remained a constant focus, requiring dedicated G4 support to B Coy as they assumed the Lead Company Group (LCG) role within the wider RSB commitment. During this phase, the more junior members of the department: Cpl Seru, Cpl Anson, Cpl Killiarki, LCpl Kabbah, and Hldrs Horne and McKewen truly stepped up, ensuring all the smaller but vital details were taken care of. These are the tasks that often go unseen but, if neglected, have real-life consequences, accounting for critical items during the handover from 1 Rifles, confirming Public Order Equipment was serviceable to support the LCG, and ensuring essential

CSUPs and clothing were available on the shelf. None of these actions required direction, they simply got on with it.

Once the department settled into our new lives in the Mediterranean, it quickly established strong relationships with the wider Dhekelia Garrison staff and Headquarters British Forces Cyprus. We soon developed a steady battle rhythm, providing support to operations such as Op GLANCE and Op HIGHMAST, and began planning for overseas exercises in 2026. The inspection regime, however, is never far away. In Oct 25, the battalion underwent a Land Equipment Audit (Light), led by Capt Craig Taylor and supported by the wider technical team within 4 SCOTS. Needless to say, the tech side smashed it, reaffirming the battalion's reputation as first-class logistical operators.

So, next time you spot a G4 operator, give them a nod, or maybe a Keo. They are the glue holding this battalion together, the experts of the supply chain, and the people who make "we need it yesterday" happen today. For us, it's just another day; for everyone else, it's a logistical miracle.

Finally, I would like to circle back to my opening statement and underline the critical importance of logistic sustainment. In Russia, logistics was not a supporting arm, it was the decisive factor. Our advance outran our supplies, and without fuel and ammunition, even the finest strategy collapses.

Promotions and Farewells

This year has seen some significant changes. Congratulations on promotions and with a heavy heart we say farewell:

- Maj Gary Main – QM (M). Gary leaves the Army in Jan 26 and the Department, and the wider Bn wish him and his family all the very best for the future.
- Capt Stevie Main – QM (T). On promotion

to Major and assuming the role of QM (M) of 7 SCOTS.

- WO2 Ross Parker – RQMS (T). On promotion to WO1 RSM 2 ITB.
- Cpl Saunders – ET JNCO. Posted to ITC (C).
- LCpl Plaiice – LST JNCO.

Their contribution has been outstanding, and they will be greatly missed. Each person has made a real difference to the department, and their absence will be felt by all of us.

New Faces to the Department

As we bid farewell to some individuals, we are delighted to welcome new members to the team. WO2 Buntine steps into the role of RQMS (T) from CSM D Coy, Capt Craig Taylor joins us as QM (T) from RCMO, and Cpl Valenitabua takes on the position of ET JNCO. Also, LCpl Naituku replaces LCpl Plaiice within the RLC LST. All will bring fresh ideas, energy, and different perspectives on how business gets done within the G4 world.

Change of QM (M)

Major Garcia has joined 4 SCOTS from DE&S, taking up the role of Quartermaster. Since arriving, he has fully embraced the challenges and opportunities that come with the position. His focus has been on strengthening logistic support, building strong working relationships across the battalion, and ensuring that the department runs smoothly.

Operationally Focused; Logistically Ready

Even with changes and challenges, being part of the Quartermaster's Department remains a privilege. The teamwork and spirit never falter, no matter what comes our way. Here's to the Quartermaster's Department – Operationally Focused; Logistically Ready, always prepared, dependable and ready to support the Commanding Officer's intent.



4 SCOTS

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS (SPS) DETACHMENT

Another busy year for 4 SCOTS has meant that the AGC(SPS) Detachment has also had to keep the tempo up to support the unit amidst a considerable change of workforce in the department.

The detachment started the new year with a new FSA SSgt Sarah Lawlor and RAWO WO2 Sujit, from 2 RIFLES and no officers. Fortunately, strong leadership and professionalism from across the ranks allowed a seamless transition and maintenance of output for the Det.

Early 2025 saw the department fully focused on deploying the unit on Ex STEADFAST DART in the best possible manner. With Sgt Jones, LCpl Witton, Pte Boyd and Pte Langton deployed to provide Pers Admin support to both firm base HQ and deployed HQs, providing an excellent opportunity to test their green skills whilst providing administrative support. The administrative burden that comes with a Battalion's worth of soldiers overseas cannot be understated and again, the 4 SCOTS Det more than ably rose to the challenge of the task at hand to ensure the Battalion deployed and recovered in good order without incident. It was a truly unique experience that also meant they could integrate more with their companies and experienced the vital role of the SPS in a full battlegroup level overseas deployment.

Soon after returning to Bourlon Barracks, and with the new RAO (Capt Joseph Pipa-

Harding) posting in, focus had to switch to the imminent G1A, followed in short order by the unit move to Cyprus under Op HALIFAX. Whilst some work for this was done before the deployment to Ex STEADFAST DART, a unit move to Cyprus is no small undertaking for an already busy branch within the Battalion. Throughout this period we sadly said goodbye to many familiar faces: LCpl Whitton, posted to 17RLC; Pte Hopkins, who has left service; Sgt Peters, on maternity leave, (congratulations again!); Cpl Murray, posted to Saudi Arabia on an OCE; SSgt Tobin, who has left service after 22 invaluable years in the Army; and Michelle Atheron, our civilian clerk who remains in Bourlon Barracks. However, thanks to the tireless work from everyone up to the point at which they left, the unit move admin was (somewhat) bearable. Next stop, Cyprus.

Once the unit had reconstituted in Cyprus, the admin department set to work understanding and briefing the troops on the unique allowances that are on offer to those whilst posted overseas. The department also wasted no time on seeing what the island had to offer. Making the most of the Dhekelia Water Sport Centre, the local cuisine and taking part in the CO's 'Hector's Odyssey' challenge travelling to sites on the island and in the region, members of the Det wasted little time in taking on all the opportunities a deployment could offer.

The department has been heavily involved with unit life over the past year. Cpl Moktan took part in the annual Caber Feidh shooting competition, where is marksmanship was a boon to the HQ team and Cpl McNevin also supported the Duke of Rothesay's Dirk (DORD) patrols competition. This year's Beating the Retreat event was attended by members of the detachment from across the ranks with their respective messes. Members of the detachment with Nepalese heritage provided a cultural stand at the Highland Games, showcasing some of the unit's broad diversity. Lt Ben Billany has supported the unit's triathlon team helping deliver the triathlon coaching course and being the fastest member of the 4 SCOTS team on the Olympusman event.

Not losing touch with the broader AGC(SPS) community, 4 SCOTS AGC Detachment entered a team to Ex WHITE LION, sending 4 members to Austria to take part in the Corps downhill racing championship. Unfortunately, not winning any silverware it stretched the individuals who attended with it being the first time downhill skiing for the majority of the team.

All in all, 2025 was a fantastic year for the AGC (SPS) Detachment of 4 SCOTS and we look forward eagerly to an exciting 2026.

Captain Pipa-Harding

COMMUNICATION INFORMATION SYSTEM PLATOON

From a G6 perspective there are two facts that remain consistent throughout the Battalion battle rhythm. They are as such: firstly, the success of the CIS PI affects all of Battalion, and secondly, that success usually goes unnoticed. This singing loop remained true up until 2025 when the PI was hailed as a priority for our departing Commanding Officer, who kindly worked previous RSO Capt Heywood to the bone throughout our period on readiness and in the lead up to Ex STADFAST DART. However, the RSO's gift of work is the signallers call to arms and in this regard the NCOs and Highlanders answered.

This year the PI has gone from strength to strength in CP survivability as a Light Mech HQ in Romania, validating on CAST in Basingbourn back in the UK, rolling out the function of MOTOROLA 5G Radios throughout Battalion, and Cpl McBride receiving Top Student on his RSDC Course.

2025 was about innovating with our warfighting foot forward before then collecting our wears, boxing up the stores in June, and starting a new life on The Jewel of the Mediterranean. Cyprus here we come!

During this transition the PI saw a large churn of personnel: Capt Watson RSO, the famous WO2 Maclean-Maccines makes a surprise return as RSWO, Sgt Kemp and Sgt Omondi post in from 1 RANGER and 3 SCOTS respectively, our resident South African Cpl Joubert diversifies the PI moving over from A Coy, and to top it all off Cpl Florence is welcomed in from the PWRR.

New faces give new life to the platoon during the early days of this Cypriot journey. The hard work and good stories continue. All have requalified on IPRO, the majority have conducted some form of AT while we also have representation on both Nordic and Alpine Skiing Championships (LCpl Pow, LCpl Patterson and Hldr Walker).

Preparations are being conducted for the forthcoming CIS career courses, and we have even squeezed some charity work in there with Hldr Cooper raising over £1000 for Dementia UK by running the Larnaca Half Marathon. Onwards and upwards for the CIS PI in this newfound land of sun, sand, meze and Keo.

With Aphrodite watching over us, the PI has bedded into island life with ease. Morale is high. As we gaze over the horizon, we see 2026 looming with possibility. The dawn of AFANC is upon us and we will spearhead the role out within the Regional Operations Battalion here in Cyprus. It is true, the success of our interoperability as a VHR Force will demand a lot of the CIS PI, but we will make sure the G6 successes of the next year are noticeable and recognised.

Captain H Watson



Hldr Gitonga on PFT.



LCpl Patterson and Hldr Hart on MBF.



CIS PI in ROMANIA on Ex STEADFAST DART.



Hldr Cooper at the Larnaca marathon.



4 SCOTS

LAD



Sgt West With survivors of Olympus Man.

August 2025, 4 SCOTS transitioned to Dhekelia, Cyprus, and inherited a ragtag but hardworking bunch of REME lads as their new LAD. The LAD, boasting a hefty workforce of ten, hit the ground running and started our introductions and working out the differences with the new Battalion.

The first big hurdle for the LAD was the build-up to the LEA in early November. With the Battalion in a completely new role and operating with a tiring fleet, this was challenging but rewarding. The LAD provided sound ES guidance and advice to the Battalion, alongside back-filling mandated courses to sustain competency throughout the unit. Even with many of the Battalion members on leave during the half term week prior to the LEA, members of the LAD worked hard in the wings to ensure the LEA went as smooth as possible. This hard work ultimately paid off as the result was an overall pass.

The LAD competed in the REME's St Eligius day. REME from all over the island came together for some friendly competition, designing and building an aquatic craft that can hold a team of five and conduct a time trial. Displaying the true 4 SCOTS mentality of being "First To The Fight", the LAD displayed sheer grit and determination to be the quickest team throughout the event. The LAD had to also wade in and save 1 PWRR LAD's team as their "craft" was difficult to use and began to drift off into the blue (but we won't mention that). After some good competition we finished off

with a classic Souvla and drinks, a great day all round.

With constant spanner-turning and build up to the joyous LEA, there has been little time to enjoy any extra curricula activities; however, the LAD have managed to pull off some enjoyable bonding events, sports and even some AT for a couple of individuals.

WO2 Coley is a keen member of the Bn football team and has even managed to finish a few games without injury.

Sgt West Competed in the Olympusman Triathlon and survived. It consisted of a 1.9km sea swim, 90 km ride from Limassol to Troodos square, half marathon trail run to mount Olympus's highest point a 2900m climb in elevation. All done in a respectable 9 hrs 14 Mins.

Cpl Jones took part in a 2-star sea kayaking course at the local AT centre. Cpl Kalegendo completed the foundation parachuting course and can now fall with style. Despite being petrified on every jump he now tries to sell the course to everyone he meets. He can now officially fall better than he drives.

A successful promotion year for Cfn Parkinson promoting to LCpl. Luckily enough for him and the LAD we do not have to say goodbye as he will get to stay on as a LCpl. His promotion is well deserved after an immense amount of work he has put in going above and beyond in his short time here, including attending a LERK course and organising socials such as escape rooms and a pub quiz.



St Eligius day fastest team.



Cpl Langworthy giving it his all by paddling the air.



MOTOR TRANSPORT PLATOON

Motor Transport Officer:

Captain A Van Niekerk
Captain A Richardson

Motor Transport Warrant Officer:

Warrant Officer Class Two C Woodhead
Warrant Officer Class Two J Neilson

Motor Transport Sergeant:

Sergeant S Morrison
Sergeant C Mitchinson

Over the past 12 months, the Motor Transport (MT) Platoon has experienced an exceptionally busy and rewarding period, demonstrating resilience, professionalism, and commitment to supporting Battalion operations across Europe and beyond.

Exercise STEADFAST DART – Romania

The year began with the Battalion's deployment on Ex STEADFAST DART, a major NATO exercise in Romania. The MT Platoon played a pivotal role in enabling the Battalion's movement across Europe, ensuring the timely and secure transportation of personnel and platforms. Once in theatre, the team provided essential sustainment support as part of A1 Ech, underpinning the success of the exercise.

Op HALIFAX – The Move to Cyprus

Following Ex STEADFAST DART, focus shifted to Op HALIFAX, the Unit move to Cyprus. The first challenge was the handover of equipment and infrastructure to 1 R YORKS at Bourlon Barracks. Under the leadership of MTWO WO2 Woodhead and Sgt Morrison, the MT Platoon worked tirelessly through long days to complete the handover, pack ISO containers, and prepare for the move to Alexander Barracks in Cyprus. Special recognition goes to Cpl Gyimah, whose dedication to supporting every individual during this complex transition was exemplary.

Arrival and Integration in Cyprus

Upon arrival in Cyprus, the MT Platoon faced the demanding task of taking over vehicles and equipment from 1 RIFLES in challenging summer conditions. Cpl Rodham led this effort superbly, ensuring a smooth handover. As the remainder of the team arrived, attention turned to

supporting Service Personnel and families settling into Dhekelia, working closely with the Unit Welfare Officer to facilitate moves from temporary accommodation into Service Families Accommodation (SFA).

Life in Cyprus – Operational Readiness and Community

Since assuming the role of Regional Operations Battalion (ROB), the MT Platoon has maintained a busy pace, supporting on-island exercises, driver training, and wider Battalion activity. Frequent airport runs for overseas operations and UK training have become routine, all while sustaining Regional Standby (RSB) readiness with personnel and vehicles.

Outside of work, the Platoon embraces a "Work Hard, Play Hard" ethos, making the most of Cyprus' opportunities—exploring the island, engaging in sport, and enjoying the excellent facilities at the Dhekelia Water Sports Centre.

Arrivals and Farewells

The Platoon recently welcomed WO2 John Neilson as MTWO, Sgt Callum Mitchinson as MT Sgt and LCpl Joshua Smith, all have already made a positive impact, bringing a wealth of MT knowledge and experience.

Finally, we bid farewell to WO2 Woodhead and Sgt Morrison, who retire after distinguished Army careers. Their leadership and dedication have left a lasting legacy, and we wish them and their families every success in civilian life.

The past year has been a testament to the MT Platoon's professionalism and adaptability. Whatever the challenge—be it NATO exercises, strategic moves, or supporting families—the team has delivered.



GS Course in AKI.



MT Deployed UST during Ex STEADFAST DART – Romania.



MT Managing Driver Hours – LCpl Senivota and Hldr Grieg enjoying some down time during Ex STEADFAST DART.



4 SCOTS

REGIMENTAL AID POST

Regimental Medical Officer:

Major G Harding

Major E.J Nelson

Regimental Medical Sergeant:

Sergeant N Ward

Sergeant C Fraser

Regimental Nurse:

Sergeant S Ncube

Company Medics:

Lance Corporal N Calvert

Lance Corporal L Hayward

Lance Corporal O Hodson

Lance Corporal K Starkey

Lance Corporal L Watts

4 SCOTS RAP has had a busy but successful start to 2025. In January, the RAP facilitated the Battalion in deploying to Romania on EX Steadfast Dart, this included pre-deployment force health protection and the road move from Greece to Romania. During this deployment the RAP provided medical cover for all training and ranges for the Battalion. This also gave the RAP an opportunity to get involved within the companies conducting green skills. LCpl Calvert deployed on exercise with Support and Bravo Coy conducting trench and urban warfare alongside Spanish and French forces in Cincu.

In May LCpl Calvert and LCpl Hayward completed their LCpl ALDP alongside other members of the RAMS, other associated cap badges as well as reservists. Both receiving complimentary reports and grades from the course. After shortly arriving to the Battalion between May and July LCpl Watts deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM. He set about providing real-life medical support for the troops on the ground allowing the smooth running of the exercise.

Between May and August, along with the rest of the Battalion, the RAP relocated to Dhekelia in Cyprus, taking over from 1 Rifles as part of the ESBA combined medical practice. The CMTs have taken on a new responsibility being a part of the ESBA Ambulance service providing medical care not only for the service personnel and their families but the wider Cyprus community.

Since arriving in Cyprus, the team have been busy supporting taskings on and off island. In October LCpl Starkey deployed to Oman for several weeks providing medical cover for B Coy while on tasking providing force protection for OP HIGHMAST. LCpl Calvert also deployed on exercise with Sp Coy during October as they hosted an anti-tank cadre over in Episkopi. November of 2025 saw the whole team prepare to execute our collective Role 1 validation and the RLS support for the DORD at the start of December. We began with two and a half days of pre-validation training where we were put through our paces by some of the senior medical staff from the ESBA medical practice. After noting our areas of strengths and areas of improvement, we set about



LCpl Calvert on the mortar range.



Role 1 validation mass casualty scenario.



LCpl Hayward getting hands on integrating with the Romanian forces.



Role 1 validation scenario debrief.



OFFICERS' MESS

prepping kit and equipment as well as using the time to ensure we were confident and competent in all areas as an RAP. The start of December rolled around, and the team arrived a day early to ensure we were set and ready to go for the busy next few days. The team were tested on many different aspects of a deployed RAP with different scenarios designed to challenge our knowledge and practical ability under pressure. These included primary healthcare, major trauma, prolonged field care and mass casualty events. Every aspect was under scrutiny from the care given to G4 planning and documentation to ensure we provided the best level of care possible. On completion of Role 1 Validation, we received our report where we achieved greens across the board highlighting that we are a strong and competent RAP. Thus, enabling us to strongly support 4 SCOTS whilst been held on high readiness.

After Validation some members of the team were given the opportunity to take part in adventure training before Christmas leave. Maj Nelson, Sgt Fraser and LCpl Watts embarked on their parachute foundation, while LCpl Hayward completed his kayaking foundation course. Giving us some much earned down time after a busy start in Cyprus.



Sgt Fraser during parachute foundation.



LCpl Hayward on kayak foundation.

The 4 SCOTS Officers' Mess has had a typically active year, maintaining our social calendar and mess traditions as best as possible between our first six months of the year in Catterick and our second six months in the warmer climes of Cyprus.

Beginning the year with all attention and focus on Ex STEADFAST DART in Romania, the mess maintained a steady social footing prior to the exercise and through a number of events sought to get to know our counterparts who would join us from BG attachments in both 32 Engr Regt and 4th Regt Royal Artillery culminating in a hotly contested and unconventional pub quiz in the mess. Whilst in Romania, the Officers' Mess also saw the inaugural 'Commanding Officer's Reading Club' which would become a regular fixture over the remaining 12 months of Lt Col Muir's command. With young officers encouraged to read and think about the wider implications of their professions, many a subaltern subsequently attempted their best improvised analysis to Jomini's Principles of War after possibly 'forgetting' to complete the set reading.

Into a typically wet and windy Yorkshire Spring back in Catterick, the Officers' Mess determined to put on a post-STEADFAST DART symposium in Murrayfield stadium in Edinburgh courtesy of Capt Heywood – inviting Bde Watson to share in our findings (and sore heads from the night before). By sheer coincidence and nothing else, our symposium happened to overlap well with the Black Hackle Dinner Night where a unique take on grace was delivered by Padre Alcock in the presence of a typically strong cohort of mess members who were able to attend.

In May, the Officers' Mess hosted our 'Farewell to Bourlon' Summer Ball, marking the end of the Battalion's 10 years in Bourlon Barracks. A fantastic night for all in attendance, the event marked the start of the process to boxing up the mess in advance of our impending unit move. Over the months of April and May, silver accounts were scrutinised by Lt Ritchie, paintings put into storage by Lt Stephens and the Mess' very own room of requirement (belonging to Capt Sandiford) was finally gutted out. At last, Bourlon Bks was ready to be handed over to 1 R YORKS and the move to Cyprus was underway.

Keen to hit the ground running in Cyprus, it was not long before a range of Family

Friday BBQs, dinner nights and our annual Beating the Retreat were underway – all amid a 35C plus Cypriot summer, presenting a tough ask for our resident 'Moon Tan' subaltern Lt Johnston. Able to make the most of the proximity to families living on the patch, their increased involvement into mess activities was a welcome benefit to social events, especially for Capt Watson who seized the opportunity to inflate his footballing ego against children of other Mess Members.

The honing of footballing skills against seven-year-olds was not to be wasted however, as before long it was time for Assaye Day, and importantly the yearly Officers' vs Sgts' Mess football match. As seems to be a tradition, the Sgts' Mess were heavily invested in the result, holding practice sessions and talking tactics for weeks previous. By contrast, the day arrived and the Officers' Mess scrounged around the JNCOs of Battalion seeking spare boots, shinpads and someone who could explain the offside rule. A competitive 90mins ended and it proved to be that the preparations of the Sgts' Mess were all in vain, as the Officers' turned out a deserved 2-1 win amid unfounded complaints of disallowed goals by our opposition. Returning to the mess for some post-match hydration and food, the day ensured that the Officers' Mess held bragging rights (and the fabled Assaye Day) trophy for another year.

As the overseas commitments of the Battalion started to increase over the latter part of 2025, the mess continued to organise and hold events throughout not to be discouraged by potentially lower numbers of attendance. Despite the unreliability of the Cypriot scrapheap cars that were purchased by many on arrival, mess members continued to explore the island with weekends away in the Troodos, growing extensive local knowledge of the best restaurants and bars in Larnaca and often venturing to the North of Cyprus to sample some more Turkish culture and cuisine (and take advantage of the cheaper fuel).

Whilst 2025 has seen significant change through the mess in both its location and members, there is no doubt that the strong camaraderie remains within its members as we seek to fulfil all that Cyprus has to offer over the coming year.

Captain C Jenkins



4 SCOTS

SERGEANTS' MESS



WO2 Gracie (PMC) Dargai Dinner night 2025.



Pipe tunes during Dargai Dinner Night.

2025 has been a dynamic year for the 4 SCOTS Sergeants' Mess, marked by a deployment to Romania and a major move to Cyprus. Despite these challenges, the mess maintained its role as the Battalion's backbone, dedicating time to key events that strengthened bonds and upheld traditions.

The year began with the annual Burns Supper, expertly organised by CSM, now RQMS, Buntine. Highlights included a spirited rendition of "Up in the Morning" by CSgt Cairns and CSgt Watson, which left the audience in fits of laughter.

Ahead of the Battalion's departure from Bourlon Barracks, the mess hosted a successful Farewell Ball, providing a fitting send-off to its time in Catterick Garrison. The move to Cyprus then became a priority, with WO1, now Capt Allison, handing over the RSM role to WO1 Ritchie. Under the PMC and CSMs' leadership, the mess was packed up and handed over to 1 R YORKS in exemplary order.

After arriving in Cyprus and completing the HOTO with 1 RIFLES, the mess was re-established in Alexander Barracks. The first official function on the island was the RSM's Dine-In, organised by PMC WO2 Stevie Alexander and his committee. Held as a family BBQ in the mess garden, the event was a resounding success under perfect weather.

The Assaye Day Trophy Match saw the Officers' Mess take on the Sergeants' Mess in a competitive game under the Cyprus sun. With the Sergeants' Mess as reigning champions, they were determined to defend their title, while the Officers' Mess aimed to reclaim the trophy.

The day began with a traditional breakfast hosted by the Officers' Mess, followed by the Assaye Day presentation from Capt Clayden Spence and Sgt Mitchinson. The match started light-heartedly, with each team fielding their "lesser talented" players.

The game was evenly matched until 2Lt Russell broke the deadlock, scoring for the Officers' Mess with a well-placed shot past CSM Alexander. The Sergeants' Mess responded with pressure and earned a penalty after the RSM was fouled by Capt Serpell (RM), but Maj Mackinnon made a brilliant save to keep the score 1-0.

In the second half saw the "Best Eleven" fielded and started in

controversial fashion as RQMS Eddie Buntine's shot appeared to cross the line but was disallowed, despite WO2 Gracie's photo evidence. The Officers' Mess then extended their lead through Capt Clayden Spence, but the Sergeants' Mess fought back with a penalty converted by CSM Alexander. Despite a late free kick opportunity, the Sergeants' Mess couldn't equalise.

The Officers' Mess secured a 2-1 victory and reclaimed the trophy at least for this year.

On Friday 21 October, the Mess hosted the Dargai Dinner Night, marking the first formal dinner of the year. Everyone looked immaculate in their white mess dress for the occasion.

PMC Gary Gracie led the evening's proceedings, while Sgt Park delivered an engaging presentation on the Battle of Dargai, reflecting on its historical significance and the heroic actions of the Gordon Highlanders. The Pipe band gave a rousing set to further enhance the night. Following the formalities, the night transitioned into a more relaxed setting, with karaoke and music adding a light-hearted touch to the warm Mediterranean night.

On Saturday 8th November, the Sergeants' Mess and Corporals' Mess came together for a special Remembrance football match, honouring all those from 4 SCOTS who have lost their lives in service. The match was contested for the "Coleman Cup," a trophy dedicated to the late Sgt Coleman.

The game was a thrilling and hard-fought contest, with both teams showing determination and skill. The Corporals' Mess ultimately claimed victory, narrowly defeating the Sergeants' Mess 5-4.

After the final whistle, the Corporals' Mess were invited back to the Sergeants' Mess for a curry lunch and drinks.

2025 has been a year of challenges and rewards, with the Mess continuing to grow stronger. We look forward to 2026 bringing similar successes, along with the opportunity to reclaim the Assaye Day Trophy and Coleman Cup.

Warrant Officer Class One (RSM) Ritchie



CORPORALS' MESS

2025 has been an eventful and defining year for the 4 SCOTS Corporals' Mess, shaped by the Battalion's deployment to Romania and the major relocation to Cyprus. Throughout the demands of operations and the challenges of moving an entire Battalion overseas, the Corporals' Mess remained a strong, cohesive body—supporting one another, upholding standards, and contributing to key Battalion events during an exceptionally busy year.

The Farewell Ball marked a significant moment for the Mess, providing the chance to close an important chapter of life in North Yorkshire before the Battalion's move. Despite the hectic start to the year, this first major function was a resounding success and set the tone for the months that followed.

Upon arrival in Cyprus and the completion of the HOTO with 1 RIFLES, the Battalion settled into Alexander Barracks. The Corporals' Mess quickly re-established itself and supported the first major Battalion event on the island—the RSM's Dine In. Organised by PMC Cpl Gideon Joubert and his committee, the event took the form of a relaxed family BBQ at the Beach Bar Water Sports Centre—a dramatic change of both location and weather from what members were accustomed to. Following the function, the role of PMC passed from Cpl Joubert to Cpl Devlin May, and the Mess extends its sincere thanks to Cpl Joubert for his sterling work in restoring the Mess to full strength and function.

A standout moment of the year was the Remembrance Day Coleman Cup football match, where the Sergeants' Mess faced the Corporals' Mess in a fiercely competitive clash. Although determined to defend the trophy, the Sergeants' Mess were soundly defeated. Ultimately, the match was won on fitness and youth, as the Sergeants' Mess leaned heavily on the rolling sub rule. Post match hospitality in the Sergeants' Mess was excellent—and, as always, a drink tastes better when it follows a victory and is free.

The year was rounded off in style with the Christmas Ball, held in a beautiful local seaview venue that provided the perfect backdrop for one of the most enjoyable evenings of 2025. With an excellent turnout from members and partners, the atmosphere was lively from start to finish. The event was widely regarded as an outstanding success—so much so that the Commanding Officer, after several enthusiastic (and repeated) attempts to make his exit, declared it a tremendous achievement for the Corporals' Mess. A great night was had by all.

Looking ahead, the 4 SCOTS Corporals' Mess anticipates an exciting and demanding 2026, with numerous deployments and career opportunities on the horizon for its members. As the Battalion continues to adapt to life and operations in Cyprus, corporals can expect a year filled with professional development, new responsibilities, and fresh opportunities to shine within their platoons and departments. Alongside a busy operational schedule, the Mess has a packed calendar of social and regimental events planned—many taking full advantage of the Cypriot heat. From garden functions to key traditions, 2026 promises to strengthen cohesion, enhance leadership, and continue showcasing the professionalism and spirit that define the Corporals' Mess.



*Warrant Officer Class Two Buntine
Corporal Devlin-May*



SCOTS

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5 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

Company Commander:
Major Tommy Blair MBE

2IC/Adjutant/Ops Officer:
Captain Sammy Parker

QM/RCMO/UWO:
Captain Steven Gibson

Company Sergeant Major:
WO2 (CSM) Gordon Brown

Training Officer:
Lt Henry Sutton

1 Platoon Commander:
2Lt Dan Beswick

1 Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant George Sheerin

2 Platoon Commander:
Lt Constantine Samoilys

2 Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant Scotty Kennedy

3 Platoon Commander:
Lt Flora Thomas

3 Platoon Sergeant:
Sergeant Mikael Vakaloloma

2025 saw significant change to Balaklava Company (BKA Coy). In January, the Coy welcomed two new Officers, 2Lts Constantine Samoilys and Henry Sutton, who assumed command of 1 and 2 Platoons respectively. The then new platoon commanders saw success on exercises with the Coy during a range of offensive and defensive exercises across the UK and on a multinational NATO exercise in Lithuania. In July, the Coy said a fond farewell to Major Neil Cargill who relinquished his position as OC BKA Coy to Major Tommy Blair MBE. We wish Lt Col Cargill MVO huge success as he continues his career at Staff College in Kuwait for the next two years. July also saw Capt Diciacca move to 3 SCOTS with his role filled by Capt Gibson who has taken BKA Coy's MS game to new levels of efficiency and professionalism. Since August, we have welcomed two other Young Officers, now Lt Flora Thomas and 2Lt Dan Beswick as well as a new Company Sergeant Major. CSM Brown, having been Lt Thomas' instructor at RMAS, will continue to ensure officer development in the Coy is of the highest of standards, hopefully without arbitrary show parades this time. Having spent almost two years with 2 RANGER, Sgt Kennedy is a welcome addition to our ranks. We look forward to seeing some of the more nuanced skills and tricks he can teach the soldiers and Officers in the Coy. Having completed our ceremonial duties, we now head back into our CYCLONE phase. The list of Officers and their job roles for this period are listed as shown.

Balaklava Company 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland holds a distinct and privileged position as the Regiment's incremental company, based in Scotland's capital city and charged with delivering ceremonial excellence alongside high calibre soldiering, all in the finest traditions of the Scottish infantry.

2025 saw Balaklava Company deliver across the broadest of fronts; from participation in a major multinational NATO exercise in Eastern Europe, to guarding the Royal Family at Balmoral and Buckingham Palace, this has been an action-packed period for the company.

The year began with a training cycle across Scotland where the Jocks went back to basics and focused on 21st century soldiering skills, bringing forward lessons from contemporary conflicts and ensuring

Balaklava built and refined the core skills that will serve us well on operations. This training period culminated in a demanding validation exercise in Stanford which allowed Commander 51st Infantry to certify the company as ready to deploy on operations across the globe.

Following validation, Balaklava Company deployed to Lithuania on Exercise IRON WOLF, a major NATO exercise which brought together a wide range of international partners in a test of Lithuania's National Defence Plan. Exercise IRON WOLF brought Balaklava Company's soldiering right up-to-date, with significant drone and air threats, and saw the company working alongside friendly and enemy armoured vehicles for the first time in recent years.

Ceremonially, the company supported parades across Scotland, including marking His Majesty's arrival at The Palace of Holyroodhouse in July in concert with the Royal Company of Archers. Shortly thereafter Balaklava Company deployed to Ballater to form His Majesty The King's Guard at Balmoral, a unique role the company has carried out exclusively since 2017. This role saw Balaklava working closely with partners to support His Majesty's Summer Court, and reflects the trust placed in the Regiment by the Colonel in Chief.

To close off 2025, in November the company travelled to London to mount The King's Guard at Buckingham Palace and St James' Palace and guard the Tower of London. Balaklava Company's first deployment to London since 2018 was a huge success, drawing huge crowds eager to catch a glimpse of tartan on the forecourt and in the tower.

Looking forward to 2026, the company has a packed and varied forecast of events lined up, including another full training cycle.

Service in Balaklava Company is a unique privilege which places all ranks in the national spotlight, and the spirit, good humour, and professionalism of the Jocks shines through in all that the company does. Their achievements this year exemplify the very best of our traditions and stand us in the best of stead as we move forward together.

Major Tommy Blair MBE



Maj Tommy Blair with HM The King.



5 SCOTS

SOLDIER PROMOTIONS

Colour Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class Two
Brown

Lance Corporal to Corporal
Dunnett

Private to Lance Corporal
Christie
Docherty
Dolan



EXERCISE ARGYLL STAND

On Monday 3rd of February, Balaklava Company (BKA Coy) deployed across the border into Yorkshire to begin Ex ARGYLL STAND, a four-day defence exercise.

The exercise began with several Tactical Exercises Without Troops (TEWTs) at Marne Barracks where many of the Company were first introduced to the Russian trench system. The first lesson explored the principles of trench clearance and discussed the freedoms, constraints and important considerations for fighting through a Russian trench system. Shortly afterwards, Sergeant Finnegan then taught the Jocks the drills required to successfully and efficiently remove "Boris" from his trench.

The Jocks then moved onto lessons about British trench variations, how they could be used and an insight into what living in the trenches would look like, for those that have not yet had the pleasure of doing so, before getting on the coach to head to Ripon where we were to begin constructing our own trenches.

After an early night, and some welcomed enforced rest, the Company awoke keen to get stuck in with some digging. All in all, the Company dug six trench systems, each one different to the other in its construction and design. The plan was to dig, as per The All Arms Tactical Aide Memoire (AATAM), non-stop from Tuesday morning until Wednesday evening.

Progress with trenches peaked and troughed as the Jocks battled with stone, thick clay and the demons of fatigue and frustration. Wednesday morning's birdsong at daybreak was replaced by painful cries of, "GEN!" as it was found that the persistent rainfall throughout the night had caused one of the trench walls to collapse. Nevertheless, the unshakeable grit and determination of the Jocks meant that this was soon rectified and by the evening all of the trenches had been dug to depth, with shelters fitted - in time for the Brigade Commander's visit.

The following day, Captain Smith painted the bigger picture of defensive operations to the Jocks, allowing them to understand what other callsigns they could expect to see, where the battle would be in relation to them and how their defensive position would be used. After the enlightenment from Captain Smith, and a quick brew looking out on to the frost-covered trenches, the Jocks then began the process of taking the trenches apart and filling them back in. That afternoon, after completely removing all traces of BKA Coy's presence, the Jocks were back on the coaches heading North back home to Redford Barracks.

Although more time to live in and operate out of the trenches would have been beneficial, Ex ARGYLL STAND gave BKA Coy a great opportunity to familiarise themselves with trenches and defensive operations.





EXERCISE ARGYLL HUNTER

BJA Coy deployed to Garelochhead for Ex ARGYLL HUNTER, a seven-day Training Level BRAVO (TL-B) exercise aimed at testing the platoons over a range of offensive and defensive actions in extremely challenging conditions. The exercise commenced with an air insertion by three CH47s from RAF Benson as part Ex KUKRI DAWN. This opportunity to fly was very well received by the company. Upon landing, the platoons went directly into an offensive action, an Advance to Contact, covering in excess of seven kilometres over difficult terrain in extremely wet conditions. For the duration of the exercise, the weather remained unkind and the Jocks displayed incredible mental and physical resilience to not just survive but thrive in offensive, defensive and enabling actions.

BJA Coy are well known for their immaculate displays on ceremonial operations (CerOps), but this exercise proved that BJA Coy can still perform to the highest standards in our core infantry role.

Ex ARGYLL HUNTER used lessons learnt from the war in Ukraine to create a realistic enemy picture and scenario which immersed the soldiers into the conditions they may experience in the future. The integration of the rural and urban landscape was key in testing the platoons' ability to adapt to any scenario. One of the main challenges for the Jocks was how to effectively administer themselves during an extremely wet and fast-paced exercise which, in design, left little time for rest and recuperation. Throughout the exercise, the Chain of Command (CoC) were impressed with the ability of the Jocks to maintain morale and to work hard for each other.

Once again, BJA Coy have proved they are a capable fighting force, able to adapt from CerOps, quickly and effectively, to execute lethality through dismounted close combat (DCC).

Ex ARGYLL HUNTER was an excellent exercise and enabled an opportunity for the CoC to assess each Platoon's strengths and weakness in the lead up to Ex BJA CYCLONE, our Training Level CHARLIE assurance exercise in March.



Sgt K Finnigan



EXERCISE IRON WOLF

On Fri 2 May, Balaklava Company deployed on Ex IRON WOLF (Ex IW) in Lithuania as part of a multinational NATO validation exercise. BKA Coy deployed on Ex IW, fully integrated, within the 14th Battalion of the Lithuanian Iron Wolf Mechanised Infantry Brigade (14th Bn) which itself sits within the 1st Army Division of the Lithuanian Land Forces.

Alongside 14th Bn, Ex IW also had in participation the NATO Multi-National Battle Group Lithuania (MN BG Ltu). The MN BG Ltu consists of soldiers from Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Croatia, the Netherlands, Norway and Luxembourg. The exercise intent was to promote international military relations and to create opportunities to train NATO units in a multinational environment in Lithuania.

Ex IW was also one part of the wider NATO's Op RAZOR EDGE which encompassed ten NATO exercises through six European countries over the period Apr to Jun 25. Ex HEDGEHOG, in Estonia, was another linked NATO exercise of Op RAZOR EDGE.

Impressively, 24 hours prior to deployment, BKA Coy had been in full ceremonial mode partaking ceremonially in support of the installation of the new Governor of Edinburgh Castle – Maj Gen Bob Bruce CBE DSO. From 'Kits to Combat', by early morning, BKA Coy were ready to deploy in full Combat Equipment Marching Order (CEMO) from Prestwick Airport to Lithuania, excited to integrate into the 14th Bn and to start our Reception, Staging, Onward movement and Integration (RSOI) training.

Ex IRON WOLF is an annual Lithuanian Land Force exercise to showcase Lithuania Land Forces and MN BG Ltu ability to quickly and accurately bolster the Lithuanian Defence Plan in the face of an international threat. However, this year was particularly important as Ex IW was explicitly tied into Ex SWIFT RESPONSE 25. A main focus on Ex IRON WOLF to defend and hold an airfield to directly enable our airborne NATO Allies to conduct a near-simultaneous airborne and mobility aircraft operations, further demonstrating NATO's deterrence and enhance readiness.

Initially accommodated at Rukla Camp and later Jonas Camp, BKA Coy underwent a

five-day RSOI package whilst the exercise scenario ramped up in the background. Late on the evening of Thu 8 May, BKA Coy began an 8-hour tactical road march South to the exercise area. This was aimed at recreating the rapid movement of troops into potentially contested areas that would need to happen should Lithuania become threatened. Arriving in the early hours of Friday morning the Jocks immediately set about establishing their Main Defensive Position (MDP). This consisted of digging a number of two- and four-man trenches to depth alongside a number of Javelin, Sniper and Grenade Machine Gun (GMG) positions with help from, and in order to support, their Lithuanian counterparts. Following this, defence stores arrived and the task of converting holes in the ground into positions the soldiers could both live in and fight from began.

Once the arduous work had been completed BKA Coy, and their Lithuanian attached arms, moved into routine. This involved catching up on admin, pushing out standing patrols and the never-ending task of improving the positions. Alongside this, Coy Tac were busy liaising with Battle Group Main, receiving orders, planning the defence and tracking the wider battle. The Company Second in Command (Coy 2IC) was kept busy attempting to build closer working relationships with the Lithuanian tac team.

The wider exercise was based on the scenario of a rise in tensions on the international stage ultimately resulting in an opposition force (OPFOR) crossing the Lithuanian border and advancing on the nation's second city, Kaunas. BKA Coy were tasked with digging and then holding the MDP (the airfield) whilst partner forces conducted a delay of the invading force. Ultimately the plan being for BKA Coy to block the enemy at the MDP before withdrawing under contact and allowing a NATO MN BG to conduct an armoured counter-attack onto the OPFOR. This was to culminate with Allied paratroopers (American) jumping in, as part of Ex SWIFT RESPONSE, and pushing remnants the OPFOR back over the international border.

BKA Coy dutifully waited in their trenches day after day receiving, somewhat sporadic, updates of the OPFOR advance through

Lithuania until eventually they penetrated into BKA Coys area of operations (AO) and their time to shine was upon them. The contact began with the Lithuanian Javelin Platoon engaging the enemy vehicles, before the GMG platoon took up the fight as the Sniper pairs called in fires identified by Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). BKA Coy then held the position whilst the others pushed back to their further taskings before the Jocks also withdrew under contact and from there the exercise tapered to a close. To the credit of the BKA Coy Group, the OPFOR had to be re-generated by the umpires twice to enable the conditions to be met for the Coy Gp to withdraw to allow an opportunity for the MN BG Ltu C-Atk.

With the actual exercise part of the overseas trip coming to a close, BKA Coy moved into a period of administration back at Rukla Camp. Rifle cleaning, sorting out kit and catching up on some much-needed sleep were the main orders of the day. From there, BKA Coy were lucky enough to have a chance to imbibe some local Lithuanian culture. Friday and Saturday gave the opportunity to explore both locally and also push further into Kaunas (the city they had so valiantly defended). On Sunday, the 14Bn kindly put on a coach which took BKA Coy on the 2-hour journey to the nation's capital, Vilnius. The troops then had the day to wander around Vilnius and enjoy themselves.

Monday the 19th saw the Company return to the United Kingdom, they once again boarded an RAF flight and returned to Glasgow Prestwick. The exercise had been long awaited and much anticipated, it gave the Company the opportunity to work in a NATO context alongside international allies. Much like Ex HEDGEHOG it is about showing force and acting as a deterrent to those who would threaten Lithuania, Estonia or any NATO country. The Jocks were also able to work alongside various attached arms and gain a lot of valuable and hard to come by experience. However, arguably most importantly it allowed the Jocks of BKA Coy to travel to a country they may otherwise never have been too and show a NATO Partner and a NATO MN BG exactly what British soldiers are capable of – a job well done!



5 SCOTS

ROYAL GUARD



The end of July saw Balaklava Company (BKA Coy) deploy to Ballater, Aberdeenshire, to begin their summer duty of Royal Guard. BKA Coy has had this responsibility annually since 2013 and it sees them deployed until the end of October, taking part in a range of activities and supporting both the Royal Household and the local community in several ways.

The beginning of August saw both the General Duties and Security Platoons undertaking training and familiarisation to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities during the Guard. The General Duties Platoon is responsible for the deer stalking beats on the estate and the respective teams would be trained to look after and work with the fell ponies, used to take stags off the hills, familiarise themselves with their respective beats, and learn how to butcher deer. Security Platoon, on the other hand, conducted walkarounds at Balmoral and Birkhall, alongside the Metropolitan Police and Police Scotland, to understand the security measures in place

and how they may be employed should they be required to support the Police in case of emergency.

The first major engagement for BKA Coy was the Arrival Parade on the 18th of August. This Parade marks the official arrival of His Majesty The King at Balmoral Castle, to begin Summer Court. On a particularly hot day, the soldiers of BKA Coy looked resplendent with their kilts flowing, brogues you could shave in, and they topped it off with some sharp drill that would make any Foot Guards Regimental Sergeant Major quake in his drill boots. Cpl Cruachan IV, arguably the most famous military mascot in the world, also made an appearance and The King was delighted to see him and his exceptional Pony Major, Cpl Stewart.

Not two days later, members of the Coy took part in the Raft Race. The Race sees teams, made of people who support the estate, build a raft and race each other on a reservoir. The event is a great opportunity to foster friendly rivalries, get to know

others and enjoy the summer weather in the Highlands. The Gardeners, with a phenomenal record of winning in previous years, were the team to beat. Bravely, the BKA Coy team stepped up to test their mettle against them and on the signal given by the Sovereign's Piper, they were off. The tension and lust for victory from both sides was palpable. BKA Coy were looking strong off the mark but what we hadn't accounted for was HRH Prince George grabbing a hose from the Balmoral Fire Brigade. Regrettably, the young Prince is a fine shot and within moments he had blown BKA's raft off course and into the reeds, thus allowing the Gardeners to steal the win. An unfortunate end to our racing season but we will be back with vigour next year.

During the Royal Guard, BKA Coy supports three highland games; the Aboyne and Ballater Games and finally the Braemar Gathering. For each, we had soldiers representing the Coy in a range of athletics events, the tug of war and in a ceremonial capacity. The events provide further





opportunity for BKA Coy to remain in the public eye and engage with a variety of different people. Sadly, the Ballater Games were rained off after we officially started the event by marching through the town. This however did not stop the Jocks from maintaining community engagement in the drinks tent while everyone waited for the poor weather to blow over. The Braemar Gathering saw the tug of war team put in a sterling effort against some excellent teams, including farming communities and the Doddie Weir foundation, in front of Their Majesties, The King and The Queen. Despite a few losses, BKA Coy represented itself well and the soldiers and Officers enjoyed a great day of games, music from a plethora of pipes and drums bands, and good laughs.

Throughout the Guard, the Officers had the pleasure of hosting a variety of people for

meals and drinks with guests ranging from the Lord Mayor of London to His Majesty The King. The most surprising guest however was American talk show host and comedian, Jimmy Fallon. After a chance encounter with him outside Balmoral Castle, an invitation to dinner was delivered to him at his hotel and he accepted the invite with alacrity. The evening was a delight, and the soldiers had the opportunity to demonstrate some of their drill, weapons and kit. Jimmy was thrilled to be there and thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the Jocks and experiencing military dining and taking part in the more social side to a mess function. News of his visit spread across the globe and was reached by 1.1 billion people – the largest media grab the British Army has ever had. It was a most memorable evening to bring the Royal Guard to a close.



50 Year Anniversary Officers' visit

On 24 August, four former Officers from the Royal Scots came to join the Officers of His Majesty The King's Royal Guard at Crathie Kirk. The visit marked 50 years since the Officers had last been in the Highlands, executing Royal Guard for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1975. The following evening, the Royal Scots Officers were hosted by the Officers of 5 SCOTS for evening drinks in the Mess. The gentlemen were able to look through the guest and game books and see which who they had to stay and reminisce about the many birds and stag they successfully shot. The evening was a huge success, and we were regaled with stories about the 'good old days'. The former Guard Officers had a tremendous evening and thoroughly appreciated the opportunity to take a walk down memory lane.



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KINGS GUARD 2025



Following 5 SCOTS' deployment to Balmoral, I assumed the role of Company Sergeant Major and undertook the responsibility of preparing the Company for the King's Guard ceremonial duties in London, a task that has proven both demanding and rewarding. My first assignment as Company Sergeant Major was a high-profile undertaking, made even more daunting by the presence of thousands of spectators. However, the exceptional leadership and mentorship surrounding me, greatly eased my transition into the role.

Thanks to the exceptional guidance and support provided by WO2 Paul Carson and his STTT team from the Irish Guards, the Company quickly adapted to the difficult and unfamiliar parade format. The Jocks'

efforts resulted in a marked improvement in individual foot drill, achieved through sustained and rigorous practice. Notable performances to mention are that of Sgt Vakaloloma and Sgt Dunnett who delivered outstanding performances as Senior Sergeants of their respective detachments. Their unwavering commitment and relentless practice to master the complex words of command, while simultaneously developing and mentoring the soldiers under their charge, was truly commendable.

Deploying to Woolwich Artillery Barracks efficiently required significant logistical expertise, and our G4 team delivered flawlessly. Drawing on his experience as a former Balaklava Company Sergeant Major, Capt Gibson devised a meticulous plan for

transporting ceremonial kit and equipment via the 'Kilts n Capes' vehicle, which was executed seamlessly by CSgt Cummings and his team. This level of foresight ensured that our Jocks arrived punctually and immaculately turned out, with minimal disruption and effort. Given our accommodation was outside central London, early starts were essential to ensure the troops arrived at Wellington Barracks in time for rehearsals ahead of the Changing of the Guard parades. The Jocks maintained exemplary discipline between guard duties, ensuring they represented the Company with professionalism during their free time and completed all administrative tasks before enjoying London's vibrant nightlife.





Upon completing the parades, the Company were delighted to receive overwhelmingly positive messages of support on social media, confirming that the Jocks had made a strong impression among London's drill enthusiasts. Coupled with the experience gained from performing the Changing of the Guard, this achievement has made the task far more enjoyable and ensured that future ceremonial duties in London will be approached with confidence rather than apprehension.

WO2 Brown



During their deployment on the King's Guard in London, the 5 SCOTS Headquarters team visited the US Embassy. The visit provided an opportunity to engage with American counterparts, share experiences, and discuss mutual cooperation, further enhancing the regiment's role as ambassadors for the British Army.



SCOTS

www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org



6 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

I write this 6 SCOTS foreword with a little over five weeks left in command of the Battalion and it has offered the perfect time to reflect on 2025 and the activities and achievements of all members of 6 SCOTS. Unsurprisingly a consistent theme of the year, like much of Defence and the Army, has been a continual focus and prioritisation of effort centred on workforce and our people where it has been a number of different experiences and challenges. The Regular Army workforce has seen a focus on mitigating and minimising the pain of gapping and risks to outputs – thankfully 2026 is a better landscape, compared to a FTRS and Civil Servant cohort which has been impressively stable and effective, despite the recruiting freezes put in place, and an Army Reserve workforce which has continued to grow in both numbers and trained strength. Regardless, the cohesive nature of the Battalion has ensured all directed tasks have been successfully achieved and conditions set for further success.

2025 has been a hugely fulfilling year for the Battalion and the exploitation of the many opportunities offered to us has enabled us to 'get after' CGS' intent of increasing our lethality and ensure we are ready to undertake our duties aligned to our purpose - warfighting. Be that on the wet and windy training areas in the lowlands of Scotland or further afield in America, Australia and Europe, 6 SCOTS have delivered, supported and been part of many training evolutions offered by the Regular Army and Army Reserve.

The Bn 2IC took ownership of the training forecast and plan, using the experience from across the Army Reserve cohort to design a rewarding and challenging programme that will ensure many people achieve their Certificate of Efficiency, but also the Battalion collectively develops and improves in our warfighting capability. This resulted in a plan that allows the Battalion to conduct some form of 'green' training each month but with support from the RAO department, we were able to exploit the freedoms offered from managing our own Control Total budget (and also remain on track to offer a small amount back to the TLB). This enabled us to deploy on a Ski-ing expedition to France and undertake a Battlefield Study to the Netherlands,

allowing us to showcase the wider offer and opportunity provided by service in the Army Reserve.

Deployment on Ex RHINO HEART in 2024 under HQ 19th Light Brigade and alongside four other Brigade units and many other Army Reserve units was an excellent experience which is still talked about fondly today. But in 2025 our training focus and main effort was very different. The Battalion planned and delivered our own Annual Deployment Exercise for the first time since before COVID-19 impacted the UK. Analysis of the climate assessment suggested an exercise doing some range work and then a Field Training exercise was in demand and therefore that is exactly what was designed. Under the detailed control and guidance of the Bn 2IC and Trg WO, the Battalion, along with members of 7 SCOTS, 4 LANCS and 6 RIFLES, deployed to Okehampton Training Area for a two week exercise that incorporated a challenging and progressive Live Fire Marksmanship Training (LFMT) and Transition to Live Fire Tactical Training (TLFTT) range package followed by a tactical exercise providing the opportunity for many newly qualified JNCOs, SNCOs and Young Officers to exercise in role under the command and control of a Battle Group HQ for the first time. Further demonstrating the Army Reserve appetite to undertake high quality, demanding training, the Cambrian Patrol team returned to Scotland with a thoroughly deserved silver medal and now have the challenge of improving on that that once more in 2026 – good luck to the team.

There has also been a lot of opportunities for operational mobilisation as an Army Reservist. More so as an individual augmentee in current times, which is somewhat different to the 'campaigning' period of Iraq and Afghanistan whereby the Regular Battalions would be supported with a healthy slice of Army Reservists as part of their orbat. In 2025, personnel from the Battalion have supported many operational task lines. LCpl Jones enjoyed his time so much with 77 Bde he extended in post and returned to us in the late Autumn, WO2 Lynn was deployed in support of the Ukrainians on Op INTERLINK, Sgt Stoker (who also extended in post) was committed to Op LAZURITE supporting SJC in the

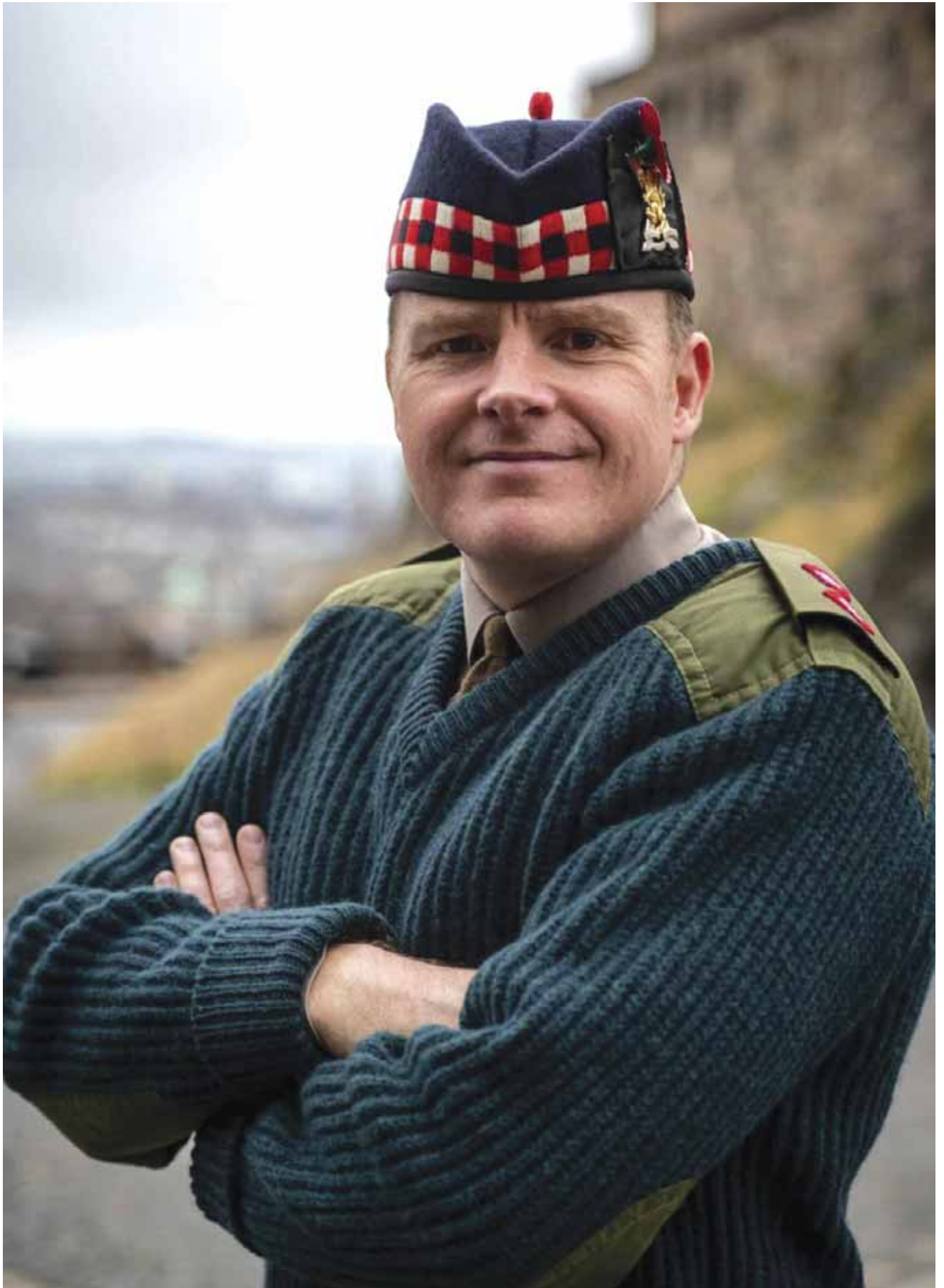
Afghan resettlement programme and Sgt Stott was committed to Op SHELLPROOF in the latter part of the year supporting urgent UK resilience activity. Three members of the Battalion (2Lt Todd, Sgt Smith and Pte Finnie) deployed with the 5 RRF BG to Cyprus on Op TOSCA over the period April to October 2025 which involved an orbat in excess of twenty-five different units.

It would be hard to argue against the key focus and outputs of an Army Reserve unit are centred on operational delivery and individual and collective training progression. Much of this however could not be undertaken without the support and assurance provided by expertise in the small yet dedicated RAO, QM and ROSO departments. Their work, often done with no obvious demand or impact on the Army Reservists, is essential in ensuring we remain operating safely and in accordance with the plethora of policies and instructions we must abide by. The ability of these teams, led admirably by Maj Alex McGrory, Maj Phil Ingram and Capt Jason Craig, to operate and deliver in accordance with the same demand signals exacted upon the Regular Battalions is a testament to the talents and commitment of those who are the backbone of 6 SCOTS.

2026 offers much to everyone, regardless of rank or contract type, in 6 SCOTS with many opportunities across the spectrum of training activities. A little over two years in command has allowed me to be confident that the Battalion is ready to meet all challenges it faces and exploit the opportunities provided to it.

I would like to thank all members of 6 SCOTS for your dedication and commitment, but also to your families and, for the Army Reservists, employers who all support you in your endeavours as part of the Battalion - in doing so this enables our individual and collective successes. I will shortly depart the Battalion and my journey and experiences with you all allow me to move to my next appointment with nothing but fond memories and immense pride in what you have all achieved.

Lieutenant Colonel Lee Curson





6 SCOTS

SOLDIER PROMOTIONS

Colour Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class Two

Gray

Knox

McGinley

Corporal to Sergeant

Cook

Private to Lance Corporal

Hunter

McGowan

Elphick

McCall



EXERCISE LION STRIKE

In the autumn, 6 SCOTS deployed to the Okehampton Training Area in Devon for the Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE). The purpose of this two week camp was to bring reservists together from across Scotland and complete a company level attack following a period of collective training. The camp was divided into two phases - exercise and live firing - with a weekend break between each phase to allow the troops to stand down and recuperate. For ADE 2025, 6 SCOTS deployed with welcome additions from 7 SCOTS and the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

Despite a ten hour bus journey, everyone arrived in high spirits and ready to begin training immediately. The initial priority was ensuring all personnel met the required start state through weapons handling tests, followed by time for platoons to develop their standard operating procedures. Many of the Jocks had never met before, so this beat up period provided valuable time to build team cohesion. The permanent staff then led a series of section attack lanes, offering troops a final opportunity to shake out and complete their battle preparation before moving into the field.

The exercise area of the Dartmoor National

Park was windswept, treeless, and characterised by undulating terrain surrounded by the infamous Ten Tors. The ground was challenging, but the weather gods smiled upon the Jocks with clear skies and a pleasant temperature. Major Mackintosh ensured the transport plan moved the troops to the drop off point seamlessly; from there, enemy positions stood no chance as the Company swept through and established a harbour location, ready to conduct future operations. A special mention goes to Warrant Officer Class Two Murray (1 RANGER), who flew over from Belfast to assist in building the Command Post.

After Lance Corporal Omand and his Reconnaissance Section identified enemy positions in depth, Captain Richardson led an ambush, and the destruction of the remaining enemy forces was swiftly completed. With victory secured, the Company withdrew back to camp for breakfast and weapon cleaning.

Before standing down for rest and recuperation, the Battalion took part in Operation TEAMWORK. Op TEAMWORK provided everyone with the opportunity to share their views while learning about the Army's stance on inclusivity and the

importance of working towards common goals. We also welcomed the 6 SCOTS Honorary Colonel, Major General Alastair Bruce of Crionaich CB OBE VR. During the weekend's R&R, several activities were available, including a cultural visit to Plymouth and a local parkrun.

The live firing phase of the ADE began on the Monday, with everyone able to fire both rifle and pistol and complete the Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT). Further shoots included the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), as well as additional rifle shoots to encourage interest in future shooting competitions led by Warrant Officer Class Two Ewart.

ADE was a resounding success. Alongside a well structured programme and excellent permanent staff who supported every aspect of delivery, the soldiers themselves were the key component. The quality of the reservists was exceptionally high throughout, and although some were new to the unit, all made an effort to get involved and gel with their peers.

Captain I Hunter



The Company patrol on Dartmoor.



With no lone trees on Dartmoor target indication was slightly tricky.



OPERATION TOSCA



A PT session delivered by Sgt Smith.



Sgt Smith (second from the right) and his fellow PTIs.

In 2025, I completed a six month tour on Op TOSCA 42 as the Royal Army Physical Training Corps Instructor (RAPTCI). My time in Cyprus with the 5th Battalion, Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Battlegroup was quite different from that of others who had deployed there.

I arrived on the advanced flight on 15 March, reaching camp at night. I remember walking around thinking, *"It's warm,"* and *"What have I let myself in for?"* I was shown to the room I would be in for the first four weeks before moving into my permanent accommodation. Again, I thought, *"I'm not sure I can live here for six months."* I had a bed but no bedding, a metal wardrobe with no doors, and an air conditioning unit that spat brown dust at us whenever we dared to ask for cold air. A few weeks later, I moved into the room I would stay in for the rest of the tour; it was far better. I was, however, sharing with three others – all English – and the only other Scot on camp was in the room next door.

The next day, we began our Reception, Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) and completed the car log (UN driving licence) before getting straight to work. This started with a handover of all Physical Training Equipment (PTE) and the gym facilities, followed by a familiarisation run to explore

routes around camp and the buffer zone. This was also my first experience of doing PT in 30°C heat. If I am honest, it was not enjoyable, but it became far more manageable as time went on.

My first responsibility was delivering the acclimatisation package for all deployed personnel, essential for minimising and preventing heat injuries. Over the six months, I was proud to say that we had no heat related injuries during any PT we delivered.

My next task was to develop a physical training programme in line with the Commanding Officer's intent. It had to be challenging while still allowing everyone, from the fittest soldier to those downgraded, to participate.

Delivering two PT sessions per day, five days a week, was where the fun and challenge began for me and the other PTIs. The schedule ensured that everyone, regardless of working hours, could take part in some form of PT. We delivered this programme for the first three months before reducing to three days per week. To break the routine, we also ran a St George's Day celebration sports day. As someone who was neither English nor from a Fusilier background, it was new to me but

something I ended up enjoying.

During the deployment, I was fortunate enough to attend two parachuting courses. The first was the foundation course, which sparked a real interest. I was lucky enough to secure a place on the two week intermediate course and gained my A1 licence, allowing me to jump at any drop zone accepting A1 jumpers. This qualification would have cost a civilian between £2,500 and £3,000, but I was fortunate to complete it for free.

Towards the end of the tour, our focus shifted to handing the camp over to the Coldstream Guards. This involved numerous administrative checks, accounting for new gym equipment, and removing old kit. All that remained was our medals parade.

The deployment allowed me to learn a great deal and stretch myself throughout. Best of all, I eventually managed to sort out a comfortable bed, wardrobes that actually shut, and decent air conditioning in my room.

Sergeant Smith



EXERCISE CAMBRIAN PATROL - BRECON BEACONS, WALES

"A huge congratulations to the 6 SCOTS team on achieving a Silver Medal". The words the team had longed to hear after slogging and sweating over the roughest terrain know to any soldier!

This outstanding result is a testament to the patrol's exceptional teamwork, grit, and professionalism, especially remarkable given the short training time available. From the outset, the team demonstrated unwavering cohesion, trust, and adaptability under pressure, proving what can be accomplished through shared purpose and mutual respect.



The patrol carrying out CBRN drills.

Throughout every demanding phase of the patrol, the team showcased determination, discipline, and selfless commitment to each other. Whether navigating difficult terrain, overcoming physical exhaustion, or responding to complex tactical challenges, their resolve never faltered.

The performance reflected the highest standards of the British Army Reserve and highlighted the depth of talent, resilience, and leadership within 6 SCOTS.

The Silver Medal represents far more than just success on the exercise, it is the

culmination of months of hard work, preparation, and dedication. Every training session, every late-night rehearsal, and every moment of shared hardship contributed to this incredible achievement.

The team have made, 6 SCOTS, immensely proud, setting an inspiring example of what can be achieved through teamwork, determination, and the unbreakable spirit of the Scottish soldier.

Colour Sergeant Meighan



The reward for all the hard work.



6 SCOTS

EXERCISE LOWLAND POPPY

Capt Andy Blair, PSAO C Coy, with WO2 RQMS Thompson delivered a realities of war battlefield study to members of 6 SCOTS. This was delivered over the period 23-27 Oct on the battlefield of Walcheren Island in the Netherlands.

The first stand gave the Commanding Officer a chance to set the scene for the coming days. Capt Blair gave a historical account of the action that took place at Breskens. The 52nd Lowland Division who had been trained to fight in the mountains of Norway were now about to launch into battle on the flooded Island of Walcheren. WO2 Thompson then took over and gave an excellent presentation on the realities of going into battle for the first time with some of his own thoughts and feelings, and retold accounts from soldiers who actually fought at Walcheren.



CO 6 SCOTS, Lt Col Lee Curson, delivering his opening address and setting the scene for the days to come.

We then moved to the second stand, focusing on the Canadians and the Glasgow Highlanders fight to cross the Walcheren Causeway. This was a particularly harrowing action that saw a full-frontal assault across a 40-yard wide and 1200-yard-long strip of land that was the only access and egress onto Walcheren at the time. The CO was then able to lay a wreath on the 52nd Lowland Division memorial stone on the Causeway.

The third stand saw us reach Uncle Beach, this was the landing point for Op Infatuate 1, where The Royal Marines Commando and 52nd Lowland Division came ashore.



We remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.



Sgt James Gould C Company REMSO looking over some of the artifacts from the battle of Walcheren where his grandfather fought with 7/9 Royal Scots.

The fourth stand allowed us to walk the route that 7/9 Royal Scots took to assault the Hotel Britannia which was one of the last bastions of the German occupiers in Flushing. On the battlefield study was Sgt James Gould from C Company. Sgt Gould's Grandfather Pte Thomas Polson was with 7/9 Royal Scots during the assault. It was one of the many connections from the past to the present that the Battalion has.

On Sat 25 Oct the fifth stand took us to the Liberation Museum where we received a guided tour from one of the Dutch museum historians, this was an excellent start to the day and very informative. The guide gave an in-depth brief of all the artifacts which were on show, this helped to bring the battle to life even more.

The 6th stand took us to the north of Walcheren to study the Royal Marines landing at Westkapelle. This was codenamed Op Infatuate 2, and took place at the same time as Op Infatuate 1. This stand focused on two events: the strategic bombing campaign, and the beach assault of the Royal Marines with combined arms support from the Royal Navy.

We went to a viewpoint on the beach to study the strategic air bombing campaign by the RAF which had the decisive impact of breaching the dikes around Walcheren.

From Westkapelle we moved further along the coast to Zouteland, where the Commandos had to engage the Germans in their bunkers on the coast. We were given the opportunity to go into the bunkers and were briefed by the Dutch historians to learn more about the operations that were conducted from this location.

On Sunday we moved from our hotel to Damplien Square, which was the location of the 9th stand. Here Capt Blair briefed on the German surrender and how the 7/9 Royal Scots deceived the Germans, tricking them into thinking there were opposed by a larger force than they actually were.

The final stand on Sunday allowed the group to pay their respects at both the Canadian and British Cemeteries in Bergen Op Zoom. We gathered in the CWGC and held a short act of remembrance in the British Cemetery. We paid our respects to the fallen, and we all placed a cross at a grave of our choice. Pte James Mair from A Coy laid a wreath in the Canadian cemetery, where at the same time there was a large parade taking place to remember those Canadian Soldiers who fell during the Battle for Walcheren.

Captain Andy Blair



Pte James Mair A Coy laying a wreath in the Canadian Cemetery.



A COMPANY - EDINBURGH, GALASHIELS

Officer Commanding:
Major R Baggott la Velle

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:
Captain D Tait

Company Second in Command:
Captain J Beale

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two J Gray

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant S Boyd (FTRS)

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant D Jackson (Reserve)

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:
Colour Sergeant B Macintosh
Colour Sergeant T Meighan

Permanent Staff Instructor:
Sergeant D Kelly

**Recruitment Engagement Mentoring
Support Officer:**
Sergeant H Harris

The past year has been a successful one for A Company, driven by the dedication and professionalism of our people, high quality training, and the welcome addition of enthusiastic new team members.

The year was, however, overshadowed by great sadness. Over the summer we lost LCpl James 'Jimmy' Johnson, a man whose service, character and commitment to the Army Reserve has left an indelible mark on A Company. Jimmy served with distinction in 6 SCOTS for over 15 years, including two tours of Afghanistan attached to 1 SCOTS. He embodied courage and unwavering loyalty to those around him, and was known for his integrity, generosity, and ability to lift others through quiet strength and good humour. He will be deeply missed by his fellow reservists in Galashiels, across the Company, and throughout the wider Battalion and Regiment. His life and example will remain a lasting part of our community, and we will continue to honour his memory with pride and respect in the years ahead.



Forthright, fearless and full of wit: LCpl Jimmy Johnson.

This year also marked a significant transition within the Permanent Staff. A Company said farewell to our Staff Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI), Colour Sergeant Barry Macintosh, who retired from regular service after 24 years. We owe CSgt Macintosh a considerable debt of gratitude; his unwavering commitment to the Armed Forces, expert guidance and meticulous planning have been a cornerstone of the Company's progress over the past two years. Fortunately, this is only a half farewell, as CSgt Macintosh continues his service with us as a Reservist. We were pleased to welcome Colour Sergeant Tam Meighan as his successor. We also said goodbye to Vicky Gunner, the stores person at East Claremont Street. Vicky's contribution behind the scenes was invaluable, and she will be sorely missed.

As always, the training year revolved around the Annual Deployment Exercise Ex LION STRIKE, which this year took place at Okehampton. The exercise provided an excellent opportunity for soldiers to test and develop their skills, progressing through blank firing training up to platoon attacks, before moving into live firing Close Quarter Battle shoots.

The Company also took part in the Battalion Adventurous Training and battlefield study weekend, Exercise CALEDONIAN QUEST. This included a day of mountain biking at Glentress, followed by a Battalion battlefield study day. The study traced the Cromwellian invasion of Scotland in 1651, focusing on the battles around Edinburgh, Cromwell's withdrawal through East Lothian, and the decisive engagement near Dunbar.



The Battle of Dunbar Memorial – Essential Agony.



6 SCOTS

A COMPANY - EDINBURGH, GALASHIELS *continued*

Beyond training, the Company marked several important events that connect us to our history. In May, we gathered with members of the local community, the Royal Scots Club, and the Edinburgh Branch of the Royal Scots Association to commemorate the Gretna Rail Disaster. We remembered the tragic events of 22 May 1915, when 216 soldiers of the 1/7th Battalion, The Royal Scots—an antecedent of A Company, 6 SCOTS—were killed when a troop transport train crashed en route to Flanders. Nearly all were young men from the Leith and Bonnington areas that surround our Army Reserve Centre at East Claremont Street, and where many of today's Reservists are drawn. The commemoration served as a powerful reminder that community, regiment and comradeship remain central pillars of the moral component. A Company also visited the Royal Scots Club at Abercromby Place,

strengthening our ties with serving and former service personnel and deepening our understanding of our regimental heritage.

The Company has enjoyed a notably successful year for recruiting. Sergeant Keith Harris has continued to deliver high quality candidates who have been quickly assimilated into the A Company ethos of pride, professionalism and commitment.

We were pleased to welcome several experienced soldiers on regular to reserve transfers: Captain Rory Edwards (ex Scots Dragoon Guards), Colour Sergeant Sean McLaren and Colour Sergeant Craig Brown (both ex Royal Regiment of Scotland). All three have immediately thrown themselves into Company life. Capt Edwards assumed command of the CAMBRIAN PATROL team and quickly forged an exceptionally cohesive group.

As we reflect on the past year, it is clear that the true strength of A Company lies in its people. We are fortunate to have a cadre of seasoned and highly experienced Reservists. The year saw several notable individual achievements. We congratulated 2Lt James Robertson on commissioning into The Royal Regiment of Scotland; he has assumed command of 1 Platoon at East Claremont Street. The Company also celebrated WO2 Gray's appointment as Company Sergeant Major. Having served with A Company from Private Soldier through to Warrant Officer, including operational deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, WO2 Gray leads by example and we are immensely grateful for his long service and experience. Pte Bruce was awarded the West Lothian Armed Forces Day Award in recognition of his outstanding performance, professionalism and exemplary attitude. In December, we marked LCpl Elphick's promotion to Lance Corporal. A long standing and committed attendee, his promotion formalises the leadership role he has already assumed through experience, example, and force of character. We also had the pleasure of congratulating Maeve Taggart and Joyce Binnie on their Civil Service Long Service Awards. Maeve continues the unenviable task of keeping us all organised as the A Company Clerk, while Joyce is the long serving custodian of the Bathgate Army Reserve Centre.

With a strong cohort of officers and non commissioned officers, supported by dedicated instructors and permanent staff, A Company is well positioned to build on the successes of the past year. Looking ahead, we do so with confidence, ready to meet new challenges and continue our proud tradition of excellence.



CSgt McIntosh, Pte King and Maj Baggott la Velle marching alongside the community – the Gretna Rail Disaster Memorial 2025.



B COMPANY - AYR, DUMFRIES

Officer Commanding:
Major A Guzowski

Second in Command:
Captain J Richardson

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:
Captain M Green

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two C Knox

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant J Cleland

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant D McClung (Reserve)

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor (SPSI):
Colour Sergeant G McCann
CSgt R Muir

Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI):
Colour Sergeant P Breen

Recruitment Engagement Mentoring Support Officer:
Sergeant B Stuart



A year of change: new capabilities, new locations and ensuring we spread the good word!

The year began with a focus on enabling activity, including the annual 6 SCOTS inter-company patrol competition held on a blustery winter's day at Castlelaw training area, Edinburgh. B Company was narrowly beaten (by a single point) securing second place overall. Congratulations go to Capt Jim Richardson, patrol commander, and to all of those who took part.

As the weather improved, the Battalion training programme gathered momentum. B Company soldiers participated in a breadth of collective training weekends in preparation for the Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) on Okehampton, Devon. This included completion of the mandatory Annual Combat Marksmanship Test, with the required build-up shoots. Collective training progressed from individual skills through section and platoon level offensive and enabling actions. During this period, B Company was responsible for delivering Ex LOMOND SENTINEL at Garelochhead. The exercise was designed to test junior commanders' leadership during reconnaissance tasks and contact drills, culminating in a complex raid on an enemy position.



LCpl Bruce stepping up as Sect Comd during a complex attack with casualties on Ex LOMOND SENTINEL.

Following the return from Okehampton, B Company transitioned to focus on urban

operations, while emphasising that training is not confined solely to green field environments. Equal effort was applied to attracting and retaining talent through varied and engaging activity. Sgt Mathews exemplified this balance, completing multiple British Army Warrior Fitness events and qualifying for regional level events. This is a tremendous achievement to be able to compete at such a high standard against regular army counterparts. Sgt Mathews was also highly commended for his contribution to the Army Expo, in Edinburgh, over the summer. Hosting a stand and talking to attendees about his role in the reserves. Pte Lane was also recognised through the Thriving Community Volunteer Award for his work supporting adult and family learning across Ayrshire.



Sgt Mathews 'flying high' at the Army Expo in Edinburgh.

Throughout the year, the ReMSO, Sgt Stuart, led numerous engagement activities, including support to the International Airshow in Ayr. Across Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire, B Company remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting as many Remembrance events as possible, proudly sending representatives to Ayr, Prestwick, Troon,



6 SCOTS

B COMPANY - AYR, DUMFRIES *continued*

Dumfries, and Stranraer. Through this visible presence, B Company upheld the enduring bond between the Army and the communities we serve, particularly significant in 2025, marking the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe and Japan.



Stuart enjoying the Ayr Show on the Low Green, Ayr Beach.

The Officer Commanding represented the Company as the oldest member of the 6 SCOTS Commando Speed March team, finishing in the top third of runners – the first time in many years that 6 SCOTS had entered a team. This challenging march

covered 6.7 miles of undulating terrain, replicating the original test route from Spean Bridge Train Station to the Achnacarry estate. Historically, aspirants were required to carry 36 lbs (16.5 kg) of issued equipment while dressed in heavy woollen service attire and wearing brogues. Failure to reach the finish line within 60 minutes resulted in automatic disqualification, and a long walk back to the train station.



OC B at the Commando Memorial post completion of the Commando Speed March.

The final Company-led activity of the year was Ex CALEDONIAN QUEST – a joint A and B Company Battlefield Study and Adventurous Training weekend held in October. Centred around Edinburgh, the package included mountain biking at

Glentress, a study of the manoeuvrist approach at the Battle of Dunbar (1650), and a social evening that reinforced team cohesion.

It has been a pleasure for us all to witness the career progress of B Company members, and this year is no exception. It is a delight to announce that CSgt McClung was selected for promotion and assumed the role CSM B Company in late 2025 after many years of distinguished service as both the B Coy CQMS and CQMS(R). Recently promoted CSgt Allison will now assume the CQMS(R) B Company role alongside his other duties within Dumfries Platoon. Congratulations are also extended to A/Sgts Owens and Mathews, and LCpl McCall all of whom promoted following successful completion of their career courses.



Sgt Owens entering the Sgts' Mess, presenting WO2 Lynn his leaving gift from 6 SCOTS.



B Company on Parade at the sunken Garden, Ayr.

We also bid farewell to several members moving on to new opportunities. WO2 Knox has elected to take a break from military service to focus on his civilian career, whilst CSgt McCann and Sgt Breen both conclude their Regular service with us this year. Finally, WO2 Lynn, who has been a long-standing member of both B Coy and of 6 SCOTS, concludes 36 exceptional years of service in the infantry and now transfers to the Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS) in January 2026. We wish all departing members every success in their future endeavours.



C COMPANY

Officer Commanding:

Major L Herbet

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:

Captain A Blair

Company Second in Command:

Captain I Hunter

Company Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two B Ewart

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant R Hamilton (FTRS)

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:

Colour Sergeant J Henderson (Reserve)

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:

Colour Sergeant T Meighan
Colour Sergeant Chamberlain

Permanent Staff Instructor:

Sergeant R Morton

Recruitment Engagement Mentoring Support Officer:

Sergeant J Gould



Ex Urban Avenger.

2025 was an eventful year for 6 SCOTS, both in terms of training and personnel turnover. Inflow continued to improve, and we saw more soldiers progress through basic training and the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) for trade training. We unfortunately said goodbye to CSgt Meigan who leaves us to be the next SPSI at A Company in Edinburgh. Sgt Stott also departed the company, a stalwart of C Company, who leaves us to pursue a career with the Military Provost Guard Service. CSgt Chamberlain has arrived as SPSI, having finished his previous role as Chief Instructor at the Union Division Training Team. We welcome back Capt Ian Hunter, as Company 2IC, from his secondment to the DC National Guard in the United States. 2Lt Jamie Horsley joins us as a Platoon Commander from Glasgow UOTC. The following received richly deserved promotions; Lance Corporals Hunter and McGowan and Corporal Currie-McLean.

In preparation for the Battalion's Annual Deployment Exercise, the Company were tasked with the planning and execution of Ex URBAN AVENGER, a Company level urban exercise at Whinny Hill, Catterick. Deploying a full 3 platoon company, alongside fellow Army Reservists from 1 RMP and regular soldiers from Balaklava Company.

Ex URBAN AVENGER was designed to enhance urban warfare capabilities and strengthen cooperation between different Army units. The training included a variety of scenarios mimicking complex urban environments, allowing soldiers to refine their skills in navigation, communication, and tactical decision-making under pressure. Members of 1 RMP played a critical role by overseeing prisoner handling exercises and offering practical demonstrations on how RMP resources could be integrated effectively into wider battalion operations. Balaklava Company's participation marked an important step in reinforcing mutual understanding and teamwork between Regular and Reserve soldiers. The exercise also featured interactive workshops where attendees

discussed best practices and shared experiences from previous operations.

Deputy Commander Reserves (1st Division), Brigadier Jaishan Mahan, joined us for part of the weekend. The Brigadier provided an Army Reserve update and answered questions from an inquisitive audience. Brigadier Jaish's presence not only motivated the troops but also fostered open dialogue about future developments in the Army Reserve, ensuring that all voices were heard. The event concluded with a debrief highlighting lessons learned and setting objectives for upcoming exercises throughout the year.



The Jedi Master, WO2 Ewart, passing on his knowledge.

C Company also completed numerous range weekends in Castletlaw and a pre-deployment exercise, ensuring all those attending the Battalion's Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) met the required start state. The ADE was our main effort this year and members of C Company provide the bulk of the fighting troops, with Capt Ian Hunter in position as OC for all exercising troops. In addition, members of the Company successfully completed the CAMBRIAN PATROL, earning well deserved silver medals, completed the Speen Bridge Commando Speed March and took part in the 1st Division battle fitness test Ex RHINO CHALLENGE.

Looking ahead to next year, the Company are primed to support deployments internationally and in support of UK Operations. We will also lead on the Battalion's entry to the Divisional Shooting Competition as well as providing workforce to CAMBRIAN PATROL and other Brigade and Divisional events.



6 SCOTS

HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major W Hunter MBE

Company Second in Command:
Captain G Rattray

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Office Class Two S Watt

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
CQMS Staff Sergeant C Ward (FTRS)

Company Quarter Master Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant P Duncan (Reserve)

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:
Warrant Office Class 2 G Mclay

This year HQ Company supported every training event and deployment in some way, shape or form.

We said farewell to, Capt Gordon Law who left to carry out a new post closer to home. WO2 Garry Stewart, retired from Service and is now, in his own words, "100% a civilian". WO2 Barry Lynn, left to join the MPGS. In the summer of 2026, we will also say farewell to Capt Graham "Tosh" McIntosh who will have completed 40 years Reserve Service, and Maj Watty Hunter MBE who will have completed 35 years Regular and 5 years Reserve Service. To all those leaving we wish them the best of health and good luck for the future.

The new blood into HQ Coy included CSgt Gaz Mclay, who left the Regular Army as our PSI and has made the switch to the Reserves, he is now our CIS CSgt. LCpl Torbet also left the Regular Army to join the Reserve, he is now our MT Cpl. Finally, the new Padre, Capt Guss McAuley, joined HQ Coy in November having been posted in from 4 Para. It is great to have them all on board, I wish them success in their new appointments.

Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE)



A Chef's work is never done, Sgt MacAllister prepares another fine meal for the troops.

Exercise LION STRIKE was the 6 SCOTS ADE where we deployed to the sparse and challenging training area of Dartmoor. During this ADE HQ Coy deployed all our staff in their respective roles in support of the F-echelon troops. SSgt Lawrence and Sgt MacAllister provided the catering support both in camp, and on the ranges. As usual their delivery was outstanding, and the food was enjoyed throughout by all.

Sgt Watt controlled all G1 support before, during and after the ADE. Capt Rattray and CSM Watt both deployed in support of the range teams, using their knowledge and experience to support the troops and the training team.



Seal team 1 deploy. CSM, RQMS, Master Chef and Trg WO.

The G4 team, led by RQMS Seery and supported by the CQMS CSgt Duncan, delivered a superb service and ensured the troops were more than adequately supported throughout. The MTO, Capt McIntosh, planned and delivered all vehicle movement serials during the exercise, which was no mean feat supporting the various comings and goings. Maj Hunter and CSM Watt delivered a cultural and R&R package in Plymouth, allowing the troops to see the surrounding area. During the ADE Capt Rattray delivered the units OP TEAMWORK exercise which was both educational and informative.



CSM Watt re-living his youth.

Battlefield Study



OC, RQMS, CSM and TRG WO paying their respects.

The 6 SCOTS annual Battlefield study, Ex LOWLAND POPPY, saw Maj Hunter CSM Watt and RQMS Seery deploy to the Netherlands on a windy and rainy day in Walcheren. There we discussed the Allied forces bombing of the dikes during the attack on the island of Walcheren. Part of the study was to visit the Commonwealth War graves at Bergen-Op-Zoom, where we paid our respects to all those who lost their lives in the battle.

Christmas Lunch



The HQ Coy Team who make it happen.

HQ Coy were again tasked with delivering the 6 SCOTS traditional Christmas lunch for the Battalion. The challenges of planning and delivering such an event was given to Capt Rattray, like most activities in HQ Coy it truly was a team effort. Once again SSgt Lawrence and Sgt Macallister were tasked with providing a three-course lunch for over 100 troops, a huge challenge which they smashed out of the park.

Everyone in HQ Coy would like to congratulate SSgt Jen Lawrence on her GOC 1 UK Div commendation for her outstanding work with both 6 SCOTS and her attachment to 167 Reg at the Army Reserve School of Catering. This is a fantastic achievement for an outstanding SNCO.



SSgt Lawrence receives her GOC commendation from CO6 SCOTS, Lt Col Curson.

CSgt Patch Duncan attended and passed the All Arms CQMS course this year and has taken up the post as our Reserve CQMS. He was also awarded the voluntary Reserve Service Medal (VRSM).



CSgt Duncan receives his VRSM medal from 6 SCOTS Honorary Colonel.



THE LOWLAND BAND – A YEAR OF SERVICE AND MUSIC

Director Of Music:

Captain A Knox

Band Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two J McQuat

Band Permanent Staff Instructor:

Warrant Officer Class Two M James



ADE Aberdeen.

Over the past year, the Band has delivered a remarkable breadth of ceremonial duties, achieving musical excellence, and community engagement across Scotland. From solemn services and Royal occasions, to our annual training camps and high-profile concerts, every commitment reflected the values that define a reservist: discipline, pride, loyalty, commitment and unwavering dedication to community and country.

Ceremonial & Commemoration

The calendar opened with the 3rd Sunday of Lent Service at Canongate Kirk, a thoughtful and dignified moment that set the tone for the months ahead.

Spring brought a focused training cycle to the fore. A four-day camp culminated in marching band practice and a Reservists Pass-Out Parade at Redford Barracks reaffirming core standards of drill and teamwork. May saw the Band support the Airborne Alliance Service at Dunfermline Abbey, a setting resonant with Scotland's martial heritage. The atmosphere of remembrance and unity surrounded by centuries of history underscored the Bands' continuing bond with those who have served and the communities that support them.

Summer's ceremonial high point arrived with the Royal Scots Beating Retreat in June at the Royal Scot Club, attended by HRH The Princess Royal. The precision of the drill and the musical programme of all involved spoke for the many hours of preparation

behind the scenes. The Band also supported a small contingent for Princess Anne at the City War Memorial in Dunfermline, a moment of quiet respect that illustrated the enduring link between ceremonial duty and communal remembrance.

The Band's commitment to national observances was visible throughout the year: participation in Armed Forces Day in Edinburgh, Remembrance events in Glasgow, and the Huddersfield Remembrance Concert ensured that the Bands presence was felt both locally and nationally. Engagements at Erskine Hospital and the Combat Stress Concert further highlighted the Band's support for veterans' charities and wellbeing.

Training, Readiness & Development

One of our newest recruits, Musn Ballantyne, had the opportunity to further



Musn Ballantyne on the Summer Mountain Leader Course.



enhance her skills on the Summer Mountain Leader Course. Musician Ballantyne demonstrated a commitment to professional development, expeditionary competence, and the confidence required to lead in challenging environments.

Further professional enrichment took place at Bovington Camp, with three musicians broadening their skills by working with another military band. The Band's main training and development exercise took place in Aberdeen where we combined heritage and outreach, encompassing engagements at the Gordon Highlanders Museum, Dunkeld Cathedral, St Machar's Cathedral and concluded with an informal concert followed by lunch for the veterans of Aberdeen.

Musical Excellence & Achievements



Remembrance Parade, Glasgow.

Across the year, the Brass Group were front-and-centre in conveying the Band's spirit through music. A dinner night for the RAF showcased the ensemble's versatility in formal settings, while appearances at the Royal Scot Club for Poppy Scotland brought music to the forefront in support of military charitable fundraising. A few of our musicians had the opportunity to participate in the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, a high-profile event whose global audience reflects the prestige and visibility of the performance.



Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

The Band's calendar also embraced cultural inclusion and civic energy: the Diwali Festival of Light Parade demonstrated respect for Scotland's diverse communities, these engagements align with the Bands charity, and community engagement commitment. The Brass Group's St Andrew's Night dinner was a highlight, blending national tradition with musical craftsmanship, and affirming the cultural role the band plays at the heart of battalion life.

Recruitment

Recruitment efforts told an equally encouraging story. The Band's Open Day welcomed new recruits; Rae, Bedwell, Ballantyne, Kennedy, Harby, Liles and Angus whose arrival is both a testament to successful outreach and a vote of confidence in the Band's culture. Induction is only the beginning, the commitment to structured training, clear progression, and a supportive peer environment will ensure that these recruits not only integrate but thrive.

Confidence for the Year Ahead!

Threaded through every engagement is a set of values put into action: respect, loyalty, selfless commitment, discipline, and integrity. Ceremonial Duties whether at Canongate Kirk, Dunfermline Abbey, or with HRH The Princess Royal, require exacting standards and quiet focus. Musical performances from the Edinburgh Military Tattoo to mess dinners and charity fundraisers demand collaboration, rehearsal discipline, and performance poise. Camps and training from Redford to Bovington, and mountain leader qualifications develop resilience and leadership. Community events from Diwali to the Erskine Hospital demonstrate that service is not only about ceremony; it is also about the challenge of meeting the demands of a reservist and balancing this with employment commitments and life as a civilian.

We'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate Musn McDonald, LCpl Naumova and LCpl Stirton who welcomed new additions to their families this year. We also wish a fond farewell to Musn Sandford.

Corporal F Allan

Lance Corporal M Marshall



OFFICERS' MESS



The St Andrew's Dinner night.

The Officers' mess continues to thrive even though it can be hard to come together as a mess consistently.

The mess continues to grow as we welcomed Maj Alan "Puggy" Falconer as the Executive Officer and Capt Gregor Sandiford as the Adjutant, both have embraced the reserves and provided the benefit of their experience to enhance mess life.

We also welcomed a number of officers who have recently left the regular army; Capt Nick Lytollis from 2 SCOTS joins as the training officer, Capt Tom Quayle joins us from the Rifles as a liaison officer, Capt Elliot Smith from 3 SCOTS, joins us as A Coy 2IC, Capt Rory Edwards joins us from The Scots Dragoon Guards, and 2Lt Jamie Horsley joins C Company as a Platoon

Commander from Glasgow UOTC. It is a credit to each Company for attracting such high-quality officers in a very competitive environment, with a wider range of units on offer for talented and enthusiastic officers leaving the regular army. It is also a positive reflection on the economy in the central belt that so many young officers wish to stay in Scotland and start their civilian careers rather than moving south. It is also a positive reflection on 6 SCOTS that our new officers take the time to engage in training and the unit while managing busy work and home lives.

We also saw a number of departures this year with A Coy 2IC Josh Beale not only welcoming his first child, but taking the decision to return to the regular army after successfully establishing himself at JP

Morgan. Jack Lord and Rich Dunbar successfully completed the commissioning course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Rich commissioned into the REME and Jack commissioned into the Army Air Corps and also won the Sword of Honour and the King's medal, a tremendous achievement and we wish them both well in their future careers.

The highlight of the year was the St Andrew's dinner where we were able to welcome friends and family to our mess. Major Alex McGrory put on a wonderful dinner with excellent food and wine. Our Band provided a delightful musical accompaniment to the evening.

Major C Jetuah



WARRANT OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS - WALCHEREN BARRACKS

The 6 SCOTS Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess had a steady period, welcoming many new arrivals on posting into the unit. We also bid a fond farewell to several individuals who reached the end of their service in both the Regulars and the Reserves. Throughout these changes, the Mess continued to uphold the positive culture it has established, creating further opportunities to socialise outside of work.

Summer 2025 saw the Mess take on Topgolf in Glasgow – a great day out enjoyed by all, including those who had never swung a club in anger, and those more proficient golfers who often *do* swing a club in anger. The event gave all Mess members the chance to get to know one another better in a relaxed environment; the momentum carried on into Glasgow city centre afterwards.

The end of 2025 marked the return of several Mess members who had been mobilised on both UK and overseas taskings, and it was excellent to have them back in time for the Christmas festivities. To close the year, the Mess held its Christmas function at the Normandy Hotel in Renfrew, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

As I write this, preparations are in full swing for Burns 2026 at Walcheren Barracks, typically the biggest (and most enjoyable) event of the calendar year. The performers have been preparing for several months, so it promises to be a fantastic way for the 6 SCOTS Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess to begin 2026.

WO1 S Whitehead MC



SCOTS

www.theroyalregimentofscotland.org



7 SCOTS



COMMANDING OFFICER'S FOREWORD

With my first year in command now firmly in the rear-view mirror, penning journal notes offers a welcome opportunity to reflect on 12 months of what I assess to be normal jogging for a busy Infantry Reserve Battalion in good spirits. Whilst this year's Strategic Defence Review certainly headlined the importance of the UK's Reserve Forces, it will take longer to define how this is to be operationalised. My sense is that this thinking will not mature until the latter stages of my tenure, but our next annual deployments are set to provide waypoints to help orientate our training and demonstrate, both internally and externally, our operational role within the 1st(UK) Division and the wider NATO construct. However, it is important not to lose sight of the unique role and connection our Battalion has with our local communities across the North of Scotland: our Territorial forebears; the wider veteran community from across the antecedents and all three Services; and, of course, our future - in the shape of the younger generation in our affiliated ACF and CCF units

Without a Battalion overseas deployment this year, routine training has sought to reset to the basics after last year's event in Germany, but with a constant drumbeat of individual deployments in support of Regular and Reserve overseas exercises (Kenya, Lithuania, Spain, USA), and wider operations - including Op INTERFLEX and Op TOSCA. On this year's Annual Deployment Exercise to Otterburn, the Battalion's primary task was to deliver a Brigade Junior Non-Commissioned Officers' cadre. The terrain and weather on the Otterburn Training Area did not disappoint and it was reassuring to see the resilience of the Highland soldier stand out against those used to less harsh climes! In addition, Maj Harry Hood also delivered Cambrian Patrol training to two other ARes units and Glasgow & Strathclyde UOTC - resulting in an impressive three Silver Medals, one Bronze, and one certificate. In addition, we ran a series of Support Weapons and Bowman cadres - qualifying small numbers of soldiers in Mortars (including Live Firing), Javelin Anti-Tank, Light Role GPMG, and advanced Signalling. Whilst the Army Reserve has yet to come to decision on the future of Support Weapons, our training demonstrated the ability and enthusiasm to keep these broader Infantry capabilities alive. Other routine activity throughout the year has seen the Highland Band and our playing pipers busy as ever, supporting State Ceremonial activities and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. The



Commanding Officer even made it onto the Esplanade, with the last-minute privilege of commanding the parade for the installation

of Maj Gen Bob Bruce CBE DSO as Governor of Edinburgh Castle - a truly memorable experience.



Mortar live fire at Bn ADE.

Marshall from a long and illustrious shift with 3 SCOTS, and Capt Tom Purslow from knees-to-chest with 2 SCOTS. Instructor handovers saw the departures of CSgt Craig Sloane and Sgt Marc Tulley to 3 and 2 SCOTS respectively, replaced by CSgt John Fay and Sgt Craig Manders – both one in/one out from their parent Battalions. On the FTRS staff, CSgt Alan Pratt leaves the Highland Band on retirement, replaced by CSgt 'Titch' Harvey, arriving from the UNION Division Training Team. In August Capt 'Tich' Robb retired from his post as PSAO D Coy. The 31st of October also marked the last day in uniform for the Regimental Administration Officer, Maj Phil Ward. Combining both his FTRS/NRPS and Regular Service, he has racked up nearly 44 years of service – a genuine stalwart and shining example of personal commitment. The rest of the 7 SCOTS articles will add more depth and colour to our achievements this year, so I will close with a final couple of congratulations. Firstly, to our Medical Officer, Maj Andrew Gilmour: awarded a CGS Commendation in the Army's New Year's Honours List 2026 "for exceptional professionalism and dedication in military healthcare". And secondly, to our Training Warrant Officer, WO2 Darran Pasifull: selected for RQMS(M) at 3 SCOTS from Summer 2026 - a just reward for the exceptional drive and enthusiasm he has brought to 7 SCOTS, building confidence and competence in training planning and delivery throughout the Regular and Reserve training teams.

Lieutenant Colonel David M Robertson

My priority for 2026 is to maximise routine training attendance – reinvigorating small team cohesion and increasing collective training 'mass' when we come together to train collectively, monthly. In October we will deploy to Denmark with 19th Light Bde, giving us the Spring and Summer to prepare to hit the ground ready to train and fully exploit a new opportunity. Recruiting north of the border remains a challenge, and the protracted application and basic training pipelines exacerbate our ability to regrow our active strength quickly. Raw application numbers are on the increase: the last twelve months up by over 80% on the previous, thanks to the energy and effort of our localised recruiting teams under Capt Scott Shaw. However, we must make better use of what we have already. My personal experience, joining the TA as a soldier 25 years ago, tells me that it is in these small teams where our strength lies. Our volunteer soldiers and officers have extremely busy lives, balancing family, and professional commitments against time in uniform. The first two must always be the priority but, by rebuilding localised team unity, training ownership, and social events, I believe that the motivation to serve will endure, building friendships for life.

I was delighted to attend the 7 SCOTS combined Officers' and Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess Burns Night in Perth in January – a fantastic blend of entertainment and comradeship, bringing together Regulars, Reserves, FTRS, veterans, families, Perth Council and Highland RFCA. It was equally pleasing to fill two tables at the Black Watch Association Perth Branch's well-established event the following weekend – including bringing four of our Reserve JNCOs. The desire to strengthen the bonds between the Battalion and its antecedents is alive and well and the addition of a dash of youth brought added energy to the

event. We are extremely fortunate in Inverness where our PSAO (Capt Pete Marshall) is also the SCOTS Association Highlands & Islands Branch Chairman. This provides a focal point between serving soldiers, veterans, and the local community – it is something I would love to replicate routinely across the rest of our AO. The number of ex-Regular Jocks and SNCOs transferring to 7 SCOTS, C Coy in particular, is testament to the importance of this relationship; brings enormous experience to our Battalion; and supports our people as they make the often-challenging transition out of full-time service. I encourage anyone leaving the Regulars to consider making the transfer to their local Reserve unit.

This year's permanent staff turnover has seen the departure of the Executive Officer, Maj Paul Colville, and Adjutant, Capt Iain Pearson, posted on to the Army Personnel Centre and RMAS, respectively. In their place we have welcomed Maj Paddy



Junior Command team.



SOLDIER PROMOTIONS

Colour Sergeant to Warrant Officer Class Two

A/WO2 McNiven

Lance Corporal to Corporal

A/Cpl Omahoney-Magee

Private to Lance Corporal

Marshall

McChesney

McLean

Mitchell

Walker



HEADQUARTER COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major A Collister

Company Second in Command:
Captain M Dunnigan

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:
Captain S Rae

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two S Woods

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant J Twine

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:
Warrant Officer Class Two O Hiagi

The Battalion of course continues to support Operations, HQ Coy included, and Pte (now LCpl) Walker spent the last 6 months in Cyprus on Operation TOSCA with 5 RRF. On his return the Colonel of the Regiment, Major General RRE Lindsay CBE, was visiting Battalion Headquarters and was delighted to promote him, so huge congratulations to LCpl Walker and welcome back. He was not the only HQ Coy soldier mobilised this year, Pte Smith was also mobilised to spend 3 months in Kenya on Exercise BULLSTORM, with 3 SCOTS, giving a performance worthy of a soldier of much greater experience, as noted by his Platoon Commander who "forgot" he was a reservist. Mobilisation will continue to be a feature of the Army Reserve training year and even now we are seeing interesting trawls for both operation and exercises coming through so there will no doubt be more soldiers off to interesting places in the next 12 to 18 months.



Pte Smith with 3 SCOTS in Kenya.

Training year 25-26 saw Headquarter Company go from strength to strength. The soldiers continue to approach any given task with enthusiasm, good humour and maximum effort. From deployments to courses to weekend training and of course our Annual Deployment Exercise, not to mention external events like the Cambrian Patrol.

Congratulations go to Ptes Adam, Barr and Copas who all completed the Combat Infantryman Course in Catterick this year with very good reports and also to Pte Eunson who very recently completed his Phase 1 Battlecamp and is as these notes are being compiled preparing to go on his Phase 2 AGC SPS Combat HR Course.

LCpl Stewart has completed the demanding Section Commanders Battle Course (Junior Brecon) and is back in the fold full of good ideas to enhance our training.

The main focus for the year for the Battalion this year however, was our Annual Deployment Exercise, where this year as a Battalion we were tasked with running a Potential Junior NCO Cadre on the Otterburn Training Area for all of the units in 19 Brigade. The PJNCO Cadre proved to be very demanding with the weather conditions and terrain combining to prove too much for some who withdrew from it. This did include 2 soldiers who actually ended up with broken bones but did highlight the need for robustness in our soldiers. The attrition rate did make the achievement of passing much greater for those who did and congratulations to all of them.



LCpl OMG putting the PJNCO Cadre through the RFT.

Alongside the PJNCO the Battalion also ran a number of other Cadres for members of the battalion not involved in it. This included a Signals Infantry Platoon Radio Operators (IPRO) Cadre run by WO2 Hiagi, CSgt Bradford and Cpl Chambers (that Pte Adam passed), a Mortar Cadre including live firing, a Javelin Operators Cadre and a preparation course for the Cambrian Patrol. This proved to be valuable training for the 7 SCOTS team (that included Cpl O'Mahoney-Magee and Pte Macrae) who managed to win a silver medal at this year's competition.

So as usual, a lot of activity throughout the year and now that ADE is over, we start looking forward to the next training year and the build up to ADE 2026. Watch this space.



Weekend training with SNIY, aviation assault.



A COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major Grant Linklater

Company Second-in-Command:
Captain Jonathan Nicol

Company Sergeant Major:
Gapped

Permanent Staff Administration Officer:
Captain Robert Graham

Regimental Mentoring Support Officer:
Sergeant Hugh Robertson

Platoon Commanders:
Lieutenant Peter Walker
Lieutenant Nicholas Caceres
Lieutenant Alexander Innes
Lieutenant Martin Neil Steven

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant Scott McGregor

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:
Gapped (Reserve)

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:
Colour Sergeant David McGregor
Sergeant Bryan Feenan



January Trg weekend in Dundee urban operations facility.

2025 proved busy for A Coy, and kicked off in style with Exercise Urban Argyll, 17 - 19 Jan. This saw the Bn use the indoor state-of-the-art Close-Quarters Battle (CQB) facility at Oliver Barracks for the first time. The new facility in Dundee, co-located with the A Coy HQ location, allows the Army in Scotland to train low-level urban warfare tactics realistically in a CQB environment. With such a facility now on our doorstep, A Coy and the wider Bn are now in prime position to hone individual and team skills within a challenging urban context.

During the exercise, which was led by D Coy, members of the Bn learnt about camouflage and concealment in the urban environment and put it into practice by camouflaging vehicles. In addition to this, the soldiers learnt about the threat from mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The weekend concluded with an urban navigation exercise where exercising troops developed a route that met specific rendezvous points and conduct reconnaissance on opposition force actions. This was then compiled into a patrol report.

The Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (HRFCA) were kind enough to partly fund the facility, allowing the purchase of smoke, light, and noise equipment. This allows training troops and some emergency workers to be fully immersed into the training. While its core purpose is to train soldiers for operations in the ever-evolving urban environment, it will also be available to other local agencies, such as Police Scotland, widening its utility to the civilian world.

Later in the year, A Coy supported a wide range of Bn activities, contributing significant numbers to the Operational Shooting Competition and Cambrian Patrol where the Bn Team led by 2Lt Caceres and Cpl O'Mahoney Magee (HQ Coy) achieved an impressive silver. They also helped support

Bn training events from Fort George to Castletlaw, Barry Buddon to Otterburn.

The end of the year saw a shift of focus from the Bn back to Coy level training, with Remembrance Events across Fife, Angus and Aberdeenshire. November also saw an exciting opportunity to collaborate with the Dundee Stars Ice Hockey Team. December saw us run our "Top Jock" competition as well as a Coy social. A little rest and time with our families prepared us to jump straight back into the training program in January 2026.



Urban operations.

There have been promotions and appointments across the Coy throughout the year. We welcomed Sgt Bryan Feenan from 4 SCOTS as the Aberdeen PSI, and CSgt McNiven left us on promotion to WO2 and a posting to HQ Coy Perth as the Training Warrant Officer (Reserve). 2Lt Caceres joined the Coy as the Aberdeen Pl Comd upon commissioning from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in July as did 2Lt Innes in November. Success was also enjoyed for some of our junior soldiers, with Ptes Mitchell, McLean and McChesney making that important first step on the ladder and achieving a thoroughly deserved promotion to LCpl.

2025 proved to be successful for A Coy and sets the perfect conditions for us to build on for every success. The future is bright.



CHARLIE COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Gapped

Company Second in Command:
Captain A Lapslie

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:
Captain P Marshall

Company Sergeant Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two C Smith

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant A Braid

Regimental Mentoring Support Officer:
Sergeant H Brownless

Senior Permanent Staff Instructor:
Sergeant D Campbell

Permanent Staff Instructor:
Sergeant K Hart

2025 has been a remarkable year for the members of C Company, marked by a whirlwind of activity, deployments, and achievements both at home and abroad. From the rolling hills of Otterburn to the bustling streets of Basel, C Company personnel have represented their unit with distinction, showcasing their skills and dedication on a global stage.

Global Deployments and Memorable Moments

The year got off to a flyer with LCpl Hall received a Brigade Commanders Commendation and promotion to LCpl on the same day. C Company has had an impressive international presence this year, with personnel deploying to Kenya, Romania, the USA, Switzerland, France, and Belgium. Among the highlights was LCpl Stewart's deployment as a Piper to France and Belgium, where he supported commemoration services for the burial of World War I soldiers. Working alongside 2 SCOTS, who provided the bearer party, LCpl Stewart's exceptional piping and his respectful, engaging manner earned him special praise from the Commemorations Caseworker.



LCpl Hall with his Commendation being promoted by the 19 Brigade Commander.

Meanwhile, Piper Christie travelled to Switzerland to support 4 SCOTS at the prestigious Basel Tattoo. As a reservist based in Los Angeles, Piper Christie may well hold the title of the UK's furthest-travelled reservist, demonstrating the global reach and commitment of C Company.



Piper Christie in Basel.



CHARLIE COMPANY *continued*

Capt Lapslie represented the company in Romania, attending the International Confederation of Reserve Officers – Young Reserve Officers' Seminar, while Sgt Hart, one of the company's Permanent Staff Instructors (PSIs), deployed to Kenya. There, he served as an observer mentor, supporting 3 SCOTS during Exercise BULLSTORM. Additionally, Capt Bloodworth is currently on a 12-month mobilisation in Kenya, working as a development staff Officer for the training unit HQ.

Four soldiers from the company also had the unique opportunity to deploy to the USA with 2 Royal Irish on Exercise NORTHERN STRIKE. This multinational exercise saw them train alongside coalition forces, including the US Marine Corps Reserve, and gain hands-on experience with American weapon systems—a highlight for all involved.



Soldiers enjoy some team building in America.



Stopping for a photo during night manoeuvres in America.

Training and Exercises Closer to Home

Back in the UK, C Company has been equally busy. Personnel participated in a variety of exercises and courses, including the Unmanned Aerial System Operators (UAS) Course. Pte Thorpe not only qualified as a drone operator but also quickly put his skills to use during Exercise WESSEX STORM. The company also took part in the 7 SCOTS Annual Deployment Exercise in Otterburn, which received glowing feedback from participants.

LCpl Barry was the first Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (JNCO) from the company in several years to attend the challenging Section Commanders' Battle Course. Meanwhile, C Company members supported the Battalion Shooting Team and Cambrian Patrol Team, both of which performed admirably.

A Year of Growth and Success

Recruitment has been another area of success for C Company in 2025. The unit welcomed several transfers from the Regular Army, including soldiers from 3 SCOTS, the Scots Dragoon Guards, and the Royal Army Medical Corps. Additionally, reserve-to-reserve transfers brought in personnel from 4 PARA, the Royal Logistic Corps, and Officer Training Regiments. The company's Recruiting and Mentoring Support Officer (ReMSO), Sgt Brownless, has been instrumental in driving this growth, working tirelessly to integrate new recruits into the team.

Looking Ahead

As the year draws to a close, C Company finds itself in a strong and positive position. Attendance is on the rise, and there is a palpable sense of enthusiasm and engagement across all locations. With such a productive and rewarding year behind them, the company is well-positioned to tackle the challenges and opportunities that 2026 will bring.

C Company's achievements in 2025 are a testament to the hard work, dedication, and professionalism of its members. Whether at home or abroad, they have consistently demonstrated the values and standards that define the British Army Reserve. Here's to another year of success and service!



DELTA COMPANY

Officer Commanding:
Major D Hood

Company Second in Command:
Captain O Gourd

Permanent Staff Administrative Officer:
Captain MSP Robb

Company Sergeant-Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two Kelly
Warrant Officer Class Two Dearden
(from Oct 25)

Company Quartermaster Sergeant:
Colour Sergeant L McDowall

Regimental Mentoring Support Officer:
Sergeant G Simpson

Permanent Staff Instructor (Dumbarton)
Colour Sergeant Sloan
Colour Sergeant Fay (from Sep 25)

Permanent Staff Instructor (Stirling)
Sergeant Tulley
Sergeant Manders (from Sep 25)



Suppressive Fire from the GPMG on Ex HIGHLAND DIRK.

Delta Company has been as ever fully committed to Battalion Training this year planning and running several of the training weekend in the build up to ADE, from the well-received Ex URBAN ARGYLL, an introduction to Urban Ops in the new urban training facility in Dundee to Ex HIGHLAND DIRK, a patrolling and attack serial on the often overlooked but demanding Pentland Hills. This training has helped produce fit, keen and robust soldiers who thrive on the challenging training the Battalion is now delivering

Lance Corporals Dunnegan and Marshall (newly promoted) joined the Bn shooting team which competed in the Divisional Operational Shooting Competition at Altcar Ranges. This was a totally new experience for them, and they produced a sterling

performance as the team qualified for the Army Reserve Operational Shooting Competition at Bisley. 7 SCOTS Annual Deployment Exercise HIGHLAND SABRE was conducted at Otterburn Training Area and saw members of the Company participate in a number of training serials which enabled them to showcase and develop their personal skills and instructional techniques. Corporals Gordon and McFarlane assisted as Section Commanders on the Potential NCO (PNCO) Cadre, while Lance Corporal Marshall honed his Anti-Tank skills on the JAVELIN cadre. Of note, Private McDonald put in an outstanding performance on the PNCO Cadre to finish as the Top Student and it was pleasing to see that he received his award for 19 Brigade Commander at the end of the exercise.



Pte Macdonald, Top Student on the PNCO Cadre being presented with his prize by 19 Brigade Commander.



DELTA COMPANY *continued*



The Silver Medal Winning Cambrian Patrol Team.

Additionally on Ex HIGHLAND SABRE, Colour Sergeant Blair, Cpl Mclean and Lance Corporal Hartland supported a pre-CAMBRIAN PATROL training package which saw soldiers from several Army Reserve Units and University Officer Training Regiments undergo some demanding (and wet!) training in the often inclement weather in the Northumbrian hills, which paid dividends for those who then took part in the actual competition. Our own 7 SCOTS team won a silver medal and were disappointed they had not actually won a gold such was their confidence when they deployed. They still deserve huge congratulations for their efforts along with the teams from the other units who joined in who also achieved excellent results.

Op INTERFLEX is the United Kingdoms mission to support the training of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. It was extremely pleasing to see Private Alan McDougall volunteer to mobilise and deploy in support of this mission. The experience gained over the last 6

months will be invaluable in shaping and enhancing Coy training events in the coming year to ensure currency and development of sub-unit tactics.

Sergeant Simpson continues to mentor, encourage and guide the next generation of recruits through the elongated, and at times frustrating, recruit training pathway. Travelling hundreds of miles, and working long hours, he ensures the life blood and future of the Coy is secure through his sterling efforts and unwavering dedication which was recognised by the award of a Lord Lieutenant's Commendation for excellence.

At the other end of the spectrum, as these notes go to print, the Company will bid farewell to Captain Michael "Tich" Robb who sadly leaves the army after 42 years of loyal service, WO2 Alan "Sid" Kelly and WO2 Kenny Petrie also move on to pursue the challenge of civilian life. Colour Sergeant Sloan and Sergeant Tulley return to Regimental Duty and well-deserved promotions, they leave with our best wishes for the future.



JNCO cadre. Can you see me cam and con.



THE HIGHLAND BAND, THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Bandmaster:

Warrant Officer Class One R K Brill

Band Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two G Blamey

Band Permanent Staff Instructor:

Colour Sergeant R Harvey

Music is often described as a universal language, transcending boundaries, cultures, and spoken words to connect directly with the human soul. Whether in a joyous melody or a solemn tune, music provides a therapeutic, emotional outlet that makes it an indispensable part of human life. The British Army continues to utilise music as a source of unique power. 2025 provided countless highlights and experiences for the Highland Band.

On returning from the festive break emphasis and training was placed on ensuring that the band was fully prepared for the wide-ranging tasks set before them in 2025. The band, along with the Lowland Band, undertook a 4-day concentrated training exercise at HMS Caledonia, rehearsing and finessing mission specific training. It also gave the band a chance to catch up with former Permanent Staff Instructor Eddie Duff, who is part of the Health and Safety team at HMS Caledonia. Eddie will be retiring from this role in the early part of 2026, and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

Under Project TRINITY tasks are categorised to optimise the delivery of military music. This includes support to Commemorations, Repatriations and Celebration events. 2024-25 marked the 900th Anniversary of Stirling being granted Royal Burgh status by King David 1. The commemoration recognised the breadth and diversity of events that have engaged communities across Stirling in celebrating its rich heritage. The culmination of the celebrations included a parade of nine hundred performers and musicians marching from the esplanade at Stirling Castle through the streets of Stirling. Members of the Highland Band provided support to its regular counterparts in the delivery of musical

support to this historic event.

Music serves as a powerful medium supporting and enhancing anniversaries and remembrance, linking emotions to memories, and honouring the past through solemn and reflective music. 2025 marked the 80th Anniversary of the Victory in Japan, honouring the "the forgotten army" that fought in the Asia Pacific region and marking the end of World War 2. The brass quintet was honoured to be part of a Service of Thanksgiving attended by the First Minister of Scotland, John Swinney.

The Annual Deployment Exercise, Exercise NORTHERN NOTE took place at the beginning of July at Gordon Barracks, Aberdeen. As in previous years the band amalgamated with the Lowland Band (6 SCOTS). Throughout the exercise new repertoire was rehearsed and consolidated through live performances at events arranged prior to deployment. These included Armed Forces Day, Edinburgh, and concerts at the Gordon Highlanders Museum and St Machars Cathedral, Aberdeen. However, the highlight of the short concert series came at Dunkeld Cathedral. For some years, the parish has held a Music Festival between the months of May to August. The free concerts are informal and aimed at letting visitors enjoy the sound of music in the cathedral's wonderful setting. Concerts are performed by professional musicians and by talented local musicians who are part of the cathedral and wider local community. Concerts are a mix of genre from classical voice and instrumental to Scottish folk songs and guitar. The concert given by the band was a resounding success, with over 250 people attending, and £850.00 raised in donations. We very much look forward to going back next year!



Armed Forces Day Edinburgh.



THE HIGHLAND BAND, THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

continued



Concert at The Gordon Highlanders Museum during Annual Deployment Exercise.

2025 proved to be both a busy and memorable for the Highland Band. The Royal Military Edinburgh Tattoo celebrated its 75th anniversary with its theme *The Heroes Who Made Us*. Reflecting the 80 years since the end of World War 2 the Tattoo paid a fitting tribute not only to those who helped profile the world we live in, but the everyday heroes who has an influence on the communities that surround us. Music has always played a key part with bands from Ukraine, Poland and the United States of America adding their own culture and heritage, enriching the 2025 show. The United Kingdom provided six bands from the Royal Corps of Army Music, including the Band of the Royal Regiment Scotland supported by personnel from both the Highland and Lowland Bands performing to a worldwide audience, and increasing the share price of Haribos!

The band's busy schedule continued with musical support provided to many service charities and unit events. Towards the end of the year the theme of remembrance again came to the forefront of the band's activities. As part of the 19 Lt Brigade the Band of the Yorkshire Regiment has firmly established the Festival of Remembrance as a favourite event within the calendar. A number of the Highland Band travelled to Huddersfield to take part in this celebration, through music reflecting the admiration and gratitude for the Armed Forces. An amazing £3,386.00 was also raised for the Royal British Legion thanks to the generosity shown by the public who attended this event. As part of the National Act of Remembrance the Highland Band combined with the Lowland Band as the nation took a moment to pause, pay respect to veterans and those currently serving, and recognise the fragility of peace. Remembrance Sunday continues to not just be a historical reflection but a living commitment to supporting veterans and those still serving, as the cost of conflict continues to be paid.

The final engagement of the year saw the band provided musical support to Combat Stress Charity in their popular nine lessons and carols at Stockbridge Church, Edinburgh. Combat Stress is the UK's leading veterans' mental health charity providing the only intensive mental health treatment service to UK veterans. A wonderful charity and a terrific way to end the year.



Combat Stress Carol Service.

And Finally

In 2025 the band welcomed CSgt Richard Harvey as its Permanent Staff Instructor and Musn Isaac Wilsher back after a short sabbatical break. 2026 will see the band perform at the Men's Six Nations Calcutta Cup and the corresponding fixture in the Women's Six Nations. It is hoped that the weather is much better than the last time the band played at this fixture!



UNIT AID POST

Regimental Medical Officer:
Major AA Gilmour RAMS

Medical Sergeant:
Sergeant N Foxcroft RAMS

2025 has been yet another extremely busy and productive year for the 7 SCOTS UAP, so much so that we have now developed a formal three-pronged approach to supporting the Battalion: -

- Providing the Commanding Officer and Chain of Command with advice on matters including Health Service Support planning, Occupational Health, and employability/ deployability.
- Providing clinical training and development for CMTs and soldiers, especially with the imminent transition from BCD to TCCC.
- Provision of GP-led RLS Medical care on Exercise with a focus on ensuring our CMTs get as much clinical exposure as possible.

We continue to be a popular choice for both new recruits to the Army Reserve and CMTs wanting a change of Unit; a proactive approach from the RCMO, ROSO and importantly the Company ReMSOs has been crucial in making this happen. We are now probably the healthiest staffed UAP in Scotland (both Regular and Reserve) and 19 Bde, with a full complement of CMT1s and a significant number of medics in training.

As ever, the highlight of the UAP's year is our Annual Deployment Exercise which this year

involved deploying a pre-hospital treatment team to Otterburn in support of the Bn's training. Building on the last three years of medical capability development, we are now fully equipped with the most modern of military medical kit, are staffed with CMTs capable of both primary and pre-hospital emergency care, and indeed were the envy of the Regular UAPs in the camp who were less well resourced than us despite it being their everyday role.

In the firm base we continue to support UAP and medical development within 19X and the Army Reserve as a whole, whilst at a local level working on the CMT's educational portfolios and their mandated clinical training. Our conversion of a disused office within Inverness ARC to a modern clinical training and store room has also been a critical milestone in our development as a Battalion asset.

As a UAP team, we are looking forward to maintaining this productivity for the remainder of the training year and beyond, and as ever are extremely grateful for the help of the Commanding Officer, BHQ and 19X Medical Team for ensuring that our enthusiasm to develop medical capability is supported so generously.



Medical Trg.



INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF RESERVE OFFICERS, YOUNG RESERVE OFFICERS' SEMINAR - CONSTANTA, ROMANIA MAY 2025



Lt Lapslie at the Young Reserve Officers' Seminar (YROS) Romania.

The ability to understand and operate with our allies will be key to NATO winning any future conflict. Recent Army exercises, both Regular and Reserve, across the globe are reflecting that. Both of 7 SCOTS' Annual Deployment Exercises in the previous two years have been overseas, working with NATO allies, and it was with this pattern in mind that I volunteered to attend the four-day Young Reserve Officers' Seminar (YROS), organised by the International Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) in Constanta, on the Romanian Black Sea coast.

Here, only 200km from occupied Crimea, 36 reservist young officers from 13 NATO and Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations descended for an opportunity to learn, practice and, most importantly, build lasting professional and personal relationships with one another. A long trip from the northern Scottish Highlands, followed by an equally long wait at Bucharest Airport (the Swiss were, astonishingly, late!), led to the Seminar initiating on a warm Romanian evening with introductions by Maj Gen (Retd) Grecu, the Chairman of the Romanian Reserve Officers' Association, and the other senior staff who would run the week of events. A busy first day followed, with an introduction to NATO's Command and Force Structure, followed by

a fascinating lecture on NATO Threat Perspectives and the tactics used to counter them, delivered by the ARRC. A syndicate exercise on press interaction followed, demonstrating the difficulty in reaching a consensus within a multinational organisation, where allies share the same intent but may demand differing effects to achieve it. Each contingent delivered a brief on their nation and its reserve forces, which demonstrated the breadth of techniques and definitions involved in delivering a pre-trained reserve mass of combat power. Pre-dinner, there was an opportunity for some relaxed phys on the beach, where the British contingent delighted in posing for a photograph in the chilly waters of the Black Sea (and disputed a member of the Finnish contingent describing the water temperature as "boiling"....).

The following day saw an opportunity to visit the Romanian Naval Academy and hear from senior naval officers who are on NATO's front line of the maritime domain. A visit to the main Romanian Navy dockyard followed, with visits on board their training tall ship and the Type 22 frigate *Regina Maria*, formerly HMS LONDON. The afternoon was taken up by an excellent series of lectures and exercises delivered by Maj Corey Anhorn of the Canadian Grenadier Guards on negotiation and the

difficulties of communicating in a multinational environment. It was enlightening to see how people could go from friends one minute, to aggressive opponents the next, simply by setting them across a negotiating table with different and opposing aims.

The final full day of the seminar consisted of the remaining country briefs, followed by an excellent lecture on the threats posed within the cyber domain and how the Dutch military are developing specialist reservist forces to combat it. The closing presentations were delivered, and there was finally a chance to relax in the afternoon, providing the opportunity to see the historical Black Sea city. The evening consisted of a visit to a Romanian vineyard and winery for dinner, thoroughly enjoyed by all, with some Young Officers potentially still nursing headaches at the start of their long journey home the next morning.

Whilst there were excellent and fascinating lectures and syndicate activities delivered throughout the seminar, the activity of greatest value was the chance to interact and spend time with reservist counterparts from our NATO and PfP allies. The seminar provided an opportunity to experience, in a small way, what working in a multinational headquarters might be like, and the frictions in communication and delivery methods which may occur through different cultures and upbringings. The experience of other reservists, many of whom have come through a conscription system, was eye-opening, and demonstrated those of different backgrounds whom we might find ourselves working with. Most importantly, it proved that, at heart, all Young Officers are the same, with the basic principles of understanding higher intent and caring for our soldiers appearing universally across all of our allied cultures. I would recommend the YROS to any reservist YO who is serious about understanding how the next conflict is to be fought and won by NATO, and I have returned with a new outlook on our allies and some great friends across the water.

Lieutenant AJC Lapslie



RECRUIT RETENTION AND MENTORING TEAM

Regimental Operations Support Officer:
Captain Scott Shaw

Officer Commanding RRMT:
Captain Mike Dunnigan

**Regimental Engagement Monitoring
Support Officer A Company:**
Sergeant H Robertson

**Regimental Engagement Monitoring
Support Officer C Company:**
Sergeant H Brownless

**Regimental Engagement Monitoring
Support Officer D Company:**
Sergeant G Simpson



RSM and CO with new recruits passing basic Trg.

2025 has been another year full of the usual challenges in the Recruit Retention and Mentoring Team (RRMT), our small team of Regimental Mentoring Support Officers (ReMSOs) that is spread to the 4 corners of the Battalion has continued to work its magic at the coal face of the Battalion Recruiting effort and bring a steady stream of new recruits and soldiers into the unit and the through training.

This can sometimes feel like an uphill struggle and a thankless task with all of the challenges of getting recruits through the application pipeline, but the rewards come when we see those we have nurtured, usually over a period of several months, join the team. This makes all the hard work planning and attending the multitude of outreach and recruiting events the ReMSOs and soldiers attend across our AO worthwhile.

Getting soldiers in is only half of the task, it is equally important to keep them in once they do join, and then make sure they are fully trained as quickly as possible, which is the second part of the ReMSOs responsibilities, another task they manage with good humour as getting these new soldiers to and from training is a significant task meaning the ReMSOs see quite a lot of the motorways of the UK getting recruits to and from their courses. Once again though the rewards outweigh the pain when we see our Recruits excel in their training like the latest batch of recruits who completed their training at Army Training Unit Scotland in Edinburgh. They came home with the prize for the Top Student (Pte Loney from D Coy) and the prize for the Best Endeavour (Pte Latz from C Coy) so congratulations not just to them but all the soldiers who passed Phase One training this year.



REGIMENTAL SPORT

EXERCISE LOWLAND BUNKER 3 - NEWQUAY, SOUTHWEST ENGLAND

Forging Skills and Camaraderie on the Fairway

Fifteen personnel from 6 SCOTS, joined by three from 6 RIFLES, deployed to Newquay for Exercise LOWLAND BUNKER 3 (LB3)—an annual event masterminded by WO2 (RQMS(T)) Thompson. The exercise serves a dual purpose:

1. Golf Development – Enhancing core golfing skills in preparation for the Infantry Golf Championships.
2. Mental Fitness & Inclusion – Creating a platform for Regulars, Reservists, Veterans, and Civil Servants to connect, share experiences, and support one another.

This year marked a shift from the usual spring dates to July, in pursuit of better weather. Ironically, the first two days were met with wind and rain—earning RQMS Thompson the tongue-in-cheek title of “weather jinx.” Despite the conditions, spirits remained high, with players embracing the challenge of coastal golf—sometimes aiming shots into the sea in hopes the wind would return them to the fairway!



Move to July they said. The weather will be great! Day 1. All lies.



Courses Played

- Day 1: Falmouth Golf Club
- Day 2: Carlyon Bay
- Day 3: Tehidy Park Golf Club
- Day 4: Newquay Golf Club (3-man Texas Scramble)



The first three days followed an individual Stableford format, with handicaps ranging from 5 to 30. The final day introduced a team-based Texas Scramble, adding variety and camaraderie to the competition.

Competition Highlights

Overall Winner:

Mr Gordon Perry (6 SCOTS FSA) – 102 points

A consistent performer throughout the week, Perry’s impressive play earned him the coveted LB Shield, presented by OC HQ Coy, Maj ‘Watty’ Hunter, and generously sponsored by Saltire Whiskey. His handicap, however, remains a topic of light-hearted debate—“absolute pirate!”



Mr Gordon Perry awarded the LB Shield.



Second place – Pte Muir.

Runner-Up:

Pte James Mair – 99 points

A standout debut from one of the unit’s younger members, Mair’s performance bodes well for future competitions.

Special Mentions:

- Maj ‘Watty’ Hunter – Winner of “Closest to the Pin” on Day 1 and the only player to sink a ‘2’ during the Stableford rounds.
- The ongoing banter between Maj Hunter and Lt Col (Retd) ‘Jimmy’ Law added to the week’s vibrant and inclusive atmosphere.



‘Watty’ receiving more than the actual winner (and Jimmy).

Looking Ahead

LB3 successfully met its objectives—developing new talent for the Infantry Golf Championships and fostering a positive, supportive environment across ranks and backgrounds. Plans are already underway for LB4 in Cyprus, where 6 SCOTS will take on 4 SCOTS in a Ryder Cup-style showdown, with 7 SCOTS golfers joining the fray.





EXERCISE APHRODITES HIGHLANDER

With a recent unit move to the Mediterranean, 4 SCOTS have sought to capitalise on the climate and location to build on our triathlon team. Exercise APHRODITES HIGHLANDER was a two-week training and racing package designed to both develop athletes and to test them in some really challenging races.

This was to promote triathlon within the Battalion and seen complete novice triathletes and seasoned athletes training and competing together. The exercise further sought to prepare three of our athletes who are due to attend the Infantry Triathlon training camp in Thailand later this year. The training camp was kindly supported by the sport's governing body Triathlon Scotland, who after some consultation agreed to put on a bespoke foundation coaching course for our Soldiers and Officers.

For the second week, a coach tutor flew out to Dhekelia and put eight of our athletes through their paces planning and delivering sessions. The improvement seen across the board in confidence, technical ability and instructional capacity was huge and this could easily be placed as the highlight of the two-week exercise. The culmination of the two-week package saw two races – the Ocean Man open water swim in Ayia Napa and the Olympus Man Middle Distance Triathlon held in Paphos. Both events were mammoth tasks. The Ocean Man swim involved either a 2, 5 or 10 Km swim and was tackled by three of our athletes with Capt Morgan Serpell completing the 10km event, and Hldr Harbour Brown completing the 2km swim. Olympus man involved a 1.9Km open water swim, a 90 Km bike and a half marathon to finish. The race started on the coast in Paphos and finished on Mount Olympus in the Troodos mountains. The bike course alone involving over 2000 metres of climbing.

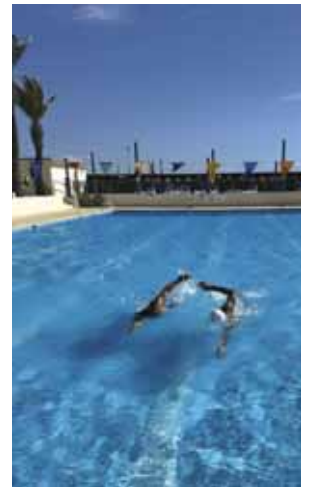
The exercise has allowed our athletes to get stuck in to sport in a world class training and racing environment very early on, with coaches gaining a recognised qualification allowing them to take the lead collectively on the delivery of training and racing throughout our time in Cyprus. The exercise was very kindly supported by the Regimental Trust, the Live Well Fund and the Alex Fairey Memorial Fund, without which delivery of the package would not have been possible.



Capt Jenkins finishing the swim.



Capt Serpell and Sgt Gillin pre race.



Coaching course lesson delivery.



Hldr Cushing delivering a lesson on the coaching course.



Hldr Cushing, Langton and Sgt Gillin.



Hldr Harbour-Brown on completion of the Ocean Man swim.



Sgt Gillin on the bike course.



Sgt Gillin.



Hldr Cushing and Langton.



REGIMENTAL SPORT

ARMY CLAY TARGET CHAMPIONSHIPS

Padre Andrew Thompson, LCpl Josevata Niumataiwalu and Fus Ryan Jarvis arrived at Barbury Shooting Ground early on Tuesday 7th October, ready for the first day of the Army Clay Target Championship. It was soon apparent that the standard of the first day's competition would be stiff, with the Army's top guns jostling for the silverware and the keenest members of the Corps and Regimental teams sweeping up the lesser prizes.

The three-man 2 SCOTS team, armed with the Padre's own sporting gun and two brand new, Bn owned over-and-unders headed out onto the empty stands for a couple of hours' practice. LCpl Niumataiwalu had never shot before but was quickly up to speed with gun safety, CPSA rules and the basic mechanics of 'pick up', 'lead' and 'swing through'. With a relaxed first day under the belt, and a satisfactory number of clays having been smashed, the three packed up and left, looking forward to a full days' competitive shooting the next day.

Wednesday was the novices and beginners competition. The 2 SCOTS team was joined by two RLC guns and one Royal Engineer. It's worth mentioning that LCpl Niumataiwalu, who had not touched a shot gun until the previous day, was the 2 SCOTS High Gun with a score of 54.

The team's stated aim was to be hitting targets more consistently at the end of the day than at the beginning. That, all agreed, had been achieved. The next stage is to get more soldiers shooting regularly. Having now experienced what the championship is about we aim to become more competitive next year and hopefully enter a team into next year's Army Champs.



The 2 SCOTS shooting team – LCpl Niumataiwalu, Fus Jarvis and Padre Thompson.



LCpl Niumataiwalu employing Fus Jarvis as his 'loader'.



PULL!!! – Fus Jarvis getting some one-to-one coaching.



INFANTRY ICE HOCKEY TRI SERVICE CHAMPIONSHIPS



Four soldiers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland (SCOTS) were chosen to represent the Infantry Ice Hockey Team at the Tri-Service Championships held at Ice Sheffield. The selected individuals were WO2 Scott Boyle (4 SCOTS), CSgt Shaun Dick (4 SCOTS), LCpl Patty Patterson (4 SCOTS), and Officer Cadet (OCTD) Jack Farquharson (7 SCOTS).

The tournament kicked off with a practice session on the first day to shake off any rustiness, as the team hadn't trained together since their camp in Cardiff. The following day, they faced their rivals, the Royal Marine Bootnecks, whom they had lost to in the previous year's semi-finals. The Infantry team started strong and secured a convincing 7-1 victory. In the afternoon, they played against the REME B team, initially struggling in the first five minutes of the first period but eventually dominating the game with an 8-0 win.

On the second day, the team narrowly defeated the RAF's Vulcans A team 3-2 in a tense match. They then triumphed over the Royal Signals with a 5-0 win, maintaining their unbeaten streak after four games.

However, on the third day, the team faced a setback, losing 2-0 to REME A despite a valiant effort. In a crucial match against the Army

Allstars winning 1-0 the Allstars scored a goal to even the score which took us into overtime, they ended up in a tight battle that led to a penalty shootout, resulting in a narrow defeat 3-1 Allstars.

Moving on to the fourth day, the team secured a place in the Plate finals by defeating the RM Bootnecks 7-2. They then faced the RAF's Cosford Stars in the Plate finals, determined to claim victory. The Infantry team delivered an impressive performance, winning 8-0 and clinching the Plate title.

During the week, WO2 Boyle and OCTD Farquharson also represented the Army Blades team in full-contact hockey, showcasing their skills in a match against the Navy Destroyers. WO2 Boyle stood out, earning the man of the match award and scoring two goals for the Army Blades.

The tournament concluded with the Infantry team lifting the plate, with WO2 Boyle being recognised as the top scorer and most valuable player of the competition. Despite not winning the cup, the team celebrated their success and will look to begin preparations for the upcoming Army Cup in October, aiming to avenge their previous losses to REME A and the Allstars.





REGIMENTAL SPORT

INFANTRY CYCLING TEAM

As a proud member of the Infantry Cycling Team, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to represent the SCOTS, the Infantry and the Army in the UCI Gran Fondo Cyprus 2025.

The Gran Fondo weekend consists of 3-days of racing starting off with an individual time trial (ITT) over 27km. Stage 2 is then onto the main Gran Fondo Road Race with 100km of distance and 1900m of elevation gain. Stage 2 starts off with a mass start with over 300 people which is controlled by the race leader and pace car for 20km before the car pulls off and the 100km race begins. Stage 3 then finishes the weekend off with the same starting process as Stage 2, however the race is dramatically shorter coming in at 60km and 1500m of elevation.

This overseas sporting visit to Cyprus was only made better when I was posted to Episkopi Station as the Station AAPT I shortly after being selected for the team for the second year in a row. Last year's appearance was a massive wakeup call that fitness is not always an open book and that a huge amount of training is required to compete at these events, competing against some of the best cyclists in the world below the professional level is no easy feat. Having learned my lessons and being on Island for a prolonged period before the weekend of racing began, I managed to gain a lot of experience on the roads and even took a massive chunk of time out of my 2024 results, turning over 55 minutes quicker across the weekend.

The Infantry team is broken up into 2 smaller teams of 6 riders, with various capabilities and includes some riders from the wider Army Cycling Team. As Teams we ranked impressively against some dedicated road racing teams, with my team placing 8th and the second team placing 13th overall. The Infantry Road team seen three riders qualify in their age groups for the UCI Gran Fondo World Championships in Australia later this year.

Thank you to Capt Lee Jones (IBS MTO), for organising, delivering a great training camp, and getting the team to the start line!

Thank you to RHQ SCOTS for supporting me as a SCOTS Soldier on this OSV.

Cpl Jaxon Kerr





EXERCISE WALLABY BAYONET



Attacking in Game 1, Brisbane



Lineout throw!

ITC Catterick's inaugural Rugby Union Overseas Sports Visit Australia

In April, a squad of Permanent Staff from the Infantry Training Centre Catterick (ITC) swapped the unpredictable weather of North Yorkshire to head overseas on a three-week Rugby Union Overseas Sports Visit (OSV) of Australia – for the first time in ITC's history. Managed and led by Director of Rugby, Major Doug Hayton-Williams RG, the tour was ably supported by Capt Alfie Blackhall SCOTS (2IC), Sgt Solomon Qaranivalu R YORKS (Coach), and Cpl Marley Woolfenden R ANGLIAN (Capt). Other Units who has personnel represented were: WG, RRF, MERCIAN, RIFLES, PARA, R WELSH, LD, and RAPTC, all of whom were excellently supported by their RHQs in being able to attend. The outline scheme of manoeuvre saw a 22-man party move from the UK to Australia, play three games at three different

locations, whilst conducting activities with our Australian Defence Force (ADF) allies, before a period of rest and recuperation, and the long flight back to the UK, noting this was achieved all for personal contributions of £350 per person!

Following a 36 hour journey, and arriving in Brisbane, the memories of grey clouds and rain were swiftly banished as the players enjoyed endless amounts of sunshine. The party were welcomed by 7 Brigade at Gallipoli Barracks, a huge base with excellent facilities, and they got stuck straight into a series of demanding training sessions, focusing on fitness, defensive structure, and sharpening attack formations, and acclimatisation. The conditions were challenging, but they pulled the squad together quickly, laying the foundation for what would be a highly competitive tour. The opening fixture of the OSV was versus the Australian Army

Selection XV — a fast, physical side with plenty of flair, this was coupled with some excellent and humorous exchanges (usually in well-rehearsed accents, focusing on the English cricket or rugby teams, or additionally Home and Away or Neighbours) on the side lines between all participants. In a hard-fought battle, the ITC team showed grit and discipline, edging out a narrow but deserved win. It was a huge result for a group that had only come together a few days earlier, and set the tone for the rest of the tour, giving real belief and esprit de corps. The final event at Brisbane was as part of a 7s Tournament, where the side encountered the blistering pace and the sort of high skill levels that Southern Hemisphere rugby is well-known for (think Sua'ali'i, Giteau, and Genia). Adaptability was key, and the squad responded with huge energy and enthusiasm — and a few aching legs, and some seriously worn-out lungs. Whilst the side did not win this exchange, it took pride and grit in the taking on of some of the best that the ADF had to offer, giving a first-class account of themselves. The party also kept busy through a meal out at a local Thai restaurant, and a visit to see one of the professional Rugby League teams (Brisbane Dolphins) play a national league game at the Suncorp Stadium.

From Brisbane, the party moved by train along the eastern coast for 12 hours south to Singleton (130 miles north of Sydney) at the Australian School of Infantry, for the next phase. Here, alongside continuing rugby training, time was spent with Australian Army's Phase 1 Infantry Instructors, sharing best practices and observations in several engagement events, which gave much food for thought for both sets of personnel. The party were hosted exceptionally well and were honoured to be invited to attend the annual ANZAC Day commemorations — a moving experience which reminded all the shared heritage, and sacrifices, of our services across many theatres of conflict in history. The third and final game of the OSV came against the Singleton Bulls. In another close contest, the ITC team fought hard but narrowly missed out on getting a result against a high-class side who have played together for some time. Further to the training, playing, and engagement events, the party were given much opportunity to sample Australia's rich culture - from winery tours in the Hunter Valley (world famous for its memorable Shiraz); to surfing in Newcastle; and an unforgettable trip to the local rodeo which was an eye-opener! The penultimate phase was to visit Sydney for a well-earned period of rest and recuperation. Here the



REGIMENTAL SPORT

EXERCISE WALLABY BAYONET *continued*



Maj Hayton-Williams presents to CO Aus School Infantry.



Team visit Aus Inf Museum, Singleton.

party were able to take in the many amazing sights of the city from the Opera House; to the Harbour Bridge, Bondi and Manly beaches, along with several museums and military memorials.

As the Greek proverb goes: a society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit – this is something Ex WALLABY BAYONET hopes to have achieved, benefitting others involved in some small way by demonstrating what the will of motivated people can achieve in designing and executing such an event, acting as a benchmark for sporting clubs within the ITC. The OSV acted as a

significant activity to best showcase the Infantry's, and attached arms', approach to sport and how the ITC seeks to reward it's staff. Applying reward, one of the key tenants of the Army Leadership Code, has been demonstrated here, where Staff who work hard and go out of their way to produce high standards in their roles are able to partake in such an event are recognised. Furthermore, the OSV went above and beyond what was expected, bringing together permanent staff from across the three Battalions at ITC, building strong friendships and mutual respect, and forging a team who will continue to

collaborate well beyond the final whistle and take their successes into the 25/26 rugby season.

The sincere thanks of ITC Rugby are extended to all the enablers for this activity from the amazing hosting and generosity of the Australian Army in Brigadier Jason Groat and Col Nathan Pierpoint, to all who supported the tour from the Sports Lottery, Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Fund, Army Rugby, Soldier Academy, and those people who helped with kit and sponsorship, to ensure activity met all its objectives. Everyone involved will always be very grateful.



SSAFA CHARITY CLAY SHOOT

For several years now the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Families Association boarders branch have run a charity clay shoot to raise funds for the excellent work they do throughout the region. Given that the competition was to be held at Bisley at Braidwood, an hour from Edinburgh, it seemed rude not to enter a SCOTS team into the mix and, do our part in supporting an excellent cause.

Assembling a team was not particularly challenging as Capt Sammy Parker has recently taken up clay shooting and has thrown himself into it with the enthusiasm of a man late to a hobby. WO2 Dean Devine, RQ 2 SCOTS and fellow DDM member, was an easy sell meaning I was short one person to complete my dream team. This was easily solved when I bumped into Pte Rob Eldon, 5 SCOTS, who has beaten me at

every event on the Royal Guard. After pestering him for a few minutes at the Colinton Inn he seemed keen to attend if I left him alone, which I duly did.

So, on a fine Sunday morning we arrived at Braidwood for a cup of coffee, a bacon roll and a safety brief. The event was simple. Eight stands and one team flush, the greatest number of points wins. We got off to an average start which was made slightly worse for Capt Parkers firing pin failing. With no spare parts wallet, we were down to two shotguns between the four of us.

However, some consistent shooting in the first few stands meant that we entered the flush brimming with confidence. A strong effort there was almost undone by some poor shooting in the second half by one member of our illustrious team (I blame a

dip in my blood sugar). So, its was with trepidation that we handed in our score card and settled down to lunch.

Thankfully our efforts had not been in vain. Capt Parker picked up first place amongst the novices which was all the more impressive since he had managed to break his own gun. I won a magnificent food hamper as part of the raffle and, most importantly, the team came first in the novice category brining home some tinware.

If you are a budding clay shooter and are looking for a friendly event as your first competition you cannot go far wrong with the SSAFA charity shoot.

Major Rob Weir



WO2 Dean Devine demonstrating his prowess



Capt Sammy Parker claiming first individual in the Novices category



SCOTS brining it home in first place within the novice category. L-R - WO2 Dean Devine (2 SCOTS), Maj Rob Weir (HQ MS), Pte Rob Eldon (5 SCOTS), Sir Hew Strachan (The Boarders SSAFA President), Capt Sammy Parker (APC)



REGIMENTAL SPORT

2 SCOTS SPORT & GYM



The Boxing Team visit Rangers FC.



Regimental Boxing Night organised by 2 SCOTS.

Battalion sport enjoyed a positive and productive year, making a significant contribution to physical readiness, mental resilience, wellbeing and cohesion across the unit. The role of OIC of Sport changed from Major Craig Wilkinson to Major Malky Morrison. Sport was treated not simply as a series of competitive events, but as a core enabler of operational effectiveness and soldier development. This approach ensured that sporting activity aligned closely with the Battalion's broader outputs and values, reinforcing discipline, teamwork and resilience.

The Festival of Fitness proved particularly successful, providing soldiers with a structured opportunity to focus on sport, physical conditioning and wellbeing during a concentrated period. Participation levels were consistently strong across companies, although could always improve, and feedback from soldiers was overwhelmingly positive. The festival highlighted the importance of protected time for physical development and allowed individuals of all abilities to engage meaningfully. Lessons were identified for future iterations, including increased use of the Spond application to improve coordination and communication, alongside greater empowerment and responsibility delegated to individual sports officers at sub-unit level. Targeted events will be key, with individual sports officers taking more ownership.

This month-long physical development initiative delivered tangible improvements in fitness, morale and teamwork across the Battalion. The programme placed deliberate emphasis on strength

development, injury prevention, nutrition and recovery, ensuring soldiers were better prepared for both training and operational demands.

The Battalion gymnasium staff and sports officers were central to the year's success and deserve particular recognition for their professionalism, adaptability and sustained commitment. Their efforts enabled the effective delivery of a wide range of activities, including British Army Warrior Fitness competitions, inter-company sport and the King's Highland Ultra Marathon. The gymnasium also hosted external engagement visits from Rangers Football Club Youth Academy and Edinburgh Rugby, demonstrating both the credibility of Battalion facilities and the high standard of Army Physical Training Instruction delivered. The support of Staff Sergeant John Fleming was exceptional throughout the year; his experience, leadership and willingness to go beyond routine

expectations were instrumental in the smooth delivery of events and the maintenance of high training standards.

Sporting activity also extended beyond the wire, notably through fishing events conducted with local veterans from Scottish Veterans Residences, delivering clear wellbeing and engagement benefits while strengthening community links. Boxing remained a highlight of the sporting calendar. The regimental boxing event was a clear success, due wholly to the attendance and commitment of 2 SCOTS. The boxers demonstrated the controlled aggression, discipline and courage expected of Scottish infantry battalions, reflecting credit on both the individuals involved and the wider unit. Overall, Battalion sport continued to develop resilient, confident and physically prepared soldiers, strengthening esprit de corps and reinforcing the Battalion's fighting spirit.



2 SCOTS Football Team visit Rangers FC.



4 SCOTS SPORT

Introduction – OC Sport, Major J Fish

2025 has brought about something of a reset in Battalion Sport. Both CFA and Army Sport have directed a re-investment in 'Unit' level sport – and that doesn't mean an afternoon off pretending to play volleyball! It means units playing unit and there are some real benefits to our soldiers doing so. AGAI 5 (not that I would recommend it as further reading), has a great line in the early pages about how "during the Second World War sport...became a key tool for commanders to use in preparing soldiers for the stress and rigours of battle". When 4 SCOTS looked to address the training pipeline of those heading to JNCO Cadres, SCBC & PSBC, there begins to emerge skills that can be sharpened on the sports pitch (such as skill execution under pressure & dealing with nerves, failure and success) that can be translated into our core roles. Therefore, we elected to focus on quality of sporting opportunity, not quantity. Below, are the fruits of our sporting endeavours so far.

Football – Captain A Richardson, Football Officer



The team huddle during match Vs JSSU. Oct 2025.

4 SCOTS began the 2025 season still competing in the UK North League and Cup in Catterick, with the campaign culminating in a strong run to the Semi Finals of the UK North Cup, narrowly losing out to RAF Boulmer. This was a commendable achievement in what proved to be a challenging season, given the demands of ongoing operational commitments.

Relocation to Cyprus has significantly increased opportunities to play competitive sport, and the Battalion's football programme has expanded rapidly. 4 SCOTS has now established two teams, both of which are competing in the Cyprus Services Football League (CSFL) against units based across the island. The teams have also faced several touring units visiting Cyprus, with three additional fixtures already confirmed for 2026.

The pursuit of silverware remains the main

effort this season. Both teams are strongly positioned within the CSFL, and the Battalion is preparing for an Infantry Cup Quarter Final against either 1 MERCIAN or 2 PARA.

On the representative side of Army football, Cpl Mason continues to serve as a member of the Army U23s squad, while Hldr Barry remains selected for the Infantry team—both reflecting the high calibre of players within the Battalion.

Rugby – Major J Fish, 4 SCOTS Director of Rugby

2025 has been a year of mixture fortunes for Highlander RFC. The 2024/5 season was dominated by NATO & high readiness tasks that mean we simply couldn't commit to enter a league, so we used the vessel of Infantry Rugby to provide opportunities for our soldiers to play. However, once Ex STEADFAST DART & DACIA were out of the way, the spring and summer brought about a fresh revival of the club. In and amongst the frantic packing of ISO containers for our move to Cyprus, the team managed to cram in five games, within six weeks. We took the approach of playing friendlies with local teams, including against ITC, the SCOTS GUARDS and even a 4 SCOTS own 10 v 10. All were victories to build confidence as the foundation of the revitalised team. In terms of structured competition, the team enter the ARU Inter-Units 7s and narrowly finished second to a well drilled & well practiced 1 RRF team. When you consider the competition was our first 7s outing in recent memory, it was phenomenal result and demonstrates the talent we have within the 4th Battalion.



4 SCOTS 7s team at the ARU Inter-Units Competition 2025. They finished a valiant second.

Moving to Cyprus presented us with a unique opportunity. When you consider that the entire Battalion family now remains in location over the weekend (as the distance between Cyprus and Scotland precludes weekly commuting) local sport, became Battalion sport. As a coaching team we put it to the players that we could enter the Cypriot national league, playing our games at the weekend, meaning the friends

and family of the players could come, watch and support. However, this would mean running the rugby club as community club. What that mean was we would need to train on Tuesdays & Thursdays to go up against the best in Cyprus.



4 SCOTS 1st XV having just beaten the Akrotiri Flamingos in the Cypriot National League. Final score, Flamingos 10 – 50 4 SCOTS RFC.

The players rose to the occasion magnificently and at the time of writing, we remain undefeated in the 2025/25 season, with Limassol, Nicosia and Akrotiri all succumbing to the might of 4 SCOTS RFC. The aspiration is to return to the ARU Premiership in 2027 having built on the foundations laid in Cyprus, as a true community club. There should also be a special mention for individual success – Hldr Vula was selected to represent the Army 7s team in Fiji and was a standout player of the tour.

Cricket – Lt S Owtram, Club Secretary

2025 has been a fruitful year for 4 SCOTS Cricket Club. With the Battalion preparing to move east, competitive fixtures proved challenging, prompting the team to explore alternative opportunities to engage with the sport. In May, the team travelled to London to visit the home of cricket, Lord's, and compete in the UK Armed Forces Cricket Skills Competition. Thanks to a serendipitous meeting of an ex-colleague of Lt Owtram, the Jocks managed to gain access to the illustrious Marylebone Cricket Club, craftily taking turns wearing each other's blazers to bypass the grey-haired gatekeepers.

This was not the end of competitive cricket on UK soil. In June, the Infantry Cricket Club (ICC) called for players to support several fixtures, and no fewer than five members of 4 SCOTS answered the call, putting the Battalion back on the cricketing map before their move to Cyprus. The relocation to Cyprus has proven beneficial for fixtures. The team started strong with a friendly match against British Forces Cyprus, which introduced them to the fast-paced T10 format. And if you thought Cyprus didn't play cricket, you were wrong. The Cyprus Cricket Federation T10 League offered a chance to face some local talent. Success however came in the longer format and the year was closed out with two victories



REGIMENTAL SPORT

4 SCOTS SPORT *continued*

against the Coldstream Guards and Larnaca Warriors. As 2026 approaches, the team looks forward to building on their experience and potential, eager to continue their success on the field.



The team assemble at Woolwich Barracks.



Cricket on high. Lt Owtram and Hldr Singh at the MCC.



4 SCOTS CC Jocks tip their hat to the Elizabeth Tower.

Triathlon – Capt F Ritchie, Lead Co-Ordinator 2025 has been a strong first year for the 4 SCOTS Triathlon Team. Established in North Yorkshire at the start of the year, the move to Cyprus has allowed the team to take full advantage of the Mediterranean climate, resulting in increased participation and racing.

Our first competition came just before the unit move and In June, the Battalion was represented at the Army Inter-Unit Triathlon champs, which was a great first competitive outing for the team. In October, the team delivered Exercise Aphrodites Highlander in. The result being eight members qualifying as Level 1 Triathlon Coaches, significantly strengthening the Battalion's internal coaching capacity.

November saw three athletes selected to represent 4 SCOTS at the Infantry Triathlon overseas training camp in Phuket, Thailand. The camp gave the team the opportunity to train and race abroad with athletes from the wider Infantry.

With eight newly qualified coaches now embedded, the Battalion is well placed to run structured and consistent training across all ability levels. This improved coaching base will support the development of a more competitive squad as preparations begin for the 2026 racing season.



LCpl Cushing, Sgt Gillin and Hldr Harbour-Brown at race check in (Laguna Phuket Triathlon).



LCpl Cushing delivers a session on the Level 1 Triathlon Coaching Course.



Capt Serpell and Sgt Gillin at the start line of the Olympus Man middle distance triathlon.

Overall, 2025 has provided a strong platform to build a capable team who are ready to compete in 2026. The move to Cyprus has given the team new opportunities and a world class area in which to train and race.



Boxing – CSgt S Dick

Upon arrival at Dhekelia, it was evident that the station lacked a dedicated boxing gym. RQ Pew identified a hangar that could be used, initially a cluttered space with old equipment and unused stores, however with the vision of Hldr McLean and the collective effort of D Company soldiers; the building was completely gutted, cleaned, and painted. Additional support from local station staff and the fire brigade, who assisted by hosing out the space, ensured the transformation was a success and 4 SCOTS now had a fully functional and fit for purpose boxing gym in which to train.

Once the refurbishment was complete, boxing equipment was brought in. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Legends Barbers and Tattoo Parlour, as well as Fighting & Fitness Sports Gear, the gym was fully equipped with new bags and training gear. This marked the beginning of an intense eight-week training camp in preparation for the Regimental Boxing Night 2025.

The training camp was both rigorous and demanding, particularly as the team worked to transform complete novices into ring-ready boxers. The sessions were fast-paced and aggressive, focusing on transitioning soldiers into athletes. This transformation was made possible through the support of members of 4 SCOTS to organise coaching sessions and provide the resources and encouragement needed to push the team to their limits.

Before making their way to Edinburgh for the Regimental Boxing Night, the team gained valuable sparring experience with the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. These sessions were instrumental in sharpening the boxers' skills and preparing them for the challenges ahead. After six weeks of intense training, all organised and run by Hldr McLean, the team was set in Edinburgh for the final two weeks of camp. Their time in the city began with training at the renowned Lochend Boxing Club, followed by a day spent visiting Edinburgh Castle. This visit allowed the team to decompress and reconnect with their regimental history, fostering a sense of pride and camaraderie before stepping into the ring.

The final phase of training took place at Clovenstone Boxing Gym, another top-tier facility. Here, the boxers received expert coaching, which further refined their skills and provided invaluable experience ahead of the competition. As fight week approached, the team faced the usual pre-competition rituals, including weigh-ins and managing the inevitable nerves.

Although seven boxers were prepared to compete, injuries to opponents—a common challenge in contact sports—meant that only three were able to step into the ring on the night. Despite this, the 4 SCOTS Boxing Team delivered an impressive performance. LCpl Bird and Hldr Watt both secured victories, while Cpl Johnston narrowly missed out in a hard-fought split-decision loss. The team's results reflected their dedication, resilience, and the strength of their preparation.

The journey of the 4 SCOTS Boxing Team is a testament to the power of teamwork, determination, and the ability to overcome challenges. From transforming a derelict hangar into a fully equipped gym to competing on a national stage, the team demonstrated the true spirit of the regiment. Their achievements serve as an inspiration to all, proving that with hard work and support, anything is possible. Next up will be Inter Company in May 2026.

Golf – Major T Lindsay, Club Secretary



Capt McLellan, Sgt Fraser, RQMS (T) Buntine & LCpl Matthews representing the club in Happy Valley, Cyprus. Clearly it was rubbish weather for golf!

Following the move to Cyprus, we have been working hard to build upon the successes the club achieved in Catterick under Capt Stevie Main. The number of golfers within the 4th Battalion is growing and we played well in our first competitive outing at Secret Valley Golf Club with Sgt Hauley and LCpl Mathews collecting 5 individual prizes; two longest drives and three closest to the pin prizes, it was a great day out! At the finals event of the Army Golf Cyprus in December, we played at Aphrodite Hills over two days. 4 SCOTS were yet again in the limelight on both days, with Sgt Fraser coming in 1st place and winning Day 1 & Maj Lindsay coming in 1st place & winning day 2. LCpl Mathews was also on the prizes list with winning longest drive on Day 1. As we move into 2026, we can't wait to see what the new year holds and look to build on our success of 2025.

Drone Racing – Sgt M Van Der Walt, Club Secretary

During the past year, 4 SCOTS achieved significant progress in enhancing our drone racing capability. The unit successfully secured advanced equipment designed to improve performance, reliability, and operational efficiency.

This investment represents a key milestone in our modernization efforts, ensuring that personnel have access to cutting-edge technology for training and competition. The new equipment will enable us to maintain and improve our soldiers.

As we enter the new year, we are committed to taking the next step forward by maximizing the use of our equipment to its fullest potential.

Conclusion – OC Sport

As you can see, not only the move to re-invest in our soldiers through sport, but also the move to Cyprus, has offered great opportunity & secondary benefits, chiefly in supporting the Battalion family that now permanently resides around Alexander Barracks. Recently, 4 SCOTS completed some-what of a triple crown; winning competitive league fixtures in Rugby, Cricket and Football, within five days of one another. From a sporting perspective, the new approach is working. 2026 will see if sport is also helping the Highlanders to succeed as war fighters as well.



REGIMENTAL SPORT

WEST HIGHLAND WAY CHALLENGE RACE

4 SCOTS pursuit of challenge activity continues. Seeking to again push the boundaries of our soldiers mental robustness and physical resilience, several soldiers from 4 SCOTS attempted the West Highland Way Challenge Race. A civilian run 96-mile best effort, across the iconic rolling terrain - made even more difficult by the relentless rain and wind. Again the quality, determination and will to win shone through, with WO2 Dean Dunnachie winning the event in 22 hours - a seriously impressive time given the conditions were noted as being the worst the event has seen. Conditions that also cost a sub-20-hour time for the West Highland Way. What was even more remarkable though was the grit in the final stages, when sleep

deprivation and fatigue were hitting hard. WO2 Dunnachie fought back from third and managed to catch and pass the leader in the final 6km, winning by some 5 minutes. Unfortunately for LCpl Watson, Hldr Headley and Hldr Huntington the challenge was too much, with Headley withdrawing at 50km due to a groin injury and the others hitting the wall at 0300 around the 85km mark. The weather, elevation and sheer distance took many victims, with around half the participants withdrawing at some point. Watching these events can be positively infectious. So much so that the two Hldrs that volunteered to help support the team have already committed to participating next year.

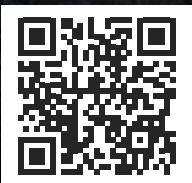


WHW - winner.

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SCOTTISH ISLANDS PEAKS RACE

The Scottish Islands Peaks Race is a truly magical event set in some of the most stunning scenery in the British Isles. A unique adventure race that blends offshore sailing and hill running, it challenges teams of five to sail from Oban to Troon via Mull, Jura and Arran to run up the highest peaks on the islands. The catch: no engines or stored energy—just wind, tide, and ingenuity. Set in the middle of May with the benefit of long days, short nights and the hope of good weather, the race is notorious for fickle winds and strong tides. The fastest of teams will complete the race in just shy of two days, whilst others will enjoy the experience and camaraderie of sailing and running in some of Scotland's most impressive landscape.

Covering 160 nautical miles of sailing and 60 miles of running, the race demands serious hill and navigational experience. Despite this, the event attracts a broad church of experience and competitiveness from elite world record holders, to recreational teams on their 20th iteration of the race all too happy to take four days. As a result, the race is split into a number of categories: multihulls, monohulls (slow), monohulls (fast), all-rounders, youth teams and interservice.

This year, 4 SCOTS entered two interservice teams. Team One, skippered by Paddy Hand on *Rival Bear*, a Rival 34, included runners Capt Hand (First Mate), Capt Boyle, Hldr Hill, and Hldr Murray. Team Two, on *Pintail IX*, a Hallberg-Rassy Joint Services boat, was skippered by Lt Cage-Whyte (REME), with First Mate Cpl Daly and runners Lt Ritchie, Cpl Whyte and LCpl Gynne. With just two interservice teams entered, a gritty head-to-head was guaranteed.



Both teams in Kerrera Marina – the morning of the race!

With the race starting at midday on Friday 16 May, the two teams were granted the week to prepare. First step would be familiarising the teams with their boats and actually practicing the sailing aspect of which forms the lion share of the race. Less the sailing members, the remaining crews had never been on a boat, let alone raced on one. On a shakeout sail to Tobermory, crews were tacking and gybing their way through the Sound of Mull. Crucially, though, was learning how to make, and drink, tea and coffee whilst at 45 degrees. The remaining part that needed rehearsed prior to Friday was the wacky element of the race: the transition from sailing to running. Chosen runners have to be dropped within one cable (c. 100m) from the shore and row to predesignated start points on land. With the calm winds and seas, the crews were beguiled by the uncharacteristically hot weather in Scotland and ventured for a swim whilst at anchor in the Sound of Mull. All were very swiftly reminded of the sea temperature in Scotland.



Hldr Hill reminded of Scottish water temperature!



Capt Hand cooking chorizo pasta at 45°.

After a run ashore for a fish and chips in Tobermory, both teams headed for the Isle of Seil and to the secluded anchorage of Puilladobhrain, 'Pool of the Otters'. The anchorage was nothing short of idyllic as we arrived just before sunset. A few other boats entering the race had been spotted in the anchorage and were definitely confused by our ability after watching Hldr Hill's very interesting dingey rowing technique from boat to shore. A short walk led us to the poetically named Bridge over the Atlantic and the pub Tigh an Truish, translating to The Hoos of the Troosers.



View over Puilladobhrain.



ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

SCOTTISH ISLANDS PEAKS RACE *continued*

Historically used as a changing place for Highlanders to change into trousers following the Jacobite Rebellion, it was made even more apposite with teams from 4 SCOTS visiting.

Following some last minute boat repairs and a final stock up of food, both teams were set with Hldrs Hill and Murray, and Lt Ritchie and LCpl Gynne at the start line for the first run of the race around Oban. Alongside 36 other teams, and their pair of runners, the 4mi hill run from the yacht club would head up and over the highest peak in Oban and back around to allow runners to commence the dingy row back to the yachts and begin the sailing to Salen, Mull. Made worse due to the mass start, heat and lack of wind, the race was fast and furious. In true Jock fashion, Hldrs Hill and Murray would later claim to have led the race in 1st place for some couple hundred metres before being quickly picked off by the elite teams on the climb, the fastest of which coming in at a lighting 25 minutes. With Hill and Murray arriving in at a very respectful sub 35 minutes and Lt Ritchie and LCpl Gynne just a few minutes after, the next challenge was negotiating the row to the yachts. Chaos is the only word to describe the scene of 36 yachts all manoeuvring slowly like vultures, all trying to time perfectly the pick-up of their pair. Boats would have to bring runners onboard outside of the mooring buoys as well as having to stay behind the start line and avoid collisions with not only other boats, but trawlers, water taxis and passenger ferries in Oban Bay. The wind now at a punchy 1kt gusting 3, 36 boats were moving only with half a knot of tide thankfully in the direction of the Northern Channel. Well versed teams had rowing oars attached to their yachts, some even with sliding seats, to get a one knot edge to negotiate the exit from Oban to the Firth of Lorn. Even more absurd was one team who had created a cycling-powered water turbine at the back of their boat. Both our teams had clearly missed the memo and had to resort to crew rowing the yacht from the dingy that was being towed to push the yacht half a nautical mile out into the sea.



Lt Ritchie and LCpl Gynne rowing back after the Oban leg.

The pack had massively opened up now and unfortunately wind was still low at 10kts. *Pintail* had shot off with the main pack whilst *Rival Bear* was taking the more leisurely approach and firmly in the bottom third for the rest of the sail to Mull. *Pintail* runners Lt Ritchie and Cpl Whyte had made great time and were up and down Ben More just within daylight, coming in at 6hr 25min. *Rival Bear* runners Capt Hand and Capt Boyle had reeled in a few teams and ascended Ben More just by twilight but faced a tricky descent from the final col and a 6mi road run back all in darkness. Back after 6hrs 16min, they had closed the gap on a few teams, especially since the tides in the Sound of Mull had turned against boats at the tail end of the competition. With all runners getting some well-earned rest, *Pintail*

was sailing hard to get through Duit Point, a funnel with some of the greatest tidal strengths in the race. In an attempt to face weaker tides against their boat, *Pintail* opted for a sneaky Tiger Line that a few yachts ahead had negotiated. Unfortunately this would prove to be their undoing as they ran aground in shallows, damaging the yachts keel in the process. Regrettably, they were forced to withdraw due to severe damage and the race was firmly over for *Pintail*.



Captain's Boyle and Hand atop Ben More, Mull.

As runners arose from their sleep on *Rival Bear*, they were met with the news that they were now 1 of 1 in the Inter-services category, and victory already felt tangible. Unfortunately, sailing *Rival Bear* in this race was the equivalent of racing a Morris Minor in a F1 race – the strong tides against us and light winds proved to be a vicious combination that afforded us snail-like speed over the ground. In 6 hours we had moved some 9nm and were in last place, some 30nm behind the lead runners. Although we took solace knowing other boats had already withdrawn from the sailing by motoring, or the race altogether, a rough time estimate and look at the forecast would see us finishing the race around Tuesday or Wednesday. A check of the water and food stocks was another blow and would suggest we could exist until Monday evening latest. Winds were continuing to remain incredibly low throughout the weekend and with the tide and fickle winds blowing us slowly onto islands in the Sound of Mull, the decision to use the Iron Sail was regrettably made. On we went South passing the Slate Isles of Seil, Luing and Lunga. Scarba and Jura quickly came in sight and we even caught a glimpse at distance of the mighty Corryvreckan, arguably the most dangerous stretch of water around Britain, and the third largest whirlpool in the world. From the GPS tracking, some boats had managed to cross this with the necessary timing precision to take a sneaky Westerly line around Jura, whilst others had been spat out and forced to anchor overnight. For us mere mortals, we would give it the widest berth possible and beat to quarters as the Paps of Jura became visible in the distance.



Tiredness setting in – Capt Boyle, Hldr Murray and Hldr Hill resting during a fallow period of sailing.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING



Capt Hand and Hldr Murray would run this leg for Rival Bear and upon landing at Craighouse, they were pleasantly surprised to be met by the Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major who had made the pilgrimage to Jura to wish the teams good luck. Kit check complete, the pair set off at great pace in attempt to scale the first Pap before sunset. This run would be the hardest leg navigationally and also the hardest terrain to negotiate. The pair reeled in their first team after the first 5km and slowly made their way to the base of the first Pap. From distance, the Paps looked genuinely unscalable and resembled ominous chimney stacks clad with loose rock and boulder fields from every angle. Eventually at the top of the first Pap before nautical twilight, we took this small victory and headed for the next checkpoint, the saddle between the first and second Pap. Going down proved its own challenge, especially with the loose rocks falling with you onto ankles and feet. As night came, finding the optimal line was getting trickier. However, with darkness came the visible confirmation of headtorches ahead which confirmed our lines up and down. With navigation proving straightforward – top of Pap, look for silhouette of other Pap, head down Pap, climb up next Pap – we were almost robotic in our nighttime approach. Third Pap eventually summited, Hldr Hill, contrary to name, confessed that it was the first time he had ever climbed a proper hill. Indeed, a nocturnal 16 mile run up and over the Paps of Jura would certainly flesh out his hill walking CV alongside an ascent of Arthurs Seat, his only other hill walk. The pair attempted to find the fabled grassy-ish corridor to descend off the Third Pap but instead took a wonky line into the ever-surrounding boulder field. One of the pairs we had overtaken had made considerable ground due to our slow-go descent but both Hldr Hill and Capt Hand were keen to preserve our position and turned the screw with whatever remaining energy. A much more pleasant run handrailing a river took us neatly onto the racing line and de-facto path for the race route. Final check point done; the pair sped off on their 5km road run portion back to Craighouse for a sub 6hr shift.



The second and third Paps of Jura looming.

After another calm, yet strangely cold night, the tide proved to finally be on our side. With help of the trusty Iron Sail, we took full advantage of conditions resulting in being sling-shotted round the Mull of Kintyre. On *Rival Bear*, spirits remained high, especially with Hldr Hill having found his calling in the galley, firing out bacon and sausage rolls like he was running a Michelin Star restaurant. Within what felt like hours, instead of the anticipated 20 hour slog, Arran was in sight and soon Lamlash Bay. Capt Boyle and Hldr Murray saddled up with a last minute addition of Capt Hand wanting to make the most of the Scottish sun. Whilst another 18mi loomed,

there was solace knowing it was *only* a 6mi run in on road each way before taking the tourist path up to the summit. The trio made great time up and down but as tiredness set in, the patter between Captains Hand and Boyle turned even worse than usual as they discussed the origin of sheep on Arran, the rules of kabaddi and what they were hoping for dinner. Hldr Murray had reached his limit and was forced to comment on the awful 'Officer Patter' having had to endure it for some four hours. Winds had drastically picked up to 25+ kts and far heavier swell was present in Lamlash Bay. Forewarned from race safety that the Swiss boat ahead had capsized rowing, the runners carefully launched their dingey from the beach. Having been spat back to the shore a few times due to the heavy winds, they finally made their exit in what was an incredibly ropey and dangerous small boat passage, being broadsided and taking on water. *Rival Bear* made a wonderful taxi pickup in an extremely congested area at night, aided by Hldr Hill's catch of the dingey painter by his fingertips which would have had cricket scouts come knocking.



Hldr Hill atop Goatfell, Arran.

Paddy Hand's famous jambalaya was waiting hot on arrival for the runners, whilst the skipper and Capt Boyle took us for our last leg. Morale sky high with the finish in sight, *Rival Bear* made its last passage across the Firth of Clyde into Troon just after 6am on Monday. Finishing as we started, Hldr Murray and Hldr Hill completed the last row ashore to the Troon pontoon and tapped in to conclude the race.



Rival Bear at the finish in Troon.

A whirlwind of an event and one that certainly lived up to its ethereal reputation. Indeed, it was strange to think the crew had started in Oban less than 72hrs ago! Whilst *Rival Bear* also ended up being disqualified for using its engine, much like the majority of the course, it did not detract from the overall success of the week and was cited as one of the best experiences people have had in the Army to date. For any would-be entrants, the Scottish Islands Peaks Race can be summarised in a few words: Survive, If Possible, Race!

*Capt R Hand
Officer Commanding, Recce Platoon, 4 SCOTS*



ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

EXERCISE SNOWJACK



Members of 2 SCOTS, 3 RIFLES, 1 WG & 4 LANCS deployed on Ex SNOWJACK in Flachau, Austria, as part of the Infantry Snowboarding Team. The team consisted of a Capt, SNCO, JNCOs and three Riflemen. This was a fantastic opportunity to compete in the Army championships against the wider Army in a sport that is both physically and mentally demanding. Another member of the team is one of only two snowboarding instructors that the infantry has.

The competition itself is broken down into two phases:

1. Week 1 – Infantry Training Camp
2. Week 2/3 – SNOWJACK competition.

As there were changes to the competition this year open riders competed in one discipline.

- Snowboard Cross (SBX). A rally track style course where four riders compete simultaneously down the same run.

The team placed 7th across all competing Corps.

BATUK RHINO CHARGE



BATUK Car 58. Lt Col John House is front right.

The British Army Training Unit Kenya entered two teams into an internationally recognised off roading event in May. Entering the event is highly competitive, and whilst it is lots of fun requires significant work to raise the entry fee which supports Rhino Ark. Rhino Ark, a conservation charity, protects forested areas in Kenya. 65 teams enter and there were 3,500 spectators.

The premise is navigating 13 checkpoints in the shortest distance possible within 10 hours. As such, daring descents, crashing through the bush, winching up steep hills, crossing gaps with sand boards are all part of the challenge of getting the shortest possible distance. The challenge is amplified by the location being secret until the week before the competition. The event was held near Lake Baringo, which took us all to a part of Kenya we would otherwise never have visited.

Lt Col John House had the privilege of driving one of the BATUK vehicles – a 3.5-ton Unimog. Frustratingly mechanical issues with the vehicle plagued us early in the event, with the high-pressure hose on the power steering bursting, followed by the accelerator pedal falling off, then the brakes failing! This resulted in several hours stuck in what was beautiful Africa bush whilst our team mechanic tried to 'bodge' various repairs.

Positively, BATUK's second vehicle did very well, completing nine of the thirteen checkpoints.

BATUK's renewed presence is welcomed by the Rhino Charge fraternity, and we are already making our plans to enter again in 2026.

The regimental funds supported Lt Col House in attending a driving course to upskill his off-road driving and were gratefully received.





ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

2 SCOTS ADVENTURE TRAINING

Within a very busy year the Battalion was lucky to squeeze in four Adventure Training expeditions. All opportunities to enhance our leadership and resilience in a fun and enjoyable environments.

Ex DOLOMITE FUSILIER & Ex BAVARIAN FUSILIER

In August and September the Battalion mounted two expeditions: one to the Dolomites in Italy, and a second to Bavaria in Germany. The expeditions were to introduce 21 soldiers to via ferrata or 'klettersteig', which is a hybrid of hiking and rock climbing. It uses a protected climbing routes with fixed steel cables, rungs and ladders, to allow individuals to traverse steep and challenging. This opens up access to dramatic alpine environments without needing advanced climbing skills, though fitness and a head for heights are still required.

Led by Lt Brophy and Lt Mckell, the expeditions fostered a strong team spirit through progressive and challenging climbing, and pushed individuals beyond their comfort zones in a controlled environment. In the latter phases of training, smaller 2-day expeditions were mounted by using mountain huts to link routes, and soldiers were able to complete climbs up to altitudes of 2900m.

As an added bonus, those on DOLMITE FUSILIER were given a small insight into the Mountain War. Fought in the Dolomites during the first world war, there still remains trench systems, tunnels, look out points and light artillery pieces to be seen in the region.

Ex SNOWY HAGGIS II



Ex SNOWY HAGGIS II

For the second year running the Battalion delivered a skiing concentration in the French Alps. Led by Lt Steven and Lt Sands, 48 personnel conducted 7-days of training in La Plagne. Split into separate foundation courses, the week allowed members of 2 SCOTS to progress through the adventurous training qualifications with the overall aim to develop their ski touring skills.

The additional benefits of this training clearly include building soldiers' confidence operating at altitude and in winter conditions. Both directly applicable to our operational commitment. Learning to fight-through the apres-ski schedule is also a key area of development.

At the end of a long year, the expedition was also a great opportunity for Jocks to relax together, enjoy some time together, and build inter-company cohesion. The expedition was by all accounts a great success, and after two successive years, we expect to once again qualify 2 SCOTS instructors at the end of 2026.



Cutting up the powder on Ex SNOWY HAGGIS II

Ex FIELDWORK FUSILIER

Sgt Drysdale led eight soldiers from 2 SCOTS Reconnaissance Platoon, who travelled to Madeira to compete in the Madeira Orienteering Festival. The aim was to develop navigation skills by operating in unfamiliar terrain and mapping systems, while competing against experienced international runners.

Initial training was exposure to Portuguese mapping standards and control placement, and this was followed by a large rural event in the mountainous area of the island. The importance of accurate contour interpretation and disciplined route choice was quickly made apparent. The competition itself began with a night race and poor weather and steep ground made movement difficult. This demanded sound decision-making under pressure in particular.

On the last day, and despite being fuelled almost entirely by Pastel de Natas, the Platoon performed well. In the misty forest terrain of Fanal Cpl Reid delivered a standout performance to win his category by a clear margin. The final event was a large urban race in Funchal which attracted a high number of competitors and required sustained concentration and quick decision-making. Several team members achieved top ten finishes, with Cpl Blake placing an impressive sixth overall.



B (ISR) Coy orienteering in Madeira



4 SCOTS - EXERCISE FROSTED BLADE

In Winter 2025, 4 SCOTS sent 8 SP ranging from Lieutenant to Highlander to Val d'Isere in the French Alps in order to compete in EXERCISE FROSTED BLADE 40. This is the premier alpine skiing training camp and competition that the Army offers at Corps level and saw our Jocks going from 'zero to hero' through a demanding and intensive training period to compete and place well in race week.

One Sergeant, one Corporal, and five Highlanders were specifically selected to represent the Battalion on Frosted Blade for their competitive spirit, keenness to learn, mental and physical resilience, and desire to compete at the infantry level. They would race in all four main alpine disciplines; slalom, giant slalom (GS), super-giant slalom (SG), and downhill, all on world class pistes also used by world-cup level professional skiers.

Deploying from Cyprus, the team travelled to Val d'Isere via coach from a zulu muster in the UK, arriving at the end of November. Once settled into our accommodation, and ski equipment had been organised and issued, we began training. The exercise provided professional ski instructors who spent two weeks training the team in all aspects of technical skiing. Our team included four members who had never

skied before but I'm happy to report they took to the sport well and by the end of the technical training period they had improved massively.

In our final week before Christmas, the team moved into gate training. This involved spending time analysing race pistes and familiarising ourselves with how the race week would be conducted. This added a significant element of difficulty to the training as our soldiers would have to navigate a series of gates designed to push their technical skiing ability while also trying to post a faster time on each run. This period also included some speed training, ensuring the team built the mental resilience required for the most demanding disciplines: SG and downhill.

By the end of the training period all our team members, whether they had skied before or not, had shown a marked improvement in their ability. During the evenings, we conducted PT, specifically designed to condition leg and core muscle groups to prevent injury and endure the long training days. In addition, we held team meals in a 'come dine with me' fashion to build team cohesion and discuss the previous and coming days' training. Our Jocks also had the opportunity to try local foods and other alpine activities, specifically

fondue, raclette, and tobogganing, which gave us much needed mental respite from our demanding programme.

After Christmas, the team gathered again in Val D'Isere for race week. This would prove to be the most demanding week of the whole exercise, competing on two 'hills', the team was split into an A and B team which gave our junior soldiers an opportunity to display their developing leadership and managerial skills as well as their competitive spirit. Over the week, we raced in the four disciplines and I'm happy to report that despite the team's relative inexperience, we raced well. Finishing 25 of 33 on the A Hill, in a tight but thankfully successful battle with 3 SCOTS, individually we had 3 skiers finish in the top third by score of all the competitors on the exercise (57th, 66th, and 75th).

Exercise FROSTED BLADE was an excellent chance to provide a truly unique opportunity for our Jocks, taking them from soldiers who had never skied before, to racing on world-cup pistes against the best skiers in the infantry. Thoroughly enjoyed by all, they return to battalion eager to continue skiing and with the knowledge that they represented their battalion and regiment to the highest standard.





ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

ALLIED RAPID REACTION CORPS (ARRC), EXERCISE SELVA BACKSTOP 26 (EX SB26)

Ex SB26, a Type 3 ARRC led Adventurous Training trekking expedition to the Mansiri Himal region in Nepal took place over 17 Nov – 5 Dec. The expedition, in a remote and high-altitude region of Nepal covered some 100 miles, none of which were on flat ground, over a 12-day period. A team of 14 from HQ ARRC, covering all ranks including German and Dutch nationals took part, completing the challenging Manaslu circuit.

As one of Army's remote and high-risk expeditions for 25, Ex SB26 certainly challenged personal resilience and physical robustness. Passing the Larkya La Pass at 5106m (some 300m higher than the summit of Mont Blanc) on an arduous 15hr trekking day in -25 degrees temperatures was certainly a highlight but was equally challenging.

With amazing people, clear skies and breath-taking (literally as 50% of the oxygen at sea level) views the Manaslu circuit trek was an absolutely stunning adventure. Less crowded than many other treks in Nepal, the route circumnavigated Manaslu, the world's eight highest peak. Deep gorges, waterfalls, lush forests, alpine meadows and numerous swing bridges all featured on the route, with no roads all local logistics are achieved by donkey trains or through local porters, seeing 20 full laden donkeys crossing swing bridges was certainly a sight!

An additional charity focus in supporting the Namrung Monastery Orphanage enabled a short dive into Buddhist faith and culture. With strong Tibetan influences in the trail's higher villages, the region travelled was culturally rich and diverse. An excellent and wild adventure, certainly one of the most challenging treks in Nepal, and only to be attempted if you can cope with eating Dal Baht (rice and lentils) for 12 days straight!



Lt Col Brocklehurst at the Larkya La Pass (5106m).



The ARRC team.



Not quite at the pass yet, but still higher than Mont Blanc in the Alps.



The ARRC team visit to Namrung Monastery.



Nepali resupply.



Manaslu through the Namrung Monastery gate.



One of many swing bridges.

EXERCISE NORTHERN PISTE XXV

In February, 12 soldiers from 6 SCOTS, under the watchful eye of Maj Ingram (QM), embarked on a thrilling overseas AT Exped, aptly named Exercise NORTHERN PISTE XXV. The team journeyed from Glasgow to Tignes, France, home to some of the finest slopes in Europe. Their journey began on January 31st, with the advance party navigating a smooth trip via Folkstone despite facing a 12-hour delay due to a rockfall accident.

Upon arrival in Tignes, the group was divided into Ski Foundation 1 (SF1) and Ski Foundation 2 (SF2). The weather was perfect with bluebird skies, and both groups relished the excellent skiing conditions. SF1, comprised of novice skiers, learned the fundamentals under the guidance of experienced instructors, while SF2, featuring more seasoned skiers, undertook rigorous training, including a ski tour around the glacier.

As the days passed, each group honed their skills. SF1 transitioned from nursery slopes to green and blue runs, with their confidence and competence soaring. Meanwhile, SF2 delved into advanced techniques and avalanche drills, preparing for a challenging ski tour.

Though the week was marred by a few injuries, nothing too serious, the soldiers demonstrated resilience and teamwork. By the end of the training, both groups had achieved significant progress and forged strong bonds. With their eyes set on the next adventure, Ex FROSTED BLADE 2025/26, the soldiers of 6 SCOTS returned home, fortified by the camaraderie and skills gained on the snowy slopes of Tignes.





SCOTS AT ERE

IRAQ – A COUNTRY, NOT A CAMPAIGN



Basra Memorial which commemorates over 40,000 Commonwealth fallen.

For many in the Regiment, veteran and serving alike, Iraq brings memories of Operations GRANBY & TELIC, and the years of discretionary campaigns overseas, including the ongoing Op SHADER. Many of our forebear Regiments, as well as our own, bear Iraq in their histories. Of 23 SCOTS fallen since 2006, two fell in Iraq and are remembered in our Roll of Honour.

Remember we should. And yet, there is risk our vision of Iraq is one wedded to the past. Having recently returned from 2 years in Iraq as the Defence Attaché (2023-2025), I want to offer a perspective. In my travels around the country - including Basra, Kut, Fallujah, Habbaniya, Mosul, Erbil, Sulaymania and Halabja - there was much to discover and (re)learn. Our diplomatic operating posture permitted more freedom than what is generally available to most on Coalition deployments, for good reason. While a level of risk remains, dictating the Embassy force protection wrap, getting out and engaging in places beyond Baghdad was part of the Ambassador's remit. He exhorted all the Embassy staff to do the same: to be curious and stay informed in order to be relevant both to officials in London and Iraqi interlocutors.

With its ancient history it is also a country of diversity where traditionally Muslim, Christian and Jew co-habited, but one where sectarian division has taken a toll. Some of this is structurally enshrined in the country's politics; look up *'Muhasasa'*, the power-sharing mechanism along ethno-sectarian lines. Having visited beautiful churches in Mosul, and ancient Jewish shrines in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq the imprints of toleration still exist, even if population sizes have diminished. Frequently in private conversation, Iraqis refer proudly to their cultural heritage, and exude national pride. They are hospitable, good-humoured and, despite recent history and trauma in living memory, there is tangible resilience. A preference to look to the forward. Yes, there is also fear of return to instability and violence, mainly from entities beyond Iraq's borders, but what shines through is a determination to craft better futures.

What also dominates is desire to no longer be a proxy battlefield for others, no surprise given decades of conflict. Most Iraqis want their country to provide regional balance, not be a lackey of Iran, Russia, China or indeed the West. And in discussing 'Persian' influence in

Iraq, one line I heard on Turkey illuminates other concerns, "the age of the Sultans may be returning". Evidence perhaps that this remains a country on a historical geo-political crossroad.

Iraq remains relevant to the UK. A stable and more prosperous Iraq contributes to UK security interests in the region, including CT and with Syrian stability a story yet to play out. Trade, Climate and Development opportunities featured strongly in the January 2025 visit to the UK by Iraqi PM Al Sudani (including audiences with HM The King as well as the UK PM). Other non-MOD security interests include countering organised immigration crime, with progress made in the last 2 years.



Brig Wearmouth laying a wreath.

Our Regiment has played its part. During my tenure as Defence Attaché, 2 SCOTS were exemplary in providing the Op SHADER Manoeuvre Support company; and many other members of the Regiment passed through staff and HQ positions in the Coalition and NATO missions in Baghdad. All left positive marks.

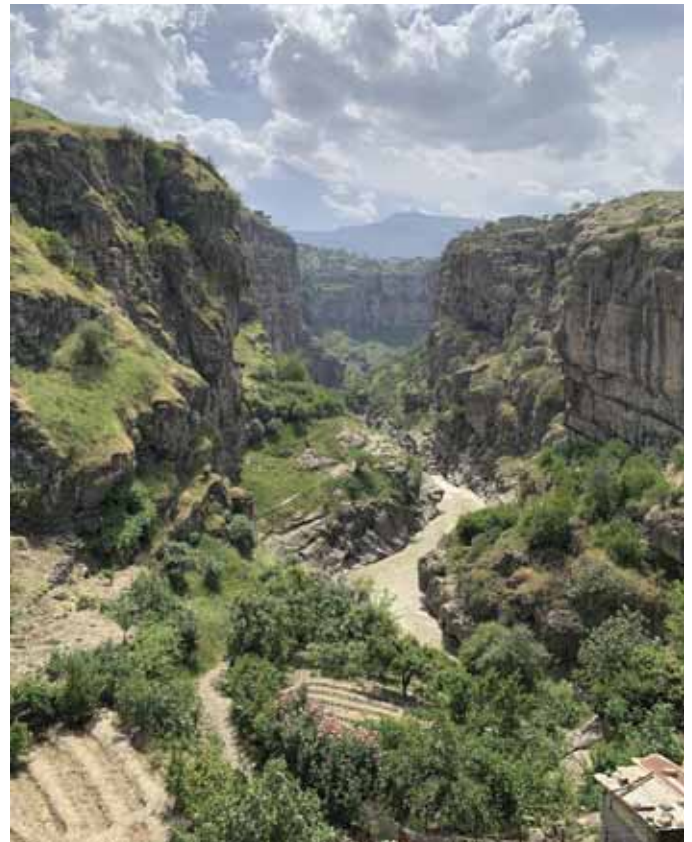
I was also privileged in my time to visit CWGC sites of which there are 20 in Iraq. Our forebear Regiments adorn many of the casualty lists (for those who want to discover more, 'When God Made Hell' by Charles Townshend is an excellent starting point). Sombre, and a fact lesser known, with 54,000 graves Iraq is the resting place of more UK and Commonwealth war dead than any other country outside Europe. While some cemeteries are in good order (eg Kut, Habbaniya), others need attention due to the ravages of time and climate (eg Basra Memorial, and Baghdad Northgate). Some have been stricken by more insidious action, like Mosul where ISIS blew apart each gravestone. The rehabilitative 'Spirit of Mosul' that is underway includes restitution of mosques and other sites ransacked by ISIS. Having proposed the CWGC cemetery in Mosul as a mutually supporting priority for restoration, the CWGC will be able to play its part in Iraq's (and the UK's) longer term heritage in a city once famed for its tolerance of multiple religious traditions. These projects are not just about engineering and project management, the local politics has to be right. Access by CWGC has been frustrated by security concerns and it has its own



organisational governance and risk management issues to resolve. More positively, during my time in Iraq the FCDO changed country-wide Travel Advice from Red to Amber in places. Should a trajectory of relative stability (not least political) continue, this will result in greater freedoms, and the ability of the CWGC to execute plans for restoration. In 2026 eyes are on government formation following national elections in late 2025. Iraq has multiple challenges, and its democracy is imperfect, but political transition between governments does occur.



Fellow SCOTS serving in Iraq: (l to r) Colonel Tim Cave-Gibbs, Brigadier Graeme Wearmouth and Captain Matt Orr in Northern Iraq.



Northern Iraq, the Rowanduz Gorge.



Basra Cemetery.



Basra Cemetery.

While the longer-term legacy of Iraq is arguably still to be written, UK military efforts, and sacrifices made, are part of the story of Iraq. As a British soldier I lost count of the number of times I was positively reminded by Iraqis of the British Army's influence in Iraq from 1921 onwards, frequently accompanied by the line, 'when the British came, they built'. We have a long-term relationship with this country in a region that is important to the UK. It is a country with a people and culture that is to be celebrated and newly discovered, full of welcome, warmth, humanity and humour. A country, not a campaign.

Brigadier GC Wearmouth OBE



Fellow SCOTS during Brig Wearmouth's tenure – CSgt McGregor and WO2 Pew.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EUCOM FOR NATO



US Troops in Europe.



EUCOM and other Component Commands.

For many who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, US Central Command (CENTCOM) – headquartered in Tampa, Florida and responsible for those theatres – was the dominant focus. US European Command (EUCOM), headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, felt less central, except perhaps to Cold War veterans who understood its role in planning for a potential Russian attack on Western Europe. Today, however, with rising Russian aggression, EUCOM has once again become critical. Recent political dynamics in Washington have added an additional layer of complexity, as discussions about potential changes to the US force posture in Europe have created uncertainty for long term planning.

As the Permanent Joint Headquarters Liaison Officer to EUCOM, my role is to provide timely and appropriate assistance on planning and operational matters requiring or benefiting from UK input and co operation. I also keep the UK informed on all matters affecting UK-US bilateral and multinational relations, deliberate and contingency planning, policy, exercises and operations.

In purely geographic terms, EUCOM's area of responsibility covers more than 20 million square miles of land, air and sea space. It stretches from the Arctic Circle in the north to the Mediterranean in the south, and from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Caucasus and Russia's western borders in the east. It encompasses 51 countries and territories, making it one of the most densely populated and politically interconnected regions in the world.

EUCOM's role is built on partnership. The command works closely with NATO allies and non NATO partners to ensure collective defence, enhance interoperability and maintain a credible deterrent posture. The war in Ukraine has reinforced the importance of these relationships. Since Russia's full scale invasion in 2022, EUCOM has coordinated the largest movement of US forces into Europe since the Cold War. Today, the United States maintains roughly 100,000 military personnel in Europe, including around 65,000 Army, 30,000 Air Force and 10,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel. Key capabilities include four forward deployed destroyers in Spain, approximately 150 US fighter aircraft across Europe, and rotational armoured brigade combat teams equipped with M1 Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, HIMARS rocket systems and Army aviation brigades.

At the same time, EUCOM must navigate a shifting political environment. Public debate in the US about the scale of America's military presence in Europe – including proposals to reduce troop numbers or reposition forces – has introduced an element of

unpredictability for allies. Calls for increased European defence spending and discussions about prioritising resources for the Indo Pacific have also shaped perceptions of future US commitment. While the US continues to support deterrence in Europe, these debates underscore the importance of European burden sharing and long term resilience within NATO.

Beyond political considerations, EUCOM faces significant strategic challenges. Russia remains the most acute threat, with its military presence, nuclear posture and willingness to use force creating persistent instability. At the same time, China is expanding its economic and political influence across Europe, investing in critical infrastructure and seeking access to advanced technologies. EUCOM works to help allies navigate this dual challenge while maintaining unity within the alliance.

A second challenge is readiness and modernisation. The US and its allies must adapt to a rapidly changing character of warfare – one defined by drones, long range fires, electronic warfare and contested communications. Ensuring that NATO forces can operate effectively in a degraded environment, integrate new technologies and sustain high intensity operations is a central task for EUCOM.

A third challenge is logistics and sustainment. Supporting large scale operations across Europe requires resilient supply chains, robust infrastructure and the ability to move forces quickly across borders. The war in Ukraine has highlighted both the strengths and vulnerabilities of Europe's logistical networks, prompting renewed investment and planning.

Finally, EUCOM must manage the political complexity of a diverse alliance. Maintaining cohesion among 32 NATO members – each with its own priorities, capabilities and domestic pressures – requires constant engagement and diplomatic skill.

Despite these challenges, EUCOM remains a cornerstone of US national security and a vital guarantor of European stability. Its ability to adapt, innovate and lead alongside allies will shape the security of the transatlantic region for decades to come.

It's also an extremely interesting, relevant and fun place to work.

*Colonel Justin Barry
UK Liaison Officer to US European Command*



UNITED NATIONS FORCES IN CYPRUS HQ

In the past 20 months, I have been in the role of the Training Warrant Officer (Trg WO) for the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), based in Nicosia. This is the operational deployment known to UK troops as Op TOSCA. I have been seconded to the UN as part of the multinational 2* HQ, where I have the responsibility and pleasure of working alongside the Training Officer (Trg Off) who is a Lt Col from Argentina. We are responsible for assuring that all 800+ peacekeepers have completed all aspects of their pre-deployment training. All peacekeepers are responsible for assuring the mission's mandate and tasks which is to prevent a "Prevent a reoccurrence of fighting" and "maintain and restore law and order and return to normal conditions".

During my time in this role, I have seen four major rotations of UK troops on the OP TOSCA mission, these include 4 Para, 5 RA, 5 RRF and now 1 CG. I play a pivotal role in the transitional phase of the deployment as I provide part of the continuity in my role for the chain of command, offering not only a friendly face but also a UK focal point for anything that may have been missed during the handover-takeover. Furthermore, I have been heavily involved in the planning and execution of the evaluation process that is mandated by UN HQ in New York. This process sees a UN layer of evaluation on all Troop contributing countries that are deployed on the mission area. In addition, I have planned and delivered a force level exercise to 200+ peacekeepers, UN Police Officers, and our civilian colleagues.

In addition to my duties, I have planned and organised several mission wide events including sports days, the twice annual Peacekeeping Skills Competition and a few sporting fixtures against the Republic of Cyprus National Guard. Furthermore, I have organised two UNFICYP HQ Medals Parades which includes international Officers, WOs, SNCOs and JNCOs to march in unison, this has been a challenge.

The role of Trg WO for the UN in Cyprus has offered me significant personal development opportunities, including the chance to enhance leadership, communication, and organisational skills in a dynamic, multinational environment. Collaborating with diverse international teams naturally fosters cultural awareness and adaptability, while the responsibility of delivering mission-critical training builds confidence and expertise. It has been a fantastic assignment and a power insight into the UN and the importance of Peacekeeping.

Warrant Officer Class Two James McKenna





INSIGHTS FROM A PERMANENT JOINT HEADQUARTERS EMBED: A STRATEGIC ROLE IN UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND

Since August 2024, I have had the privilege of serving as the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) exchange officer, or embed, within the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) Strategy Team. USAFRICOM's mission focuses on countering malign actors, responding to crises, strengthening African security forces, and supporting broader U.S. Government efforts, all while fostering regional security and stability across the African continent.

Africa is a region of immense strategic importance, where global interests converge, making USAFRICOM's work critical in addressing complex challenges. As a member of the Strategy Team, I have contributed to shaping policies, analysing geopolitical dynamics, and developing strategies that integrate military, diplomatic, and economic elements. USAFRICOM's African partner-led and U.S.-enabled approach prioritises building the operational independence of African nations, empowering them to address their own security challenges.

Countering groups such as al-Shabaab and ISIS-Somalia remains a key priority, particularly in East Africa, where the region's proximity to global trade routes enhances its strategic significance. Kenya's designation as a Major Non-NATO Ally in 2024 underscores the growing strength of regional partnerships, which are essential for addressing threats and promoting stability.

USAFRICOM's flagship exercises, including FLINTLOCK and AFRICAN LION, play a vital role in strengthening African security forces and fostering cooperation with Allies. FLINTLOCK focuses on counterterrorism and irregular warfare, bringing together forces from over 30 nations. AFRICAN LION provides joint, multinational training across land, air, and maritime domains, involving thousands

of participants. These exercises not only enhance operational capabilities but also strengthen relationships and demonstrate the effectiveness of security cooperation programmes.

In North Africa, USAFRICOM advances U.S. interests through partnerships with Morocco and Tunisia, both designated as Major Non-NATO Allies. Morocco plays a key role as a security exporter, providing military training and contributing to peacekeeping missions. Meanwhile, Tunisia's emergence as a regional military training hub highlights the importance of fostering partnerships to achieve shared objectives. Beyond these efforts, USAFRICOM addresses broader challenges to regional stability, supporting African-led solutions to create conditions that are less conducive to the influence of malign actors.

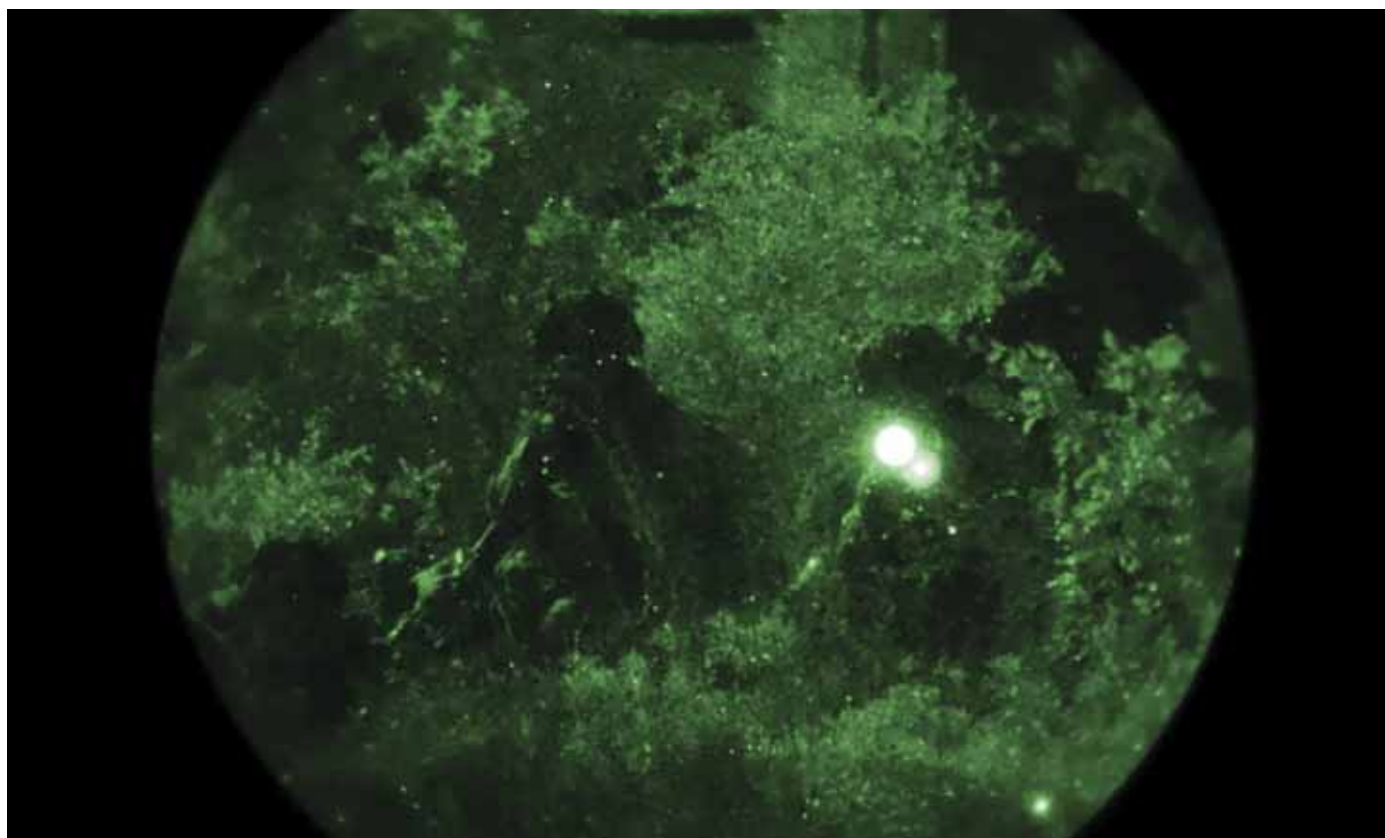
The UK derives significant benefits from the reciprocal PJHQ embed role, gaining valuable insights into the operations of a U.S. Combatant Command (CCMD). This experience enhances strategic planning, interagency coordination, and multinational collaboration from the strategic to operational levels. Furthermore, the role has provided a unique opportunity to observe an Administration change, offering a deeper understanding of how shifts in U.S. policy and priorities influence strategic planning and operations.

I wholeheartedly recommend working with USAFRICOM or any other CCMD. You will be warmly welcomed and gain an exceptional education in the inner workings of the U.S. military.

Lt Col J R P Bailey (GBR)



LIFE IN TIGER LAND - FORT POLK, LOUISIANA, USA



OPFOR, 1-509th Airborne Infantry, Geronimo Soldiers viewed through night vision.

Captain Glass is currently serving as an Observer Coach Trainer (OCT) at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Fort Polk, Louisiana, USA.

The sound of enemy tanks rumbling towards the river crossing echoes through the forest's darkness. Anti-tank teams armed with Javelin ready themselves in their fighting positions. Gun teams brace themselves behind M240 machine guns, searching through NVGs for enemy dismounts, belts of 7.62mm laid out in anticipation glint in the moonlight. Overhead, enemy UAS flit back and forth seeking out targets, their disconcerting whine overlays the rhymical "whop-whop-whop" of circling enemy attack helicopters. You could be forgiven for thinking you were in a European theatre of war, if it were not for the sticky, unrelenting humidity and rhymical sound of cicadas and crickets.

The scene described plays out in almost every rotation at JRTC. Each rotational unit (RTU) benefits from a well-resourced full time opposing force (OPFOR) from the 1-509 Infantry Regiment equipped with its own attack aviation, UAVs, EW and armour. This OPFOR coupled with the 309 square miles of the Tiger Land training area provides the crucible for US Army Brigades

preparing to deploy on operations.

Since August I have been a Company OCT for Brigade rotations from 2/10 Mountain Division and 1/82 Airborne Division. In November I deployed to Hawaii to support a Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Centre (JPMRC) exercise for 3/25 IBCT. A recurring theme of rotations, particularly during their After-Action Review (AAR), is the topic of "standards and discipline". Undoubtedly an area of strength for SCOTS, and I am confident that any of the battalions, if given the opportunity, would excel in the woods and swamps of Fort Polk. The units which can execute soldiering fundamentals whilst incorporating new technology are those with the greatest chance of mission success.

Outside of work there has been ample time to explore the local area, local cuisine is predominately of the deep fat fried variety. Though as an honorary Scot, I have not yet managed to find a local eatery offering a "pizza crunch", though alligator and crawfish are readily available! Living in the "Deep South" we have been afforded opportunity to explore a lesser-known part of the US, surrounded by Cajun and Creole culture. As a family we have already taken trips to Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi as

well as a visit to the Duck Commander in West Monroe (if you know, you know). To escape the Louisiana heat, we spent Christmas in the mountains of Colorado.

The community swimming pool being a stone throw from our house provides welcome relief from the humidity which in the summer sits at around 90%. Living "on post" we have received a warm welcome from our neighbours. We celebrated Thanksgiving with our entire street, and in return we hosted a St Andrew's dinner complete with haggis, peeps and tatties a few days later. There is already talk of a Burn's Supper and St Patricks Day celebration in the New Year. Southern culture and hospitality are also at show in our local church where we've been able to sample plenty of Cajun cooking and received a warm welcome with multiple members of the congregation keen to share details of their Scottish and Irish ancestry.

Overall, we have had a great time in our first months here at Fort Polk. The New Year will start with another JPMRC rotation, this time to Alaska, which I am sure can't be any colder than Galloway Forest.

Captain Glass



LIFE AND WORK IN DC - WASHINGTON, USA

In Nov 24 I was delighted to be selected to the position of Chief of Staff (COS), Defence Intelligence USA (DI-USA), for my SG2 posting. Whilst deployed on Op SHADER, receiving this news was extremely welcome and gave me a great reason to immediately phone home and share the good fortune with my wife and two girls, who had been eagerly waiting to see where Defence would send us next. Having enjoyed a previous assignment to Cyprus, we were keen on one last overseas trip before settling the family in one place. To date, the decision to come here has not disappointed.

The Defence Intelligence Enterprise in the USA is larger and more diverse than one would imagine, comprising a cross-section of Defence from all three services, as well as the civil service, and situated across the contiguous United States. Operating as embeds and exchange officers to US military formations or liaison officers to the US intelligence agencies or the Pentagon, it's a broad church of highly motivated and productive individuals. As the network COS, my job broadly entails cohering the outputs of the network, ensuring there is a persistent link back to DI in MOD, and most importantly, ensuring that the team and their families feel valued and supported. A fascinating time to be in the US, it provides a challenging environment in which to operate, but it's a privilege to work with such individuals as DI USA has that meet the challenge so effectively, cultivating excellent working relationships across the US government apparatus and ensuring we remain the administration's partner of choice.

For a family assignment, it's surpassed our expectations to date. There is no denying that the admin burden of moving out is complex and frustrating, but once that settles down it can be (as was sold to me by my predecessor), 'like living in a film,' and he wasn't wrong. A working day may consist of a morning in the embassy, lunch at The Pentagon, and an afternoon at a US intelligence agency, with access and insight to events as they unfold. But what has really stood out to me is the way my family



British Embassy DC.

have been able to settle so quickly into life in the US, with the children in a public elementary school really enjoying themselves, and my wife helping at the school whilst maintaining a beautiful house in the suburbs of DC. Our holidays so far have included a road-trip along the Pacific Highway, city breaks and trips to the coast and mountains, with more planned next year. Perhaps an unusual change from the Field Army, this assignment has certainly broadened by professional knowledge and opened my sight picture to a different and rewarding career field within defence. I would recommend it to anyone seeking to explore something new and different, and I look forward to whatever the next eighteen months brings with life in DC.

Major LJ Malpass



US Capitol Xmas Tree.



Family Washington Mall.



UNITED STATES ARMY'S COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE - FORT LEAVENWORTH, USA



My time thus far at the United States Army's Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth has been immensely rewarding, both professionally and personally. Founded in 1881, CGSC is steeped in history and has shaped generations of American officers and international graduates. Yet what distinguishes the institution today is its extraordinary global reach. This year, 121 international officers from 93 countries join approximately 1,000 U.S. students to form one of the most diverse military education cohorts anywhere in the world. It is this international community that has made the experience truly unique. Daily engagement with officers from around the world broadens perspectives, challenges assumptions, and builds the mutual understanding essential to modern multinational operations.



Command & General Staff College Opening Flag Ceremony.

A particular privilege this year has been my selection as an Art of War Scholar, a distinct programme reserved for a single syndicate of 12 officers. While the reading load more than justifies its moniker, "the-book-a-day club", the opportunities it provides far outweigh the academic demands. The programme routinely brings esteemed authors, senior military officers, and leading thinkers to speak with the scholars, offering

rare access to those shaping contemporary strategic thought. These engagements have been among the most intellectually stimulating and will undoubtedly prove good preparation for the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP), which I will attend next year at the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) alongside seven other international students. Notably, both UK officers have once again been selected; a testament to the value placed on the UK-U.S. special relationship.



Command & General Staff College Opening Flag Ceremony.



International Military Student Division Field Trip.

Perhaps the most enduring lesson, however, is perspective. Professionally, CGSC offers not only deep academic development but also a rare vantage point from which to observe how the vast U.S. Army thinks, educates, and prepares its leaders for the demands of the modern operating environment. Immersion in another army's culture reveals where we can learn, but it also invites reflection on, and appreciation for, the strengths of the British Army, and of the Royal Regiment of Scotland especially – our history, humour, and understated professionalism. While friendly debate continues over historical perspectives, and my humour has not always hit the mark with the Americans, there remains an unspoken mutual respect between U.S. and UK officers that has been reassuring to witness given the current geopolitical climate.



Charity "Ruck March" (Tab).

Importantly, life outside the classroom has been equally rewarding. Fort Leavenworth is a close-knit military community, and the hospitality extended to international officers and their families has been exceptional. With ample opportunity to travel, it has been great to sample the culture on offer in Kansas and wider America and has included rodeos, national parks, country music and sporting events, to name but a few.

Ultimately, my time at Fort Leavenworth has, as our American cousins would say, "been a blast." It has deepened my professional understanding of multidomain operations, underscored the value of international cooperation, and perhaps most importantly, provided countless opportunities to build enduring relationships. For any future SCOTS officers considering U.S. overseas staff college, I could not commend it more highly.

Major Jean-Marc Roberti



BBQ at home with other Brit families on post.



BBQ (again) with international and American families.



Trip to St Louis.



SCOTS AT ERE

A YEAR DOWN UNDER – AUSTRALIAN COMMAND AND STAFF COURSE - CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA



Team Phillips down under.



Lt Col Al Phillips with Toby & Sophie on ANZAC day.



Family holiday during the gap year.

***"The soldiers of the Commonwealth are cut from the same cloth - steady under fire, adaptable in adversity, and bound together by a shared martial tradition."**¹*

That sentiment, echoed across campaigns from Gallipoli to Afghanistan, felt alive throughout my year in Australia. Though separated by oceans, the professionalism, humour, and fighting spirit of Australian soldiers were instantly familiar. What differed, however, were the lessons the environment itself imposes, lessons that we can learn from to make us better for tomorrow's fight today.

Before I go on, you might reasonably ask what I was doing in Australia in the first place. Well, in a year when the British & Irish Lions were touring and the Ashes were being fought out down under, the choice between ACSC in Canberra and a year in Shrivenham was hardly a choice at all. Australia beckoned, but more on the fun stuff after the professional reflection. The year has been a fantastic opportunity, and I have learnt a tremendous amount, with three key observations worthy of sharing:

1. Russia is the weather, China is climate change... captures the dual nature of modern strategic risk. Russia produces immediate, violent shocks that demand rapid tactical adaptation, while China is a slow, structural force reshaping the global strategic environment. Ukraine shows the British Army must be ready to fight tonight, countering drones, massed fires, and rapid adaptation cycles. But China's rise requires something deeper. Beijing advances long-term political aims through economic coercion, maritime expansion, technology acquisition, and influence operations that shift the balance without firing a shot.

Australia has responded to this challenge by redesigning its force structure developing amphibious and littoral elements that act as stand-in deterrent forces, mirroring the USMC and physically occupying key terrain before China can, much like NATO's forward presence along Russia's borders.

For the British Army, the lesson is that readiness must work on two timescales: tactical agility for today's fight, and long-term institutional resilience for a strategic competitor shaping the environment itself. Deterrence, partnerships, logistics, information resilience, and sustained presence matter as much as armour and fires. Russia teaches us how to weather the storm; China teaches us how to prepare for a changing climate.

2. Win the Fight to get to the fight. The ranges and constraints Australia faces mean that the first step is to win just to get to the fight you want to have. In the Indo-Pacific, vast distance, a hostile A2/AD envelope, and fragile regional basing mean the opening battle is securing access, survivability, and persistence long before a shot is fired. What Ukraine teaches at the tactical level, where simply crossing open ground to reach the enemy trench requires defeating drones, sensors, EW and long-range fires, Australia experiences at the operational and strategic level.

The same "transparent battlefield" applies, only magnified by geography: satellites, ISR networks, and precision-strike systems now push engagement ranges hundreds or even thousands of kilometres, making movement, concealment, and logistics inherently contested. Australia has internalised this reality; its planners assume that distance, not the enemy, will be the first adversary, and that technology has removed the luxury of a safe rear area. For the British Army, the lesson is clear and understood from Ukraine: If we cannot penetrate an adversary's reconnaissance-strike complex, sustain forces across extended lines of communication, and manoeuvre under constant observation, then we will never reach the close battle we prefer to fight. The future challenge is not just winning the close battle but surviving and sustaining the journey to and during it.

3. Australians are closely aligned to the US. A year in Australia makes one thing unmistakably clear: the country's strategic alignment with the United States is deeper, more structural, and more necessary than many British officers fully grasp. Australia's sovereign security in any high-end conflict rests on US power. An openly acknowledged reality shaped by history, geography, and the enduring lesson of the fall of Singapore. As a result, Australia views most partners, including the UK, as valuable but ultimately second tier when compared to Washington. For the British Army, this demands a mindset shift. In the Indo-Pacific, we are not the framework nation, we are a supporting actor in a US-led coalition, contributing niche capabilities, credibility, and political signalling rather than expecting to lead in any campaign. This is not a diminution but a recognition of strategic design: we can lead in Europe, exert influence in the Middle East, but must be comfortable operating under others in the Indo-Pacific. The lesson is humility with purpose, understanding where we add value, aligning seamlessly with US and

¹ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1976).



Overseas Course Members 'OCMs' learn about Australian democracy!

Australian planning constructs, and accepting that influence in the region comes not from leading, but from being a dependable, capable junior partner.

Now that I have shared the top three observations there is one other area that we can learn from: sport as defence engagement. Australia understands the power of sport and uses it to great effect in a region that loves it. Not only does the ADF tour regionally with partner forces (Fiji, Tonga, Solomon etc) but the government recognises the power of sport and has recently established a National Rugby League team in Papa New Guinea, which has spread influence, aligned with treaties and ultimately enhanced access basing and overflight. We should use our own sports

teams to greater effect as part of a coordinated engagement effort.

Finally, the year offered far more than professional insights. The chance to learn alongside Indo-Pacific partners, immerse in Australian culture, and explore a vibrant, outdoors-driven society with my family was a privilege. Australia offers a rare blend of strategic relevance, intellectual challenge, and human warmth, a posting that broadens horizons in every sense and is highly recommended, there are always plenty of Jocks about too... And we won the Lions Tour!

Lt Col A J Phillips MC



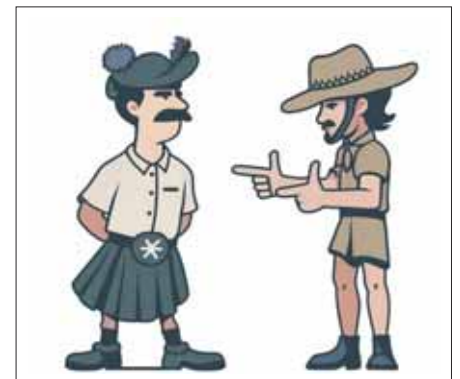
New South Wales Coastline.



Some of the stunning scenery in Queensland.



Lt Col Al Phillips & Maj Al Sweet on ANZAC day.



Caricature of Lt Col Phillips and his Australian host on completion of 'Movember'.



Maj Fin 'The Gladiator' Anderson (Retd), Lt Col Al Phillips, Capt Robbie Donaldson (Retd) enjoying the lions test match in Brisbane.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PENINSULA BRITISH MILITARY MISSION SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD - ARABIAN GULF



Course Prize Giving.

At the time of writing, I have been in-country for only two months, yet the experience has already been nothing short of remarkable—at times overwhelming, but always in the best possible way. Immersion is perhaps the most accurate word for it. This posting has delivered all the things one hopes for when living and working on the Arabian Peninsula: a sense of place shaped by deep history, a culture that invites engagement, and a society that is confidently charting its course toward the future.

I did not arrive expecting anything akin to Lawrence of Arabia, nor did I seek some romanticised desert wanderer's tale. Instead, I find myself in a modern, ambitious, and steadily progressive environment—one that honours its traditions while investing fully in the world of tomorrow. That balance, that duality between heritage and forward momentum, seems to define daily life here.

My work has begun at pace. Already I've carried out planning exercises and delivered training to sergeants and lieutenants in Dammam on the Arabian Gulf. These sessions have offered more than simple professional engagement;

they've opened windows into the values, expectations, and pride that animate military service in this part of the world. Working side by side, sharing methods, comparing approaches, and learning in both directions has grounded my time here with purpose.



Remembrance British Embassy.

Outside the formal duties, the cultural encounters have been equally vivid. I've tasted the local cuisine—quite literally sampling the region's warmth and hospitality—and I've also been fortunate enough to witness expatriate life in its full rhythm. One standout moment came during the Poppy Ball hosted at the British Embassy, a gathering of 280 staff, diplomats, and local VIPs. With a team of 4 SCOTS pipers joining us, the event became an unexpected lesson in the British traditions, offered to a diverse and attentive audience. It was a reminder of how military heritage travels with us, shaping perceptions and building bridges even far from home.

Having completed a loan service posting in Jordan previously, I arrived with some sense of what awaited me—a mixture of challenge, opportunity, and discovery. Yet each country brings its own character, and this one is no exception. I look forward to the remainder of

this posting with equal parts enthusiasm and humility. The expectations are high, not least my own: to continue developing professionally, to carry out my duties with diligence, and to strengthen my grasp of the language I was fortunate to begin studying at the Defence Academy.



Downtown Riyadh.

Perhaps the best words to capture this experience come from the explorer Wilfred Thesiger, whose travels across Arabia left him with a profound respect for the region and its people. He wrote, "I was looking for adventure, but more than that, I was looking for peace. I found both in the desert, and among the people who called it home." Though my surroundings are far more modern than the landscapes Thesiger crossed, his sentiment still resonates. In the purposeful work, the warm encounters, and the evolving rhythm of each day, I find both challenge and a certain quiet sense of belonging.

Major Daniel Reed



Edge of the World.



Edge of the World.



THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST

Commander:

Brigadier Nicholas Wight-Boycott OBE

Academy G35:

Major Andrew Campbell

Assistant Chief Instructor

Intermediate Term:

Captain Adrian Van Niekerk

Platoon Commander:

Captain Alastair Turner

Captain Ian Pearson

Platoon Senior Non-Commissioned Officer:

Colour Sergeant David Mathieson

Platoon Senior Non-Commissioned Officer:

Colour Sergeant Kenny MacMillan

Platoon Senior Non-Commissioned Officer:

Colour Sergeant Tony Iliffe

As an officer the first time you arrive at Old College, you are a cadet; keen, uncertain, focused on survival. The second time, you arrive as a Platoon Commander. The uniform feels familiar, but the responsibility does not. You are no longer being shaped; you are shaping others. That is a sobering thought as you drive past the Old College parade square and wonder if you are ready to be the officer or SNCO your cadets deserve.

As OCdts arrive on day one they are met by their Platoon Commanders and SNCOs. A blur of paperwork, haircuts, and wide-eyed faces trying to make sense of their new reality. They are strangers then, standing awkwardly in borrowed confidence. From that moment, as an instructor you are part of everything. You watch them stumble through drill, wrestle with admin, and learn the rhythm of days that start early, and end later than they thought possible. You see the first cracks forging; fatigue and frustration, but also resilience forming in response. You are there when they first lead, first fail, first succeed. And you are there when they begin to understand that leadership is not about shouting orders but about earning trust.

People assume the officer's role is all plans and paperwork. In truth, it is about shaping character. Standards are not negotiable; discipline is not punishment but a foundation. Every inspection, every correction, every conversation is about preparing them for decisions that matter. The shine on a boot is not vanity; it is a lesson in consistency. The straight line on parade is not theatre; it is teamwork in motion. None of this, or the transformation that OCdts undergo, would be achievable without our exemplary SNCOs. These individuals are exceptional instructors and uphold the standards expected at RMAS.

The field is where reputation meets reality. A few exercises linger in my mind, not just for the mud and rain, but for the harsh truth that as permanent staff, you need to be on top of your game around the clock, no matter how foul the weather, how tired you are, or how many SAFs you still need to write. There is no hiding fatigue when you are the standard-bearer.

One night on the defensive exercise, after 36 hours of digging trenches, I watched a cadet fall asleep standing up, leaning on their shovel like a commuter clinging to a handrail. Another froze mid-sentence, eyes open, brain clearly clocked off. At one point, half the platoon was swaying gently in the rain, a sort of exhausted choreography that would have been funny if it was not so honest. I was stern... eventually. But I would be lying if I said that I and others, did not turn away once or twice to hide a smile. There is something uniquely British about trying to maintain dignity while half-asleep in a hole you have been digging for two days straight.

Command at Sandhurst is a balance: challenge and support, expectation and empathy. Sometimes you tighten the screws; sometimes you close the door and listen. You learn patience, letting cadets wrestle with problems rather than fixing them. Failure, contained and learned from, is a faster teacher than your perfect solution.

What never gets old is witnessing the change. Junior Term is survival. Intermediate Term brings confidence. Senior Term delivers humility. The best cadets leave knowing leadership is not about being loud, but about being reliable, fair, and unflinching when decisions carry weight.

When they march up the Old College steps, boots echoing, heads high, you sit back and feel the honour and privilege of having helped them on their journey. Command here is not about control; it is about trust. It is an education that lasts longer than any exercise and it is worth every early start and every long day that ends with the quiet satisfaction of seeing your team take shape. It is always a bittersweet feeling seeing a Platoon move onto pastures new, but a proud feeling to know that you have left your mark on them all.

As a Regiment, the most important factor in attracting OCdts to be our future officers is representation. We currently have six SNCOs undertaking the Sandhurst Instructor Aptitude Cadre.

Captain A Turner



TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

“THE VIEW FROM BEHIND THE PACE STICK”

Impressions of a Colour Sergeant at Sandhurst

I first met 31 Platoon not on day one of Sandhurst, but on a Sunday evening at the start of Intermediate Term. They returned looking relieved, apprehensive, and in some cases suspiciously well-rested whilst most likely thinking *“Who is this grumpy jock stood before us”. I remember thinking: “Right then, let’s see what we’ve got”.*

Taking over a platoon halfway through their journey gives you a unique perspective. They arrive with just enough experience to think they know the routine, but not enough to realise how much further they’ve got to go. From the first minute, you spot the gaps: habits to sharpen, standards to lift, confidence to build. But you also see the potential - the untapped potential waiting to be developed.

People often assume Colour Sergeants obsess over drill, turnout, timings, and the constant battle of straight lines. In truth, it’s never really about the small things themselves. It’s about showing cadets that standards matter, especially when nobody’s watching. The shine on a boot or the precision of a movement is just the starting point - a doorway into discipline, consistency, and pride in their work.

Out in the field is where the real development and the comedy unfolds. DEFENCE EX will stay with me for a long time. Four days of trench digging with no rest will break anyone, but the platoon’s attempts to stay awake were entertainment in their own right. I watched one cadet fall asleep standing up, leaning on his shovel like a man trying to stay upright in a Friday-night taxi queue. Another froze mid-conversation, eyes open, brain clearly clocked off. At one point, half the platoon was swaying, each fighting a losing battle with gravity and exhaustion.

I was stern... eventually. I’d be lying to say there weren’t moments I had to turn away to hide a laugh. There’s something uniquely British about future officers trying to maintain dignity while half-asleep in a hole they’ve been digging for 36+ hours.

Still, that’s where you learn the most. When the cold and rain sets in, and sleep is a distant memory, leadership appears. You see who can motivate a tired section, think clearly under fatigue, and look out for their mates when their own tank is empty.

What never gets old is the privilege of watching them grow. They



TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS



start Intermediate Term thinking they've cracked it. By the end, they understand what it truly means to lead, to serve, and to carry themselves like officers. My job is to challenge them, support them, and occasionally remind them firmly, that excellence has no shortcuts.

Sandhurst demands high standards for a reason. Standing behind the pace stick, pushing them to reach those standards, is something I'm proud to do. They won't remember every inspection or correction, but they'll remember the lessons behind them. And when they finally march up the Old College steps as commissioned officers, knowing I had a hand in that transformation makes every long day and every "again" utterly worth it.

*Colour Sergeant A Iliffe
31 Platoon SNCO, Falklands Company*





TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

INFANTRY BATTLE SCHOOL - BRECON, UNITED KINGDOM

Platoon Commander's Division:
Captain J Cullum

Junior Division:
Colour Sergeant G Watt
Colour Sergeant S Oliver



SCOTS Student Receiving Guidance in Cellini Village.

If 2025 was a period of consolidation for the Infantry Battle School (IBS), 2026 has started as a year of refinement. The 'Optimisation' process, which has seen sweeping changes to the three core tactical courses taught by the Battle School (Platoon Commander's, Platoon Sergeants and Section Commander's Battle Courses), is now well established, with the biggest change being the integration of all students onto one Final Test Exercise (FTX): Exercise COMBINED WARRIOR. SCOTS Students and Directing Staff across the School have taken this in their stride, with Jocks maintaining the same high standards and professionalism seen prior to 'optimisation'.



LCpl Allison, 2 SCOTS, 'streets ahead' on the SCBC 2 Miller, breaking records with an impressive 12:58mins!

This thread of excellence is perhaps best represented by the performance of SCOTS Lance Corporals on the Section Commanders Battle Course (SCBC). With a special mention to LCpl Allison 2 SCOTS who has broken the IBS 2-miler record during his attendance on SCBC, obliterating the Parachute Regiment's long held record with an impressive time of 12:58.

Across the Platoon Commander's Battle Course and Platoon Sergeants Battle course, the trends are broadly similar, with Jocks juniors, seniors and officers alike, excelling at every level. With LCpl Allison achieving Top Student on SCBC 2501. On the Platoon Commanders Battle Course (PCBC) the new SCOTS officers have maintained a high standard among their peers with a total of 11 2Lts passing PCBC in 2025. Much of the successes of Jocks at IBS is the result of sustained investment in our soldiers; through continuous personal development within battalions and the preparatory courses delivered from the Union Division Training Team. Nevertheless, further improvement is always possible, and SCOTS often arrive at Brecon less well prepared for the conceptual side of their courses than their peers from other cap-badges. To rectify this, our battalions must maintain close coordination with the Regimental Permanent Staff at IBS. This collaboration will enable the monitoring of trends at the Battle School, ensuring preparatory training is tailored effectively and that the most current practices are applied across all SCOTS Battalions and our colleagues in the Union Division.

IBS currently has three Royal Regiment of Scotland Permanent Staff, as Colour Sergeant and Captain Instructors across all 3 Tac Divisions. This regimental footprint has once again proved invaluable, with SCOTS Permanent Staff at the forefront of revamping Dismounted Close Combat Doctrine and ensuring Jocks achieve the expected standards when attending courses.

The SCOTS age old reputation of robust, no-nonsense soldiers; ready to turn on the aggression at a moment's notice is still in full flow. A reputation we must seek to uphold to enable healthy competition with our colleagues across the infantry.



SCOTS Student providing Intimate FSP during an Urban Delay.



THE INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE

SUPPORT BATTALION

Commanding Officer:

Lt Col PJ Morgan

Officer Commanding Slim Company:

Maj KW Nicholson

Second-in-Command Slim Company:

Capt AC Ferrier

Regimental Sergeant Major:

WO1 (RSM) B Young

Master Tailor:

CSgt N Revill

Nurture SNCO:

Sgt A Hughes

Hook Coy Pl Sgt:

Sgt I Foreman

Hook Sect Comd:

Cpl K McCarthy

Slim Coy Storeman:

Cpl S Simpson

Resources NCO G7:

Cpl M Burns

STW Instructor:

Cpl A Lockhart

Cpl J Kelly

All Arms PTI:

Cpl JT Campbell

1ST INFANTRY TRAINING BATTALION

Second in Command:

Maj WF Garrick

Operations Officer:

Capt RA Mounsey

CQMS, A Coy:

CSgt JT Neilson

Platoon Commanders:

Capt HML Eaton

Capt AWI Blackhall

Capt AT Calder

Capt O Shankland

Capt HRV Thornton-Kemsley

Lt B Richardson

Lt J McKell

Platoon Sergeants:

Sgt P Dalglish

Sgt ST Degei

Sgt S Digman

Sgt K Macdonald

Sgt D Rogers

Section Commanders:

Cpl M Brebner

Cpl D Buntain

Cpl D Shaw

Cpl A Cockrell

Cpl A Devlin

Cpl K Gibson

Cpl C Gilmour

Cpl D Gough

Cpl J McGregor

Cpl F Gray

Cpl D Hood

Cpl S O'Lone

Cpl E MacDonald

A Company Storemen:

Cpl U Rai

Pte L Marham

2ND INFANTRY TRAINING BATTALION

Regimental Sergeant Major

WO1 (RSM) R Parker

Platoon Commander:

Capt G Gray

Platoon Sergeant:

Sgt M Nayadravuki

Section Commanders:

Cpl R McLurg

Cpl C McInnes

Cpl T Martin

Cpl S McQueen

Bastion Coy Storeman:

Cpl A Hewett

Cpl M Saunders

The Infantry Training Centre is an outstanding E posting for any rank to be posted into. It delivers Phase 0 (pre-entry training for recruits), Phase 1 (Basic Training), Phase 2 (Initial Trade Training) and Phase 3 (Subsequent Trade Training) for students from across the Army. The breadth of output is vast, and all instructors are empowered to deliver. The work life balance is good, and the stability of the E posting allows greater opportunities to be taken and equally helps to build your profile against your peers.

ITC 25 – One Year On

April 2024 marked the launch of ITC 25, the most ambitious programme of change since the Centre's inception in 1995. One year on, its impact is clear. The restructure has significantly reduced training wastage and improved retention, while raising the standard of delivery across both battalions. 1st Infantry Training Battalion has firmly established itself as the specialist hub for Basic Training, transforming civilians into soldiers across all Combat Arms: Infantry, Guards, Parachute Regiment, and Royal Armoured Corps. The removal of the Section Commanders' Battle Course as a prerequisite for instructors has widened the talent pool, enabling corporals with Infantry Instructor qualifications from IBS or CAMS to step into these critical roles.

Meanwhile, 2nd Infantry Training Battalion has consolidated its position as the centre for Initial Trade Training, Gurkha training, and All Arms Pre-Parachute Selection. This division of labour has driven efficiencies and allowed instructors to focus on their core expertise. Predictability in course loading has improved dramatically, with ring-fenced summer and Christmas closedown periods now guaranteed - an important step in supporting instructor welfare and career planning. In addition, 2 ITB has assumed sole responsibility for delivering Infantry Phase 2 training, further cementing its role as the Army's dedicated hub for infantry development. Specialist companies such as Para Company and Guards Company provide tailored training for their respective regiments, while Anzio Company delivers Phase 2 training to the line infantry regiments. To enhance capacity and flexibility, a new line company, Bastion Company has been formed within 2



TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

THE INFANTRY TRAINING CENTRE *continued*

ITB, reinforcing its ability to deliver high-quality training across the infantry spectrum.

Looking ahead to 2026, the opening of the **Catterick Integrated Care Centre (CICC)** will represent a major leap forward in supporting both trainees and staff. This state-of-the-art facility will centralise medical, welfare, and rehabilitation services, ensuring faster recovery times, improved mental health support, and streamlined care pathways. The CICC will complement Slim Company's work by providing integrated clinical and welfare support under one roof, reinforcing ITC's commitment to holistic soldier development and resilience.

The infantry's roles and structures have evolved significantly over the past three decades, and ITC 25 has positioned the Centre to meet these challenges head-on. The operating model now delivers better recruits through better-trained instructors, supported by sustainable tempo and improved resources. ITC remains a centre of Infantry Excellence and an exciting place to serve as an instructor. As the Army professionalises its instructor career pathway, ITC offers a crucial first step toward future opportunities at IBS or RMAS.

Outside of the delivery of training, and preparing for the large changes afoot, there has remained time for activities of a slightly different nature. SCOTS Instructors have supported wider army inflow through Engage to Recruit activities across the country. They have represented at every level in a variety of sports, including participation in the Bouldering Army Championships, and Snowsports, attending and achieving excellent results on career courses and generally representing the regiment in a positive light in every way imaginable.

Nurturing of potential SCOTS recruits remains key activity and the responsibility of all SCOTS PS within the ITC. Internally Capt Alan Ferrier organised a BBQ in September for all SCOTS PS and recruits. Inviting SCOTS unit RCMO's to engage with the recruits to visit and experience the wider regiment. Visits from Commanding Officers, RSMs and RCMOs are always welcomed, with willing hosts from across the permanent staff. This was funded by the Regimental HQ.

SCOTS PI Comd Voice of Experience (Lt Alfie Blackhall)

From Fort George, Inverness to Catterick, North Yorkshire I was expecting to be a long way from friendly faces or anyone I knew. I arrived at the Infantry Training Centre (ITC)



SCOTS PS and Recruits BBQ.

apprehensive. I was excited but nervous, however, after making the long journey south and arriving at Coy Headquarters the following day I was pushed into a Platoon to start delivering training as a Platoon Commander. As I headed to my office, I heard the distinct voice of a jock Platoon Sergeant exchanging pleasantries with the recruits. Immediately I was set at ease and even more so as I came around the corner to see the Royal Regiment of Scotland cap badge. All nerves and apprehension left and my initial concern of not knowing a friendly face disappeared. Not only from the Jock contingent but also from fellow Officers, many of which were friends from Sandhurst and Brecon who now had the chance to work and live together.

Throughout my time here I have had the privilege of taking recruits through both phase one and phase two training as well as working with amazing instructors from all cap badges. The ITC is an amazing place to work and an extremely rewarding one, it is not often you get to watch an individual grow and progress the way they do through military training and even less so to do with good mates and great instructors. In April I was also fortunate enough to go on the ITC Rugby tour to Australia. An incredible experience and a chance to spend time with our allied forces both competitively and socially. We spent three weeks in country, in which time we visited Brisbane, Singleton and Sydney. In Singleton we stayed with the Australian Army School of Infantry which was a real opportunity to see and compare how we train our recruits but also just to get to know each other and have a beer together.

Recently I have been responsible for the Soldier Preparation Course (SPC) a course that is well established at the Army Training Regiment (Pirbright) however brand new to

the ITC. The 6-week SPC is a course that aims to develop individuals who received a deferral from the Assessment Centre and bring them up to the standard required to start basic training. With it being the first of its kind the training team and I were responsible for establishing and resourcing the course as well as refining the programme to suit the needs of the recruits.

The programme largely consisted of Physical Development (PD), locker inspections, fieldcraft lessons, drill and an emphasis on the Army's Values and Standards. Also included in the programme were the flag competitions which were enjoyable inter-section competitions run throughout the course to enable problem solving, healthy competition and team bonding. Confidence was built on the high ropes and a chance for education at the Imperial War Museum in Manchester. A successful first course saw 88% of recruits pass and go onto basic training.

The SPC was a brilliant course to be a part of not least because of the team I was



Lt Alfie Blackhall and team.



working with but also seeing the recruit's progress. It allows individuals who may otherwise not get the opportunity to serve a second chance to develop until they are ready to start Basic Training. The course is a tailored mentoring approach to individuals which focusses on their needs, it gives the recruits the confidence to start training knowing they are capable and have what it takes to succeed.

I will take away a lot of great memories from the ITC and have met amazing people along the way. I would recommend coming here to anyone, being an instructor and seeing the change you can make is truly rewarding and the impact you have on their lives goes without saying. Everyone remembers their Platoon Staff and carries what they've been taught throughout their career.

My first few months at 1ITB (Lt James McKell)

"Halt! Check! Two, three up! Sir, I am recruit 3044-". With this common refrain, and usually a reshuffle of drill at the door, recruits have paraded up to my office door with their various issues and ailments over my first seven weeks as a Platoon Commander at 1ITB. These myriad issues stretch from the comical – "Sir, I've heard that I can transfer to the Australian Army?", to the frustrating – "Sir, I've lost my MOD90" (less than an hour after issue), to the more complex G1 issues that recruits have at this stage of their training. In amongst these daily occurrences, the first seven weeks of training have absolutely flown by. The first five weeks of the Basic Training Course were filled with the usual arrivals process paperwork and kit issue. I quickly became the Platoon SME in filling in Wills and Next of Kin details, and DLE depressingly became the most opened tab on my laptop. Once past this Sisyphean task, however, training began to ramp up and – dare I say it – become enjoyable.

The highlight of the first half of training is Ex FIRST ENCOUNTER; for the recruits of D4 this was a week spent in the field learning camouflage and concealment, individual and pairs fire-and-maneuvre, methods of movement (Fig. 1), and basic section patrolling. Despite this worrying start, D4 managed to finish strongly with every member of the Platoon mastering the basics. The fact that we managed to complete the Exfil Tab back to camp (their first one with 25kg), intact as a platoon was impressive, demonstrating grit and professional pride. Witnessing 5-week-old recruits getting to grips with living out in the field, with nights approaching -3

degrees, and beginning to function as soldiers and as a team was rewarding after the previous weeks' expenditure and served as a great launchpad for their upcoming week of AT and two more exercises post-Christmas leave.

Not only did I take on a new platoon of 44 recruits at the end of October, but I was also joining a Training Team of five Section Commanders and Platoon Sergeant. Getting exposure to experienced Corporals from a range of cap badges is a genuine privilege and benefit to working in ITC; the wealth of knowledge that they bring helps with the day to day running, and I quickly learnt that as long as you bring them the occasional can of Monster, you'll get on very well. Outside of the training programme, getting stuck into the ITC mess has made up for the gaping hole that a Jock mess has left; if it were not for the lack of bagpipes, the addition of bugles, lack of tartan and nights out in Catterick replacing a night out in Edinburgh, one would hardly have noticed any change. The 'Sit Drinks' welcoming all new members of the mess was a great way to get acquainted with fellow platoon commanders – new officer get to know Mr Lee Bowyer very quickly. With several more functions planned, including a big Christmas party and a Mess trip to Vienna, it is great to see a thriving mess, and a good opportunity to reacquire oneself with friends from RMAS and PCBC.

After Christmas leave D4 Platoon are right back into it, with two more weeks in the field, ACMT's, RFT's and – as usual – DLE.



The Methods of Movement Lesson.

The 13 week basic training program will be culminating with the Passing Off Parade – the Platoon Commander now needs to start practicing his drill.

SCOTS Platoon Sergeant Voice of Experience (Sgt Digman)

I am currently posted to 1st Infantry Training Battalion as a Platoon Sergeant. This is my second posting at ITC having been previously being employed at ITC as a Section Commander from 2019-2021.

Being posted to ITC is a highly rewarding role as it gives you the privilege of training the next generation of soldiers for the British Army. Over the past year, I have had the privilege of instructing two platoons of recruits from their first day in uniform to their pass-out parade at the end of phase one, prior to them moving to phase two training with the 2nd Infantry Training Battalion or down to Bovington for the RAC aligned recruits.

Throughout both training cycles, I delivered instruction across fieldcraft, marksmanship, navigation, bayonet fighting, section tactics, and physical development. A key part of the job has been setting expectations early, identifying individual strengths, and supporting recruits who benefit from additional mentoring. Watching their progression from unsure civilians to confident soldiers has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career to date.

The pace and pressures of the ITC environment have strengthened my own leadership style, reinforcing the importance of clear communication, adaptability, and maintaining morale during challenging phases of training. My time at 1 ITB has reaffirmed the importance of investing in the next generation of British Army soldiers. It remains a professional honour to play a part in producing motivated, capable infantrymen and RAC soldiers, ready to join their battalions and represent their respective Regiments at home and on operations overseas.

Furthermore, an additional privilege is working alongside my fellow SCOTS soldiers who are posted at the ITC. It is evident that the Royal Regiment of Scotland produces highly competent JNCO's, SNCO's and Officers. All members of the SCOTS posted to ITC from throughout the Regiment consistently demonstrate an exceptionally high standard. The exemplary standards and expertise demonstrated by the SCOTS instructors at ITC have consistently upheld the esteemed reputation of the Regiment.



TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS

ARMY FOUNDATION COLLEGE HARROGATE



The Army Foundation College (AFC) Harrogate is the British Army's only Junior Entry Establishment, offering a transformative experience for 16 and 17-year-old recruits. Over the course of an intensive 49-week programme, new recruits are moulded into disciplined, capable junior soldiers through a combination of rigorous military training, academic education, and personal development. For those aspiring to join The Royal Regiment of Scotland, the College provides a unique and challenging environment that prepares them for the demands of military life.

The journey at AFC Harrogate begins twice a year, with new recruits arriving to take the Oath of Allegiance, a significant moment that marks their transition from civilian life to the military. From the outset, recruits are immersed in a structured and disciplined environment, designed to help them adapt to the expectations of Army life. They are assigned to one of five training companies, where they quickly settle into a demanding routine. Days are filled with physical training, fieldcraft, weapons handling, and drill, alongside academic studies in English, maths, and IT. For many, the initial weeks are a culture shock, requiring them to adjust to the physical and mental rigours of military training. However, this phase is critical in building the resilience, discipline, and teamwork that will underpin their future success.

As recruits progress through the programme, the training becomes increasingly challenging, reflecting the complexity of the skills required in modern military operations. By the Intermediate Term, Junior Soldiers are undertaking advanced tasks such as platoon-level manoeuvres, night navigation, and CBRN training. These activities are designed to test their physical endurance, mental agility, and ability to work effectively as part of a team. The training is not only about mastering technical skills but also about developing the confidence and leadership qualities that are essential for a successful Army career.

SCOTS staff are a key part of AFC Harrogate, contributing across all areas of the College. Found in various roles, from training delivery to mentoring recruits, they play a crucial role in preparing Junior Soldiers for life in The Royal Regiment of Scotland. Known for their distinctive presence, SCOTS instructors are often heard before they are seen, bringing energy and focus to every aspect of training. Their guidance ensures recruits understand the regiment's values and are ready for the demands of battalion life. Since arriving in November, Cpl Mullen (3 SCOTS), has seen first hand the impact SCOTS have on the lives of their junior soldiers, "Since arriving it has been great to see so many friendly faces, whether it's at SCOTS nights where we help SCOTS JS sort their kit for the graduation

parade, or within the company, other members of staff are always happy to help, there's a real regimental pride here at Harrogate".

In addition to military training, AFC Harrogate places a strong emphasis on personal and academic development. Recruits are encouraged to challenge themselves in all areas, fostering growth in confidence, leadership, and teamwork. Academic studies in English, maths, and IT are integrated into the programme, ensuring that Junior Soldiers develop the skills they will need both in their military careers and in their personal lives. This holistic approach ensures that recruits leave the College as well-rounded individuals, equipped to face the challenges of Army life and contribute meaningfully to their units.

As the 49-week programme draws to a close, the Graduation Parade marks the culmination of the recruits' hard work and dedication. This proud moment is a celebration of their transformation from civilians into disciplined, capable soldiers, ready to take their place in the British Army. For those joining The Royal Regiment of Scotland, the training at AFC Harrogate has provided them with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to serve with distinction. The mentorship and guidance of SCOTS staff have been instrumental in this process, ensuring that the next generation of SCOTS soldiers is prepared to uphold the regiment's values and traditions.

The Army Foundation College Harrogate is more than just a training establishment; it is a place where young individuals are given the tools to succeed, both in their military careers and in life. For those aspiring to join The Royal Regiment of Scotland, it is the perfect starting point, offering a challenging yet rewarding experience that sets them on the path to a long and fulfilling career. The dedication of SCOTS staff, combined with the comprehensive training programme, ensures that recruits leave the College ready to serve their country with pride and professionalism.

Capt Callum Barrie





THE ARMY SCHOOL OF BAGPIPE MUSIC AND HIGHLAND DRUMMING

Director Army Bagpipe Music:
Major R McCrindle 1SG

Second in Command:
Captain K Douglas RRF

Senior Pipe Major:
Warrant Officer Class One P Grant SCOTS

Senior Drum Major:
Warrant Officer Class Two G Prescott
SCOTS DG

School Pipe Major:
Colour Sergeant J Muir SCOTS

Assistant Senior Drum Major:
Sergeant T McKay SCOTS

Pipe Sergeant:
Sergeant M McWhinnie SCOTS

Piping Instructors:
Corporal N Gillies SCOTS
Corporal S McCaskill SCOTS
Corporal R Steel SCOTS

Drumming Instructors:
Corporal N Tamang RGR
Corporal M Dixon SCOTS

Administration Officer:
Mrs Debbie Moody

Facilities Manager:
Mr Colin McCart

Dancing Instructor:
Ms Cheryl Campbell

Over the past 12 months, the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming has continued to train and develop students from across the Field Army, Royal Air Force, and Royal Navy, encompassing both Regular and Reserve personnel. This ongoing delivery plays a vital role in sustaining and strengthening Pipes and Drums capability across units.

In September, the AA Class 3 Course 2501 marked its completion with a passing-out parade held on the 105 Regiment Royal Artillery parade square. The parade was inspected by Brigadier Garner, Commandant of the Soldier Academy, and benefited from ideal weather conditions.



Sig Aman Thapa of the Queens Gurkha Signals being presented the Class 3 Course Top Student trophy from Brig Gardener, Commandant of the Soldier Academy.



Cpl Steel SCOTS performing at the Cannongate Kirk for Remembrance.

The past year has also seen a welcome increase in external piping and bugling commitments, providing instructors with opportunities to support a wide range of key events, including mess dinners, Remembrance parades, and soldier training and testing events. The Capt John MacLellan MBE Memorial Competition was

successfully hosted in October, attracting entries from some of the world's leading competitive pipers.

Looking ahead, AA Class 3 Course 2502—one of the largest intakes on record—will pass out on 4 March 2026. Thirty-one students are currently undertaking the demanding final phase of training, focusing on marching with instruments, Drum Major signals, and pipe band parade drill. The final parade will mark the culmination of an intensive six-month syllabus, after which graduates will return to their units as trained pipers, drummers, buglers, and Highland dancers.

Alongside this, the AA Class 2 Elementary and Intermediate Pipers' Course commenced in January with eight students, who will pass out at the same time as the Class 3 course and receive a PDQB SQA Level 4 qualification.

Army Piping and Drumming Championships

On 5 December, the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming hosted its annual Piping and Drumming Championships. The competition attracted over 60 competitors across 11 piping and drumming events, with each event tailored to suit participants at different stages of their musical development. Despite a particularly busy period in the training calendar and congested Field Operational Exercises, the championships were well supported by units from across the Army.

Soldiers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland enjoyed notable success throughout the day. Of note, Corporal McCaskill SCOTS, one of the ASBM&HD instructors, was crowned Army Champion Piper after securing an impressive collection of silverware across multiple events. Lance Corporal Faulds, 4 SCOTS, was named Army Champion Drummer, following a closely contested competition with Corporal McEntee, 2 SCOTS, who pushed him all the way to the end.



Cpl McCaskill SCOTS with his haul of silverware from the Army Piping and Drumming Championships.



PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC

THE ARMY SCHOOL OF BAGPIPE MUSIC AND HIGHLAND DRUMMING *continued*



Trophy winners from the Army Piping and Drumming Championships.



LCpl Faulds of 4 SCOTS being presented with the Army Champion Drummer Trophy from DABM Maj McCrindle.

Midlothian Schools Project

The Midlothian Schools Piping and Drumming Programme has continued to make strong progress this year under the direction of the Director of Army Bagpipe Music, Pipe Major Muir, and Corporal Gillies. Now in the fourth year of a five-year initiative, the programme delivers high-quality tuition to pupils across several Midlothian schools, supported by experienced instructors from the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming.

Weekly instruction is currently provided to more than 80 pupils during school hours across multiple sites, with an additional out-of-catchment evening class attracting over 40 participants each week. The programme's aim to widen access to piping and drumming through free tuition remains central to its success, with steady growth in numbers keeping the long-term goal of establishing a fully functioning Pipes and Drums ensemble firmly on track.

Beyond musical training, the initiative continues to inspire confidence, discipline,

teamwork, and cultural pride among young people across Midlothian. As the fourth year concludes, sustained enthusiasm from pupils, parents, and schools highlights the programme's positive impact and its growing contribution to Scotland's musical heritage.

AA Pipe Major's Course

The AA Pipe Major's Course is approaching its final stages, ending an intensive seven-month period of professional development for four students drawn from across the Field Army.

Throughout the course, the students have continued to refine their performance in March, Strathspey & Reel, Hornpipes & Jigs, and Piobaireachd, while also undertaking in-depth study of piping theory, music notation, and the history of piping. Structured to challenge students both musically and academically, the course introduces new repertoire each month and includes weekly theory assessments to consolidate learning. This comprehensive preparation ensures that these aspiring Pipe Majors are fully equipped to uphold—and further enhance—the high standards for which the Army's Pipes and Drums are renowned.

At the outset of the course, the group provided essential support to the prestigious Northern Meeting Piping Competition in Inverness, where they served as stewards, ensuring events ran to schedule and competitors were efficiently guided throughout Eden Court. Their enthusiasm and proactive approach were widely noted, with it suspected that the Gold Medal competition concluded in record time thanks to their determination to keep competitors moving.

Alongside their demanding training schedule, the students also had the opportunity to compete against their peers

in the Senior category at the Army Piping Championships. The group achieved considerable success, with every student securing at least one prize across the events. Of note, Sgt Beaton claimed victory in the Senior March, marking a standout performance.

As the course enters its final months, the students are preparing to travel to Australia and New Zealand with the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, gaining valuable international performance experience, while continuing with their course work under the Senior Pipe Major. On their return from Auckland, they will undertake their mock and final play-off examinations, which will determine their practical grade for the course.



Sgt Beaton, a Pipe Majors Course student, with the Senior March trophy at the Army Piping and Drumming Championships.

Senior Drumming Courses

Alongside the Piping Course, a total of 22 students has been successfully trained over the past year through the Class 2 Elementary Drummers, Class 2 Intermediate Drummers, and Class 1 & Drum Majors' courses. Together, these programmes cater for a wide spectrum of experience and developmental needs, from those taking their first steps in drumming—learning their initial March, Strathspey, and Reel (MSR)—to advanced performers refining complex MSR sets and Hornpipe and Jig arrangements.

Several students completing these courses have also gained recognised civilian drumming qualifications, achieving assessments at PDQB Levels 4, 5, and 6, further strengthening their professional credentials and musical versatility.

The Class 1 & Drum Majors Course is now approaching the end of its Class 1 Drumming phase. Once final assessments are complete, students will progress to the



Drum Major phase, which will culminate in a major parade assessment. This final event will see candidates demonstrate a range of Highland Drum Major movements under the scrutiny of the Senior Drum Major and the Director of Army Bagpipe Music. The assessment is set to be a highlight of the training calendar, with musical support provided by the Class 3 and Class 2 courses in attendance.

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo

This year saw the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo celebrate its 75th anniversary, a landmark occasion in its distinguished history. The massed Pipes and Drums were once again expertly supported and directed by staff from the Army School, under the steady leadership of the Director of Army Bagpipe Music, Major McCrindle, and Senior Pipe Major, WO1 Grant. On the Castle Esplanade, the 2025 formation strikingly revealed 'REMT 75', a visual centrepiece that reflected the detailed planning and creative vision of Senior Drum Major WO2 McCutcheon.

The Massed Pipes and Drums featured prominently throughout the production, with appearances in both the Tattoo 75 and Tattoo 900 sequences, which combined music with singing, dancing, and complex choreography. The celebrations will extend beyond the UK in February 2026, when the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo takes its anniversary production to Brisbane, Australia, and Auckland, New Zealand. These international performances are expected to reach audiences of up to 40,000 per show, showcasing the Tattoo's musical excellence on a global stage.

November

As 2025 ended, the Senior Pipe Major launched a Movember challenge, bringing instructors and students together in a united effort to raise funds and awareness for men's physical and mental health, while strengthening teamwork across the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming.

Throughout November, the school logged kilometres through walking, running, cycling, and rowing, with strong participation and steady commitment across the month. The challenge concluded with a final multi-discipline fitness event, where the school collectively completed 60 km of rowing, 60 km of cycling, and 60 km of running, before finishing with a final 2 km completed together as one group—everyone dressed as their favourite moustache-wearing hero.

By the end of the campaign, ASBM&HD had raised £1,336 for Movember and covered more than 3,000 km in total. The achievement reflects not only impressive physical effort but also an excellent commitment to supporting a worthy cause. It was a fitting end to the year, showcasing the enthusiasm and camaraderie that can be found throughout ASBM&HD.



ASBM&HD post Movember challenge.

Farewells, Promotions & Welcomes

In 2025, ASBM&HD marked the departure of four senior appointments: Senior Pipe Major WO1 Colin Simpson, Senior Drum Major WO2 Rab McCutcheon, School Pipe Major WO2 John Harvey, and Pipe Sergeant Roman Rai. All at ASBM&HD extend their best wishes to them as they move on to new appointments and careers.

The departures also saw several key arrivals and appointments. WO1 Peter Grant was welcomed as Senior Pipe Major, WO2 Gordon Prescott as Senior Drum Major, CSgt James Muir as School Pipe Major, Cpl Mark McWhinnie was promoted to Pipe Sergeant, and Cpl Norman Gillies joined the team as a Class 3 instructor.



ASBM & HD before the final Movember fun run.



The Senior Pipe Major performing at Edinburgh Castle for the VJ Day Celebrations.



REMT Massed Pipes and Drums formation celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Tattoo.



PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC

THE SOUND OF SCOTLAND – INSIDE THE BAND OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND IN 2025

Officer Commanding:

Major Brenden Wheeler
(August 2023 - April 2025)

Major Esther Hayes
(May 2025 - present)

Band Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class Two John Govan
(June 2022 - June 2025)

Warrant Officer Class Two Laura Windley
(July 2025 - present)

Bandmaster:

Warrant Officer Class Two
Christopher Brown
(September 2023 - August 2025)

Warrant Officer Class Two Faye Snowdon
(August 2025 - present)

January

The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland (Band SCOTS) began 2025 with a trip to HQ British Forces Cyprus, supporting events such as the Episkopi and Akrotiri Officers' Mess Burns Suppers, the British High Commission (BHC), and local service schools. After acclimatisation and rehearsals, the Band performed for junior schools in Episkopi and Akrotiri, tailoring their repertoire to include contemporary pop music. Similar performances followed at Dhekelia Garrison Primary and Senior Schools.

The clarinet quartet performed at the British Embassy in Nicosia for a High Commissioner's reception, while the saxophone quartet supported the BHC Strategic Leadership event. The Ceilidh Band played for Burns Supper reeling at the Episkopi and Akrotiri Officers' Messes, continuing a cherished tradition.

During downtime, members of Band SCOTS explored cultural sites, enjoyed go-karting, and visited Saving Pound Dogs Cyprus (SPDC), fostering community ties and making donations. Special thanks were extended to Cpl Tegan Moisenko from The Band of The Household Cavalry for her musical support throughout this visit.

February

Over 200 musicians from 7 different locations in the UK arrived in Edinburgh for the inaugural Regional Bands Concentration, titled Celebration: A Festival of British Army Music, hosted by Band SCOTS. They rehearsed and performed in ensembles such as big band, brass band, and symphonic wind band and the event culminated in a successful concert at Perth Concert Hall, featuring a diverse programme that pushed musical boundaries and showcased the talent of British Army musicians.

March

Stirling 900 saw Band SCOTS lead a procession on 900 participants, 350 of which were musicians, to mark the city's 900th anniversary. The Band marched from Stirling Castle through the city centre, concluding at Stirling County Rugby Club.

Following this, a week-long recruiting surge in Edinburgh saw the Band visit schools such as Firrhill and Portobello High Schools, and the Edinburgh Schools Wind Ensemble. Activities included side-by-side rehearsals, sectional workshops, marching band sessions, career presentations, and concerts. The Band worked on a mix of repertoire and popular music, inspiring the next generation of musicians.

April

For the second overseas trip of the year, four band members joined a reservist from the Lancashire Artillery Band for a three-week tour in Gibraltar during Regimental Week, coinciding with VE80 celebrations. Highlights included a VE80 concert at Ince's Hall, a Drumhead Service, and a Regimental Dinner Night in St. Michael's Cave. The Band also engaged in outreach school visits and enjoyed leisure activities such as paddleboarding and exploring Gibraltar.

The Brass 10 ensemble also supported the ANZAC and Gallipoli Day Service at the Scottish National War Memorial, commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign with solemn and reflective music.

May

May began with, Scotland's Salute: VE80 at Edinburgh's Usher Hall, a national tribute to the 80th anniversary of VE Day, collaborating with The Band of HM Royal Marines Scotland, choirs, and soloists, the event combined music, storytelling, and veterans' testimonies.

In Kelso, Band SCOTS supported further VE80 celebrations with a parade, Drumhead Service, and Beating Retreat at Floors Castle alongside the Kings Own Scottish Borderers Veterans Pipe Band.



Major Ben Mason conducting the combined bands of The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and HM Band of The Royal Marines Scotland.

PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC



The saxophone quartet travelled to Slovenia, performing at the University of Ljubljana, Friendship Day, and public events in Ljubljana. They collaborated with local musicians, performed for dignitaries, and honoured the 1945 crash of a British bomber near Gornji Suhor. The tour strengthened international ties and showcased British Army Music.



The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and HM Band of The Royal Marines Scotland perform the National Anthem at Scotland's Salute: VE80 in Usher Hall.



The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland perform a Beating Retreat at Floors Castle, Kelso for VE80 celebrations.

June

With recruiting being the Corps (and the Army's!) main effort, the Band visited Lochaber High School in Fort William, working with Highlife Highland to inspire students through seminars, side-by-side rehearsals, and marching band sessions. Repertoire included pop hits, film scores, and student-prepared pieces.

Band SCOTS also supported two major civic events: the Freedom of Falkirk parade and Linlithgow Marches, providing music for traditional processions and ceremonies.

A brass quintet toured the Balkans, performing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro to mark His Majesty The King's Birthday. The tour included school visits, collaborations with the Montenegrin Military Band, and performances at UK Ambassador residences, fostering cultural exchange and diplomacy.

The month concluded with musical support for Balaklava Company, 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, during their Major General's Inspection, preparing for ceremonial duties for HM The King.

July

Royal Week, which sees The King in residence in Edinburgh, saw the Band in Edinburgh performing at events such as the Garden Party

at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, providing a musical backdrop for guests. Their presence highlighted the pageantry and tradition of Royal Week, strengthening ties between the Royal Regiment of Scotland and Edinburgh.

August

August saw Band SCOTS play a prominent role in the 75th Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, themed The Heroes Who Made Us. Performing alongside massed pipes, drums, and military bands, the band entertained nightly audiences of up to nine thousand on the Edinburgh Castle Esplanade.



Band SCOTS in front of Edinburgh Castle during Edinburgh Tattoo.



Massed Military Bands, Regional Bands, Royal Corps of Army Music performing during Edinburgh Tattoo 2025.



Massed Military Bands, Regional Bands, Royal Corps of Army Music, Massed Pipes and Drums and the Guard of Honour formed from the Royal Yorkshire Regiment during Edinburgh Tattoo 2025.



Massed Military Bands, Regional Bands, Royal Corps of Army Music performing during Edinburgh Tattoo 2025.



PIPES, DRUMS AND MUSIC

THE SOUND OF SCOTLAND – INSIDE THE BAND OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND IN 2025 *continued*

September

The Band visited schools and hosted an Open Day to promote British Army music. At Earlston High School, students participated in performances by various ensembles, culminating in a side-by-side concert featuring upbeat pieces like Despacito.

At Muirfield Primary School in Aberdeen, Band SCOTS hosted a ceilidh and delivered a marching band experience over a two-day event. The experience concluded with a performance for parents, featuring classic marches such as Coburg.

October

15 young musicians arrived for a week of work experience, otherwise known as the Royal Corps of Army Music's Scottish Work Experience Week with activities including rehearsals, audition preparation, and marching band training. The week ended with a Beating Retreat and Sunset performance, showcasing the students' progress.

The Band's new Director of Music and Bandmaster collaborated with renowned conductor Bjørn Sagstad enhancing their conducting skills. The Band then performed in Greenock for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Heritage Trust, delivering a community concert.

Marking the start of the Remembrance season Band SCOTS supported the opening of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Gardens of Remembrance, with reflective music.

November

As professional musicians the Band showcased a wide variety of ensembles for Edinburgh College music students. The aim was to inspire and demonstrate sounds and arranging styles within a Military Band. They experienced Clarinet and Saxophone quartets, brass quintets, ceilidh band and jazz ensemble, finishing the event with an inspiring performance by the full band. During the Remembrance season, Band SCOTS paraded from Edinburgh Castle to the City Council Chambers on Remembrance Sunday and supported the Scottish National War Memorial service on Armistice Day. LCpl Bryony George also represented Band SCOTS in Mogadishu, Somalia, for Remembrance services in support of Op TANGHAM.



Director of Music, Major Esther Hayes conducting at the Dundee Festival of Remembrance.



Director of Music, Major Esther Hayes conducting at the Dundee Festival of Remembrance.

The Band also had the privilege of performing the Tongan National Anthem at Scottish Gas Murrayfield, during the Quilter Nations Series.



Sgt (DMaj) Martin Slater saluting during the anthems at Scottish Gas Murrayfield.



The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland formed up to play the Tongan National Anthem at Scottish Gas Murrayfield for the Quilter Nations Series.

December

To kickstart the festive season, the Band supported Edinburgh's instrumental music services, assisting the Edinburgh Schools Woodwind Ensemble and Jazz Orchestra in their preparations for the Childline Christmas concert at the Usher Hall.

Band SCOTS spread Christmas cheer with visits to Edinburgh Children's Hospital, local carol services, and festive performances at APC Glasgow and 51X events. A Christmas concert at Tait Hall, Kelso, in support of Poppy Scotland, concluded the year, highlighting the Band's commitment to veterans and their families.

Conclusion

2025 was a rewarding year for The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland marked by significant performances, community engagement, and international tours. The Band's efforts strengthened ties with local and global communities, showcased British Army Music, and inspired future generations of musicians. As the year ended, the Band took a well-deserved break, ready to continue their mission of service, music, and excellence in 2026.



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND PIPES AND DRUMS

2025 was a landmark year for The Royal Regiment of Scotland Pipes and Drums, with several exciting developments that highlight the enduring importance of music, tradition, and camaraderie within the Regiment.

One of the most significant milestones was the appointment of the Regiment's first-ever Regimental Pipe President, Lt Col Freddie Macnair. In this new role, Lt Col Macnair will act as a key point of continuity, addressing regimental matters and serving as a vital link to our veterans and cadets. This appointment underscores SCOTS commitment to preserving and promoting its rich musical heritage.

The Regiment has also strengthened its connection with the Army Cadets Pipes and Drums. Instructors from across the Regiment's bands have been actively involved in cadet piping and drumming concentrations, fostering a strong relationship with the next generation of musicians. This collaboration aims to inspire young talent and ensure the future of SCOTS musical traditions.

Another noteworthy achievement is the establishment of the SCOTS Veterans Band, which provides a unique opportunity for veterans, including those living with PTSD, to find support through music, tradition, and camaraderie. Under the leadership of Andrews Laird, a former Drum Major of the

Regiment, and Cpl Gillies, currently posted to the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming (ASBM&HD), the band has already made significant strides. With the support of regimental funding, the band has acquired essential equipment, enabling them to participate in prestigious events such as the World Pipe Band Competition in 2026. We wish them every success in their endeavours.

Looking ahead, 2026 will mark the 20th anniversary of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, and to celebrate this milestone, the first volume of The Royal Regiment of Scotland Pipe Music Book will be published. This eagerly anticipated collection will showcase the Regiment's musical legacy, and we encourage everyone to secure their copy early before it sells out.

Royal Regiment of Scotland Piobaireachd Competition

On 1 December, The Royal Regiment of Scotland hosted a Piobaireachd writing competition at Inchdrewer House, the home of the ASBM&HD. This event was organised in support of the upcoming SCOTS Pipe Music Collection Book, set for release in March 2026.

Four talented competitors from across SCOTS performed their self-composed Piobaireachd in front of a distinguished panel of judges. The panel included Lt Col

Macnair, SCOTS Pipe Band President; Neil Hall, Senior Pipe Major of the British Army (2007–2010) and 2iC ASBM&HD (2010–2012); and Colin MacLellan, an esteemed piping judge and son of Capt John MacLellan OQ Hldrs, the first Director of Army Bagpipe Music.

The competition was fierce, with all participants delivering performances of exceptional musical quality. Ultimately, the panel selected Salute to The Royal Regiment of Scotland, composed and performed by Cpl Gillies, as the winning tune. Cpl Gillies, who is currently posted at ASBM&HD, will have his composition featured in the SCOTS Pipe Music Collection and recognised as the Regimental Piobaireachd. This historic tune will be performed publicly for the first time at the Black Hackle Dinner Night on 27 March 2027.

The Regiment extends its heartfelt thanks to all competitors for their dedication and hard work in preparing their compositions. Their efforts have contributed to the continued growth and celebration of The Royal Regiment of Scotland's proud musical heritage.

Lieutenant Colonel FJC Macnair
- Regimental Pipe President



REGIMENTAL MASCOT

CORPORAL CRUACHAN IV

From Aberdeen to London, Cpl Cruachan IV spent 2025 travelling the length and breadth of the UK—ears pricked, hooves polished, and always ready to make an entrance. Wherever he went, he brought that unmistakable mix of pride, mischief, and star quality.

The year was packed with parades, each one offering something unique. Stirling saw him take his place in the city's spectacular 900th anniversary celebrations, a historic moment filled with colour, music, and the unmistakable clip-clop of the SCOTS mascot enjoying the spotlight. Linlithgow followed with its annual marches; a tradition Cpl Cruachan now seems to think was invented solely for him. Falkirk and Argyll and Bute offered something special: formal parades in which SCOTS was bestowed the Freedom of the region. From Falkirk to Lochgilphead, Cruachan took it all in his stride—earning cheers, salutes, and quite a few pats from dignitaries thoroughly charmed by him.

And it wasn't just civic celebrations catching Cruachan on camera. The BBC's *The Troops* documentary was filming throughout the summer. Naturally, this meant that Cpl Cruachan, Uncle Nightcap, and Pony Major Stewart were all front and centre. Cruachan didn't ham it up for the cameras—he simply *was* himself, which was more than enough to steal every scene he wandered into.



Cpl Cruachan IV and Uncle Nighcap filming "The Troops".

The Royal Windsor Horse Show brought its own familiar excitement. Standing proudly alongside his Uncle Nightcap and the hardworking Clothie team, Cruachan dazzled spectators and judges alike. Nightcap, ever the seasoned professional, matched him step for step, and together the team walked away with multiple awards—as they always do.



The Clothie team.

Summer saw a well earned break in Aberdeen. Even then, things didn't stay quiet for long. Nightcap shook off the driving cobwebs after *nine years* and proved he still had plenty of power in the tank. Cruachan rounded off the break with a triumph at the Turriff District Show, trotting away as Shetland (Gelding) Champion, much

to the pride of everyone except perhaps the ponies he beat.

Balmoral brought its classic combination of stunning scenery and ceremonial splendour. Taking part in the arrivals parade for His Majesty the King, Cruachan behaved impeccably—as did the weather, for once. A win win indeed.



HM The King greeting Cpl Cruachan IV at the Arrival Parade.

Then came two unforgettable weeks in London. The noise, bustle, and endless commotion can overwhelm even seasoned horses—but not this year. Cruachan treated the city like his personal arena. Every day he stepped out from Wellington Barracks with confidence, marching to Buckingham Palace, St James's Palace, or both, depending on the duty. Crowds gathered. Phones lifted. Smiles spread. He moved with that unmistakable "Jock swagger," effortlessly winning new fans and reminding London that Scotland had very much arrived. Of course, he remained himself throughout, meaning that whenever the troops went static, he couldn't resist a cheeky nibble at Pony Major Stewart's immaculate white gloves.



Cpl Cruachan with the Met Police, Mounted Unit.

By the end of 2025, after a year of parades, ceremonies, royal appearances, television filming, competitions, and thousands of admirers gained along the way, it was finally time for some well-earned Christmas leave. Both Cruachan and Pony Major Stewart headed back to Aberdeen for a peaceful and very welcome break.



MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

Museum and Collection

'Growth' best describes 2025 for the Museum of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as the team, its ambitions, and its collection all expanded this year.

We were thrilled to add an Assistant Curator to the roster in October. Hilary joins us via the Royal Engineers Museum and is thrilled to take over the task of transferring all museum objects into the new collections management system. This work is part of the preparatory stages to begin the substantial project of auditing the full museum collection in early 2026. The collection is made up of over 750 objects and archive material, and the audit is one of many ongoing behind-the-scenes tasks of our team that help stories and information to be uncovered.

The Museum retained its Accredited status this year, thanks to a positive response to our return from Museums Galleries Scotland. We were pleased to receive this acknowledgement of the progress the Museum has made – and continues to make.

The Museum's close relationship with RHQ SCOTS allows for us to collect objects meaningful to the Regiment right in the moment. Added to the collection this year is a newly produced Veteran's coin and presentation box. These coins are to be presented to every member on behalf of the Colonel of the Regiment as they leave their service.

There were several significant events for the Regiment throughout the year that the Museum has been able to mark with new acquisitions. Major General R B Bruce CBE DSO took up the post of Governor of Edinburgh Castle in Autumn 2024, and the historic ceremony took place the following May. Major General Bruce is a significant figure for SCOTS as a previous Colonel of the Regiment, and the ceremony included members of BKA Coy and 2 SCOTS Pipes and Drums. The museum will preserve the Order of Ceremony from the event. A booklet such as this acts as a great window into moments in time, whether that be programmes of music, food and drink menus, or records of notable figures in attendance.



The scroll presented to the Regiment after receiving Associated Status of the City of London, the only Scottish regiment to have been granted such status.

From The SCOTS Guard of Honour and Colour Party for the Lord Mayor of London's procession at the end of 2024, to the coastal Parade by 2 SCOTS in Lochgilphead in the spring, SCOTS have been granted meaningful honours from communities across the UK. The Museum will look after the hand illustrated certificate for Associated Status of the City of London, and the Freedom Scrolls from Argyll and Bute and Falkirk; in fact, they are now on proud display on the RHQ corridor walls. Several more freedoms granted

previously were redesignated museum property this year as well, including the Freedom of West Lothian, Clackmannanshire, Angus, and Fife, reflecting their historical importance.

As part of the National Army Museum's pilot of a revised MOD Gifting Policy, the Museum was delighted to receive a selection of current equipment to enhance the collection. This included Virtus body armour and an SA80 A3 rifle, both in use by SCOTS currently.

The closing months of 2025 were focused on preparing for the upcoming 20th anniversary events. The Museum was successful in a bid to Museums Galleries Scotland for over £11,000 to create a bespoke travelling exhibition unit. Designed to fit neatly in the back of a van, this unit will be touring communities across Scotland in 2026 to highlight the varied and fascinating stories of The SCOTS from the past 20 years.

Learning and Engagement

A six-week partnership with Beeslack High School in Penicuik was the jewel in our engagement programme crown this year. The school, situated a stone's throw from Glencorse Barracks, worked with the Museum, 2 SCOTS and BKA Coy to produce a series of informational videos about the roles and experiences of our soldiers. We worked with a group of twelve young people to help them understand more about their 'local' regiment and expand their skills and confidence. The collaboration was made possible through support from Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), a Scotland-wide network that helps young people prepare for the world of work. The project was designed to be accessible to students from various backgrounds and abilities, with the aim of developing essential skills like communication and teamwork. The young people flourished over the course of the project, gaining confidence from the freedom they were given to create content and film on-site at Glencorse. The interviews were launched during Beeslack's 'Peace Games' in June and are available to view on the Learning Hub.



Beeslack students interviewing Pte Anthony (BKA Coy) at Glencorse Barracks.



MUSEUM OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND *continued*



Cadets from George Heriot's take in the view over the Edinburgh Castle battlements.

Our in-museum schools programme has enjoyed another successful year, with our newest activity, 'Defending The Nation', the most-booked by schools. Our Learning and Engagement volunteers continue to be a valuable asset in delivering these sessions to a high quality. As well as assisting with school visits, our team of 30 volunteers helped to refresh our session resources over the summer, clean equipment, create new teacher trails and analyse feedback from our sessions. They have also been carrying out our regular craft drop-in sessions and new object handling sessions in the Museum throughout the week. We held a 'summer social' to thank them for their support, which included a visit to Lady Haig's Poppy Factory.

Among our other learning activities this year was a visit from George Heriot's School CCF, who were keen to understand more about the heritage of The Royal Regiment of Scotland. They enjoyed an after-hours tour of the Museum where we tested their knowledge of antecedent traditions which are still maintained by SCOTS and showed the Museum team a thing or two when it came

to weapons handling. A chance conversation with the Royal Scots Museum Curator meant Cadets also viewed special archive material related to a former George Heriot's pupil who was a Drummer Boy in the First World War.

Project 31

A significant milestone was reached in the future development of the Museum as SCOTS and Royal Scots joined forces on a project which will see a multi-million-pound transformation of our museums in Edinburgh Castle. The museums have been co-located as two independent parties in the Old Drill Hall since 2014, but a new Collaborative Working Agreement has outlined a shared desire to improve our storytelling, visitor experience, and enhance provision for our serving and veteran communities. At the core of this is the Joint Museum Project Working Group (JMPWG), a cross-party group of staff and trustees from SCOTS and RS, who will be leading the charge for the redevelopment and a crucial application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund across the next five years.





HISTORICAL REGIMENTAL APPOINTMENTS

COLONEL IN CHIEF

Mar 06	Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
Aug 23	His Majesty King Charles III

DEPUTY COLONEL IN CHIEF

Aug 23	Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal
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COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

Mar 06	Maj Gen WEB Loudon CBE (Regimental Colonel Commandant)
Mar 07	Lt Gen Sir AJN Graham CB CBE
Mar 14	Maj Gen JMC Cowan CBE DSO
Jul 16	Maj Gen RB Bruce CBE DSO
Nov 19	Lt Gen Sir NRM Borton KCB DSO MBE
Mar 24	Maj Gen RRE Lindsay CBE

REGIMENTAL SECRETARY

Mar 06	Maj (Retd) CA Campbell
Jan 18	Lt Col (Retd) KM Potts MBE
Oct 20	Lt Col (Retd) JD Tink

SCOTS COMMANDING OFFICERS



Rank	Initials	Name	From MMY	To MMY	Remarks
1 SCOTS*					
Lt Col	RB	Bruce MBE	Mar 06	Feb 08	
Lt Col	CLG	Herbert OBE	Feb 08	Oct 10	
Lt Col	BMA	Wrench	Oct 10	Jul 13	
Lt Col	ME	Munro	Jul 13	Aug 15	
Lt Col	NM	Wight-Boycott	Aug 15	Feb 18	
Lt Col	AD	Watson	Feb 18	Oct 20	
Lt Col	FS	Reeves MBE*	Oct 20	Dec 21	Last CO

*On 1 Dec 21, 1 SCOTS were re-designated 1 RANGER as part of the new Ranger Regiment.

2 SCOTS

Lt Col	PK	Harkness MBE	Mar 06	Dec 07	
Lt Col	NRM	Borton DSO MBE	Dec 07	Jan 10	
Lt Col	DSG	Graham	Jan 10	Oct 11	
Lt Col	RRE	Lindsay	Oct 11	Jul 14	
Lt Col	GC	Wearmouth OBE	Jul 14	Jul 17	
Lt Col	DC	Close	Jul 17	Sep 19	
Lt Col	OPB	Dobson MBE	Sep 19	May 22	
Lt Col	J	Dunn	May 22	Jul 24	
Lt Col	O	Bridle	Jul 24		

3 SCOTS

Lt Col	LR	MacDuff	Mar 06	Mar 08	
Lt Col	SJ	Cartwright	Mar 08	Mar 10	
Lt Col	EA	Fenton	Mar 10	Sep 12	
Lt Col	AP	Reilly OBE	Sep 12	Jan 15	
Lt Col	AFL	Steele	Jan 15	Oct 16	
Lt Col	RSJ	Hedderwick	Oct 16	Feb 19	
Lt Col	G	Sefton	Feb 19	May 21	
Lt Col	M	Hayton	May 21	Dec 23	
Lt Col	RA	Smith	Dec 23		

4 SCOTS

Lt Col	JMR	Hopkinson OBE	Mar 06	Dec 06	
Lt Col	J	Campbell	Dec 06	Mar 09	
Lt Col	AJ	Aitken MBE	Mar 09	Dec 11	
Lt Col	JC	Roddie MBE	Dec 11	Jun 14	
Lt Col	LJ	Drummond MBE	Jun 14	Jul 16	
Lt Col	NKG	Tomlin	Jul 16	Feb 19	
Lt Col	TJJ	Draper	Feb 19	Jun 21	
Lt Col	AJL	Hempenstall	Jun 21	Aug 23	
Lt Col	GW	Muir MBE	Aug 23	Dec 25	



SCOTS COMMANDING OFFICERS

Rank	Initials	Name	From MMY	To MMY	Remarks
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5 SCOTS/BKA COY

Lt Col	SR	West OBE	Mar 06	Nov 06	
Lt Col	DC	Richmond	Jan 07	Sep 09	
Lt Col	AWA	Griffiths MBE	Sep 09	Jul 11	
Lt Col	NA	Den-McKay MBE	Aug 11	Jun 13	
Maj	OPB	Dobson	Jun 13	Jul 14	
Maj	JA	French	Jul 14	Jun 16	
Maj	CM	Wood	Jun 16	May 18	
Mar	J	Thompson	May 18	Feb 20	
Maj	CK	Law	Feb 20	Jun 22	
Maj	RC	Weir	Jun 22	Jul 24	
Maj	NK	Cargill MVO	Jul 24	Jul 25	
Maj	TH	Blair MBE	Jul 25		

6 SCOTS

Lt Col	SW	Burns TD	Mar 06	Jul 08	
Lt Col	CA	Coull	Jul 08	Jun 09	
Lt Col	CE	Platt	Jun 09	Oct 11	
Lt Col	AJ	Fitzpatrick MBE	Oct 11	Jan 14	
Lt Col	DG	Stimpson TD	Jan 14	Jul 16	
Lt Col	J	McElhinney	Jul 16	Jan 18	
Lt Col	J	Anderson	Jan 18	Jun 21	
Lt Col	RJ	Stuart MBE	Jun 21	Dec 23	
Lt Col	LJ	Curson	Dec 23		

7 SCOTS

Lt Col	CH	Campbell TD	Mar 06	Mar 08	
Lt Col	DW	Hay	Mar 08	Feb 10	
Lt Col	EC	The Viscount Chelsea	Feb 10	Aug 12	
Lt Col	PM	Little OBE	Aug 12	Jan 15	
Lt Col	PGB	Strudwick	Jan 15	Jul 17	
Lt Col	DM	Sheldrick	Jul 17	Jan 20	
Lt Col	DDJ	Mackinnon	Jan 20	Jun 22	
Lt Col	DID	Watson	Jun 22	Oct 24	
Lt Col	DM	Robertson	Oct 24		

SCOTS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS



Rank	Initials	Name	From MMY	To MMY	Remarks
1 SCOTS*					
WO1	RJ	Stuart	Jul 06	May 07	
WO1	WC	McAuley	May 07	Jun 08	
WO1	D	Tait	Jun 08	Jun 10	
WO1	P	Wood	Jun 10	Dec 12	
WO1	A	Falconer	Dec 12	Jul 14	
WO1	S	Boyle	Jul 14	Jan 16	
WO1	J	Corkill	Jan 16	Jun 16	
WO1	S	Burns	Jun 16	Apr 18	
WO1	CH	Docherty	Apr 18	Apr 20	
WO1	A	Duncan	Apr 20	Dec 21	Last RSM

*On 1 Dec 21, 1 SCOTS were re-designated 1 RANGER as part of the new Ranger Regiment.

2 SCOTS

WO1	JK	Law	Mar 06	Apr 06	
WO1	WGA	Hunter	Apr 06	Apr 07	
WO1	WR	Barrie	Apr 07	Apr 09	
WO1	MJ	McNally	Apr 09	Jun 11	
WO1	W	Garrick	Jun 11	Nov 13	
WO1	A	Russell	Nov 13	Sep 15	
WO1	M	Gallagher	Sep 15	Aug 17	
WO1	J	Fraser	Aug 17	Mar 19	
WO1	SL	McNally	Mar 19	Aug 21	
WO1	RD	O'Neill	Aug 21	Jun 23	
WO1	S	Paterson	Jun 23	Jul 25	
WO1	LJ	McConachie	Jul 25		

3 SCOTS

WO1	M	Robb	Mar 06	Jun 07	
WO1	LI	Campbell	Jul 07	Apr 08	
WO1	L	McDougall	Apr 08	May 10	
WO1	MG	Duffus	May 10	Sep 11	
WO1	S	Shaw	Sep 11	Jun 14	
WO1	P	Marshall	Jun 14	May 16	
WO1	KJ	Stacey	May 16	May 18	
WO1	KJ	Pedder	May 18	May 20	
WO1	M	Gray	May 20	May 22	
WO1	A	Ferrier	May 22	Apr 24	
WO1	M	Robb	Apr 24		

4 SCOTS

WO1	R	Smith	Mar 06	Apr 07	
WO1	H	Wilson	Apr 07	Apr 09	
WO1	A	Moore	Apr 09	Sep 09	



SCOTS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS

Rank	Initials	Name	From MMY	To MMY	Remarks
4 SCOTS <i>continued</i>					
WO1	G	Law	Sep 09	Feb 11	
WO1	EG	Philbin	Feb 11	Nov 13	
WO1	S	McQuillin	Nov 13	May 15	
WO1	IG	Cordiner	May 15	Jul 16	
WO1	MG	MacLean	Jul 16	May 19	
WO1	CS	Taylor	May 19	Aug 21	
WO1	AR	McLellan	Aug 21	Jul 23	
WO1	G	Allison	Jul 23	Jul 25	
WO1	R	Ritchie	Jul 25		
5 SCOTS/BKA COY					
WO1	S	Rae	Mar 06	Mar 08	
WO1	D	Campbell	Mar 08	Feb 10	
WO1	D	Park	Feb 10	Jul 12	
WO1	R	Louden	Jul 12	Jun 13	Last RSM
WO2	D	Carter	Jun 13	Mar 15	
WO2	KJ	Pedder	Mar 15	Jun 16	
WO2	N	Diciacca	Jun 16	Oct 17	
WO2	S	Gibson	Oct 17	May 19	
WO2	R	McCready	May 19	Nov 19	
WO2	GW	Waugh	Nov 19	Apr 20	
WO2	M	Robb	Apr 20	Mar 22	
WO2	S	Cox MVO	Mar 22	Jun 24	
WO2	CR	Marr	Jun 24	Nov 25	
WO2	G	Brown	Nov 25		
6 SCOTS					
WO1	SG	Cochrane	Mar 06	Jul 08	
WO1	M	James	Jul 08	May 10	
WO1	PC	Marshall	May 10	Jun 12	
WO1	PD	Colville	Jun 12	Jun 14	
WO1	G	Main	Jun 14	Apr 16	
WO1	M	Morrison	Apr 16	Sep 17	
WO1	S	Main	Sep 17	Jun 19	
WO1	SG	Parker	Jun 19	Jun 21	
WO1	J	Thompson	Jun 21	Apr 23	
WO2	S	McKnight	Apr 23	May 24	Acting RSM
WO1	A	Welshman	May 24	Apr 25	
WO1	S	Whitehead MC	Apr 25		

SCOTS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS



Rank	Initials	Name	From MMY	To MMY	Remarks
7 SCOTS					
WO1	A	Stewart	Mar 06	Jun 06	
WO1	AG	McAleney	Jun 06	Apr 07	
WO1	G	Wallace	Apr 07	Jun 09	
WO1	D	Yarrick	Jun 09	Jul 11	
WO1	SR	West	Jul 11	Sep 13	
WO1	JJ	Dickson	Sep 13	Jun 15	
WO1	MJ	Fairweather	Jun 15	Apr 17	
WO1	D	Carter	Apr 17	Aug 19	
WO1	IL	Carlisle	Aug 19	Aug 21	
WO1	J	Knox	Aug 21	May 22	
WO1	B	Warwick	May 22	Dec 23	
WO2	D	Devine	Dec 23	Oct 24	Acting RSM
WO1	A	Bright	Oct 24		



OPERATIONAL TOURS

OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENTS

Since its formation in 2006 The Royal Regiment of Scotland has been deployed on many operational deployments across the globe from warfighting to United Nations missions to Military Support to the UK Government. The Ministry of Defence use a codeword to describe each operational theatre or task and those to which the Regiment has been deployed are described and listed below.

Op BANNER	Northern Ireland Emergency which ended on 31 Jul 07
Op TELIC	Iraq
Op HERRICK	Afghanistan
Op TORAL	Successor to HERRICK – Kabul Protection Unit
Op TOSCA	Operations in Support of the United Nations (UN) in Cyprus
Op VOCATE	UK based Training Mission for Libya
Op ELGIN	Bosnia deployment as part of EUFOR
Op GRITROCK	Force Protection Mission to Sierra Leone
Op COMET	Military Support to the Commonwealth Games
Op SHADER	Regional Training Mission (Cyprus, Kuwait and Iraq)
Op TRENTON	Force Protection Mission in South Sudan
Op NEWCOMBE	United Nations Mission in Mali
Op INTERFLEX	UK based training Mission for Ukraine
Op FIRIC	UK Infantry Coy support to The Falkland Islands
Op KIPPION	Regional Operations Battalion standing commitment in Bahrain
Op GLANCE	Regional Operations Battalion standing commitment in Ramallah
Op HIGHMAST	Force Protection Mission in Oman

1 SCOTS

Op BANNER	Mar 06 - Jul 06 (KOSB Bn/SCOTS)
Op TELIC 11	Nov 07 - May 08
Op HERRICK 10	Mar 10 - Sep 10 (Minden PI att to 3 SCOTS)
Op HERRICK 11	Sep 09 - Apr 10 (B Coy att to 3 RIFLES)
Op HERRICK 12	Mar 10 - Sep 10
Op TOSCA	Oct 12 - Apr 13 (PI Strength)
Op HERRICK 17	Sep 12 - Mar 13
Op ELGIN	Jun 14 - Aug 14 (A Coy)
Op GRITROCK	Oct 14 - Mar 15 (B Coy)
Op TOSCA	Sep 15 - Mar 16 (Bn (-))
Op TORAL	Apr 16 - Dec 16 (B Coy)

2 SCOTS

Op HERRICK 8	Mar 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 13	Oct 10 - Mar 11
Op HERRICK 18	Apr 13 - Sep 13
Op TORAL 2	Aug 15 - Apr 16 (Bn (-))
Op TOSCA	Sep 17 - Mar 18 (FSp Coy (+))
Op SHADER 6	Dec 17 - Jun 18 (Bn HQ, B and C Coys)
Op TRENTON 4	Jan 18 - Jul 18 (A Coy)
Op TORAL 11	Sep 20 - May 21
Op NEWCOMBE	Oct 22 - Mar 23 (C Coy)
Op SHADER	Dec 23 - May 24 (Bn (-))
Op INTERFLEX	Jan 24 - Jul 24 (Bn HQ and C Coy)
Op FIRIC	Apr 24 - May 24 (FSp Coy)



3 SCOTS

Op BANNER	Mar 06 - 31 Jul 07
Op TELIC 9	Nov 06 - Apr 07 (A Coy)
Op TELIC 10	Apr 07 - Nov 07 (13 Pl att to 2 R WELSH)
Op HERRICK 10	Apr 09 - Nov 09
Op HERRICK 15	Sep 11 - Mar 12
Op COMET	Jul 14 - Aug 14 (Coy (-))
Op VOCATE	Jun 14 - Nov 14 (Bn (-))
Op TOSCA	Mar 14 - Oct 15 (Bn (-))
Op SHADER 6	Nov 17 - Jul 18 (Bn (-))
Op TORAL 12	Apr 21 - Jun 21
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Nov 22 (A Coy)
Op INTERFLEX	Jul - Dec 24 (Bn)

4 SCOTS

Op TELIC 7	Oct 05 - Apr 06
Op TELIC 12	Mar 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 8	Mar 08 - Sep 08 (B Coy att to 5 SCOTS)
Op HERRICK 14	Mar 11 - Oct 11
Op HERRICK 19	Sep 13 - Jun 14
Op SHADER 4	Apr 17 - Jul 17 (Bn less FSp Coy)
Op ORBITAL	Jan 17 - Aug 17 (FSp Coy)
Op TORAL 10	Apr 20 - Sep 20 (Bn)
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Oct 22(Sp/B Coy)
Op INTERFLEX	Jun - Dec 23
Op KIPPION	Aug - Dec 25
Op GLANCE	Aug - Dec 25
Op HIGHMAST	Oct - Oct 25

5 SCOTS

Op HERRICK 4	Jul 06 - Oct 06 (Coy and Recce Pl)
Op HERRICK 8	Apr 08 - Oct 08
Op HERRICK 13	Oct 10 - Mar 11

BJA Coy - (5 SCOTS reduced to Coy strength in 2013)

Op TORAL 2	Dec 15 - Apr 16
Op TORAL 12	Apr 21 - Jun 21 (Pl (-) att to 3 SCOTS)

6 SCOTS

Officers and soldiers of 6 SCOTS have provided individual reinforcements to Regular Army Bns for most operational deployments.

7 SCOTS

Officers and soldiers of 7 SCOTS have provided individual reinforcements to Regular Army Bns for most operational deployments and a formed Coy for an operational deployment listed below.

Op TELIC 9	Nov 06 - May 07 (Alamein Coy)
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OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

Rank	Initials	Name	AWARD	THEATRE
2006				
Lt Col	JM	Donovan	MBE	Iraq
Lt Col	JMR	Hopkinson OBE	QCVS	Iraq
Maj	RL	Coutts	MBE	Iraq
Maj	PGB	Strudwick	QCVS	Iraq
Lt	SD	Ford	MiD	Iraq
WO2	NM	Davis	QCVS	Northern Ireland

2008				
Lt Col	NRM	Borton MBE	DSO	Afghanistan
A/Lt Col	AJ	Fitzpatrick	MBE	Afghanistan
Lt Col	CLG	Herbert	OBE	Iraq
Maj	JC	Roddis	QCVS	Afghanistan
WO2	PRJ	Dargavel	QCVS	Northern Ireland
ASgt	SW	McLeod	MiD	Iraq
Maj	NG	Calder	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	NA	Den-McKay	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	TGS	Perkins	MBE	Iraq
Maj	AMcL	Rennie MBE	QCVS	Iraq
Capt	BA	O'Neill	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	DID	Watson	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt	JP	Adamson	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt	DMcL	Robertson	MiD	Afghanistan
2Lt	ABC	Barclay	MC	Afghanistan
2Lt	SAC	Du Boulay	MiD	Afghanistan
2Lt	CJ	Hesketh	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	DS	McMenamin	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	S	Whitehead	MC	Afghanistan
LCpl	JJ	Newlands	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	AR	Irvine	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	RS	MacLellan	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	LD	Verity	MiD	Afghanistan

2009				
Brig	GE	Lowder MBE	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Maj	EG	Jones	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq
Maj	CA	Ramsay	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq
Lt	JP	Adamson	MC	Afghanistan
WO2	AD	Ronaldson	MiD	Iraq
Sgt	CJ	Marshall	QCVS	Iraq

2010				
Brig	JM	Cowan OBE	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	SJ	Cartwright	OBE	Afghanistan
Lt Col	RC	Cole-Mackintosh	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan

Lt Col	AJ	Halliday	MiD	Afghanistan
Lt Col	AD	MacGillivray	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	EJA	Murphy	Bronze Star Medal	Iraq
Maj	AFL	Steele	MiD	Afghanistan
Maj	GC	Wearmouth	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt	AJ	Phillips	MC	Afghanistan
WO2	PD	Colville	MiD	Afghanistan
Sgt	TA	Lowe	MiD	Afghanistan
ACpl	SC	Binnie	MiD (awarded posthumously)	Afghanistan
Cpl	SN	Boila	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	R	Clark	MC	Afghanistan
Cpl	PD	Innes	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	CS	Reynolds	MC	Afghanistan
Cpl	DJ	Roy	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	R	Sharp	MC	Afghanistan
Pte	CJ	Brotherston	QGM	Afghanistan

2011				
A/Col	CLG	Herbert OBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	DSG	Graham	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	AWA	Griffiths MBE	OBE	Afghanistan
Maj	AMcL	Rennie MBE	QCVS	Rest of World
Maj	PGB	Strudwick	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	N	Wight-Boycott	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	AJA	Akerman	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	IR	Curren	MC	Afghanistan
AWO2	CG	Muir	MiD	Afghanistan
ASgt	SJH	Cox	MiD	Afghanistan
Sgt	EW	Wilson	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	P	Buchanan	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	SIS	Gall	QCVS	Afghanistan
LCpl	CE	Burns	MiD	Afghanistan
LCpl	SH	Henderson	MiD	Afghanistan
LCpl	J	Raduva	MiD	Afghanistan
LCpl	DR	Skinner	QCB	Afghanistan
LCpl	CM	Sloan	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	B	Johnson	MC	Afghanistan
Pte	JV	Tolutinikaono	MiD	Afghanistan

2012				
Col	AJ	Aitken MBE	OBE	Afghanistan
Lt Col	AM	MacNaughton	Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Lt Col	EA	Fenton	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	GC	Wilson	OBE	Afghanistan
Maj	NKG	Tomlin	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	BD	James	MiD	Afghanistan
A/CSgt	D	Buist	MiD	Afghanistan
CSgt	IB	Smith	MiD	Afghanistan
Sgt	S	Leslie	MiD	Afghanistan

OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS



2013

Brig	RB	Bruce	DSO	Afghanistan
Lt Col	ALS	Boswell	NATO MSM	Iraq
Lt Col	BMA	Wrench	NATO MSM	Afghanistan
Maj	RJ	Connolly	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	AV	Cooper	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	AD	Lumley	QCVS	Afghanistan
WO2	RAK	Millar	NATO MSM	Iraq
Cpl	R	Cook	MiD	Afghanistan
Cpl	DR	Skinner	MiD	Afghanistan
Pte	R	Houston	MiD	Afghanistan

2014

Lt Col	DJS	Cochran	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	DR	Orr-Ewing	QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt Col	GC	Wearmouth	OBE	Somalia
A/Maj	RT	Boyd	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	GR	Brocklehurst	MC	Afghanistan
Maj	SP	Dallard	MBE	Afghanistan
Maj	TJJ	Draper	QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	GA	McGowan	MBE	Afghanistan
Cpl	CR	Grant	QCB	Afghanistan
Sgt	SN	Vono	QCB	Afghanistan

2015

Brig	BWO	Russell	MBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
A/Col	NA	Den-McKay	OBE	DSO	Operations
Col	JC	Roddis	MBE	DSO	Afghanistan
Col	CP	Wallace		Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Maj	JF	Giles		QCVS	Afghanistan
Maj	G	Tait	MBE	QCVS	Afghanistan
Capt	EP	Challis		MBE	Afghanistan
Capt	BSE	Davey		NATO MSM	Afghanistan
Capt	MI	Pemberton		QCVS	Afghanistan
Lt	JE	Donkin		NATO MSM	Afghanistan
Cpl	C	Myers		QCVS	Afghanistan

2016

Maj Gen	RB	Bruce	DSO	CBE	Iraq
Maj	JC	MacLellan		Bronze Star Medal	Afghanistan
Capt	TJ	Towler		QCVS	Afghanistan
CSgt	IG	Gallagher		MID	Operations
CSgt	JE	Mckenzie		MC	Operations
Sgt	J	McKenna		MID	Iraq

2017

Cpl	KZ	Haig		QCVS	Operations
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2019

CLt Col	JM	Christie		OBE	Iraq
Lt Col	RSJ	Hedderwick		QCVS	Iraq
A/Maj	FM	Stark		QCVS	Iraq
Maj	DID	Watson		NATO MSM	Afghanistan

2020

Maj	RAG	Adamson		Bronze Star Medal	Operations
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2021

Maj	DA	Mead		MBE	Afghanistan
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BIRTHDAY AND NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

Rank Initials Name AWARD

2006

Lt Col	SR	West	OBE
Maj	HIM	Clark	MBE
Maj	JA	Scott	MBE
Maj	GTH	Tweedie	MBE
Maj	PJ	White	MBE
Capt	JB	Henderson	MBE
Capt	JEB	Kerr	MBE
Capt	JD	McCallum	MBE

2007

Maj	D	Dobson	MBE
Capt	GA	McGowan	MBE
CSgt	E	Duff	MBE
WO2	SH	Dryburgh	MSM
WO2	ER	Stuart	MSM

2008

Lt Col	CE	Price	OBE
Maj	K	Campbell	MBE
Maj	JJ	Haughie	MBE
Maj	TAW	Ingram	MBE
Maj	WG	Lee TD	QVRM
Maj	AM	Rennie	MBE
Capt	T	Henderson McBride	MSM
Capt	WGA	Hunter	MSM
Capt	JK	Law	MSM
Capt	SD	Samson	MBE
Capt	RJ	Stuart	MBE
WO2	DJL	Bruce	MSM
CSgt	WS	McDougall	MSM

2009

Lt Col	BG	De La Haye	OBE
Lt Col	GC	Wilson	OBE
Maj	JC	Roddie	MBE

2010

Capt	S	Mackenzie	MSM
WO1	RG	Highet	MSM

2011

Col	AJN	Alderson MBE	OBE
Lt Col	JAJ	Calder	MBE
Lt Col	DR	Orr Ewing MBE	OBE
Maj	PA	Keetly	MBE

Rank Initials Name AWARD

2012

Col	DC	Richmond	CBE
Maj	A	Aitchison	MBE
Maj	DEJ	Kemmis-Betty	MBE
Maj	CRA	Miles	MBE
Maj	SG	Wemyss	MBE
WO2	S	McAlpine	MSM

2013

Maj Gen	JM	Cowan DSO OBE	CBE
Lt Col	PM	Little	OBE
Lt Col	BM	Ross	MBE
Maj	NDE	Arbam	MBE
Maj	LJ	Drummond	MBE
WO1	PD	Colville	MSM
WO1	C	Pirie	MBE
WO1	S	Shaw	MSM
CSgt	W	Bell	MSM

2014

Col	NA	Den-McKay MBE	OBE
Col	R	Jefferies	CBE
WO1	C	Pirie	MBE

2015

Lt Col	AP	Reilly	OBE
A/Maj	AM	Mack	MBE
Maj	N	Mackinnon	MBE
Capt	M	James	MBE
Capt	EG	Philbin	MBE
Sgt	P	Trickovic	MBE

2016

Lt Col	KM	Potts	MBE
Maj	AT	Grant	MBE
Capt	AG	McEwan	MBE
CSgt	CG	Graham	MBE

2017

Lt Col	TAW	Ingram MBE	OBE
Maj	FS	Reeves	MBE
Maj	SG	Small	MBE
WO2	A	McBroom	MSM

2018

Brig	AJ	Aitken OBE	CBE
Col	NHDeR	Channer	OBE
A/Lt Col	OPB	Dobson	MBE
Lt Col	PGB	Strudwick	OBE
Maj	WG	Hunter	MBE

BIRTHDAY AND NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST



Rank	Initials	Name	AWARD
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2019

Lt Col	NKG	Tomlin	OBE
Lt Col	NM	Wight-Boycott	OBE
Maj	NP	Colquhoun	MBE
Maj	RJ	Colquhoun	MBE
WO1	S	McFadden	MSM
Maj	GW	Muir	MBE

2020

Lt Col	AR	Forsyth	OBE
Lt Col	AFL	Steele VR	MBE
Lt Col	AV	Wilson MBE	OBE
A/Maj	PD	Colville	MBE
Capt	CG	McRobbie	MBE

2021

Brig	RRE	Lindsay	CBE
Lt Col	TJJ	Draper	OBE
Capt	JS	Corkill	MBE

2022

Lt Col	CAM	Lane	MBE
Maj	AD	Steele	MBE
WO2	D	Buist	MSM
WO2	RG	Robertson	MSM
CSgt	PM	Leith VR	MBE
Cpl	JK	Vakacokaivalu	MBE
Maj	TH	Blair	MBE
Maj	GM	Rowan	MBE

2023

Lt Gen	NRM	Borton DSO, MBE	KCB
Col	AD	Watson	OBE
Lt Col	J	Campbell	OBE
Lt Col	JF	Giles	MBE
Maj	WC	McAuley	MBE
Sgt	T	Couper	MBE
WO1	AR	McLellan	MSM
WO1	P	MacGregor	MSM
WO1	GW	Hannah	MSM

2024

Maj	TJM	Towler	MBE
Maj Gen	AABR	Bruce of Crionaich OBE DL VR	CB
WO1	P	Burns	MSM
WO1	AC	Ferrier	MSM
WO1	KR	Tuach	MSM
WO1	RD	O'Neil	MSM

Rank	Initials	Name	AWARD
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2025

Col	GJ	Sefton	CBE
Lt Col	FS	Reeves	OBE
Maj	AJ	Farrall	MBE
Maj	MAR	Roberts	MBE
WO1	CG	Simpson	MSM

2026

WO1	J	Couper	MSM
WO1	SJ	Paterson	MSM



SCOTS LAST POST

In memory of the officers and soldiers from The Royal Regiment of Scotland who died in 2025.

Colour Sergeant Craig WILL	09 June
Private Ian DIXON	26 June
Private Graeme SWAN	13 August
Sergeant Stuart ANDERSON	27 August
Highlander Martin MACKENZIE	26 October
Corporal Tony MOORE	06 November
Highlander Alifereti TABACALA	02 December



A military 'Freedom Right' is normally granted by a Regional Council authority in recognition of the services of the Regiment, both in peace and war. Being granted a 'Freedom Right' is the highest civic honour that a Council can bestow on the Regiment.

In keeping with tradition dating back many years, a freedom award is normally the right to march through the streets with drums beating, bayonets fixed and colours flying. The parade gave the citizens of a region, city or town the chance to show their appreciation and high regard for the hard work undertaken by the Regiment and its soldiers. The parade also provides the Regiment the opportunity to show its gratitude for the support that it receives from the region and its communities.

Since 2006, a number of new freedom rights have been conferred on the Regiment and when invited to, the appropriate battalion will exercise these historically important links to the community in Scotland and elsewhere.

SCOTS FREEDOM RIGHTS GRANTED SINCE 2006

Council	Date	Location Received	Accepted By
Clackmannanshire	13-May-06	Alloa	5 SCOTS
City of Aberdeen	01-Jul-06	Aberdeen	4 SCOTS
Angus	15-Jul-06	Forfar	3 SCOTS
Fife	21-Oct-06	Kirkcaldy	3 SCOTS
Mid Lothian	24-Mar-07	Penicuik	1 and 2 SCOTS
Dumfries and Galloway	07-Jun-08	Dumfries	1 SCOTS
Canterbury City	07-Dec-08	Canterbury	5 SCOTS
Berwick	28-Feb-09	Berwick-Upon-Tweed	1 SCOTS
Perth and Kinross	08-May-10	Perth	7 SCOTS
West Lothian	28-May-11	Livingston	1 and 6 SCOTS
Scottish Borders	11-Jun-11	Melrose	1 and 6 SCOTS
Renfrewshire	20-Jun-11	Paisley	5 SCOTS
Stirling	10-Mar-12	Stirling	7 SCOTS
East Lothian	19-Apr-13	Haddington	1 SCOTS
City of Edinburgh	20-Apr-13	Edinburgh	1 SCOTS
South Ayrshire	13-Nov-13	Ayr	2 SCOTS
Highland	15-Oct-15	Inverness	3 and 4 SCOTS
South Lanarkshire	17-Jun-23	Hamilton	5 SCOTS
Aberdeenshire	11-May-24	Peterhead	4 SCOTS
Moray	08-Jun-24	Elgin	5 SCOTS
North Lanarkshire	13-Jul-24	Motherwell	2 SCOTS
Eilean Siar (Western Isles)	07-Sep-24	Stornoway	2 SCOTS
Falkirk	14-Jun-25	Falkirk	5 SCOTS
Argyll and Bute	20-Sep-25	Lochgilthead	2 SCOTS

SCOTS AFFILIATED STATUS GRANTED SINCE 2006

Council	Date	Location Received	Accepted By
City of London	09-Nov-24	London	5 SCOTS



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

On formation of the Regiment all the antecedent Affiliations, Alliances and Bonds of Friendship (BoF) were formally transferred to SCOTS ownership. These military associations were originally formed for the mutual benefit and to promote friendship between Regiments of the British Army and those of Commonwealth and foreign countries. The military associations can be defined as follows:

- Alliances are associations between British Regiments or Corps and those of Commonwealth countries (including British Dependent Territories) only.
- Affiliations are associations between Regiments and Corps within the British Army. In practice these are confined to links between Regiments of the Brigade of Gurkhas and other British Regiments.
- BoF are associations between British Regiments or Corps and those of non-Commonwealth countries. Bonds of Friendship may also be formed between British Regiments or Corps and HM Ships.

The Regiment is committed to retain these hard-fought military associations and to take them forward as a Regiment with assistance from each Battalion. The connection to the past is born from a united and shared heritage which all ranks should be fiercely proud of. There is a combined responsibility to promote and where necessary, re-energise these links and to make best use of professional opportunities that will come from a vibrant and mutually beneficial association.

Overall responsibility for maintaining these associations rests with Regimental Headquarters, but by the very nature of the associations, the links are best preserved at battalion level, with assistance and support coming from Regimental Headquarters. New associations can be proposed and the process for this is managed through Regimental Headquarters to the appropriate MOD department.

AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP



Alliances

Country	Unit	SCOTS BN	Remarks
Australia	5 th /7 th Bn The Royal Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	25 th /49 th Bn The Royal Queensland Regt	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal New South Wales Regt	3/5 SCOTS	Res INF
	10 th /27 th Bn The Royal South Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	16 th Bn The Royal Western Australian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	5 th /6 th Bn The Royal Victorian Regt	4 SCOTS	Res INF
Canada	The Canadian Scottish Regt (Princes Mary's)	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal Newfoundland Regt	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	1 st Bn The Royal New Brunswick Regt (Carleton and York)	6 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada	2 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment) of Canada	3 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa (Duke of Edinburgh's Own)	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	48 th Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Toronto Scottish Regt (Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother's Own)	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	The A&SH Highlanders of Canada (Princes Louise's)	5 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Calgary Highlanders	5 SCOTS	Res INF
Malaysia	5 th Bn The Royal Malay Regt	tbc	Reg INF
New Zealand	1 st Bn Royal New Zealand Inf Regt	2 SCOTS	Reg INF
	2 nd /4 th Bn (Otago & Southland) Royal New Zealand Regt	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	5 th /7 th Bn (Wellington (City of Wellington's Own) and Hawkes Bay)	4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	Royal New Zealand Infantry Regt		
Pakistan	11 th Bn The Baluch Regt	2 SCOTS	Reg INF
	1 st Bn (SCINDE) The Frontier Force Regt	5 SCOTS	Reg INF
South Africa	Chief Maqoma Regiment (renamed in 2009)	2 SCOTS	Res INF
	Solomon Mahlangu Regiment (renamed in 2009)	3 SCOTS	Res INF
	The Cape Town Highlanders	4 SCOTS	Res INF
	Bambatha Rifles (renamed in 2009)	tbc	Res INF

Affiliations

RGR	4 SCOTS
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Bonds of Friendship with HM Ships

HMS Sutherland	4 SCOTS
HMS Submarine Victorious	4 SCOTS
HMS Queen Elizabeth	tbc

Bonds of Friendship with Non Commonwealth Countries

France	1e Regiment d'Infanterie	3/4 SCOTS	Reg INF
	27e Bataillon de Chasseurs Alpins	2 SCOTS	Reg INF
Germany	Landesgruppe Bremen	7 SCOTS	Res INF



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

THE CALGARY HIGHLANDERS (10TH CANADIANS)

A YEAR IN Review: Fortune Favours the Bold

It was an outstanding year of growth and success for the Calgary Highlanders, highlighted by intensive collective training and deployments in support of Canada's interests at both home and abroad. Throughout the year, Calgary Highlander soldiers and officers have repeatedly shown an unwavering commitment to excellence, professionalism and service to Canada. The activities of the regiment were a testament to our commitment to meet Canada's current needs in a modern battlespace and to our responsibility as citizen soldiers to the municipal and provincial communities we represent.

The regiment's training tempo continues to move forward at an incredible pace. This year marked a return to the fundamentals of soldiering, with A Coy conducting live-fire operations before switching to urban operations in preparation for the annual Brigade exercise, Ex Grizzly Defender. B Coy integrated the newly formed Gold Platoon, consisting of soldiers awaiting completion of their Developmental Phase 1 (DP1) Infantry course, and pivoted its efforts to preparing these new soldiers for success on the course. The summer training block saw over 30 soldiers complete their training and reintegrate into the regiment as fully qualified infanteers, proudly wearing the unit cap badge and touting their newly minted Private hooks. Ex Grizzly Defender also saw A Coy in action, as the culmination of their yearlong workup merited not only praise from Brigade leadership but also resounding success in their critical mission objectives. Over 90 infanteers participated in this high-endurance, eight-day combined-arms field exercise that actively tested their mettle—putting them in realistic, challenging field conditions intended to mimic the harsh realities of the modern battlespace in both offensive and defensive operations.

While training remains a high priority for the regiment, we are a regiment that actively deploys in support of Canada's interests at

home and abroad. This year, over 25 soldiers responded to calls from the provincial and federal governments to support wildfire suppression efforts, as several fires threatened major urban communities in Alberta and Manitoba. Additionally, over 20 soldiers volunteered to support the RCMP during the G7 Summit as part of Operation Cadence. These soldiers, along with other reservists from 39 Brigade, deployed to support the logistical supply chain and to support the defensive posture in the Controlled Access Zone (CAZ). They conducted patrols through mountainous terrain, sweeping for unauthorised personnel within the CAZ, and made up the Battle Groups' Quick Reaction Forces (QRF). Augmented by the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI), the QRF provided a Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV) Platoon that could be deployed in case of a mass casualty event, deployment of chemical, biological, radioactive, or nuclear (CBRN) material, or as a protection force to cover the exodus of critical event personnel.

Internationally, 25 Calgary Highlanders deployed to operations in support of Canada's commitments to collective security and global peace. Soldiers deployed to the enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia, actively working with allied forces to conduct collective training, provide a robust presence, and reassure our Eastern European partners on the determination of NATO in the region. Other members were sent on missions to the Middle East, in Lebanon and Jordan, as we continue to assist in the development and training of their militaries. Focusing on developing their junior leadership, mountain and winter warfare capabilities, and supporting the training and integration of women into their armed forces.

This year also saw the creation of several athletic clubs and teams in the Calgary Highlanders. The Calgary Highlanders Running team sprinted onto the scene with try-outs occurring at the beginning of the training year. Selected members trained throughout the year and competed in the

Calgary Marathon, Canadian Army Run, the Ottawa Marathon, and the Sinister 7 Ultra Marathon (including its 100 Miler). While running will always remain a core component of the infantry, who would we be without combatives? 2Lt Fisette, a qualified Close Quarters Combat Instructor, spearheaded the creation of the Calgary Highlanders Grappling Club and prepared them to compete in the 3 Division Grappling Tournament, Ex Relentless Warrior. The Club has brought in Jiu-Jitsu and other combative specialists to help them train and develop their repertoire for both tournaments and combat. Quickly outgrowing their hour-long training slot before the Wednesday parade night, the Club now occupies a dedicated 3-hour training block on Thursdays to accommodate the training and preparation required to take the Club to the next level. In 2026, we are looking forward to seeing the creation and initial activities of the Calgary Highlanders Ski Mountaineering team, which aims to compete in the Edelweiss Raid in Austria.

The end of the 2024/2025 training year marked a significant transition for the Calgary Highlanders as Lieutenant-Colonel MacKillop assumed command of the regiment. The regimental Pipes and Drums were on proud display as the regiment bid adieu to Lieutenant-Colonel Beauchamp. Building on the strong position established in 2025, this year the Calgary Highlanders are looking to implement a more robust, ambitious training plan. Highlighted by a focus on combined arms, increased collective training within the Brigade, and training with other infantry regiments. As Canada's commitments to both the enhanced Forward Presence in Latvia and other international missions continue to grow, the Calgary Highlanders remain committed to developing a professional, well-trained fighting force that can quickly and seamlessly augment our Regular Forces counterparts. We remain ready to respond to Canada's call whenever and wherever needed. Airghart!



C/S Cougar during Op Cadence.



The Pipes and Drums on Parade.



THE SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS OF CANADA



The Battalion as paraded on Remembrance Day, November 11, 2025.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

2025 was a busy year for The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada. The Regiment began the year enjoying the uniquely Canadian tradition of New Year's Levee (Levee). What began as a day fur traders paid respect to their local government officials, Levee has evolved into a social gathering enjoyed throughout the country, particularly amongst the crown's governors and armed forces. Special to the day is the Regiment's Athol Brose competition, where the Officers' and Warrants' & Sergeants' Messes vie to produce the best version of the drink. Unfortunately, as with many events, in 2025 the Officers were bested through the skill and experience of the Warrant Officers and SNCO Corps.

Following Levee, soldiers began two months of small unit fire & maneuver training, working towards live fire platoon attacks. The long training cycle, centered upon a singular task, afforded soldiers time to refine their lethality while maintaining cohesion on the attack. Come the live fire exercise, platoons proved their ability to close with and destroy the enemy at speed. This training proved invaluable when the Regiment continued onto Brigade level integration exercises as the year progressed.



A patrol steps off on EXERCISE HIGHLAND PATHFINDER, Oct 2025.

The Regiment, located in Vancouver, British Columbia, saw host to the 2025 Invictus Games. As the City's sole infantry regiment, members were invited to attend events throughout their neighborhoods while our armoury served a central role in welcoming competitors from across the globe.



The Change of Command Parade, May 2025.

One team in particular, the Dutch, were provided a special reception in the Officers Mess. The Seaforths, having done much to liberate the Netherlands, its Officers having played a key role in the Achterveld Conference ending the Hunger Winter as well as the Regiment's liberation of Amsterdam, have a deep and special relationship with those in Holland. Throughout the games, we reaffirmed our kinship through dinners and long evenings in the Messes.



Heavy Machine Gun Training, Dec 2025.

The Invictus Games, however, were not the year's only opportunity for the Regiment to spend time with our Dutch counterparts. In April and May, a contingent from the unit travelled to Northwest Europe to visit the

Seaforth's former battlefields. For those who went, to have had the opportunity to walk the ground through which past Highlanders advanced and to have stood by their countless headstones gave far greater meaning to the term 'ultimate sacrifice' than could any number of Remembrance Days.



Lieutenant-Colonel Kent Wickens commands the guard at the Menin Gate during the Regimental Battlefields Tour (April - May 2025)

The tour culminated in the Regiment's participation in the Netherlands' Liberation Day Parade. Following the Regiment's march through Apeldoorn, the Regiment was afforded the honour of meeting Jack Rossiter, a Seaforth Highlanders of Canada veteran of the Second World War. This encounter was particularly moving, as many currently serving members' late Fathers and Grandfathers fought alongside Jack during the War. At the age of 100, Jack still remembered those with whom he served and took the time to tell touching stories of their time together. It is one of the great privileges of many member's career to have met Jack Rossiter and to have shaken his hand in the city he helped liberate.



Jack Rossiter, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada World War II Veteran.

The past year witnessed many stark reminders of the importance of service and remembrance. These lessons, and the values embraced by past Seaforths such as Jack Rossiter – multilateralism, the dignity of all persons, and the rule of law – are the Regiment's lodestar in an increasingly fractious world.



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

HMS VICTORIOUS: A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH



HMS Victorious.

The past year has been an extraordinary one for HMS *Victorious*, defined by significant milestones in engineering, professional development, and team-building activities. Below is a timeline of our key achievements and initiatives:

The year began with a major industrial milestone as HMS *Victorious* successfully transitioned into dry dock. This critical operation marked the start of an extensive maintenance and upgrade period, ensuring the vessel remains at peak operational capability. The seamless move was a testament to the meticulous planning and expertise of the entire team.

Following the move into dry dock, the team achieved a pioneering technical feat: the successful depressurisation of a PWR2 nuclear reactor while waterborne. This first-of-its-kind operation required exceptional engineering precision and set a new benchmark for technical excellence. It was a

proud moment for the crew, showcasing their skill and dedication to innovation.

Throughout the year, the crew of HMS *Victorious* has demonstrated a strong commitment to personal and professional growth. A significant number of personnel have pursued degree-level qualifications in engineering disciplines such as management, mechanical engineering, and electrical engineering. This initiative spans all ranks and departments, reflecting a ship-wide dedication to technical mastery and professional excellence.

In addition, many team members have registered with prestigious engineering institutions, including the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), further enhancing their professional credentials. A robust mentoring programme has also flourished, with personnel already registered with the



Armistice Day war memorial, Val d'Isere.

Engineering Council providing guidance and support to colleagues seeking registration. This culture of mentorship has fostered continuous professional development (CPD) and strengthened the engineering capability of the crew.

In addition to professional achievements, the crew has embraced numerous adventurous training opportunities during downtime, promoting physical fitness, mental well-being, and team cohesion. Activities have included mountain biking, kayaking, sailing, hill walking, paddle boarding, rock climbing, sea fishing, and a recent ski trip to Val d'Isere in France.

These experiences have provided a welcome break from the demands of service life, fostering camaraderie and resilience across the team.



Val d'Isere ski trip.





5/7 RAR IN 2025: READY, REGIONAL, RELENTLESS

Darwin, Australia

Commanding Officer:

Lieutenant Colonel Ashley Zimmerlie

Battalion Second in Command:

Major Steven La Rose

Regimental Sergeant Major:

Warrant Officer Class One Joel McMahon



2025 saw the 5th/7th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (5/7 RAR), seek out and close with a demanding but deeply rewarding program of activity, both at home and abroad.

Based in Australia's north—amid scorching temperatures, oppressive humidity and some of the most unforgiving terrain on the continent—5/7 RAR upheld its reputation as Australia's premier light infantry battalion. Surrounded by hostile climate, uncompromising fauna and genuinely dangerous wildlife, the Battalion demonstrated the grit, discipline and quiet professionalism expected of light infantry soldiers, irrespective of season, weather or terrain.



5/7 RAR on Predator RUN.

The Tiger Battalion cut its teeth early in the year with its annual brigade warfighting program, PREDATOR CRAWL and PREDATOR RUN. The PREDATOR series is designed to consolidate interoperability across all 1st Brigade units through successive field activities conducted over several weeks. This cornerstone training cycle builds combat readiness by integrating combined arms, intelligence and logistics functions under realistic conditions. For 5/7 RAR, PREDATOR provided the opportunity for sub-units to certify core competencies, identify capability gaps and rehearse tactics ahead of major exercises and operational commitments later in the year.



5/7 RAR support TS25.

Central to this effort was preparation for the 11th iteration of Exercise TALISMAN SABRE 2025 (TS25)—the largest and most



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

5/7 RAR IN 2025: READY, REGIONAL, RELENTLESS *continued*

complex joint military exercise conducted by the Australian Defence Force, held biennially with the United States and regional partners. Equipped with four rifle companies and a robust Support Company incorporating DFSW, reconnaissance, mortars, signals and sniper capabilities, 5/7 RAR played a significant role during TS25. The Battalion also contributed a major component of the newly formed Brigade Reconnaissance Company, a key capability within the exercise. Conducted across Australia and the broader Indo-Pacific, TS25 tested joint and combined interoperability across the land, air, maritime, space and cyber domains, involving more than 30,000 personnel.



Charlie Coy collaborate with AFP on Ex Jatt-Philippines.

Complementing its domestic training tempo, 5/7 RAR also achieved notable success across its international lines of effort.

A Company, following an intensive period of jungle warfare conditioning and skills development in Tully—Australia's premier jungle training area—deployed to Malaysia as the Ready Combat Team for a three-month rotation. This deployment proved invaluable, consolidating the company's jungle warfare proficiency while exchanging hard-won knowledge with the Malaysian Armed Forces on jungle lethality and survivability.

C Company deployed to the Philippines as part of the Joint Australian Training Team – Philippines (JATT-P), strengthening



B Coy conduct beach landing on OP RESOLUTE.

enduring ties with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The exercise fostered extensive collaboration at multiple levels, focusing on small-unit tactical training, medical skills, logistic problem-solving, leadership development and strategic planning—all contributing to improved interoperability and regional security.

D Company deployed to Indonesia on Exercise GARUDA SHIELD, further reinforcing 5/7 RAR's strong relationship with the Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Darat (Indonesian Army). This annual multinational exercise, led by Indonesia and the United States, is designed to enhance regional security cooperation and military interoperability across the Indo-Pacific. D Company trained alongside host-nation and partner forces in combined-arms manoeuvre, live-fire activities, jungle and urban operations, as well as humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping tasks.

Back in Australia, B Company contributed to the Battalion's operational effort through its deployment on Operation RESOLUTE, supporting the Australian Defence Force's enduring commitment to maritime security and border protection in Australia's northern approaches. Operating across remote and austere locations, B Company integrated closely with joint and inter-agency partners, delivering a persistent light infantry presence in support of surveillance, response and assurance tasks. The deployment demanded high levels of individual discipline, adaptability and professionalism, with soldiers operating independently at distance, often in harsh climatic conditions and under compressed timelines. Through routine patrols, rapid response activities and sustained liaison with partner agencies, B Company demonstrated the flexibility and quiet effectiveness that underpin the light infantry role, contributing directly to national security outcomes while maintaining the Battalion's readiness for wider contingencies.



5/7 RAR parade during ANZAC Day.

Throughout 2025, 5/7 RAR delivered demanding training in Australia's north, strengthened its combined-arms contribution within the Brigade, and deepened relationships with regional partners. In doing so, the Battalion continued to contribute directly to regional stability and security—ready, relevant and relentlessly prepared for whatever task lies ahead.

Duty First.

LTS Goodman



THE ROYAL HIGHLAND FUSILIERS OF CANADA - DEFENCE NOT DEFIANCE

Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

Commanding Officer:

Lieutenant Colonel Robinson

Deputy Commanding Officer:

Major Macdonald

Regimental Sergeant Major:

Chief Warrant Officer Hock

Regimental Quartermaster:

Sergeant Adam



Highland Bomber.



Battleaxe Thaw.

clearance of a Russian trench system was rehearsed. RHFC next participated in Exercise TRILLIUM VENTURE, a domestic response exercise where the unit practiced stability operations as well as a water search and rescue. Training throughout the summer largely consisted of soldiering skills practice in preparation for qualification and leadership courses as well as the annual 31 Brigade Exercise. Exercise HIGHLAND SHOOTER saw the completion of personal weapons test (PWT) up to level four as well as a night shoot. Summer training was closed out with Exercise ARROWHEAD GUARDIAN 2025 hosted in Camp Grayling, Michigan. This exercise saw RHFC on the offensive, beginning with woods clearance patrols and moving into an urban assault. This provided leadership an opportunity to work in a dynamic and broader context within a battlegroup, and soldiers to develop their general infantry skills as well as more specific ones such as room clearance and working in an environment with drone assets. Following AG25, RHFC maintained our training tempo with Exercise HIGHLAND ASSAULT, further developing soldier's shooting skills on a dynamic section attack range at 4CDTC Meaford. The training year was closed out with Exercise BATTLEAXE SEVER which focused on offensive operations culminating in a raid on a mortar position, concurrently the Buron Company mortar platoon conducted a live fire mortar shoot.



Battleaxe Sever.

RHFC currently has members deployed on OP Reassurance in Latvia, with more slotted for early 2026 with members redeploying

on the following rotation. Throughout the year we saw 82 soldiers go on varying courses ranging from the ranks of Private Recruit to Captain, demonstrating RHFC's dedication to professional development. 2025 has also seen 22 members take on roles as instructors on a range of courses throughout 31 Brigade and 4th Division.

RHFC maintains our highland and regimental tradition proudly, which we display at our events and public appearances. RHFC had the honour of hosting the Kilted Conference 2025 which saw Pipe and Drum bands from across Canada perform at the Cambridge Armouries. Commanding Officer of our sister regiment, Lt. Col Bridle, 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland was the event's guest of honor, his attendance reinforcing the significance of the regiments Scottish heritage and that heritage's prominence within RHFC. RHFC worked alongside local cadet organizations and regional legions to conduct a Remembrance Day ceremony bringing together both rifle



RHFC Hockey Game.

companies to march to the Kitchener Cenotaph. This was followed by the Soldiers Appreciation Dinner and regimental hockey game, which saw the junior ranks return to former glory after defeating the officers in a rough and tumble bout. Lastly, the year was closed out with our annual Fill an Army Truck Food Drive, working in conjunction with local grocers, RHFC was able to donate 9342 pounds of food to the Waterloo Regional FoodBank.

Second Lieutenant MacArtney

Throughout 2025 the Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada (RHFC) have seen significant growth both in personnel and the number of qualified soldiers and junior leaders amongst the ranks. The training year began with the refresher of winter warfare followed by Buron Company practicing RHFC's 81mm mortar capabilities on Exercise HIGHLAND BOMBER. Having ensured RHFC's effectiveness on the range, the soldiers were given an opportunity to develop their close quarters skills on Exercise BATTLEAXE THAW, working closely with the Canadian Special Operations Regiment (CSOR) where the



RHFC Fill an Army Truck.



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

THE CANADIAN SCOTTISH REGIMENT (PRINCESS MARY'S)

The Duty Remembered: Lieutenant Francis Hemsley and the Enduring Bonds of Liberation

France and the Netherlands, April–May

Interment of Lieutenant Francis Hemsley

In April 2025, serving members of The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's) travelled to France to attend the formal interment of Lieutenant Francis Hemsley, 16th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force, killed in action on 15/16 August 1917.

Through the work of the Directorate of History and Heritage, Lieutenant Hemsley's remains were identified more than a century after his death, allowing him to be laid to rest with full military honours near Arras. His burial brought long-awaited closure to his family; no fewer than twenty-three descendants present at the ceremony.

In the days preceding the interment, the Regimental contingent undertook drill and ceremonial preparation and participated in acts of remembrance at sites of particular significance to the Regiment and to Canadian arms. These included attendance at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate on the anniversary of the Second Battle of Ypres and Kitchener's Wood—actions in which the Regiment's forebears bore heavy responsibility and cost.

The interment itself was conducted with dignity and restraint. The Lament and Last Post were rendered by Regimental musicians, and the bearer party performed its duty with professionalism and pride. The ceremony served not only as an act of remembrance, but as a visible statement that the Regiment continues to honour its obligations to those who served before it.

Following the burial, the contingent remained in France and Belgium to visit key battlefield sites associated with the Regiment and the Canadian Corps, reinforcing historical understanding and strengthening the connection between present-day soldiers and those whose service established the Regiment's reputation.



Padre Major Tom Hamilton leads soldiers from The Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's).

The Association in the Netherlands

Immediately following the events in France, members of the Canadian Scottish Regimental Association, including the Association Pipes and Drums, travelled to the Netherlands to participate in the 80th Liberation commemorations held in late April and early May 2025.

Based primarily in Deventer, the Association took part in ceremonies, parades, and concerts marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands—an achievement secured in large measure by Canadian formations in the closing stages of the Second World War.

The Association participated in remembrance services at Canadian war cemeteries, liberation parades through Dutch towns and cities, and public concerts attended by thousands. Particular significance was attached to the visit to Wagenborgen and Deventer, where the Regiment sustained notable casualties during the fighting of April 1945. The ceremony at the memorial near the battlefield was a moment of reflection not only on sacrifice, but on the lasting gratitude of the Dutch people.

Throughout the visit, the welcome extended by local authorities and citizens alike was heartfelt and sincere. The continued remembrance shown by successive generations of Dutch families stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of Canadian service in the liberation of their country.



Cpl Emma Yeo and MCpl Allyssa Haigh receiving a plaque for The Canadian Scottish Regiment from the Mayor of Deventer.



2ND/17TH BATTALION, ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES REGIMENT

2025 in Review | A year of service and readiness



Alpha Company at the conclusion of Ex TALISMAN SABRE 25.

In 2025, Alpha Company of the 2nd/17th Royal New South Wales Regiment demonstrated professionalism, adaptability, and commitment across a broad spectrum of training, operations, and ceremonial duties. Throughout the year, the Company upheld the highest soldiering standard while contributing meaningfully to both domestic and international tasks in support of Australia's Defence objectives.

Menin Series

A Company successfully completed the full Menin training lead-up series, applying the prepare, crawl, walk, run methodology to progressively build individual and collective capability.

This structured approach ensured soldiers were not only technically proficient, but also mentally and physically prepared for complex operational environments. Training EX MENIN RUN consisted of A Coy participating in security tasks in support of Task Unit Kingfisher, in preparation for EX TALISMAN SABRE 25. The exercise culminated in a combined arms combat team assault.

Ex TALISMAN SABRE Sabre 25

The company's most significant commitment came during EX TALISMAN SABRE 25, which was the largest multinational military exercise conducted in Australia's history, involving forces from 19 nations. Alpha Company provided a PL+ and CHQ to form Task Element Alpha of Task Unit Kingfisher, providing the majority of the ground security effort in defence of RAAF BASE Tindal throughout the exercise.

Operating in demanding Northern Territory conditions, soldiers conducted continuous perimeter security, patrols, rapid reaction force drills, and base defence simulations. Working closely with attached assets, such as cavalry, recon, UAS, signals, and medics, Alpha Company Officers and SNCOs gained valuable experience in a combined arms setting. The Company also developed its higher-level interoperability with adjacent and supporting capabilities.

Alpha Company's efforts enabled Task Unit Kingfisher to successfully defend RAAF Base Tindal, supporting hundreds of aircraft sorties and over 5,500 flight hours. The task was a true test of interoperability, resilience and professionalism.

Operations & Deployments

Beyond major exercises, Alpha Company continued to actively serve the Australian community. Soldiers were deployed on natural disaster response tasks, providing flood relief and community assistance when required. These operations highlighted the Company's ability to rapidly transition from high end warfighting capability to humanitarian assistance.

Alpha Company soldiers were deployed to OPERATION RESOLUTE, the ongoing operation to secure Australia's Northern maritime borders. They formed the Transit Security Element, supporting Navy with boarding parties and security teams.

International engagement also continued with Members of Alpha Company deployed to Rifle Company Butterworth, contributing to Australia's enduring commitment to regional security and cooperation in Malaysia.



AFFILIATIONS, ALLIANCES AND BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP

2ND/17TH BATTALION, ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES REGIMENT

continued

Other training and activities

With the conclusion of the Menin Series and Talisman Sabre, Alpha Company shifted its focus from security operations to individual and collective foundation warfighting skills. Training through the second half of the year included a section level LFX and a weekend urban training activity at Singleton.

Alpha Company also embraced healthy competition, participating in Section and Soldier competitions that tested individual skill, teamwork, and leadership against peers from across the Battalion.

Throughout the year, Alpha Company proudly upheld military tradition through significant ceremonial commitments, including ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Defence of Sydney, Battle of Australia, and the Ambush at Gemas commemorations. These duties honoured the legacy of those who have served before and strengthened the Company's connection with the community.

2025 was a year marked by operational excellent, professional growth, and dedicated service. The achievements of Alpha Company reflect the discipline, resilience, and commitment of every soldier, and set a strong foundation for the challenges ahead.



Soldiers conduct a stores carry during a section competition.



Soldier conducts room clearances during NLTA urban training.



Soldier conducts room clearances during NLTA urban training.



Scanning arcs post dismount from PMV.



Soldiers assault enemy positions during an LFX.



Soldiers assault enemy positions during an LFX.



Soldiers conduct a casualty drag on EX TS 25.



CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: CPL MAIN HONOURED AT THE MASONS' LIVERY DINNER



On Tuesday 28 October Cpl Main, 3 SCOTS, represented The Royal Regiment of Scotland with distinction at the Worshipful Company of Masons' prestigious Livery Dinner, held at the historic Mercers' Hall in London. The evening brought together members of the Associated Companies for an occasion steeped in tradition, camaraderie, and recognition of outstanding service.

The dinner was a formal affair, with guests in black tie and serving personnel in Mess Dress, creating an atmosphere befitting the significance of the event. During the evening, the Master of the

Worshipful Company of Masons presented Cpl Main with the Masons' Company Prize for Outstanding Contribution to The Royal Regiment of Scotland for 2024-25. This award reflects Cpl Main's exceptional dedication, professionalism, and impact within the Regiment over the past year.

Cpl Main expressed his gratitude for the honour and spoke warmly about the opportunity to engage with members of the Company and fellow representatives from the Associated Companies.



ARMY CADET FORCE

2ND BATTALION THE HIGHLANDERS ACF

The past year has been one of achievement, growth and community engagement for the 2nd Battalion The Highlanders Army Cadet Force (2HLDRS). From senior appointments and prestigious awards to demanding competitions, international exchanges and sustained community service, the Battalion has consistently demonstrated the core ethos of the Army Cadet Force: To Inspire, To Achieve.

The year began with a landmark appointment. On 25 January, SMI Kieran Walker was selected as the first Regional Regimental Sergeant Major Instructor (RSMI) for 51 Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland. Appointed by Colonel Gordon Rae, Colonel Cadets Scotland, RSMI Walker provides senior support across both the ACF and CCF (Army), acting as a vital link between Brigade leadership and local units while championing the welfare and representation of Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs).

Cadets quickly distinguished themselves in competition. At the 51X Brigade Cross-Country and Orienteering Championships, Cadet Lance Corporal Joshua Chalmers of Ellon Detachment won Gold in the Senior Boys category by a significant margin. That same month, SI Tasha Ward was appointed Battalion First Aid Training Officer and promoted to Staff Sergeant Instructor. Under her leadership, the 2HLDRS Junior Team A secured Silver at the Brigade First Aid Competition.

March provided opportunities for enrichment and transition. Cadets from SCOTS DG Detachment visited Edinburgh Castle, exploring regimental history and engaging with the Castle's District Gunner. Later that month, RSMI Alan Simpson stepped down after three years of service, handing over to SMI Darren "Daz" Haley, a former King's Own Scottish Borderers soldier and experienced Training Sergeant Major.

Excellence was further recognised in April when four 2HLDRS cadets were appointed Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets - one of the highest honours available. Musical success followed, with Cadet Corporal Ellen Archer appointed Cadet Drum Major after achieving 99/100 on her assessment parade. She went on to lead major ceremonial events, including Beating Retreat at Edinburgh Castle and the Remembrance parade in Aberdeen.

May and June focused on remembrance, service and charity. During VE Day 80 commemorations, cadets attended a "Meet the Veterans" event, hearing firsthand accounts of service spanning the Cold War to Afghanistan. In June, cadets and CFAVs raised over £1,500 for Help for Heroes through charity bag-packing in Aberdeen.

Individual dedication was also formally acknowledged. Lieutenant Georgia Pinson received a Certificate of Meritorious Service for leading the Battalion's 2024 Bavaria Exventurer expedition, its first overseas adventure in many years. Shortly afterwards, RSMI Walker was similarly recognised by the Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeen for his long-standing commitment and leadership.

Armed Forces Day in Aberdeen marked a major milestone, with over 100 cadets and 37 CFAVs parading together for the first time



Armed Forces Day 2025 in Aberdeen.

since before the pandemic, reflecting renewed strength and unity across the Battalion.

Summer training peaked at the Annual Camp at Barry Buddon. Despite its shorter duration, cadets undertook intensive fieldcraft, live firing, navigation and expedition training, while also supporting the local community through litter-picking exercises.

Two cadets represented 2HLDRS internationally during the Army Cadets International Exchange. Corporals Ty McAlley and Kuba Wielebnowski trained alongside peers from across the world, with Cpl McAlley achieving best shot for the UK contingent. Both were promoted to Sergeant at the exchange's conclusion.

Autumn brought further success. A 2HLDRS team achieved Gold at the 51X Military Skills Competition, first aid teams secured second place at Brigade level, and five cadets represented Scotland at the ACF Rugby 7s Championships, where the Junior Boys won Silver. Musical excellence culminated at the Cadet Forces Solo Piping and Drumming Championships, where Cadet Corporals Sophie Main and Gracie Reid earned multiple awards.



Rugby 7s Silver Medallist Cdt Cdt Rory Curnock (right).



51x First Aid Competition Silver Medallists (L-R) Cdt Sgt Maja Peter, Cdt Cpl Connor McCormick, Cdt Cpl Archie Rough and Cdt CSgt Erin Marie.

The year concluded with three senior cadets passing the prestigious Master Cadet Course with distinction. Collectively, the achievements of the past year highlight 2HLDRS as a Battalion defined by dedication, professionalism and community spirit, laying strong foundations for the future.



Army Expo 2025.



WEST LOWLAND BATTALION, ARMY CADET FORCE



Early in the year, Cadets had the honour of meeting His Majesty The King in the stunning surroundings of Balmoral. 2Lt Troy, Cdt Sgt Kyle Troy, Cpl Elise Alexander and SI Jenni Lang greatly enjoyed what was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity.

In April, following a busy training weekend at 2 Hldrs HQ in Boddam—covering piping, drumming, band drill, music theory and instrument maintenance—Cpl Harry O'Driscoll, Cpl Charlie Stobie and Cdt Melissa Leary were selected for the National Pipes & Drums Band. They later performed at several engagements, culminating in a full Beating Retreat at the Gordon Highlanders Museum.

In May, the Battalion travelled to Dundee to compete alongside five other Scottish Battalions in the 51X Athletics Competition. On a warm and sunny day, Cadets displayed strong teamwork and sportsmanship, with WL Bn finishing as overall winners, claiming four trophies out of five: 1st Place Junior Male, Senior Male, Senior Female, and 3rd Place Junior Female.

June brought an action packed Expedition Weekend for Inkerman Company at Lapwing Lodge near Paisley. Ninety two Cadets took part in activities including paddle boarding, orienteering, first aid and expedition skills. The weekend began with remembrance for those who took part in D Day, marking its 81st anniversary.

Annual Camp at Altcar once again proved a highlight, giving Cadets the chance to put their training into practice across Fieldcraft, Navigation, Skill at Arms and Drill. Many also gained nationally recognised SQA qualifications, valuable as they move on to new stages in life. Sharing the camp with Lothian & Borders Bn ACF added to the experience, allowing Cadets and Adults to build new friendships and reconnect with old ones.



Annual camp.

In August, Cadets from Kohima Company attended Army Expo 25 at Redford Barracks, where they explored some of the British Army's most impressive equipment, including the Challenger Main Battle Tank, the Ajax Armoured Fighting Vehicle, and the Apache Echo Attack Helicopter.

During Remembrance Week, Cadets across the area came together in their communities to raise funds for veterans' charities and to honour the fallen.

To close the year, Cadets accompanied local Lord Lieutenants at The Princess of Wales' Carol Service on Saturday 6 December at St John's Episcopal Church in Dumfries.



ARMY CADET FORCE

LOTHIAN AND BORDERS BATTALION, ARMY CADET FORCE

2025 was a year filled with achievement, growth, and memorable moments for the Lothian and Borders Battalion Army Cadet Force. Across its four companies — Alma, Kohima, Minden, and Somme — cadets and adult volunteers continued to exemplify the organisation's values, demonstrating teamwork, resilience, and commitment in all their activities.



Shooting team.

From community engagement to adventurous training, the cadets made a significant impact. During the year, cadets supported events such as the Scottish Poppy Appeal, local Remembrance parades, and various veteran and community initiatives. The Battalion also celebrated success at a national level — the Military Skills Team achieved Gold Standard and won the Army Cadet Force Trophy, while the shooting teams represented the Battalion with distinction at the Cadet Inter-Service Skill at Arms Meeting and the Cadet National Championships at Bisley.

Cadets progressed through star levels, achieved Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, and earned Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) certificates in teamwork, citizenship, and leadership. A highlight of the year was the Three Star and Junior Cadet Instructor Cadre (JCIC), which delivered excellent results and highlighted the next generation of leaders. Additionally, four senior cadets attended and successfully completed the Senior Cadet Instructor Course (SCIC).

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication of the Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, who gave their time week after week to train, mentor, and support young people. Their passion and professionalism ensured that every cadet in the Lothian and Borders Battalion had the opportunity to Be More, achieve more, and create memories that will last a lifetime.



JCIC Course.





SCOTS GALLERY







SCOTS GALLERY





SCOTS 2025

The 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS)

From July 2024, the 2nd Battalion assumed the role of a Forward Land Forces (FLF) Battlegroup, held at readiness to deploy to Estonia to support NATO. This required the Battalion to conduct validation exercises, both in the UK at the start of the year on Ex WESSEX STORM before subsequently deploying to Estonia in the spring on Ex HEDGEHOG, a NATO mission rehearsal exercise. In the Autumn, much of the Battalion deployed to Kenya on Ex HARAKA STORM as the OPFOR for the Welsh Guards. Other highlights included a visit from the Princess Royal, Freedom Parades, Adventure Training exercises and battlefield study to Gallipoli.

The 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (3 SCOTS)

2025 saw 3 SCOTS refocus firmly on warfighting, aligning with CFA's direction and returning to its core role as frontline infantry. The year opened with demanding winter training in the Highlands, preparing the Battlegroup for Exercise BULLSTORM in Kenya. There, 3 SCOTS completed a highly successful two month deployment, securing the first TL Foxtrot validation in over a decade. After well-earned AT and R&R, the Battalion reset before shifting to NATO deterrence tasks. Redeploying swiftly to Latvia on Ex FOREST GUARDIAN, 3 SCOTS integrated with Latvian, Canadian, and Italian forces under the JEF framework. The deployment underscored the Battalion's ability to project quickly and operate with cutting-edge capabilities such as high end drones. The year also saw numerous honours and promotions across the ranks. With strong achievements in AT, sport, and operations, 3 SCOTS ends 2025 revitalised and ready for 2026.

The 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (4 SCOTS)

4 SCOTS completed its move from Catterick to Cyprus, now firmly established in Dhekelia Garrison. The year began with Exercise STEADFAST DART in Romania, testing NATO Allied Reaction Force readiness alongside multinational partners. Despite harsh winter conditions, the Jocks excelled, delivering high quality training and hosting a standout multinational Burns Night. Preparations for the Cyprus move were immense, with the G4 team leading an outstanding effort to hand over 182 platforms across the Army. Now the Regional Operations Battalion, 4 SCOTS is thriving professionally and socially on island, with a second year of operational readiness ahead.

Balaklava Company, The 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (BKA Coy, 5 SCOTS)

2025 saw BKA Coy deliver across a wide spectrum, from NATO training in Eastern Europe to high profile ceremonial duties for the Royal Family. The year opened with a Scotland based training cycle focused on modern soldiering skills, culminating in a successful validation exercise in Stanford. The Company then deployed to Lithuania on Ex IRON WOLF, operating alongside multinational partners against contemporary drone and armoured threats. Ceremonial commitments remained strong, including His Majesty's arrival at Holyrood House and forming The King's Guard at Balmoral. The year concluded with a highly successful return to London, mounting The King's Guard at Buckingham Palace, St James' Palace and guarding the Tower of London.

The 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (6 SCOTS)

6 SCOTS trained and exercised across the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. From the North of Scotland to the Southeast of England, and everywhere in between. Experience was gained and boundaries were pushed through deployment on operations and exercises. These experiences will help those soldiers and officers to excel in their military and civilian careers, giving them an advantage over their civilian colleagues. Success has been seen on several fronts; a silver medal on the Cambrian patrol, deploying a company of reservists to the Okehampton training area for the Annual Deployment Exercise and promotions at nearly every rank throughout the unit. Most importantly fun was had and bonds of friendship were created or strengthened, the pride in the unit is clear to see.

The 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS)

This year saw 7 SCOTS soldiers deployed on Operations, Adventure Training & Exercise. A significant amount of the Battalion's time was taken up with planning, preparation, and delivery of our soldiers attending and supporting the 19th Brigade JNCO cadre. The opportunity of training at Otterburn also allowed for Mortar, Gun, Anti-tank, staff training and Junior Officer development. The tempo 7 SCOTS continue to maintain is testament to the capability, desire to train and commitment of the Reserve soldier. The Battalion is rightly proud of what our soldiers have achieved and now have our sights set on delivering on Army Reserve requirement and deploying on training to Denmark later in the year.

BE THE STANDARD FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW