



JULY 2024



ROYAL ARTILLERY ASSEMBLY

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FULLY QUALIFY AS MILITARY FARRIER**

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TOUR TO ITALY**

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Gunner Rules

Guidance on Submissions

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

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

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

Articles must be received by the 15th day of the month preceding the magazines publication. Please send to RARHQ-Publications@mod.gov.uk

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GUNNER



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Pipe Major Trevor Macey-Lillie, 19 Regt RA aboard a landing craft to prepare a drive onto the beach. As they did on D-Day, 80 years ago.
Front cover photo taken by LPhot Edward Jones

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**Warrant Officer Class One James Lightfoot
Royal Artillery Sergeant Major**

Dear readers of Gunner Magazine, it is with great honour and pride that I introduce myself as the Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, the 19th since the introduction of the role. I have spent most of my career within 19th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Scottish Gunners), employed in roles within the TAC Group and was privileged to spend two years instructing trainees at ATR Pirbright as a Section Commander. I have completed three tours in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. My most recent appointment was RSM 5th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Yorkshire Gunners).

Moving into this role I now undertake responsibilities for the wider Royal Artillery as your senior soldier. I have quickly found out that the role is significantly more than visiting units and being an advisor to all who need it. In the first two weeks I have been present at the Union Jack Club committee meeting as the soldiers' representative. Shortly after I headed out to France with personnel from 26th Regiment Royal Artillery to participate in the burial of Gnr Lightfoot and Sjt Smith who were World War I gunners and whose remains were found during an excavation. It was incredible to finally be able to lay these two fallen soldiers to rest with a full military burial and with their families present. The soldiers and officers that took part really did the Gunners proud! I am responsible for delivering and supporting a plethora of events including but not limited to, Sandown, Hyde Park remembrance and the Central Mess activities in addition to being a voice for serving soldiers and officers, veterans, and cadets.

I genuinely believe the Gunners are firmly 'back on the map', and even more relevant than ever which has been highlighted by the war in Ukraine. We have a significant role to play in CGS 4+1 priorities and with the introduction of new equipment (TAIPAN and ARCHER most recently) there are exciting times ahead. I aim to be ubiquitous in my tenure and will shortly commence an initial round of visits to Regiments and personnel based outside of RD.

I have always been a keen sportsman, having represented the Army and Gunners at football for over 20 years and recently taking up Golf so I know firsthand the benefits to both individuals and the Regiments that playing sport brings. It is essential we continue to push people to play sport and for the CoC to lean in and release people. I know commitments are plentiful and workforce stretched, but the start point should be looking for a way to make it work and not excuses of why people cannot be released.

I look forward to being your Royal Artillery Sergeant Major for the next two years, and I hope to meet or speak to you in the coming months. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you need assistance or influence, because I am now part of a wider network of Command Sergeant Majors who can get answers on most things very quickly.



**You need to know what
you're worth before you
decide to leave.
Join us. Job done.**



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Many of those serving decide to leave before taking all considerations about their pension into account. Worse, many do not appreciate their worth, often underestimating their pension value. At today's values, a pension income of £20,000pa would require a pension pot of at least £400,000.

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Photo credit: Graeme Main Soldier Magazine, Taxi Charity for Military Veterans

2Lt Richard Styan, Royal Artillery



It is hard to believe - walking across the D-Day beaches on a summer morning - that these sands were the scene of the largest military invasion ever mounted.

Few locals are about at 0700; the air is cool with the tide out, the sea distant and shimmering.

If the signs pointing to the battlefields and cemeteries were not here, or flags draped across the streets by grateful people who refuse to forget the liberators, this could be any French seaside town.

Yet thoughts are inevitably consumed by all that happened on June 6, 1944, 80 years ago.

Now Normandy and its inhabitants are preparing for the arrival of world leaders, dignitaries and the few remaining veterans who participated in this seismic world event.

It will, in all likelihood, be the final major commemoration of D-Day involving living ex-combatants.

“You have to remember that those alive now are the kids of the bunch, just 18 or so when they fought,” Colin Mills, chair of the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans”, says. His organisation is preparing to bring a handful of the remaining former personnel to see the battlefields of their youth.

“This was a golden generation and they are treated like gods by the local population when they come here - they’re recognised in the streets, people queue up to talk to them and they never have to buy a drink.”

They are indeed the last human faces of the most brutal confrontation the world has ever seen.

The military facts of Operation OVERLORD have been told and re-told many times - the landings of 150,000 troops and attacks on five beaches codenamed Gold, Sword, Juno, Omaha and Utah; the parachute and glider assaults inland.

The sites are well preserved, among them Pegasus Bridge, where the airborne forces struck, and Pointe du Hoc - a fortification that American Rangers took by scaling cliffs with grappling irons.

There are museums and centres for visitors while cemeteries tell their own stories; testament to the enormous costs.

But all that is left of this story now falls to those who survived the longest of old ages. And their words are perhaps more important than they have ever been. Just as illumination rounds expose the darkness of a battlefield, their testimony shines as a light in a Europe where fighting is raging again.

Steam is now rising from the sands.

Further along the coast to Ver-sur-Mer at Gold Beach is the memorial to more than 22,400 personnel from British units who died on D-Day and in subsequent fighting. Hundreds of life-sized soldier silhouettes - a striking installation created by charity Standing with Giants for the anniversary - have been erected in tribute, like sentries.

It is here then that 2Lt Richard Styan, Royal Artillery came ashore as a replacement for a junior officer killed during the fighting.

The rugged cockney had married earlier in the war but had barely seen his wife since the ceremony.

Now he was waist-deep in seawater en route to the front line as part of the 91st Anti-Tank Regiment (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders).

He recalled a vile stench hitting him as his sodden troops began to move inland.

“It still lives with me now,” the veteran, who retired from the Army as a captain and recently celebrated his 100th birthday,” said.

“The smell was coming from the carcasses of all the cattle killed by bombing and shelling - it was awful.”

“The place was deserted - we came across the occasional farmhouse but I don’t remember seeing any civilians.”

“They must have left because of the fighting and our first action was in Operation EPSOM, the battle for Caen.”

The fact that her father, an anti-tank gunner, replaced a fallen officer is not lost on Richard Styan’s daughter.



The Master Gunner St James's Park 80th Anniversary Ride



In memoria aeterna

Thank you very much indeed to many of you who kindly supported my cycling last week. The headline is I survived SSAFA's 80th anniversary of D-Day cycle ride round Normandy, though the first day's cycling really did nearly finish me off! Some of us started the ride at the national D-Day 80 Commemoration in Portsmouth, a most uplifting occasion.

The first day of real work on the 6th June saw us cycle 93 miles to allow us to reach Montormel where a Polish division fought almost to the last man when surrounded and fighting off constant Nazi counter attacks. The site overlooks the Falaise Pocket. The next day, we were lucky enough to meet the last surviving member of that Division, Eugeniusz Jan Niedzielski, who was an amazing 100 years 9 months old and fit as a fiddle.

The next two days cycling were slightly less far (thank goodness!) - but not much. They included us laying wreaths at Bayeux Military Cemetery, where 4,648 persons lie buried and where a further 1,800 Commonwealth service men and women who have no known grave are recorded, visiting the five Allied Beaches - Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah and seeing where Major John Howard landed around midnight on 6 June to seize crossings over the River Orne and the canal at Pegasus Bridge. As many of you know, next to it is Cafe Gondree, the first house to be liberated in France, and there I met Madame Gondree who was four years old at the time and ensures knowledge about the bravery of the troops who liberated her country is never forgotten.



The ride was uplifting and exhausting just about in equal measure. The battle for Normandy, again as you will know, went on until mid-August 1944. During it, there were 209,672 Allied casualties including 36,976 killed and 19,221 missing. SSAFA supported those people and their families then; on the ride we were all proud that we continue to do that today, along with those who need our help after subsequent campaigns - Korea, the Falklands, Northern Ireland, Iraq, Afghanistan and many more. That is what SSAFA is there for; it is why we help around 60,000 service personnel, veterans and their families each year. The fundraising total from the ride is now just short of £80,000 of which my total - thanks to many of you, is just short of £5,000. The money is important for SSAFA but so is the awareness it generates.

It is also very personal for me. My mother was in the WRNS and worked in the operations room in Southwick House on D Day, moving markers on the board as the invasion fleet went across the Channel. And one of those markers contained her future husband - my father, he was an FOO within 7th Field Regiment Royal Artillery who were supporting 185 Brigade within 3rd Division. He landed on Sword Beach at about 10am and was badly wounded that evening just south of Pegasus Bridge (between Benouville and Blanville) when advancing with 2 WARWICKS who were trying to reach Caen. He always said he spent less than a day in France and at least 2 years being patched up in hospital. Pictures of Mum, Dad and an oil painting of the ops room, a small copy of which is in Southwick House (Mum is right in the front middle staring into space!)





In the lead up to the liberation of Rome. The landings at Sicily, Salerno & Anzio were the dress rehearsals for D-Day They weren't 'D-Day Dodgers'



British wounded being treated, and Italian prisoners waiting to be evacuated from the beach

The sound of birdsong and the scent of abandoned orange and lemon groves filled the air as my brother Toby and I made our way with an Italian film crew through the late April sunshine to the banks of the River Garigliano in Italy.

How different from the sounds of gunfire and cries of wounded men that would have rung out through the cold wet January nights of 80 years ago. Our father, then a young army officer of just 27, was supervising a makeshift ferry to rescue the wounded across this wide and fast flowing river under constant shell fire during the First Battle of Cassino.

This was the start of our week long trip to Cassino, Anzio and the Bay of Naples to see where our father served, was later

hospitalised and was eventually awarded the Military Cross (MC).

Dad was a Troop Commander responsible for 40 Gunners. There were four men to a stretcher who had to carry the wounded to the ferry and then on to safety on the other side. One particular night one troop made five trips of one and a half miles. The ferry was a boat / pontoon attached to ropes from both banks of the river allowing the boat with wounded to be pulled from one bank to the other. Mules would have normally done this type of work but I believe they were in short supply and anyway the very loud bangs in these dire circumstances would have made that impossible. Dad told me that after the event his superiors were amazed at how long he kept the ferry



running as that part of the river was then in enemy territory.

The owners of a War Museum along with an Italian TV crew had brought us to this spot. Dad's MC recommendation had given us the army coordinates of the ferry's location and Toby and Giuseppe Caucci from the museum worked out the exact spot on Google Maps using a coordinates translator.



Tim and Toby on the bank of the River Garigliano

The River Garigliano runs through the Castelforte valley in the Lazio region in central Italy. Today Castelforte is a lovely little town, however it was near totally destroyed in 1943/4 having had the misfortune of being on the Gustav Line / Garigliano Front. This was one of the lines that Kesselring, Hitler's Commander in Chief in Italy, had chosen across the Appenine Mountains to try and defend Rome and the northern half of Italy.

A lovely couple Giuseppe & Paola, with the help of their student son Francesco, had a few years ago set up the War Museum of

the Gustav Line / Garigliano Front to honour the liberation of Castelforte in May 1944. Paola told me that for too long the Italian people had swept under the carpet this dark period in their history but they now felt that it was time the children of today should know the full story. Giuseppe & Paola have weekday jobs and their museum is run by volunteers without any public funding.

Again with Giuseppe & Paola and the film crew from Rai3 TV, the national broadcaster, we visited the little village of Suio Alto very close to where that ferry was operated. Suio, like Castelforte and a lot of other villages and towns, had been decimated in the struggle between the Luftwaffe and the Allied bombing. We now had the honour of meeting one of its senior citizens, an elderly man formerly the village postman, called Alessandro Lefano.

In February 1944 a 19 year old private called Ernie Foster from the 5th Hampshire Regiment was in Suio and heard the cries of a dying woman from the rubble of a bombed out building 'save my child- save my child'. Ernie entered the building and not being able to do anything for the mother, saved the baby and took it to the local infirmary. A day or so later the baby's father tracked down young Ernie and presented him with a golden locket as a token of thanks. That baby was Alessandro Lefano, the 81 year old man Toby and I were now being introduced to. Ernie and Alessandro met up some 50 years later and became firm friends and after Ernie's death in 1992 Alessandro campaigned and was successful in having a piazza in Suio named after him. One resident of the village, on hearing about our visit, came out of her house and



presented us with a large bag of Sicilian type lemons from the trees of her garden.



Toby, Rai3 TV presenter, Alessandro Lefano & Tim at Suio

Our Dad was Lieutenant Richard (Dick) Arthur Cooper, known as Dick Cooper, and served in the 57th (East Surrey) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery and, prior to the Italian campaign, he and the 57th were with Monty and the Eight Army at the Battle of El Alamein.



Dick in uniform

After the ferry crossing Dick and all those in his 192 Battery from the Garigliano front were then withdrawn and sent to the Anzio Beachhead. It was hoped the landings at Anzio would allow the Allies to cut the German supply lines to the Gustav line and liberate Rome from there. Sadly the Allied troops got bogged down here and it was not until May 1944 before they could break out.

At Anzio in early February 1944 Dick and 192 Battery were back in the anti-tank role. Dick and his troop were given the task of

setting up additional gun emplacements (17 pounders) to defend the flyover bridge at Campo di Carne. This was the flyover across the main road from Anzio to Carocetto. Dick had only been there a few days when one evening, while reporting back to nearby Battery HQ, a Luftwaffe plane glided down with its engines shut off, firing its cannon and machine guns and dropping a shower of anti-personnel bombs.

Seven were wounded including Dick severely and sadly two died. The war was now over for Dad.

It was then about a week later that this same flyover bridge took centre stage in the Battle of Aprilia. Operation FISCHFANG (Catching Fish), personally ordered by Hitler, was a massive attack by the Germans from their base in Aprilia in order to drive the Allies back down the road to Anzio and into the sea. The flyover is where the Allies took up their defensive position and 192 Battery were in the thick of it. What took place was one of the most terrible and bloody battles of World War II and among the two sides more than 10,000 men were either lost, wounded or missing.



Flyover at Campo di Carne in or just after 1944



Back to 2024, we were parked up by a modern Italian overpass. A brown sign read "On this site thousands of men fought and died". We soon found the exact spot where Dad was wounded and had our photos taken, both with a tear in our eye. Then on a lovely country road on our way to have lunch in modern day Aprilia, we came across at the side of the road in a little valley, a stone memorial to a Lt Eric Fletcher Waters. Eric had died during Operation FISCHFANG and his body never found. The memorial had been placed by his son Roger Waters, bass guitarist and songwriter of Pink Floyd.



Flyover at Campo di Carne today

For two days of our week long trip we employed an Italian campaign guide called Danila Bracaglia from Monte Cassino Battlefield Tours. For the days we spent with Danila and her mini van driver we travelled around various places Dick would have known. We also stopped at a number of Commonwealth War Grave Commission cemeteries where Toby and I laid poppy crosses for all those of 192 who gave their lives. The mini van also traversed the steep mountain to the beautiful Abbey of Monte Cassino, that now looked so different after

the bombing of 80 years ago. We also shared this experience with a lovely Canadian couple called Greg and Debbie who were at the same time following in the footsteps of Greg's father Roy Kirkpatrick who had served in a US / Canadian regiment, The First Special Service Force.

If you have little idea of how to follow your own father or grandfather's footsteps in Italy, we can certainly recommend Danila's services.

Our trip was also helped by Dick's service records and the 192 Battery war diaries held at the National Archives together with the personal diary of Lt Col Anderson Smith, the Commanding Officer of the 57th. This diary is now held at the Imperial War Museum and Col Anderson Smith could have been court marshalled if it had at the time been known that he was keeping it. We also had the excellent services of a very useful book "The Story of the 57th (East Surrey) Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery" privately printed by Ray Goodacre and available online.

As well as Castelforte, we visited two others museums. At the Anzio Beachhead Museum we sat in on a lecture by the President of the museum to an Italian school party with their teacher translating for us. At the end Greg, through their teacher, thanked the children for their interest and understanding of what happened on the Gustav line and at Anzio all those years ago. We also visited the Piana delle Orme Museo, an Agricultural & War Museum, probably Italy's largest, with a very impressive display of original military equipment (after WW II the US and Canadians left much of their kit behind) presented in exhibitions of the battlefields of



El Alamein, Cassino, Anzio and a very heart stopping and thought provoking mock up of the destruction of Monte Cassino.

Returning to what happened to our father Dick. On being badly wounded, he was taken in the dark by ambulance to a Main Dressing Station, where they did as much as they could to save his life. Dick took shrapnel ripping right across his stomach, up his arm including the loss of two fingers and a thumb. At the time Dad had a map of the beachhead in his pocket and today Toby still has that map, bloodstains and all. He was later transferred to a General Hospital in Naples. It was now March 1944 and Dick witnessed, from his hospital bed, the eruption of Vesuvius. Not very long after he was lucky to escape a second Luftwaffe action, as the ward on the top floor above him was hit. At the end of that month he returned by hospital ship to England. It was a long journey home via the Suez Canal and Cape of South Africa as it was too dangerous to return via Gibraltar.

After a year's convalescence Dick returned to the Chichester Town Council in Sussex where he continued his career in local government, gaining his accountancy qualifications. He married Dorothy (Dolly) in 1952 and they had three children, Sheila, Timothy and Toby. By retirement he had become Treasurer of Tandridge District Council in Surrey. Dick died in 1997, two years after his beloved Dolly.

It took four battles at Cassino, with the loss of many thousands of men from



Dick later in life

ten or more different countries and the destruction of a beautiful abbey for the Allies to breakthrough the Gustav line and meet up with those stuck on the Anzio beachhead and begin the advance resulting in the liberation of Rome on the 4th of June.

For the 57th, in fact for all the British forces, it was not for them the glory of marching into Rome. Lt General Mark Clark, in charge of the US forces, had ensured that this honour was for him and his US troops alone. Clark had gone back on General Sir Harold Alexander's plan to challenge as many of the retreating German troops before marching on to Rome. The 57th stayed on in Italy another 11 months right up to the final battle for Italy in April 1945. We don't know if anyone from the 57th is still alive today.

Our final day was in Naples and we had to include a visit to Vesuvius. We had both learnt a lot from our trip. If Dad had not been wounded and had therefore gone on to be part of Operation Fischfang, Toby and I and our sister Sheila might not have ever existed. We also found out that the great Italian people suffered terribly during this whole period and that those Allied soldiers



Dick's blood stained map

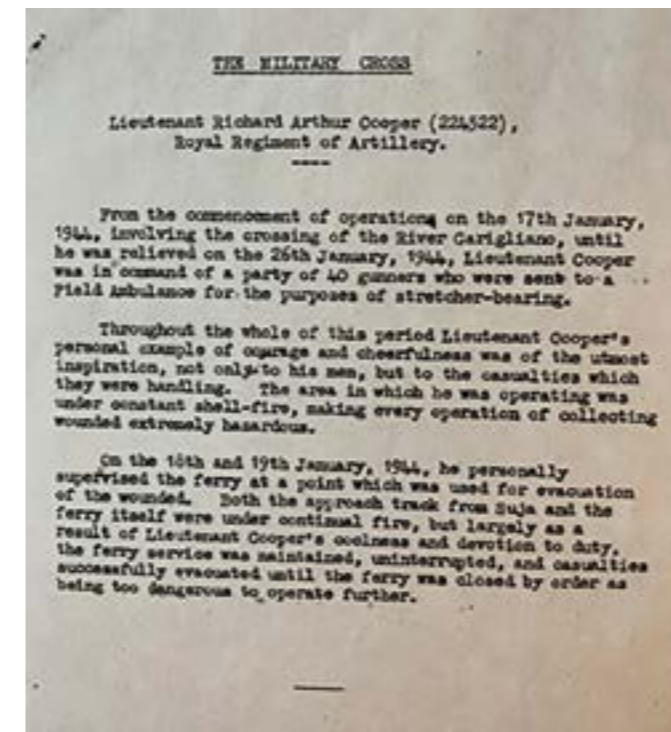


who served in Italy were all but forgotten at home as D-Day soon overshadowed their immense bravery. Dad always said the landings in Sicily, Salerno and Anzio were the dress rehearsals for D-Day. In England at the time there was some feeling that the troops in Italy were sunning themselves and drinking red wine among the orange and lemon groves and that they were 'D-Day Dodgers'. Nothing could be further from the truth.



Dick's medals

by Tim Cooper



Dick MC citation



Dick's Royal Artillery shield



Lance Bombadier Abbie Robinson-Wyss becomes first female farrier in British Army to fully qualify as military farrier



Lance Bombadier Abbie Robinson-Wyss, King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery

Lance Bombadier Abbie Robinson-Wyss in the Royal Horse Artillery has made history by becoming the first woman in the British Army to fully qualify as a military farrier.

Despite being a trade that is male-dominated, the number of female farriers is on the rise and it's all thanks to people like Lance Bombadier Abbie Robinson-Wyss.

The NCO from King's Troop RHA, who was part of the team that made the horseshoes worn by the horses who pulled the Queen's coffin at her funeral, said: "If you're passionate and you're wanting to do something, then do it – there's nothing stopping you."

She added: "I was just happy to qualify as a farrier... but knowing if I did do it then

I could set a bit of history as well, that was just the bonus for me really."

Military farriers file and trim horses' hoofs to ensure they remain healthy and strong, and then fit specially made horseshoes so they can go out on the road and perform ceremonial duties.

The soldier, who has served with King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery since 2014, claims she was "just lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time qualifying within the military".

But she earned her military farrier title fair and square, even passing her theory examinations with honours.

Passionate about riding and caring for horses since she was five, 28-year-old LBdr



Robinson-Wyss couldn't imagine a career that wasn't equine-focused, so after some research she decided to join the Army.

She said: "I could never see myself doing a job on civilian street, so looked into the Army and I was like, this is perfect."

"Found out more about the King's Troop and then found out you could then do farriery within the King's Troop as well, so for me it was a bonus."

LBdr Robinson-Wyss completed her apprenticeship at the Defence Animal Training Regiment (DATR) in Melton Mowbray and now joins the cadre of Certified Military Farriers.

Of her success, the DATR said: "We are incredibly proud of LBdr R-Wyss' determination and flagship journey."

"All of our farriers are a credit to their regiments and the historic trade that they continue to master."

"What an amazing role model LBdr Robinson-Wyss is to females within London District Regiments KTRHA and HCMR."

"We have another young lady just starting her journey also – very proud."

Just like LBdr Robinson-Wyss says, the young soldier went for it and now it's her future, saying: "She's not been with the Troop that long and she's shown an interest and she's got in. So yeah, it's good."

When asked whether she would have to buy a crate of beer for her fellow soldiers for having made the news, she said: "I think they'll be like 'chuffing hell, that's all we've seen!'"

"The main thing was just to qualify, this was just an added bonus on top."





Combining Army Reserve service as a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) Operator alongside his social life



Gunner Dan Clarke aged 27 from Washington, Tyne and Wear

Gunner Dan Clarke aged 27 from Washington, Tyne and Wear combines his Army Reserve service as a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) Operator alongside his social life and training to be a train driver.

Dan recently returned to the United Kingdom from South Africa where he exchanged long range rockets for long range bullets to represent the United Kingdom Armed Forces (UKAF), Target Rifle team at the 132nd World Long Range Shooting Championships held in Bloemfontein in South Africa.

Before joining our 204 (Tyneside Scottish) Battery based at Kingston Park in Newcastle, Dan had already been Target Rifle (TR) shooting for eight years, but joining the British Army gave him the extra support

he needed to develop his passion for TR shooting to another level.

Dan said: "I was selected to represent the UKAF team alongside 12 British Army, 3 Royal Navy and 4 Royal Air Force shooters, selection to the UKAF team at the World Championships represents the very highest level of service shooting at the biggest target rifle competition on the world stage, held every 4 years. The Sport of target rifle shooting is conducted at distances of 300, 500, 600, 700, 800 and 900 metres and involves shooting a target made up of 5 scoring rings over strings of 15 shots. To achieve a highest possible, score a firer must keep all shots within a 500mm wide scoring ring taking into account the effects of elevation but more importantly the changing wind speed and



direction - particularly difficult in South Africa. During the tour I was selected as one of only 8 firers for each of our team matches."

"I began shooting with the British Army in 2019 when I joined @101RegtRA, since joining the Army Reserve, I have been part of the Army Target Rifle Team every year at a wide range of competitions from National Marksman to short and long range inter services matches. In 2021 I attended the Scottish Full-bore Open Championships with the Army Team, culminating in a selection for England in the Lawrence match against Scotland and been a Reserve for the team GB squad and hope to get a full cap soon. In addition to top level competitions, I have also had opportunities to attend training weekends throughout the year and help to deliver beginners courses to other service personnel who are new to the sport, the support from my parent unit 101 Regiment, @RoyalArtillery has been outstanding enabling me to attend TR fixtures alongside maintaining and enhancing my skills as an MLRS operator and soldier."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the mix of sport and military training the Army Reserve

offers, providing many other exciting opportunities live firing MLRS in the USA, being part of a saluting gun crew for The King's Coronation and Remembrance Services and completed a leadership course qualifying me for promotion. Looking forward I'm hoping to qualify as a Physical Training Instructor which will enable me to maintain and develop the level of fitness of soldiers in the Regiment."

"Finally, Marksmanship is a core skill in the British Army and the principles applied in sport shooting can also be used to enhance combat marksmanship. I hope to be able to contribute towards the development of other junior soldiers' marksmanship within the regiment during range days using the experiences I have gained as part of the Army and UKAF shooting teams. For any serving Army Reserve soldiers, the Army Target Rifle team run frequent beginner's courses for anybody who may be interested in trying the sport."

Enquiries can be directed to the Army Rifle Association Chief Clerk – Samantha.treumann742@mod.gov.uk



Regular to Reserve Transfer Information
Why would a Regular Service Leaver choose to join the Army Reserves:
What is the offer and how can you benefit?



INDIVIDUAL

- **Commitment:** Min of **ONLY 19 RSDs** for first three years which does not require a 16-day Continuous Training Exercise (this is optional), providing flexibility on the days attended to fit in and around civilian work and family commitments.
- **ONLY ITRs 2 (SCR) & Core Education** required in first three years.
- **Paid** in either ¼, ½, ¾, or full Reserve Service Day (RSDs) pay for a min of 2 hours @ Rank including **5% X Factor**.
- Opportunity to work additional RSDs above the FoE, depending on agreement with the CoC.
- **Rank:** Pte – SSgt can normally transfer across at the same rank. WOs may be asked to revert to a lower rank on entry. Capt's and below transfer in at current rank. There are some opportunities for Maj's to transfer in at same rank depending on unit vacancies.
- **MS:** Reported on and boarded for promotion as usual so career progression is still possible.
- Annual Tax-Free Bounty paid at highest rate **£2084 paid** - once Commitment requirements achieved and paid pro-rata against percentage of year attended (N.B 2023/24 rate stated).
- A Regular to Reserve transfer does not require the soldier to leave the Regular Army first and then re-join the Army Reserves. By completing the correct documentation ([AFE 07547A](#)) at the earliest opportunity, there will be a smooth transfer into the Reserves following their last day of Regular Army service.
- **HTD paid** up to 50 miles @ MMA rates (authorisation for further distances).
- **Pay in lieu of Leave** at approximately 1 RSD for every 10 Days Training.
- Tax-Free Call out Gratuity (COG) for Ops **£633** Tax free e.g., MACA tasks.
- The Army Reserve guarantees service to age 55 for soldiers and age 60 for officers.
- **Pension Abatement:** There is no pension abatement for Army Reserves working on RSDs, so a Regular in receipt of a Service Pension receives all their pension, their reserve pay and is contributing to a further Reserve Service Pension which is paid when due. For concerns ring JPAC 0800 0853600
- Army Reserve **Pension** is accrued in the same way as Regular service for each day served and is paid at 60 or reaching State Pension Age depending on circumstances.
- **Further Work Opportunities.** Reservists can undertake FTRS and other contracts to increase their level of commitment, pay and allowances. Vacancies are accessed via the [SERVE](#) website.
- **Mobilised Service:** Opportunity to volunteer for mobilisation (overseas deployments / Ops through intelligent mobilisation) which carry all the same pay and allowances as regular service. For those in receipt of a service pension there is no abatement when mobilised.
- Access to Standard Learning Credits and DLE courses.
- Forces Railcard (1/3 Off Travel).
- Use of unit gym for fitness and access to Occupational Health.
- Armed Forces Covenant benefits where employers are signatories – potential two-week paid leave for annual camp attendance (check employer HR Policy).
- Partial de-kit – retain uniform.
- **Safety net** – easier to return to Regular service if employment or circumstances change.
- Possible to transfer and take an **'agreed'** period of Leave prior to starting a Reserve career, or at any time deemed necessary to fit in with family and work commitments.
- Cap-badge transfer is possible – if you wish to try something different!
- Find your local Army Reserve Centre on [Army Reserve \(part-time\) \(mod.uk\)](#)

FAMILY

- Improved Unit Welfare Support and access to Army Welfare Agencies, especially when deployed.
- Advance notice of training events – up to one year ahead.
- Access to the Armed Forces Community.
- Armed Forces Covenant benefits from local councils / some employers.

EMPLOYER

- Transferable Military skills: accredited to civilian qualifications (Driving Licences are valued).
- Prior notification of your Commitments via Employer Notification letter.
- Support at National, Regional and Local level to cover your Army service.
- Employer financial support package if mobilised (extra support for small and medium-sized businesses - up to £500 per month).

Don't sign-off and waste your training; transfer to the Army Reserves, speak with the receiving unit RCMO/ recruiting team, use the Digital Transfer App or complete form [AFE 07547A](#)

It's that simple!



4TH REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

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POTENTIAL

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The 4th Regiment Royal Artillery has Strike, Logistics & Communication roles available at OR2 to OR4 (Pte to Cpl) now. Use the QR code or link to register your interest.





Gunners' Rugby Triumph in Italy: A Tour of Resilience and Skill



The Gunners' Rugby Tour to Italy was more than just a series of rugby matches and training sessions. It was a testament to the resilience, skill, and adaptability of the Royal Artillery officers and soldiers who made up the squad.

The tour commenced on Monday 13th May 2024 with a flight from London to Naples. The team's first interaction with the local community was a rugby coaching session with the 1st Joint Force Command (JFC) Naples Scouts. This set the tone for the rest of the tour, which was marked by numerous community engagement activities. The team trained with the JFC Lions and Realize Cooperativa Sociale, an organisation that integrates immigrants into society and promotes the province of L'Aquila through social events, educational workshops and professional training.

The team also had the opportunity to immerse themselves in Italian culture, visiting the historic sites of Monte Cassino and Pompeii. These experiences provided the team with a deeper understanding of Italy's history and heritage allowing them to

reflect on the sacrifices made by those who came before them.

One of the highlights of the tour was the 80th Commemorative Service at Cassino Commonwealth War Memorial, attended by HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh and the Chief of the General Staff. This was a day of reflection for the team, as they paid tribute to those who gave their lives for our freedom.

On the rugby field, the Gunners demonstrated their skill, strategy, and resilience. They faced two formidable Italian clubs, L'Aquila and Colleferro. The match against L'Aquila was altered to a semi-contact game due to unforeseen circumstances. Despite this change, the team adapted swiftly, demonstrating their sportsmanship, flexibility and commitment to the game.

The tour reached its climax with the game against Colleferro at ASD Appia Rugby Club. The Gunners seized this opportunity with gusto, and their enthusiasm was evident in the impressive 56-3 victory. This triumphant note not only marked the end of the tour but also highlighted the team's tenacity and skill on the rugby field. The significance of playing



at the ecological site of ASD Appia added an extra layer of meaning to the match, as the team supported the federation's efforts to grow the club.

A special mention must be made for SSgt Ken Dowding. This tour marked his last interaction with the club before leaving the Army after 22 years of Service. His dedication to Gunner rugby, both as a player and a coach, spanned over two decades, making his contribution invaluable to the team. His departure marks the end of an era, but his legacy will continue to inspire the team in their future endeavours.

As the team returned to the UK on Sunday 26th May 2024, they brought back not just memories of rugby matches and cultural experiences, but also a sense of personal growth and development. The Gunners' Rugby Tour to Italy was truly a journey of discovery and learning; both on and off the field.

Overall, the tour was not just about playing rugby in a different country - it was about building connections with the local community, immersing oneself in a different

culture, and honouring the sacrifices of those who came before us. The Gunners' Rugby Tour to Italy was a transformative experience for all involved, and one that will be remembered.

A special thanks must be given to the tour sponsors Lockheed Martin, CGS, M&C Saatchi, RHP Enterprises, Morgan Sindall Construction, Leonardo and Thales, to the Army Sports Lottery, Army Sports Control Board and the Royal Artillery Centre for Personal Development. Thank you also to the Commanding Officers and units for releasing players, without this support the tour would not have happened. Thank you from all members of the Gunner Rugby Club.

Pre-season training and selection camp 24/25 will be at Newbury Rugby Club 17-23 Jul 24.

Rugby officers should contact:

Men's Director: stephanie.harris493@mod.gov.uk

Team Managers: Iain.Ritchie351@mod.gov.uk
Michael.Mitchell186@mod.gov.uk

Head Coach: Craig.Higgins173@mod.gov.uk

by WO2 Michael 'Mitch' Mitchell
Trg Plans, Land Warfare Centre





72 hr fishing session at Festival Fishery in Glastonbury



Left to right Jamie, Evans and Punchy

On Tuesday, May 14th, the Royal Artillery Carp Group (RACG) embarked on a thrilling 72-hour fishing session at Festival Fishery in Glastonbury. The anticipation was palpable as the group gathered at the picturesque lakeside by 9:30 AM. After a leisurely 30-minute walk around the lake, each angler carefully selected their fishing spot. The draw, conducted promptly at 10 AM, determined the order in which anglers could choose their swims. To everyone's surprise, Captain Cain, notorious for drawing the last spot in previous matches, secured the first pick. With the draw complete, all participants settled into their chosen swims, ready to cast their lines.



Captain Cain

Sergeant Harrison wasted no time, landing the first catch of the session, a respectable carp weighing in at 20 pounds and 8 ounces. Close on his heels, Bombardier Evans showcased his angling prowess, reeling in two carp in rapid succession, the largest of which tipped the scales at 19 pounds and 6 ounces.



Sergeant Harrison

Captain Cain, despite his early draw, encountered an unexpected twist: a catfish. Undeterred, he continued to catch fish throughout the day. As daylight faded, more catches followed, with most anglers enjoying success on the opening day.



However, it was Warrant Officer Class 2 Stones who stole the spotlight on the second night. His massive carp, weighing an impressive 37 pounds and 8 ounces which came very close to a personal best. The camaraderie among the RACG members intensified as they shared stories, exchanged tips, and reveled in the thrill of the chase throughout the closing stages of the event. Another first-class event for the group held at a fantastic venue offering something for everyone.

Next up, the group have an overseas visit to France in June and will hold the spectacular Royal Artillery Championships in July, this will be help at Norton Disney lake. The group is open to all serving regular and reserves. We have events all over the country and we welcome anglers of all abilities.



Warrant Officer Class 2 Ian Stones

For those looking to improve their angling ability, represent the RA through carp fishing and interested in joining the RACG, reach out to Bombardier Chris Evans via email at Christopher.evans215@mod.gov.uk. You can also find the group on Facebook (RA Carpers) or follow them on Instagram (@RA.Carpers).



Bombardier Evans



REGIMENTAL AND BATTERY DISBANDMENTS

Following recommendations by the Royal Artillery Heritage Committee, the Master Gunner’s Committee has approved a revised Royal Artillery Standing Order covering the instructions for suspended and disbanded regiments and batteries. The Master Gunner’s Committee further approved recommendations for a number of regiments and batteries, which have been in long term suspended animation, to be disbanded.

The practical impact of this change is to relieve the burden on the Regimental Secretary of accounting for, and maintaining, the property of those regiments and batteries in suspended animation. This will allow that property to be redistributed across the Regiment: transferred to the RAHT Collection or the RAI Collection, or otherwise disposed of, as appropriate. It also ensures that the status of our inactive regiments and batteries more accurately reflects the order in which RHQ might seek to reanimate them in the future.

The tables below show those regiments and batteries to be formally disbanded (22 regiments and 36 batteries), and those which will remain in suspended animation.

The updated Royal Artillery Standing Order will be promulgated by RHQ RA and will be applied in the case of the newly disbanded units and sub units.

Table 1: regiments, currently in suspended animation, to be disbanded or to remain in suspended animation.

1947 Regt Number	Date of formation	Date of SA	Regimental title on SA	Disband/SA
2	1901	1993	2 Fd Regt RA	SA
6	1940	1968	6 Lt Regt RA	Disband
10	1899	1957	10 Fd Regt RA	Disband
15	1915	1958	15 Med Regt RA	Disband
17	1900	1995	17 Trg Regt RA	SA
18	1927	1969	18 Lt Regt RA	Disband
20	1900	1976	20 Lt Regt RA	Disband
21	1927	1964	21 Regt RA	Disband
22	1947	2004	22 Regt RA	SA
23	1899	1958	23 Fd Regt RA	Disband
24	1918	1977	24 Msl Regt RA	SA
25	1901	1984	25 Fd Regt RA	SA
27	1927	1993	27 Regt RA	SA
28	1933	1956	28 Coast Regt RA	Disband
30	1947	1958	30 HAA Regt RA	Disband
31	1900	1961	31 Trg Regt RA	Disband



33	1947	1961	33 Para Lt Regt RA	Disband
34	1924	1969	34 Lt AD Regt RA	Disband
35	1947	1958	35 LAA Regt RA	Disband
36	1947	1977	36 Hy AD Regt RA	Disband
37	1900	1968	37 Hy AD Regt RA	Disband
38	1915	1960	38 Trg Regt RA	Disband
39	1915	2014	39 Regt RA	SA
40	1900	2012	40 Regt RA	SA
41	1899	1961	41 Fd Regt RA	Disband
42	1900	1977	42 Hy Regt RA	Disband
44	1899	1958	44 HAA Regt RA	Disband
45	1924	1993	45 Regt RA	SA
46	1947	1958	46 HAA Regt RA	Disband
48	1900	1959	48 Fd Regt RA	Disband
49	1900	1992	49 Regt RA	SA
50	1915	1993	50 Regt RA	SA
94	1939	1993	94 Loc Regt RA	SA
95	1941	1977	95 FOU RA	Disband

Table 2: batteries (in 1947 renumbered order of precedence), currently in suspended animation, to be disbanded or to remain in suspended animation.

RHA Precedence	Battery	Date of formation	Date of SA	Battery title on SA	Disband/SA
4	V	1793	2013	V Bty RHA	SA
16	M	1809	2023	M HQ Bty RHA	SA
RA Precedence					
20	17	1757	2018	17 (Corunna) Bty RA	SA
21	15	1757	2004	15 HQ Bty RA	SA
23	25	1758	2011	25 Bty RA	SA
26	33	1759	1993	33 JL Bty RA	SA
27	2	1759	1997	2 Bty RA	SA
30	35	1765	2015	35 Bty RA	SA
31	38	1768	2018	38 (Serangapatam) Bty RA	SA
32	128	1768	1958	128 Med Bty RA	Disband
33	39	1770	1993	39 JL Bty RA	Disband
36	40	1771	1993	40 JL Bty RA	Disband
37	44	1771	1972	44 JL Bty RA	Disband
39	41	1771	1982	41 Fd Bty RA	SA
43	124	1778	1958	124 HAA Bty RA	Disband
44	51	1779	1993	51 (Kabul 1842) Bty RA	SA
45	16	1779	2019	16 Bty (Sandham’s Coy) RA	SA
46	50	1779	1972	50 Hy Bty RA	Disband
48	52	1779	2015	52 (Niagara) Bty RA	SA
49	109	1786	1958	109 Fd Bty RA	Disband
50	110	1786	1957	110 LAA Bty RA	Disband
51	54	1786	1984	54 (Maharajpore) Bty RA	SA
55	56	1786	2015	56 (Olpherts’) Bty RA	SA



57	60	1791	1968	60 Hy AD Bty RA	Disband
63	69	1793	1958	69 Fd Bty RA	Disband
69	67	1794	1971	67 Fd Bty RA	Disband
70	68	1794	1969	68 Med Bty RA	Disband
71	70	1794	1969	70 Med Bty RA	Disband
72	77	1794	1969	77 JL Bty RA	Disband
76	76	1795	2014	76 (Maude's) Bty RA	SA
77	75	1795	1968	75 Hy Bty RA	Disband
79	78	1796	1968	78 Hy Bty RA	Disband
81	80	1799	1959	80 Fd Bty RA	Disband
82	81	1799	1961	81 HQ Bty RA	Disband
83	82	1799	1958	82 Para Lt Bty RA	Disband
84	126	1800	1958	126 HAA Bty RA	Disband
85	111	1800	1984	111 (Dragon) Bty RA	SA
88	92	1802	1958	92 LAA Bty RA	Disband
89	89	1802	1961	89 Trg Bty RA	Disband
90	91	1802	1958	91 LAA Bty RA	Disband
92	87	1802	1959	87 Fd Bty RA	Disband
93	90	1802	1958	90 LAA Bty RA	Disband
96	95	1803	1959	95 Fd Bty RA	Disband
97	96	1803	1958	96 Para Lt Bty RA	Disband
99	98	1803	1958	98 Med Bty RA	Disband
100	99	1803	1958	99 LAA Bty RA	Disband
105	107	1806	1958	107 Fd Bty RA	Disband
106	104	1806	1960	104 HAA Bty RA	Disband
107	105	1806	1961	105 Fd Bty RA	Disband
108	106	1806	1957	106 LAA Bty RA	Disband
109	108	1806	1961	108 HAA Bty RA	Disband
110	113	1808	1960	113 Loc Bty RA	Disband
119	Z	1824	2014	Z Fd Bty RA	SA
121	145	1826	1977	145 (Maiwand) Bty RA	SA
125	156	1848	1969	156 (Inkerman) Bty RA	SA
126	152	1848	1965	152 (Inkerman) Loc Bty RA	SA
127	27	1848	1976	27 Bty (Strange's Coy) RA	SA
129	160	1854	1963	160 Bty (Middleton's Coy) RA	SA
131	171	1857	1983	171 (The Broken Wheel) Bty RA	SA
133	26	1934	1958	26 LAA Bty RA	Disband

Note:

To be disbanded	
To remain in SA	

Any individual or organisation that has, in the past made presentations to any of the above disbanded batteries or regiments and who wishes to reclaim their presentation, should contact the Assistant Regimental Secretary, Lt Col Richard Carter - richard.carter694@mod.gov.uk



Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance

The Royal Artillery Association will conduct the Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas on Saturday 13th July 2024 commencing at 1100 hrs. All members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and their families are welcome to attend. Please find further details of the event www.thegunners.org.uk/events



RA Assembly Report

Over the weekend 17-19 May, once again the Past and Present members of the Royal Artillery, came together at the Norbreck Hotel in Blackpool to attend the Royal Artillery Assembly. Thankfully after last year's collision with the Army & Navy Rugby, the numbers attending this year were higher and given how extremely busy the serving force is, it was hugely re-assuring to see our veteran numbers up and everyone hugely supportive of the weekend.

The Friday evening as always was given up to individual comradeship with various groups coming together under their own arrangements, in many cases catching up for the first time in 12 months. The RHA Association built upon their first gathering last year, to also incorporate their AGM and social on the Friday evening. The National Executive Committee also gathered for the Master Gunner St James's Park Dinner, which included the first-time attendance for a couple of members, the Regional Representative for North Wales and the Chairman of the RA Old Boys and JLRRA Association. It was also a fitting opportunity to say farewell to the outgoing Chair of the RACF Welfare Committee (15 years) and long-time trustee Andrew Dines in attendance.

Having made considerable changes to the agenda last year, we continued to adjust slightly for this year's event, and I would like to thank everyone for the mostly positive comments and responses. The NEC meeting kicking off the formal proceedings, where amongst other business, the new Mansergh Memorial Award was unveiled, the award was unanimously well received by the whole committee. The Standard Bearers' inspection and competition now rightly at the forefront of the morning's events had been further refined and again all the changes were positively commented on by both those on parade and those watching the competition. Our Standard Bearers remain the cornerstone of the Association, representing the Headquarters, your Branches, our Regiments and most importantly on a Gunners final parade, the families of the bereaved and I for one, salute and thank every one of you for all your work and support throughout the year.

Post lunch, the main formal events opened with the Master Gunner St James's Park, Lt Gen Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL who was able to announce the news that His Majesty the King has very kindly agreed to be the Patron of the RAA and the RAI, this news was met with a spontaneous applause from all attending. The RAA AGM chaired by Brig Mark Pountain CBE delivered his Chairman's Report and focused on RAA events and activities over the last 12 months. As always, the Chair was supported and assisted by the Regimental Secretary Col Matthew Carter, who focused on this year's Financial Report and closed with the formal voting on RAA resolutions.

After the RAA Chairman's closing remarks, there was a short institute break before we rolled straight into the Assembly, opening with the Regimental Colonel Col RC Harmer ADC, who delivered the Regimental Update. This year his update included governance and recruiting, as well as a thought-provoking request with regards to online behaviours. At this point the Regimental Secretary returned to the lectern and gave a presentation on the Regimental Charities, which included a detailed breakdown of the financial support that has been delivered across the charities by area. This was followed



by a Media and Communications update by the Director of Communication, James Billingham, focussing on the newly launched Gunner Net App and the soon to be launched, Royal Artillery one-stop website, the website is currently in the final stages of build and population, before going live when it will seamlessly replace the current website.

As we came towards the end of the assembly the Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, WO1 (RASM) Sanders gave an impassioned and emotive reflections presentation, on this his final event before handing over this most prestigious of roles. On completion of the RASM's piece, all that was left was a short round of open forum before we moved on to the Association Awards. A full list of the awards are mentioned overleaf in a table but it has to be said this year was a phenomenal year and whilst the RAA Association Medal was not awarded, the presentations will be remembered for the awarding of some long overdue Certificates of Merits, at least one of which resulting in a standing ovation applause. All that was left before the Standard Bearers retrieved their Standards and closed the Assembly was the final award of the day, that of the Mansergh Memorial Award which like last year was an amazing if not emotional way to bring the formal proceedings to an end for another year.

Once the assembly was concluded there was plenty of time to retire to the bar before the tried and tested format of Reception Drinks, Sunset Ceremony, Gala Dinner and Entertainment. Once again, the shining light of this section of the weekend was the Lancashire Artillery Volunteer Band, the Band support not only the Association but the Regiment supremely throughout the year and this year it was our honour for the Master Gunner to be able to ask them to come forward and accept the award of the RA Association Cup which was won by 103 Regiment RA for 2023 with specific acknowledgment of the support the Band provide.

As always, our Honorary Chaplain, The Venerable Stephen Robbins CB delivered a wonderful service on the Sunday morning that was both thought provoking and uplifting and

was attended by a considerably greater amount than on recent previous years. The service continues to play an integral and important part for reflection amongst the weekend's events. Many a goodbyes and farewells undertaken after the service and at the hotel reception, all that was left was for the die-hards (including both myself and the Regimental Secretary) to have a relaxing day before the final and now regular Boston Suite Sunday evening event, of buffet and entertainment. This has grown into a fitting farewell to close the weekend and particularly for myself to have a genuine relaxed catch up with our members, after what is always a very busy but hugely rewarding weekend.

Finally, a thank you to everyone who attended, those that worked and supported and the wonderful hotel team for making the event a huge success, also particular thanks to Mr Steve Collins who shared his wonderful JLRA collection.

"We'll Meet Again date 16-18 May 2025"



Gala Dinner



Standard Bearer Inspection



Andy Owens



The Band



Awards



Mansergh Memorial Award



Standard Bearers



W Morrison

Founder's Day

On Thursday 6th June members of the Association were invited to the annual Founder's Day parade at Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal reviewed the parade of the Chelsea Pensioners, delivering a touching speech with a special tribute to the veterans of World War II, as the Parade coincided with the 80th Anniversary of D Day landings in Normandy, France.

Many thanks to those members of the Association who attended this special event in the Hospital's calendar, to join the In-Pensioners to honour the Royal Hospital Chelsea's founder, King Charles I.



Lads



2023 TROPHY WINNERS

AWARD	WINNER
MANSERGH MEMORIAL AWARD	WO2 G Murray, ITC
CERTIFICATE OF MERIT	Mr Colin Friend, Pembrokeshire Branch
	Mr Robert Ewington, Bury St Edmunds Branch
	Mrs Pamela Soley, Newbury & District Branch
	Mr Ronald Bailey, Wrexham Branch
	Mr Andrew Owens, Tyneside Branch
	Mr Philip Garbutt, Central Branch
	Mr Kevin Langshaw, Plymouth Branch
BURTON CUP Most money per capita to Heritage	Lt Col Mark Vye, SW & Wessex Regional Representative WO1 (RASM) Sanders L, RASM
ARTILLERY HOUSE CUP Most money raised overall by a Branch for RACF/RAA	Norwich Branch
CATERHAM CUP Runners-up to Artillery House Cup	Norwich Branch
EIRE CUP Most effort & support to its branch throughout the year	Plymouth Branch
RA ASSOCIATION CUP - Regimental Action or achievement of particular merit	Lewes Branch
RA ASSOCIATION KERR CUP - Battery Action or achievement of particular merit	103 Regiment RA
RA ASSOCIATION ABU KLEA TROPHY Best turned-out Standard Bearer	1 st Battery (The Blazers)
STANDARD BEARERS' COMPETITION	Mr W Morrison Edinburgh Branch
RA ASSOCIATION PRIZE FOR YOUNG OFFICER	Mr W Morrison, Edinburgh Branch
	2Lt T Fraser RA



Founder's Day



Founder's Day



D-Day 80 - Shoeburyness Branch

As plans for the national Normandy 80 events were confirmed and the attendance list for Founder's Day at Chelsea Hospital set. I had the opportunity to accept the invite to attend Shoeburyness Branch as they supported the Normandy 80 Commemoration parade being held at the Living Memorial at Rettendon, Chelmsford.

My first task however, was a routine Branch visit for their meeting on the Wednesday evening. Out of all the branches I visited so far, I have to say that the Branch is supremely looked after by the Navy and Military club in Southend on Sea and the meeting, atmosphere, attendance, and engagement was second to none. Of note, was the list of events that various elements of the Branch support and attend, often with their guns. The work the Branch engages in is simply breathtaking and it was an honour to be able to not only give my own presentation but to witness the detail and dedication displayed by all the members.

It was an early start on the Thursday to collect the Guns from the sheds and follow the teams over to Rettendon. As the guns deployed to their positions, I was able to familiarise myself with what is a remarkable and humbling place (I intend to do a further piece on the Living Memorial and the wonderful couple who have made it their passion) and very inspiring.

The service itself went without hitch and the guns of Shoeburyness not only provided an outstanding back drop to the service but fired the minute silence marking the remembrance period with dignity and professionalism.

The marching contingent was provided by the Royal Engineers in support of their 104 year old Normandy Veteran, Don Sheppard who arrived with a police escort and his

attendance added an even greater element of poignancy to what was a remarkable event.

There are too many names to thank but from myself and my wife Julie, I would like to thank the whole Branch. It was an honour to be counted amongst your number, even if it was for a 24 hour period and we would both love to return soon... Great job!



Aigburth-Merseyside Branch

Members of the Aigburth-Merseyside Branch and its standards were busy this month paying their respects to the fallen Gunners from both World Wars. On Thu 6 Jun, Harry Heatley and Branch Vice Chairman, Gordon Stewart took part in the City's Service at St John's Gardens. The following day, on 7 Jun a party of 19 from the Branch, combined with members of the Royal British Legion Crosby Branch travelled to Belgium to take part in a battlefield tour, visiting Ypres and the Somme. The highlight was attending the daily Service at the Menin gate, where branch members Bernadette O'Neil and Paul Mosquito laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch and 32 Regt RA and the Standard Bearers joined the guard of honour. The tour brought home the horrors of the battles and the sacrifices made, but also to keep our promises of remembrance. Meanwhile, the branch members back on Merseyside continued to pay their respects taking part in the City's D-Day 80 march, 10 members took part in the parade and our standards were paraded by Kevin Rowan and Keith Shepherd.



RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

Cost of living worries, higher monthly outgoings and finding it hard to afford those essential items or white goods, could we help you? The RACF are here to help with those essential needs.

Some of the areas we may be able to help with are white and brown household goods, help towards funerals, rental deposits, mobility aids, priority debts (rent arrears, council tax arrears, utility arrears), care home fees and annual grants and many more areas. We cannot however help with private medical or legal fees.

Two of our biggest areas that our Gunner family required help with were mobility needs and household goods.

To date the RACF have helped to provide 352 families help with essential needs.

If you have worries about money for essential needs, please contact us and we can signpost you.

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

We can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF-WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk or through the website.

Letters of appreciation

"I am so very grateful for the news that you kindly decided to grant me an annual grant... This will make a tremendous difference to my situation"
Gunner dependant

"Thank you all for your speedy action on my request for assistance for this distressed young lady. We have now gathered sufficient funds for her and her partner to move house, and she is very relieved that her nightmare is coming to an end." Gunner Veteran Family

"I wish to ensure that this will greatly assist him in his return to independent living. It helps to provide him with a secure and affordable home in our endeavour to make his resettlement a success... I also wish to offer a personal note of gratitude for your continuing and valued assistance with our clients"
SSAFA Caseworker





Date	Event	Location
13 Jul	NMA Service	Staffordshire
18 Sep	RACF Welfare Committee	Larkhill
02 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
09 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
16 Oct	Charities F&GP Committee	Larkhill
25 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
06 Nov	Charities F&GP Committee	Larkhill
07 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
10 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
28 Nov	RA Sports Awards Dinner	Larkhill
01 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
01 Dec	St Barbara's Day Lunch	Larkhill
12 Dec	Master Gunner's Committee	Larkhill
2025		
Feb	RA Gold Cup	Sandown
06 Mar	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
09 Mar	RA Boxing Finals	Larkhill
12 Mar	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
13 Mar	Master Gunner's Committee	TBC
27 Mar	RACF Welfare Committee	TBC
20 Apr	Gunner Sunday	Royal Hospital Chelsea
9 May	Gunner 25	Larkhill tbc
9 May	Spring Dinner	Larkhill tbc
16-18 May	RA Assembly	Blackpool
17 May	RAA NEC Meeting	Blackpool



LAST POST

Notification of Death:

- Maj Adrian Prewer 3 April 2024
- Dr Anthony Cooper 28 April 2024
- Chris (Jack) Dempsey May 2024
- Maj Richard Gard May 2024
- Ray Hards June 2024



ELIOT - Colonel John Hugh Eliot MBE died on 16 May 2024 with his wife, Penny, by his side. He served with the 16th Air Defence Regiment in Singapore and Dortmund; the 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in Northern Ireland and Hong Kong; and the 45th Medium Regiment in Paderborn and Northern Ireland. He also took several Whitehall roles including project management for the acceptance of Rapier FSC into service. After retiring from the army in 2000, he worked as the company secretary for the Abbeyfield Mid-Sussex Society, was a fundraiser for the RNLI, and a prolific painter.

HEAD - Gunner Jack Head passed away on 23rd March 2024. Jack was a national service man after training he was sent to

Hong Kong to join 45 Regt after they had just returned from Korea. He spent 18 months with 45 then returned to the UK to finish his service as a driver in Colchester and Grays, Essex.

THOMSON - J A J Brigadier (Retd) John Tomson OBE QVRM TD DL. Died suddenly on 10th May 2024.

TUCKER - Colonel David Tucker (born on 28th September 1935) died peacefully at home with his family in Woodbridge, Suffolk, after a full and happy life. He leaves behind his beloved wife Annette, four sons, seven grandchildren, one great grandchild and many friends; he will be sadly missed.

RA Historical Society 2024 Programme

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close	Cost per Head
Wednesday 25 September	Summer Webinar	Siege of Arcot 1751 and Battle of Plassey	36 (Arcot 1751) Battery and 9 (Plassey) Battery	Friday 20 September	Nil
Friday 25 October	Shrapnel Day Lectures and Buffet Lunch Newcome Hall, Larkhill SP4 8QT	Addiscombe: The East India Company Officer Academy The Armies of the East India Company The Indian Campaigns of Lord Roberts VC The Indian Artillery in the Great War	Ms Kate Birbeck Dr Rosie Lewellyn-Jones Dr Rodney Atwood Dr Spencer Jones	Friday 11 October	To be notified

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



John Taylor Proctor 3 June 1934 - 3 April 2024

John Taylor Proctor was born in 1934 in New Malden London. His parents, Arthur and Jean, both served in World War I; Arthur in the Royal Artillery and Jean in the Nursing Corps. Their profound sense of duty and Christian values gave Dad and his sister Sheila a sound moral compass. (Jean Wilson's father was a protestant priest in Belfast). At the start of World War II, John and Sheila were initially evacuated to Colwyn Bay. However, their parents decided it was better for them to return to London and stay together as a family which they did, enduring at times the whole experience of London in the blitz, spending most nights in their Anderson air raid shelter constructed in their garden buried in the ground halfway up, covered with corrugated iron and a thick layer of earth. This experience included a near miss of a bomb exploding close to their house. Dad gave up sleeping in the house and preferred to head straight to the Anderson Shelter to avoid having to wake up during an air raid. Dad also described to me a clear memory of celebrating VE day in May 1945 with his family, walking up the mall towards Buckingham Palace amongst the cheering crowds. Perhaps in hindsight, as a result of these experiences, it was of little surprise that after Dad completed his school education, he decided to apply to the army and, after successfully graduating from the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst in 1954, was commissioned into the Royal Artillery. As a young troop commander in his regiment, he was a quietly competent officer; he was a good horse rider, he had sound intellect, was modest, respected and liked by his soldiers with a gentle sense of humour. John's army service included deployments to Hong Kong (The Residency Battery), Singapore, Zanzibar (Zanzibar Police), Germany (24th Anti-Aircraft Regiment), Staff College Camberley, Malaysia (28th Commonwealth Brigade, as Intelligence officer), Germany and Northern Ireland (36th Anti-Aircraft Regiment). In 1974, Dad's final posting was to the 278th (Lowland Field Regiment (Scottish & Ulster Gunners) as their training Major, responsible for the planning and training of this TAVR (Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve) Regiment. After leaving the regular army in 1976, the family home was established in East Lothian, and Dad transferred to the Territorial Army as a Watchkeeper pool member, where his air defence knowledge was greatly appreciated. He attended all the major annual NATO exercises in Germany for the next nine years. He retired in 1985 from military service after 31 years and was presented with a meritorious award by the Earl of Wemyss at a ceremony in Edinburgh. He maintained his links to the Scottish & Ulster Gunners by attending the Queen's birthday salute ceremony at Edinburgh Castle every year until 2010, always wearing his best suit and the bowler hat his father bought him in 1954 when he graduated from Sandhurst, as this was the dress code for an off duty officer on parade, Dad was very much an officer and a gentleman. John's journey didn't end with his retirement from the regular army in 1976. He embarked on a new chapter, earning a postgraduate business qualification from the University of Edinburgh. In 1977, he ventured into finance, working for various legal firms in Edinburgh, including Patrick & James, Dixon Lamont, and Alex Mitchell & Sons. His entrepreneurial spirit eventually led him to establish his own accountancy practice, Trader Aid, which provided invaluable support to local small businesses. In retirement, after moving from East Lothian to the Borders in 1998, he kept himself busy with numerous activities, including being a church elder at Bonkel Church, a member of the Order of St John, and treasurer for multiple charities and Eyemouth Golf Club. He also continued to maintain accounts for several of his original Trader Aid clients until his 80th Birthday. He loved playing and watching golf (the Masters, the Open and the Ryder Cup being his favourite tournaments); we both attended too many Opens to mention over the years; however, it is safe to say that St Andrews and Muirfield were his favourite courses, he was thrilled when I managed to secure tickets for the Ryder Cup in 2014 at Gleneagles, all of which were simply great days out. Not only did he enjoy watching golf, but he also loved to play the game. At one time, he was a member



of three golf clubs (Castle Park, Duns and Eyemouth, a secret he kept from my mother!) Eventually, his membership was consolidated to his favourite club, Eyemouth, and he actively participated in their two societies, the Eyemooners and Millionaires. "Big John" continued to play into his late 80s, only stopping 20 months ago due to ill health at 88!

John also loved music, especially jazz, opera, and classical, and always took advantage of every opportunity to hear his daughter Judy play. Once, having arrived late, he slipped into the back of the Assembly Halls in Edinburgh. As Judy played, she could see smoke coming from his coat pocket—where he had just placed his still-burning pipe! He particularly requested that the music you hear today be played at his funeral.

John enjoyed his regular visits to the Craw Inn in retirement, particularly the camaraderie and companionship of his friends, or the Glee Club, as Mum called them. He enjoyed watching the Six Nations rugby in the Craw and, of course, accompanied by a beer as long as it was in a glass with a handle! A tall man whose friends have reported

that "we miss him striding into the Craw". He certainly was a strider and would stride ahead on the walk back from Murrayfield at the end of an international weaving in between the crowd, where the family would literally need to jog to keep up with him.

By sheer coincidence, today is two and half years since John's wife Jenny was laid to rest in Hundy Mundy Memorial ground. Dad met Mum in 1957, and they married in the same year. They honeymooned in Switzerland before Dad was deployed to Hong Kong, with Mum following on separately in a cargo ship. Travel options were less readily available in the late 50s than they are today. Initially, married life in the services was a challenge as Dad was not a Captain at this stage in his career, so they were not entitled to live in married quarters, and he had even initially been required to ask his commanding officers permission to get married. However, this meant they could experience the local communities, developing a sense of adventure. Perhaps the reason they were brave enough to stay on at their final home, Warlawbank, which they were determined to do!



Despite these initial challenges, they made it work and were wholly committed to each other, resulting in a loving marriage which lasted 63 years! In John's words, Jenny was "the love of his life". Dad always encouraged Mum to develop her skills as an artist by painting, which she did on their numerous overseas deployments and again in her later years. They both wanted a large family and achieved this, with Caroline being born in 1958, Judy following in 1961 and finally, the twins (Candy and me) being born in 1969 in Malaysia.

Dad instilled in all his children a sense of purpose and the core values of being kind, compassionate, and having integrity. He also encouraged and supported us in finding and following our own destiny and path. For sure, he was always available to offer advice but would always stop short of telling us what to do, as the final decision always had to be made by us and not him. I know he was hugely proud of all his children, son-in-law Graham, daughter-in-law Liz and grandson Elliott. His love, kindness, and sense of fun have inspired all of us over the years and will continue to do so.

Over the last year, his health declined, which he bore with indomitable good cheer. During this time, he was buoyed by his children's constant support and encouragement, particularly Caroline and Candy, along with all the carers and his much-loved cat, Brodie, who would often be asleep at the bottom of his bed. Dad passed away peacefully on April 3, 2024, two months shy of what would have been his 90th Birthday.

John Proctor was a courageous and honourable man of great strength and intellect. With a twinkle in his eye and a wicked sense of humour. He will be missed by all who knew him, and his influence will undoubtedly live on.

Subscription Price List

To addresses in the UK and BFPO:
 The Gunner - £24
 The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £10
 The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £34

To addresses in Europe:
 The Gunner - £39
 The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £14
 The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £53

To addresses in the rest of the world:
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REUNIONS

THE ROYAL ARTILLERY BOYS AND JUNIOR LEADERS' ASSOCIATION

34TH ANNUAL REUNION

The Royal Artillery Boys and Junior Leaders' Association will be holding their 34th annual reunion at Bosworth Hall Hotel on 12th October 2024. Full details including booking forms will be published in the January edition of "Trumpeter" which is issued to all members. Anyone who qualifies or wishes to become a member should contact The Secretary on exboysra.tm@gmail.com

14TH REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY

HQ 1ST, 5TH AND 13 BTY'S OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

5-8 September 2024 at the Copthorne Hotel, Merry Hill, Dudley. Please email: jimprice2007@yahoo.co.uk

1 RHA REUNION DINNER 2024

The 72nd 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery Officers' Mess Reunion Dinner will be held at the RA Mess, Larkhill on Friday 8th November 2024. Would any former officer of the Regiment who wishes to attend and who has not received details for the dinner by 1st October 2024 please contact the Dinner Secretary, Major Jonny Partridge at jonathan.partridge100@mod.gov.uk

100 (YEOMANRY) REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' REUNION DINNER

100 (Yeomanry) Regt RA will be holding an Officers' Reunion Dinner on Sat 6 Jul 24, which will be held at the RA Barracks Offrs' Mess in Woolwich. Given the recent redesignation of NRHQ RA to 100 (Yeomanry) Regt RA, the dinner is open to all former officers of either CVHQ RA, NRHQ RA or 100 Regt RA. The dinner will be black tie with medals and unfortunately there will be no space

for partners due to the limited capacity of the dining room. The cost of the dinner will be £40 and accommodation will be available. Any former officers who wish to attend please contact 2IC Maj Scott Sloan on 03001514955 or Alexander.Sloan139@mod.gov.uk

ALAMEIN DINNER

The Alamein Dinner 2024 will be held on Friday 25 October at the RA Mess, Larkhill, 1900 for 1930. The dinner will take the form of a Regimental Guest Night with partners and is open to officers of the Royal Regiment, serving and retired, and their guests. There will also be some regimental guests. Dress for the serving officers is Mess Dress - Full Ceremonial Evening, (stiff shirts) decorations. For retired officers/civilians it is evening dress (white tie) with decorations. As this is a formal occasion, long dresses would be the appropriate style for ladies. The subsidised cost of the tickets will be £75 per head. For places apply to Jenny McGrath by email: jennifer.mcgrath924@mod.gov.uk 01980 845788 and payment can be either: BACS: RAI, 30-11-75, 00947269 (please prefix payment reference with AD24) Cheque: made payable to the Royal Artillery Institution. Please note a first come first served basis applies.

ROYAL ARTILLERY OFFICERS' ALANBROOKE LUNCH WED 2 OCT 24



The next Royal Artillery Officers' Alanbrooke Lunch is on Wed 2 Oct 24 at the Army & Navy Club, St James's Square, London. Drinks 1200. Lunch 1245. Please note the change, on this occasion, from first Thursday to first Wednesday of the month. Our guest Speaker is Lt Gen Mike Elviss MBE CB, Commander Field Army and regimental Colonel Commandant. Please be aware this may be subject to change due to operational commitments - all attendees should be aware of this at time of purchase. The Alanbrooke Lunch Club is open to all Gunners officers, Regular and Reserve whether serving or retired. Regrettably the lunch cost has increased to £75. The price includes pre-lunch drink, wine and port. A cash bar is available after lunch. The dress code for this event is lounge suits or equivalent. To attend the lunches you must be a member of the Alanbrooke Club. There is an annual membership fee of £10 but this is waived for serving officers. For any questions or queries, please contact the Royal Artillery Secretariat Officer on Emm.Pagan-Skelley100@mod.gov.uk Do spread the message amongst your Gunner friends, and of course you may bring a guest (who may be non-military) should you wish, or bring a group of friends you served with. Commanding Officers are asked to encourage and facilitate attendance by their officers.

To purchase tickets please use the QR code



RAA NORTH WEST REGION AGM AND ASSEMBLY

The North West Region will be held at the Norbeck Castle Hotel, Blackpool Weekend 27 and 29 September 2024.

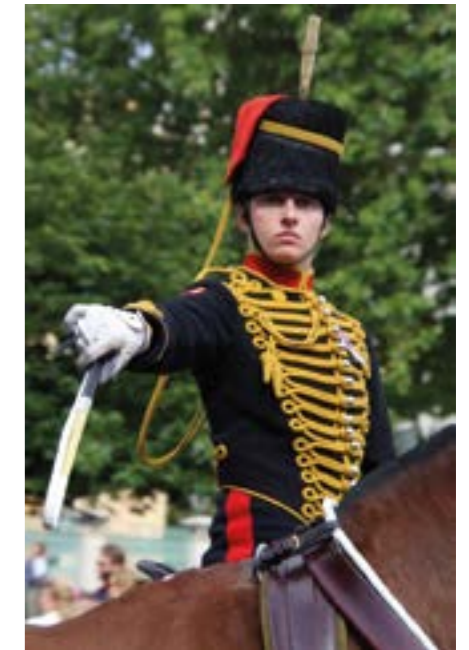


RA CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE

email: emm.pagan-skelley100@mod.gov.uk or via telephone 0300 155 6172.



The annual Royal Artillery Ceremony of Remembrance will take place on 10 November 2024 at the Royal Artillery Memorial, Hyde Park Corner. The event is open to all to attend and anyone wishing to book reserved seats is requested to do so via this link <https://buytickets.at/royalartillery/1300885> or below QR code. Please note that this is a free event, however seating is limited and will be issued on a first come first served basis. All attendees are required to be seated by 10.30am at the latest and are advised to dress accordingly for the weather as this is an open air event. All retired members of the regiment who attend are invited at the end of the Ceremony to join the march past. Any queries are to be directed to Mrs Emma Pagan-Skelley,



29 COMMANDO REGIMENT ROYAL ARTILLERY

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Our mission is propelled by a simple yet profound promise: to leave no one behind. From essential equipment to life-enhancing resources, we've answered the call of those in need, transforming lives one project at a time. Whether it's aiding with mobility through wheelchairs, enhancing training with hand weights, or empowering through education with 1st Aid courses, we adapt to the unique needs of our heroes, often collaborating with fellow charities to fulfil our commitment.

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- We assist serving personnel, veterans, or initiatives that directly benefit them, such as equipment for sports teams or community projects.
- Our assistance focuses on providing physical items that have an immediate impact on recipients' lives, as opposed to a pool of funds.
- We prioritise requests that address needs not met by MOD or statutory provisions, including match-funding request.

To explore how we might support you or your cause, please contact us at info@aaronlewisfoundation.org.uk for an application form.

About the Aaron Lewis Foundation

Lieutenant Aaron Lewis, of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, was killed in action in Afghanistan on December 15th, 2008. He was just 26 and on his first operational deployment.

Aaron wanted to make a difference in the world, bringing help to those in need. It was that belief which gave him the courage, hope and enthusiasm to deploy to Afghanistan.

Two years after his death, the Aaron Lewis Foundation was established by his family and friends to continue to make a difference in his memory. With unity and teamwork at its core, Aaron's family, friends and former service colleagues work together to raise funds for causes close to Aaron's heart, providing access to sport and wellbeing for all, while at the same time furthering his legacy.

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We're raising £7,000 to pay for the restoration and preservation of the 4/5 Bn Royal Scots Colours.

Be the first to help them reach their £7,000 target.

Give Now

Don't have time to donate right now? Set up a reminder.

The 4/5 (Queen's Edinburgh Rifles) Battalion, The Royal Scots were converted to Royal Artillery at the start of World War II, and served as 52 Searchlight Regiment and later as 130 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment. 4/5 Royal Scots are an example of many other infantry and yeomanry units that were moved into the RA in World War II.

4/5 Royal Scots, (as 52 S/L Regiment) was engaged in the first air raid of the war against the Luftwaffe attacking the naval base at Rosyth. Later their area of responsibility changed to the east coast prior to moving south of the border. As 130 LAA Regiment, they served in Kent's 'Hellfire Corner' where they were part of the defences against the V1 Flying Bombs, or 'Doodlebugs' and destroyed 35 of them.

These Colours are 100 years old, and are suffering from age and light damage. We are raising £7000 to have the colours professionally conserved to preserve this unique piece of military history for the Royal Artillery and for Scotland. Many of our Grandparents and Great Grandparents served in anti-aircraft in World War II and it is an important legacy to preserve. Every and any contribution towards this effort will be gratefully accepted. No contribution is too little, "every mickle mak's a muckle", as the old saying goes.

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D-Day 80 - Serving and retired Gunners laid a wreath at the Scottish National War Memorial in Edinburgh Castle