

The Waggoner

The Newsletter of the RASC & RCT



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Brigadier Paul Evans OBE DL President of the RASC & RCT Council

I sincerely hope that by the time you read this Waggoner, the Government will have judged that the conditions are right to lift more restrictions, particularly our ability to meet in small groups. I suspect, however, that it may be sometime before we can organise larger group activities. COVID-19 has had a dramatic affect and influence on all of our lives and will no doubt continue to do so for many months, particularly in terms of public confidence.

Coronavirus has unfortunately forced us to cancel many 2020 activities and events at Branch, Regional and Corps level, the major consequence of which has been an inability to meet with friends who we have known for many years. That said, I know that members have been providing each other with much valued

support, particularly those who are vulnerable, isolated or lonely. Such kindness serves to reinforce the strength of the Association and Officers' Club and the value we all attribute to loyalty, comradeship and friendship.

The move of RHQ The RLC to Worthy Down was completed in mid-January. The staff are having to readjust to an open plan office and a very IT orientated environment where space is limited. All forming Corps staff are working from home for the time being and I would therefore urge everyone to be patient during the remainder of the lockdown period and in the weeks immediately following regarding the decision to return to work. Your understanding will also help the newly recruited clerical staff to become familiar with RASC & RCT matters.

Shortly after the move, our secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Knowles handed over his



Lt Col Jonathan and Geraldine Knowles on Jonathan's last day of service, having just been paid a surprise visit by The RLC Corps Colonel - Col Colin Francis MBE ADC



VE Day - Desmond Wilson parading the Taunton Branch Standard in splendid isolation

responsibilities for the Council and Officers' Club to Lieutenant Colonel Paul Duncan and the Association to Lieutenant Colonel Robin Moore. I would like to take this opportunity, on your behalf, to welcome our new secretaries and, at the same time, pay tribute to the outstanding contribution made by Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Knowles over many years. We have plans to formally recognise his support, but these are currently on hold until restrictions are lifted. I know that you will join me in thanking him for his distinguished service and in wishing him a long, healthy and enjoyable retirement. I am delighted to say that we will not be saying goodbye to Jonathan as he will be playing an active role within the Association and will enthusiastically continue to support Officers' Club events. We are therefore fortunate to be able to continue to call on his vast knowledge and wise advice.

We are very much looking forward to meeting each other again when the easing of restrictions allows that to happen. In the meantime, please ensure that you remain safe and well.

Colonel Colin Constable Chairman RASC & RCT Officers' Club

What a strange year this has been necessitating the cancellation or deferment of our programmed Officers' Club activities - the last function that took place was the well attended Taunton Curry Lunch back in September 2019, although we were well represented at the Field of Remembrance on 7 November 19 and on Remembrance Sunday when there was a 50 strong contingent of RASC and RCT members marching past the Cenotaph.

2020 started with the move to Worthy Down and welcoming our new secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Duncan, who has undergone a baptism of fire! No sooner had he settled in than COVID-19 necessitated the cancellation of our April AGM and Dinner, the Over 90's Lunch and Corps Sunday. He was faced with trying to rejig these functions from his desk at home where he had relocated to during this lockdown. In the end, the RASC and RCT Council cancelled all of these events.

Looking to the immediate future, we are hoping to hold the Taunton Curry Lunch at Norton Manor (Courtesy of the Commanding Officer 40 Commando Royal Marines) on Sunday 20 September 20. When Paul was negotiating this event with the Mess Staff, he was informed that at that time, although there were Royal Marine officers living in, there were no catering facilities - one wondered where they ate? On 20 November 20

we are hoping to hold our deferred AGM and Dinner at the Lakeside Hotel in Frimley. Many of you know this venue and they are familiar with service functions. Nonetheless, Paul is aiming to make it as much like an Officers' Mess as he can - displaying some of our Corps silver on the tables and hopefully having a quintet from the RASC and RCT Association Band Branch playing throughout the meal. **Do try to attend this function** - it will need your support if it is to survive into the future.

Looking even further ahead to 2021, I am considering reorganising our functions to make them more evenly spread throughout the year, but any changes will have to be approved by the RASC and RCT Council first. What I have in mind is to reinstate the Spring Curry Lunch in late March/early April in Worthy Down, giving our members the opportunity of visiting the new, shared Headquarters Officers' Mess of The RLC. The over 90's Lunch will hopefully be held in May in Regent's Park Barracks Officers' Mess (by courtesy of the Officer Commanding 20 Squadron RLC), and Corps Sunday will be, as usual, in July but sharing our Curry Lunch with the Association members in Potters Hotel (the old Aldershot Officers' Club which many of you may remember). The Taunton Curry Lunch we hope will continue to be held in September in the Officers' Mess of 40 Commando Royal Marines (Norton Manor), again by courtesy of the Commanding Officer, catering for our members who live in the far South West. Our AGM and Dinner would be held in late October/November again - in the Lakeside Hotel if this year's function is a success. In this way I hope to achieve a fair spread of functions across the year without interfering with other Corps clubs' functions. However, as I have previously said, all our functions rely on **your support!**

Finally, on your behalf, may I wish Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Knowles a long and happy retirement. He has been an outstanding secretary of the Officers' Club; his commitment has been extraordinary and I know much appreciated by all our members. Thank You Jonathan!



Colonel Colin Constable at the Field of Remembrance

Colonel Nigel Gilbert **Chairman RASC & RCT Association**

I concluded my last report by wishing everyone a happy, healthy and rewarding 2020. Whilst those sentiments remain, little did I realise that within a few weeks we were about to enter a prolonged period of lockdown as the government dealt with the global threat from COVID-19 and 2020 would become a year for future history books.

That said, the year began on a high note, with a visit to Kensington Palace on the 15 January 20 by myself and the Director of the RLC Museum for an audience with our Patron, HRH The Duke of Gloucester. He wished to hand back to our Corps the RCT Diamond Brooch, which had been especially commissioned from Garrards for his mother, HRH Princess Alice when she was appointed our Colonel-in-Chief in the early 1970s. The brooch is to be displayed in the RLC Museum and will be a permanent reminder of the close relationship between the RASC and RCT and both HRH Prince Henry and HRH Princess Alice who we were privileged to have as our Colonels-in-Chief for 50 years.

Personality-wise, we have had a number of notable changes to the membership of the Committee of Management, the most significant of whom has been the retirement of our long-standing secretary, Lt Col Jonathan Knowles in late January. His dedication to our Association and his warm personality have been the hallmarks of his success in the appointment and it goes without saying that he will be missed throughout our Corps. I am glad to report that he has agreed to become a life patron of the Association and he will remain a member on the Committee of Management, which will give us the continuity that is essential in the running of our affairs. We have already benefitted similarly over these past years from the wise counsel provided by his predecessor, Lt Col Mike Graham. I am delighted to welcome Lt Col Robin Moore as our new secretary. We are indeed fortunate that he is 'one of us', having served in both the RCT and RLC, and in the few months that he has been in post, he has quickly 'found his feet' and is enjoying being back in the military family and renewing old friendships. Two of our regional chairmen are leaving us - Roger Sanders from London and South East has retired and Duncan Forbes will handover after the next Committee of Management Meeting. Their successors are Benny McHale and John Phillips (thank you for volunteering). The original intention was to say 'hail and farewell' at the April Committee of

Management. Needless to say, that had to be cancelled and this will now take place at the next Committee of Management meeting, hopefully in early September, when we can formally say thank you for their support. On a sad note, I would like to formally express my sadness at the recent death of John Brown. He was a very committed and much respected Chairman of the Scottish Region, until a few years ago, and indeed was still an active member of the Edinburgh Branch despite his health problems.

Looking to future events, (or non events!), sadly Corps Weekend has been cancelled. It was intended for the Sunday lunch at Potters Hotel to be the ideal occasion for both the Association and the Officers' Club to formally say thank you to Lt Col Jonathan Knowles and to his wife Geraldine. This will now happen in some form or other at a later date. Similarly, a number of regional and branch functions have also been cancelled. What is most important is that we all keep in contact with each other, and where possible look after those amongst us who are vulnerable and isolated during these difficult times. May it be not too long before we get the chance to meet up again.



Major Simon Walmsley (RLC Museum Director), HRH The Duke of Gloucester and Colonel Nigel Gilbert

Secretary's Brief **Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Knowles**

It has been my privilege and honour to have looked after the Officer's Club and Association over the past nine years. I would like to thank everyone, including the many loyal members who have died, for their comradeship and their enthusiasm to preserve and perpetuate the 'esprit de corps' and well-being of the

Association. I would particularly like to thank all those key members of the Officers' Club and the Association's regional and branch committees who are key to our success. I miss-quote President JF Kennedy when I say, "My fellow members ask not what your Association can do for you, but ask what you can do for your Association" - I trust that resonates with our membership, as our future is in your hands.

Lieutenant Colonel Robin Moore

The end of 2019 and start to 2020 have been challenging, with the move to Worthy Down, my assumption of post of secretary and measures imposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am most grateful to Lt Col Jonathan Knowles, my predecessor in post, for his assistance throughout this period. Jonathan has continued as Veterans, Families and Community Engagement Officer (VFCEO) for the RLC, working at arms reach from my new desk, until we were separated by the lockdown. Jonathan finally escaped to start a well-earned retirement on 17 June 20, but I am pleased to report he has agreed to become a life vice patron of the Association so his wealth of knowledge will not be lost to us.

As the Association settled into the new RLC Regimental HQ at Worthy Down, IT and e-mail services were initially patchy, causing some disruption to communications. However, these difficulties have now been resolved and recently IT provision has been expanded to allow remote working. One area of communications that remains difficult is post - this is currently forwarded in batches from Worthy Down to those working from home and is subject to some delays within the Royal Mail System. In addition, some mail is still being sent to Dettingen House in Deepcut. This will improve as our new address is further promulgated and lockdown restrictions are eased.

With the move to Worthy Down, the HQ has said goodbye to some long serving staff, most notably for the Association such as Stephanie Bentley who looked after the membership database. To fill this gap, recruiting has now been concluded for a new Regimental and Forming Corps Admin Assistant (RFCAA) and Chloe Darling will be joining us as soon as we are allowed to make more regular use of the office. In the meantime, our data has been transferred from the old obsolete database, which was built on an MS Access platform, to a new bespoke system. The new system is Subscriber Customer Relationship Manager (SCRM)

which is already used to good effect by several other regimental associations, including the Adjutant General's Corps and Royal Signals. SCRM offers a significant increase in utility and will allow us to modernise our working practices; one of the new features is the ability to send bulk e-mails and this was used for the first time spreading the news of the cancellation of our 2020 Corps Weekend celebrations. One thing that is becoming clear is that to make best use of this system, we will need to improve the accuracy of the data we hold and to increase the number of members who we have e-mail contact with. This will be the primary focus of Chloe Darling, who will need the assistance of the regions and branches to complete this work.

In March and April, some quick footwork was required to cancel and postpone events that were likely to be compromised by the social distancing and shielding restrictions being imposed by the government. The regional and branch secretaries were very proactive and in most cases refunds or credits were obtained and nugatory costs have been minimized. For the 'centrally planned' events, I am pleased to report that the deposits for the Committee of Management meeting scheduled for 15 April 20 have been transferred to our September meeting and for the Corps Weekend 2020 have been transferred to 2021. In addition, Potters International Hotel have allowed our members' hotel bookings for the Corps Weekend to be transferred to 2021. Unfortunately, some members incurred un-refundable costs for Corps Weekend but it was kindly agreed by the Chairman that the Association would cover these costs.

To keep communications going in these difficult times, it was decided that this edition of the Waggoner would go ahead even though many of the events that would have normally graced its pages have not taken place. However, despite the severity of the restrictions and suddenness of their imposition, some events did manage to get through just in advance of lockdown and many of our members have been able to mark make important events such as VE Day, albeit in a limited and often in a very personal manner.

This edition of the Waggoner has been printed and sent to home addresses as normal. However, as a one off, a digital copy has been placed online and is available on the RASC and RCT Association page of the RLC website. The aim of doing this is so that anyone who has just joined, has moved or is self-isolating away from their home address can gain access. If this proves successful, we will consider repeating for future issues.

Please note that we have no plans to change from issuing a 'hard copy' Waggoner, we recognise that this is important to our members especially some of our older veterans and those who do not have access to IT facilities. Any digital offering will be in addition rather than instead of the paper Waggoner.

Despite the challenges facing us, the Association continues to thrive and even grow. At the time of writing, we have 5,155 members and barely a day passes without a new member joining. In particular, our National Branches with an online presence are thriving and our newest branch, the RCT Riders Branch, has just signed up its 300th member.

We are very keen to start our Association activities as soon as current restrictions are eased and it is safe to do so. Planning for the following 'centrally controlled' events is underway:

- Wednesday 9 September 20 - Committee of Management Meeting on at the Lakeside Hotel, Frimley Green.
- Sunday 8 November 20 - RASC & RCT Association attendance at the Cenotaph Parade. Our ticket allocation will be confirmed on 29 June 20, initial indications are that we should receive a full allocation of the 60 places that we have applied for. I would be most grateful if applications for attendance could be forwarded by the end of July. However, members who intend to attend should refrain committing to non-refundable expenditure at this stage.
- Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 July 21 - Corps Weekend.

Finally, I would like to thank Colonel Nigel for his warm welcome to the Association and his generous assistance during my induction. I have returned to the fold after 12 years in the bowels of 'civvy street' and it is very good to be back with the military family. During my service with The RCT and RLC, I had the privilege to command at Troop/Platoon, Squadron and Regimental level. In my previous travels, I met many of our members and to those I have offended I can only apologise; I was recently reminded by one that I gave him a show parade for a dirty beret 32 years ago - some memories are long. I look forward to meeting more of you as soon as we are free to associate and shall not be inspecting the turnout! For those who have any concern or think they may know me, I have added an old photograph to help you with your 'target recognition'!



Belfast 1987, Lt Robin Moore RCT (in background W02 SSM Hopper (looking unusually happy), LCpl Botterill and SSgt Gorrod,) 17 Sqn RCT

Amphibious Branch Reunion 2019 by Lt Col David Pepperell

When the last DUKWs were disbanded from Marchwood in the 1970s, it wasn't only the equipment that was scattered, it was their drivers, the Amphibians (18 Amph Sqn), too. RCT had been based in Fremington since World War Two and this area in North Devon had been selected as an ideal training ground for the British Forces preparing amphibious landings for Anzio and for D Day.

Many of the young men forming the unit fell in love, not only with North Devon but with the local talent. When the unit disbanded and members left the Army, many of them retired to the local area and many others had wives whose families were still living there and so, it is no surprise that regular reunions in the Fremington area started to develop soon after. Two absolute stalwarts of these gatherings were Maj Mike (Taffy) Ross and John (Geordie) Routledge.

In 2012, they proposed a formal branch link to the RASC & RCT Association and to have a regular meeting. Soon after the first 'official' reunion, it was realised that our ages dictated that we needed to meet more frequently and an annual reunion was established. Sadly, both Mike and John passed away shortly after and so the good work they started is very much in their memory.

Our reunions are held in the Barnstaple Hotel in October each year, which becomes our home-from-home every year, and they look after us magnificently. The format has evolved into a full weekend, starting with a 'relaxing' 10 pin bowling session at the alley next to the hotel. This year, 30 attended - even those

unable to bowl came to share in the fun and laughter and several came away with winners' prizes awarded on the Saturday 'big night'. Later that evening, we had an excellent meal and were entertained by popular songs from Jason Toft. The following morning, we held our committee meeting followed by the AGM in the afternoon. Our chairman is Major David Jeremy, and this year we implemented our policy of including loyal partners as associate members, important as we now have several widows attending. We also added a ladies representative onto the Committee. We are always grateful for the support we get for our efforts from the Association and the staff at RHQ.

Our final important event was the big dinner dance organised by our Entertainments Member, Don Turner, ably assisted by his wife, Babs (who is now our first ladies representative). Following a wonderful meal, we danced through the evening to the music of Charlie Kay, recalled happy days in Fremington and told each other war stories - some things never change.

We now look forward to the next reunion, over the weekend 16 - 18 October 20. Book your places!

One of the bittersweet memories from this year occurred only two days after our reunion. Our chairman

had highlighted the importance of comradeship in our meetings, using our very own folk hero, Henry Kubinski, as a model. Henry had just been to the Arnhem 75th celebrations where he had met HRH Prince Charles. He was in his 94th year and often attended our reunions but sadly passed away shortly after this one. Henry RIP.



SSgt Henry Kubinski in the late 1960s

18 and 26 Squadron Reunion 2020 by John Mosinski

18 and 26 Squadron RCT held their ninth Annual Reunion on the weekend of the 6 - 8 March 20. We once again welcomed our friends from the Belize Veterans' Group as a large number served in both units.

This year's event was held in Lichfield, the venue was the Kings Head pub and we enjoyed a curry on the Friday evening and a sausage supper on the Saturday funded by the Association, with contributions also received from our former Officer Commanding Martyn Cubitt, Graeme Alby Albinson and Alan Machin.

A raffle was held on the Saturday evening raising a total of £400.00 which was distributed to three military charities. The reunion has been held every March since 2012 and we have moved the venue every year to keep it fresh, however COVID-19 is putting next year's plans on hold.



Early arrival Gordon 'Flash' Harris



David 'Mac' McNamara telling war stories



18 and 26 Squadron at the ninth Annual Reunion



18 and 26 Squadron in the Kings Head pub, Litchfield

21 Squadron Reunion 2020

Another one of the very last events to go ahead before lockdown restrictions came into force was 21 Squadron's Annual Reunion at Buckatree Hall Hotel, The Wrekin, Telford on the weekend of 7 and 8 March 20.



21 Sqn at the Bucktree Hall Hotel

A thoroughly enjoyable evening was held and the highlight of the entertainment was a 'charity race night'. There was also an auction of presentation gifts donated by members, from which a very creditable £420.19 was raised and this was donated to Lingden Davies Cancer Trust, a cause close to Malcolm McKiven, the reunions organiser.

Norfolk and Norwich Branch - VE Day celebrations, despite lockdown by Lt Col (Retd) TC Byrne MBE

Lt Col (Retd) TC Byrne MBE, Chairman and Standard Bearer of the Norfolk and Norwich Branch of the Association decided action was needed to commentate the VE Day anniversary. With the support of the local press, his intention was to parade the Branch Standard around his home village of Winterton-on-Sea to remind residents to 'turn-out' for the National Toast at 1500 hours on the village green.

Friday 8 May 20 started early with the marking on the green into two metre, social distance, squares. 1300 hours was parade (womble) start time when Terry,

joined by his Norfolk Military Vehicle Group mates mounted in six war time vehicles to form an impressive mini convoy. Flags flying, horns and sirens blaring, vehicle occupants in full period uniforms - they were going to be noticed. The first refreshment stop was a socially distanced street party BBQ where we were well received. Next was the church yard and the village war memorial where the Standard was dipped for a minute's silence, the Exaltation and a toast to absent friends. Next port of call was our 'lockdown pub', the Fisherman's Return, where we had a 'stand to' and a toast to better times ahead!

It was then on to the village green, where there was a good gathering of residents and a great buzz of conversation. We got a supportive wave and smile from the occupants of a passing police vehicle, so all was well.

At 1500 hours, our Piper, Simon, played the National VE Day Lament, written especially for the occasion and Terry proposed the National Toast, "To all those who gave so much, thank you".

On our dispersal from the green, we had one final visit for our convoy and that was to one of our village care homes where residents could wave and chat from within but still feel very much part of our celebrations.



Lt Col (Retd) TC Byrne MBE on parade

RCT Riders' Branch fly the flag at the Scottish Bike Show

Members of the Riders Branch embarked on their first big external event in March this year after successfully applying for a stand at the Carole Nash MCN Motorcycle Show held at the Royal Highland Showground, Ingliston, Edinburgh.

Prior to the show, numerous requests were sent to motorcycle accessory suppliers and other appropriate groups asking for the donation of goods and services to be used as tombola prizes. A total of over 150 prizes were donated, varying from family tickets for Knockhill Racing Circuit, tickets for the National Motorcycle Museum, a CBT Test, keyrings, pens, alcohol and Easter eggs to name but a few.

Preparation for setting up the stall started early on Friday morning with Branch Chairman Andrew Wright, secretary Berni Wilkins and branch members Paul Hettman, Dougie McPhee, Gordon Greenan and Alan McNamara assisting. All travelled long distances at their own expense to be there to help.

The show opened to the public at 1000 hours on 7 March 20 and ended at 1700 hours on Sunday 8 March 20. The event encompassed two exhibition halls with over 500 bikes on display, ranging from new to classic – racing and road, plus demonstrations by many of the top manufacturers and not forgetting the hundreds of stalls with something for all the family.



The RCT Riders' Stand

Everyone attending the show entered via the Highland Hall with many visiting the Lowland Hall where the Riders' Branch stand was situated. This resulted in a busy time for the team, as our display and unique tombola drew the attention of young and not so young alike. Participants in the tombola had to find a ticket with a five at the end of the number, but children were guaranteed a prize every time thanks to a wonderful donation of Easter eggs, sweets and chocolate by Iceland Foods.

As well as the tombola, a lot of interest was shown by adults wishing to know more about the branch,

including former RASC, RCT and RLC veterans - resulting in us gaining four new members for the branch and the Association. Having a stand at the show was a great way of meeting and making friends old and new from our own Association and other biking organisations and veterans' groups.

One of the highlights of the show for Branch Chairman Andrew Wright was being the only person in attendance at the show to be given permission to sit on the replica bike built by Triumph for Guy Martin's show 'The Great Escape'. A well-deserved reward for all his hard work, not only leading up to the show but forming the branch.



Andrew Wright on Guy Martin's Triumph

We raised £300 for branch funds but more importantly raised awareness of the Riders Branch and the Association. The feeling is unanimous that the weekend was very enjoyable (if tiring) and hopefully won't be the last we participate in. We wish to thank everyone who visited, donated, participated and assisted in making the event the success it was.

Waggoners from the East Riding of Yorkshire remembered on 'Flog It'

An episode of the BBC Two Programme 'Flog It', shot at Sledmere House in the East Riding of Yorkshire, was

broadcast on Thursday 23 April 20. This provided an interesting and poignant account of the First World War Service of the Waggoners Special Reserve, who were drawn from the local area.

This Waggoners Special Reserve was raised by Colonel Sir Mark Sykes, 6th Baronet. A most interesting man in his own right, Sir Mark served in the Princess of Wales' Own Yorkshire Regiment in the Boer War, later as CO of the 5th Battalion, Green Howards and finally in the Intelligence Department of the War Office working on Middle Eastern affairs. He was also MP for his local constituency, Kingston upon Hull Central, from 1911 until his death in 1919.



Colonel Sir Mark Sykes

Based upon experience gained during his service in the Boer War, in the lead up to the First World War Sir Mark identified an increasing shortfall in the Army's ability to provide sufficient trained waggon drivers to sustain large-scale operations. He recruited labourers and tenant farmers from across the Yorkshire Wolds as an informal reserve for war service as drivers. Initially he paid for them with a bounty of one pound each out of his own pocket; his recruits, who never expected to be mobilized, referred to this money as the 'silly quid'. In 1912, Sir Mark received permission to raise the Waggoners Special Reserve as a Territorial Army unit.

In August 1914, immediately upon the outbreak of



Waggoners at a railhead

the First World War, the Waggoners Special Reserve was mobilised. In total, 1,127 men from the Reserve were called up to serve in the Royal Army Service Corps and the Royal Engineers. Most were sent to serve on the Western Front in France, although some also served in Italy, Salonika and the Middle East. Whilst skilled wagon drivers, they had little military training and they faced a steep learning curve when rising to the critical challenges of moving essential materiel and in casualty evacuation. In total, 34 of the Reserve lost their lives.



Waggoners' Memorial, Siedmere Village

The last soldier of the Special Waggoner Reserve passed away in 1993, however they are still remembered with a Waggoners' Memorial, in Sledmere Village. The unusual squat columnar memorial was designed by Sir Mark himself and is believed to be based on a Saxon memorial in the crypt at York Minster. It stands at 6 feet (1.8m) high, with an octagonal plinth

of five steps leading up to a squat stone column of Portland stone with stone carvings, with conical canopy and pinnacle, once topped by a cross (now lost). The central column is surrounded by four narrower columns, supporting a carved entablature and inscription on the frieze. The masonry was built by Alfred Barr and the naïve art sculptures made by Carlo Domenico Magnoni, curving around a central column in three sections, showing scenes from the history of the Waggoners - from Sir Mark enlisting them, through call up, travel to France and graphic scenes of conflict. The memorial is also inscribed with a five-verse poem in the local dialect:

*These steanes a noble tale do tell,
of what men did when war befell,
and in that fourteen harvest-tide,
the call for lads went far and wide,
to help save the world fro' wrong,
to shield the weak and bind the strong*

*When fra tease words XII hundred men,
came forth fro' field and fold and pen,
to stand again' the law of might,
to labour and dee' for right,
and so to save the world fro' wrong,
to shield the weak and bind the strong*

*These simple lads knew nowt of war,
they only knew that god's own law,
which Satan's will controls must fall,
Unless men then did hear that call,
to gan to save the world fro' wrong,
To shield the weak and bind the strong
Ere Britain's hordes were paved or planned,
the lads whae joined this homely band,
to Normandy has passed o'er sea,
where some maimed and some did dee,
and all to save the world fro' wrong,
to shield the weak and bind the strong*

*Good lads and dames our ridings pride
these steanes are set by this roadside,
this tale your children's bairns to tell,
on what ye did when war befell,
to help to save the world fro' wrong
to shield the weak and bind the strong*

The memorial was constructed between 1919 and 1920 and was unveiled on 5 September 1920 by Lt Gen

Sir Ivor Maxse KCB CVO DSO, GOC Northern Command. Sadly, Colonel Sir Mark Sykes did not live to see the memorial completed. On 16 February 1919, while attending the peace negotiations in Paris, he fell victim to the Spanish Flu pandemic.

Should any reader wish to view this episode of 'Flog it', it is Episode 55 of Series 16 which, at the time of writing, was still available on the BBC's iPlayer service.

After note: Following his death in Paris, Colonel Sir Mark Sykes' body was repatriated to England in a lead-lined coffin, for burial in Sledmere. In September 2008, his body was exhumed for scientific investigation. His remains were of interest, because it was thought likely that the lead-lined coffin would have preserved viral particles of Spanish flu intact. Samples of this virus were required for research to develop defences against future influenza pandemics. The Spanish flu virus was of particular interest because it became a human infection by a mutation of the avian virus H1N1. Unfortunately, the coffin had been split by the weight of soil on top of it and Sir Mark's remains were badly decomposed. However, it was possible to take lung and brain tissue samples before resealing the grave. These samples are significant because only five other samples of the Spanish flu virus exist.

'Nil Sine Labore' - A 100-year chapter by Tony Hales

Nobody knows how Freemasonry began. It may have evolved naturally from the lodges of medieval masons who built famous castles and cathedrals, or from the Knights Templar when fleeing persecution in the fourteenth century. Some settled in Scotland and built Rosslyn Chapel as a replica of the temple at Jerusalem but had to conduct themselves in secrecy from the papacy and its clergy.

The Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century with the desire to study the liberal arts and sciences saw membership increase and a code of conduct was established based on brotherly love, relief and truth. Tools of operative masons were used as symbols for individual ethics and biblical stories taught moral truth in ceremonies at meetings. These have stood the test of time with minimal change for more than three hundred years. Core masonry consists of three degrees called 'Entered Apprentice', 'Fellowcraft' and 'Master Mason' which are held in a lodge with an exaltation to become a 'companion' in a chapter.

The first military lodge was formed in 1732 by the

1st of Foot (The Royal Scots) and 200 years later in 1932 the 574th military lodge was formed by the 8th Kings Royal Irish Hussars. Often the Master was the Commanding Officer or the Senior Major and the soldiers may have first found it difficult to call senior officers 'brother', but outside lodge meetings normal protocol prevailed with not one case of Freemasonry having compromised military discipline. Many famous masons have faced each other on battlefields including Wellington and Napoleon and leaders of nations include Washington and Churchill. The Antarctic explorers Scott and Shackleton were both members of The Navy Lodge as was the late King George VI.

Nil Sine Labore, our Corps Lodge, was founded in 1899 with Col George Parkyn as primus Master followed by Col Sir Frederick Clayton. From 1904 to 1942, Field Marshal HRH The Duke of Connaught was Master. The Lodge now has members not only from the Royal Logistic Corps but from forming Corps and other regiments, the Navy, RAF and those with an interest in the services. At every festive board, after Lodge and Chapter meetings, there is always a lot of inter-service banter while drinking a beer and chuntering over old times.

The Corps Chapter, also named 'Nil Sine Labore', celebrates its centenary in October 2020 and on Friday



29 January 21, COVID-19 restrictions permitting, after a short ceremony in Freemason's Hall, Great Queen Street, London WC2 5AZ, there will be a Centenary Dinner at the Union Jack Club, open to everyone whether masons or not (including partners). For more information about the Corps Lodge and Chapter, or details of the Centenary Dinner, please contact Paul West the Lodge Secretary at westpaul68@gmail.com

Another Freemason, who was also a lodge secretary, did more than any other person to change the then despised and unwanted way people regarded the Army in peacetime. Never a soldier himself, Rudyard Kipling's Barrack Room Ballads and other poems conveyed the foibles of soldiers to the hearts and minds of a population which began to appreciate far more the dangers and hardships of military life. This change helped foster numerous military charities and welfare organisations, many of which still survive today.

'TOMMY' - by Rudyard Kipling - 1890

I went into a public-ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e ups and sez
"We serve no red-coats here"
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed a
n' giggled fit to die,
I outs into the street again an' to myself sez I:

O it's Tommy this, an Tommy that, an'
"Tommy go away";
But it's "Thank you Mister Atkins,"
when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play, my boys,
the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you Mister Atkins"
when the band begins to play

'100 Not Out' Colonel Charles Mercer by Major John Tatham

I recently met with Colonel Charles Mercer, who celebrated his 100th Birthday in 2019, at the Cricketers pub in Wisborough Green, Petworth. Charles played on the cricket ground fronting this pub just before the outbreak of World War Two. He joined the Royal Sussex Regiment (who were also involved in the North Africa campaign under General Montgomery) and then in early 1944 he was seconded to 7th Battalion, the Nigeria Regiment and sent to Burma on Operation Thursday, the second and largest Chindit operation up to August 1944.

Fast forward 13 years to 1957, after Charles had



Colonel Charles Mercer and Major John Tatham outside the Cricketers pub

transferred into our Corps (RASC) and was serving with 1 Training Battalion at Buller Barracks, and over two seasons he frequently acted as Captain of the Corps XI. In 1963, he returned as the Captain for two more seasons, at which point the other figure in the accompanying photo 'jumped into the hoop' as his team secretary. Cricketing personalities of those latter days included Tony Lerwill and Roly Fahey - who also kept wicket for the Army, together with Brigadier Mike White who was largely responsible for creating our high-quality fixture list against other corps and regiments together with top clubs such as the Free Foresters, Incogniti and MCC.

Charles was transferred to RAOC in 1965 and on posting to Germany found himself appointed Director of Rhine Army Cricket that year and then again in 1972. He retired in November 1974 aged 55 years. He was also a Middlesex Cricket Club member for 55 years.

Clearly, throughout his life, he has been a very energetic man, so it is hardly surprising that he achieved his century last year, only a few days after he had participated on the Remembrance Day Parade with other Chindit veterans. Would you believe, he still drives a car and is thoroughly independent home-wise!

Keep our history alive – The Norton Manor Group

Paul Shilling, an ex Norton Manor RASC Junior Leader who joined at 15, has been actively collecting, digitally repairing and archiving photos of life at Norton Manor Camp from 1960 to 1965 since 2012. Members of the Norton Manor Group provided these photographs, believing they would never be needed again, only to find out to their surprise how valuable they have become to the Group. Paul believes that some of these photographs have never been shared before.

In the early days of the project, photographs were



Photograph of Norton Manor Cycling Club before restoration



Photograph of Norton Manor Cycling Club following restoration and cataloguing

coming in daily, which kept Paul busy into the late hours. Some of those now need to be revisited and tidied to bring them up to the high standard of the rest of the collection, so Paul's work will be never ending. However, this endeavour has produced a valuable record, which is entertaining and enlightening. This includes many of formal troop/intake photographs as well as showing some of the more quirky and unusual aspects of training from the 1960s. These photographs are used to bring to life the Norton Manor Group's excellent newsletter, which is regularly published by



Norton Manor Group, Clayton Platoon – The Band 1964



Norton Manor Group - Home Day Summer 1965
Gymnastic Display
Clive Oldfield Vaulting over "Man Up" - Ralph Gothard

Norton Manor Group – Home Day Summer 1965

Mike Mason.

As well as life at Norton Manor, the photographs now include military and civilian life after leaving, annual reunions and mini meetings from ex boy soldiers from around the world. Paul has encouraged many of the Group's members to write down their experiences after leaving Norton Manor.

Paul is now working in liaison with The RLC's Museum to ensure that this collection is safely archived and is available for viewing. Next year will mark 60 years since the gates of Norton Manor Camp were opened to the Junior Leaders Battalion RASC.

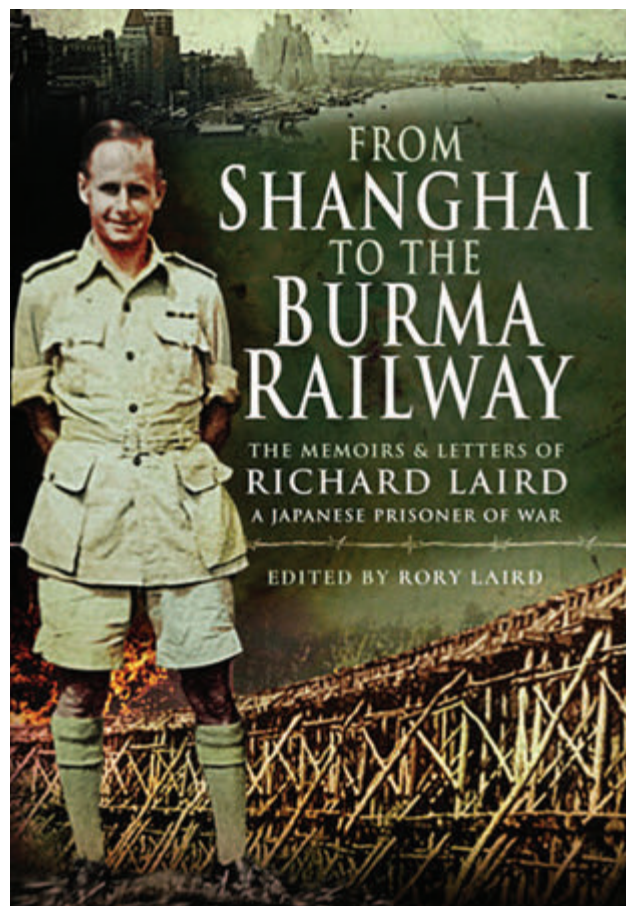
8 Regiment RCT/RLC 19th Anniversary Reunion

The 19th Anniversary Reunion Dinner will take place on Saturday 24 October 20 at The Village on the Green Club, Aspull, Wigan starting at 1900 hours. All past members of the Regiment, irrespective of cap badge, with their wives/partners or guests are invited to attend. A pre-reunion 'warm up' will take place on the evening of Friday 23 October 20 at The Wigan Army Reserve Centre, the cost of the event is £30.00 a head and this covers entertainment and a self-service buffet. For those that can only attend the warm up, the price is reduced to £10.00.

For further information please contact Jimmy Aspinall jimmyasp@hotmail.com or David Southall dcsouthall@aol.com

From Shanghai to the Burma Railway

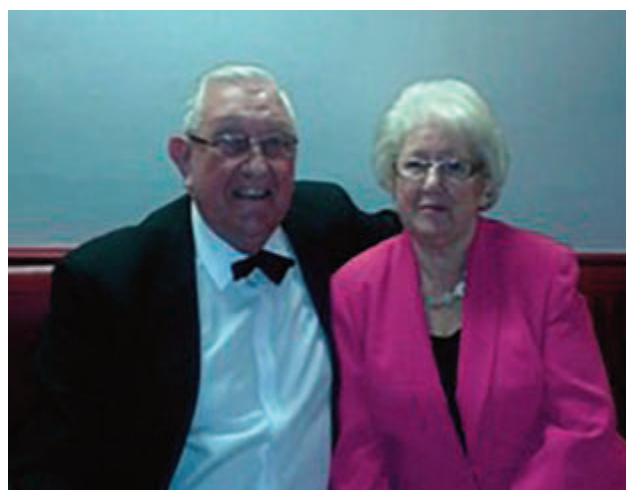
Pen and Sword have recently released the memoirs and letters of Richard Laird, a Japanese POW and RASC veteran, edited by his son – Rory Laird, a Fleet Air Arm Officer. For those who are interested, this book's ISBN is 9781526771117 and its RRP is £19.99.



From Shanghai to the Burma Railway

John Brown

John Brown was born in 1932 and his early life, particularly his performance at school where he did very well, was very positive. He left school at 14 and at aged 19 started his National Service which he did for two years in the RASC, reaching the rank of Sergeant (not the normal practice in the National Service). On leaving in 1953, he joined 908 Coy RASC at Alnwickhill. He remained at Alnwickhill through all the changes and resigned from the RCT in 1973 when he was Squadron Sergeant Major, having attained his Warrant in 1963. He



John and Chris Brown

was very much a family man, loving his wife Chris very much as he did his own children and later his grandchildren. He was a very active and social character who had a place in the heart of everyone he met. He, as we know, was very active in the RASC/RCT Association where he was for many years chair of the Scottish Region and president of our Edinburgh Branch. Within the Committee, John kept us right on all matters of process and protocol. He will be sadly missed and we can only ask that he rests in peace. Due to the current virus crisis, the funeral was only attended by close family. However, once the restrictions are lifted John's family seek to hold a memorial service and we hope you'll all make an effort to attend - we'll share the details once known.

Colonel Alasdair Maclean TD

A Territorial Army officer, who commanded four of his regiment's five squadrons – a feat believed unique – has died aged 76.

Colonel Alasdair Maclean TD served in 153 (Highland) Regiment RCT and commanded its 239 (Highland Yeomanry) Artillery Support Squadron, 231 Artillery Support Squadron, HQ Squadron, and finally 212 Ambulance Squadron. His career had started in 1967, after service in the RASC and RCT in 526 Company/Squadron (TA) in Broughty Castle in Dundee.

Between HQ Squadron and 212 Squadron, he also fitted in three years as 2IC of Tayforth UOTC, where he rather single-mindedly recruited for the Corps, bringing one Regular and four or five Reserve officers into the fold. He was also the first Territorial Army officer to qualify as a Joint Warfare Staff Planner, or so his Royal Marine instructors claimed.

On retiring from the Territorial Army, as the Army Reserve was then called, he joined the Army Cadet Force (ACF) and rose to command of its Angus and Dundee Battalion for four years.

When cancer surgery prevented him from being extended in command, he voluntarily dropped two ranks, from Colonel to Major and was head of ACF public relations for Scotland before age compelled him to retire.

In civilian life, he was a journalist with Dundee publishers D C Thomson & Co Ltd for over 20 years, working on Commando War Stories in Pictures, The Evening Telegraph and the People's Journal. He also contributed record reviews and book reviews to The Scots Magazine.

On leaving the firm in 1991, he gained two degrees from Abertay University and lectured there for 15 years, combining the post with that of Press Officer for Angus College in Arbroath.

After retiring from Abertay, he lectured for some years in the English Language Teaching Centre and the School of Management in St Andrews University.

A long-term British Legion member, he served over 20 years on the Committee of the Angus and Perthshire Areas Festival of Remembrance, held annually in the Caird Hall, Dundee, and edited the Festival Souvenir Programme. In later years, he also volunteered for the NHS in King's Cross Hospital Health and Community Care Centre in Dundee.

His wife Kerry pre-deceased him on Christmas Day 2014; he is survived by his son Fergus and daughter-in-law Pamela in Dundee, his daughter Dee and her husband Mark in California, and five grandchildren - Adam, Alex and Ruairi in Dundee and Beth and Bridget in the US.

Major K F (Ken) Reece MBE by Lt Col Bob Pow TD

Former members of the RCT and RLC will be saddened to learn that Ken Reece died after a short illness on 25 April, aged 75. He will be greatly missed.

Although Ken saw regular service with the Green Jackets in the 1960s, most of his military career was served with the Territorial Army (TA), initially with 240 Squadron of 151 Greater London Regiment RCT at Slough and later with a number of RCT and RLC units at Grantham, to where he transferred as a Sergeant in 1979. Once at Grantham, he quickly progressed through the ranks, becoming SSM of 280 TRC Squadron in 1983 and then RSM of 162 MC Regiment in 1988, before being commissioned in 1991. He subsequently served as an MCO in 162 Regiment until his appointment as QM of 2 Group in 1997. He retired from the TA in 2002 but worked with the Army Cadets at Chilwell for a couple of years thereafter.

Ken was a larger than life character with a big personality. Hugely enthusiastic, he was also a complete all-rounder. He had very strong military skills from his infantry days which he put to good effect in the training he provided to the many young soldiers and officers serving at Grantham. He was also a great organiser, taking on many extra-curricular events for HQ RLC TA, and he was a renowned 'fixer', no problem proving too difficult for him. Very keen on sport, he won RLC Colours

for supporting three separate sports: football, golf and skiing. However, first and foremost, he was a 'soldiers' man', whose primary interest was the wellbeing of those around him, as Ian McRobbie, former Commanding Officer 151 Regiment and Colonel of Volunteers, remarked, "He was never one to shy away from advising senior officers of his views, particularly when it came to soldiers' welfare." He knew everyone and very few people passing through Grantham weren't touched by Ken in one way or another over the 25 or so years he served there. The personal tributes paid about him from all ranks since his demise have been overwhelming - it is fair to say he had become Mr Grantham.

Ken was ideally suited to the role of QM for 2 Group. The then 2 Group Commander and later DRLC, Brigadier Chris Murray, commented that Ken led the QM team from the front and was in his element when deployed. The Group wanted for nothing and Ken would go out 'foraging'. The trick was never to ask 'how' or 'where from' and, crucially, not to enquire too closely how it may be accounted for!

One of Ken's many interests was shooting and he was a Stages 1-5 Qualified Range Officer, normally only achieved by Small Arms Corps members. He managed the 151 Regiment Shooting Team which included a TA Queen's Medallist and which swept all before them at Skill at Arms meetings (SAMs). He was subsequently to be found at Bisley most years running one of the ranges at the TA and Corps SAMs. Brigadier Maurice Sheen recalls being with Ken at Bisley when they approached a group of officers with the then CGS, General Sir Mike Jackson, in the centre. Maurice quickly suggested to Ken that they veer off out of sight. "Don't worry, young Maurice, he's alright!" came Ken's calm reassurance. They threw up salutes and chirped, "Morning CGS," as the great man reached them. The scowl left CGS and a crinkled smile took its place. "Morning Ken," was the General's response!

Another of Ken's loves was football - he was a Middlesex FA referee - and whilst RSM of 162, he formed the Regimental team in 1989, which won the Eastern District Cup four years out of five and twice got to the semi-finals of the National TA Cup. Not content with that, and with the support of the then RLC TA Colonel of Volunteers, he formed an RLC TA football team in 1995 from units across all the forming Corps in the UK, which has since played the Regular RLC side each year for the White Cup.

Ken gave of his time freely and acted as a Marshall

of the Lord Mayors Show every November - taking on responsibilities for directing over 100 floats and some 3000 civilian participants at the Law Courts sector. He was invaluable in a similar role as a Marshall for HM the Queen's Golden Jubilee in the City of London.

For his many services to the RLC TA and the Reserves in general, Ken was awarded the MBE in the 2004 New Year's Honours.

Ken was a great family man and is survived by his wife Janice, daughters Kerry, Laurie and Stacey, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The family hope to hold a memorial service for Ken next year when the pandemic has eased.



Major K F (Ken) Reece MBE

Major Raaid Chris Beal FTR, RCT and RASC

Raaid Christopher (Chris) Hamilton Beal died in hospital in Switzerland on 6 May 20 from a heart attack.

Chris was born on 12 July 1939 in Cardiff, Wales. His father was mobilised as a Territorial officer in the Welch Regiment shortly after his birth and would eventually land in Normandy in 1944. He would end the war as a decorated major in the Reconnaissance Corps. Chris was educated at Framlingham College, in Suffolk. He was commissioned from Mons Officer Cadet School into the Royal Army Service Corps in 1960, having been a National Serviceman since 1959. During his time in the British Army, he saw overseas service in Libya, Germany, Cyprus, Sabah, Sarawak, Hong Kong and Northern Ireland. He retired from the British Army as a major in the Royal Corps of Transport in 1978.

Following his service in the British Army and after a short time in Sudan acting as the logistics team leader for a documentary film crew, he joined SAF on 8 October 1979. Having arrived in the Sultanate, he undertook a short attachment in Dhofar attached to A

Company Southern Regiment (KJ), before joining Muqaddam Paul Benton as his operations and training officer in the rapidly developing Force Transport Regiment (FTR). They were both instrumental in taking the Jaysh's operational logistics from 'back of a Bedford' ad hoc resupply arrangements, to a modern and integrated force-support capability in the early 1980s.

Chris was also a great enthusiast for rigorously testing every resupply element and he was only happy when an FTR capability had been desert-proven. He was a great mentor to Omani, Baluchi and Brit alike. He was a natural adventurer and from 1984 to 1986, he played a key role in supporting the Royal Geographical Society's expedition and detailed analysis of the Wahibah Sands. He had a depth of skill and experience that was put to great use and Chris played a huge part in preparing the Omani logistical contribution to the Peninsula Shield Force that deployed to Kuwait. He was an enthusiast for Omanisation and always committed time to developing junior Omani officer capabilities in terms of bringing on their command and planning skills. He ended his time in SAF as the Commandant the Force's School of Transport.

Chris and his wife Heide ran an exclusive tourist operation in Oman after he left the Army. He was deeply loyal to his dear wife Heide during her battle with cancer, which she sadly lost in Oman in 2002, as well as being a great father to their daughter Natasha. In 2003, he returned to London and took on a logistics fuel project for the UN in Iraq just after the war. Later he met a fellow spirit in a Swiss lady, Esther, so they married and he moved to Switzerland where they lived peacefully for 13 years in a small farming village outside Bern. In his retirement, he became a member of the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC). He joked that his time on horses in Hong Kong may have helped him get into the HAC. He was also a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Chris was immensely positive and would always lift the spirits of others under strain. As a friend, he was witty, warm and always patient. He was very popular with his Omani friends and when on his frequent trips into the interior, he was never short of places to stop for qahwa and dates. He was a wonderful guide who loved to share his knowledge of the Sultanate (a country he adored), a real raconteur who was never short of a story. As a host, he was always generous and when paying a visit to Chris it really was a case of 'baytee baytak'. He will be sorely missed by all that knew him.

Once the travel restrictions due to COVID-19 have been lifted, Chris' ashes will be given to the sea in the smallest circle concurring to Chris' wishes.



Major Raaid Chris Beal FTR, RCT and RASC

Major Alan Batty

As a trained air despatch crew commander and member of the Special Air Service, Captain Alan Batty was well equipped to deal with the audacious mail drop and pick up on the eastern side of the Falklands during the 1980s conflict. Even so, with high winds, fast-changing weather conditions and fuel limitations, the manoeuvre was not without its problems. On the Seal Point drop zone, Alan and his team from 47 Air Despatch Squadron RCT had set up an extended type of rugby post with a wire hung in the middle and then set off a flare to indicate that the weather conditions were satisfactory for the Hercules aircraft from Ascension Island to come in low. After dropping its mail from 500ft, the plane then swooped to 50ft, extended a grappling hook from its rear fuselage door and scooped up the mailbag dangling from the wire. The mail 'had got through'. Morale was restored to the troops and their families.

An adventurer at heart, Alan had left St Egbert's College in Chingford, Essex at the age of 15 to join the Junior Leaders' Battalion RASC as a boy soldier. He was a well-built and fit young man who enjoyed boxing, became a trumpet major in the military band and rose

to the rank of sergeant before joining the Royal Army Service Corps as a lance-corporal aged 18. He was posted to Borneo during the Malayan Emergency, a guerilla war between Commonwealth Armed Forces and the Malayan National Liberation Army, to help with air supply, and then Singapore and Dhofar in 1975 where he was attached to 23 Special Air Service Regiment. After promotion to major in 1984, he worked alongside General Sir Peter de la Billiere, the Commander-in-Chief of British Forces during the Gulf War, as liaison officer to provide air supplies to the special forces.

Alan was born in 1942 to Patrick Diggin, an agricultural manager from the west of Ireland, and Anastasia (nee Grant) who was from the east of Ireland and ran a dress shop with her sister. In 1939, his parents moved to Potters Bar in Hertfordshire where his father was an agriculture adviser to the war effort's food supply and raised Alan and his younger brother John. In the 1950s, his parents divorced and his mother married Peter Batty, the landlord of the Angel Inn in Addington near West Malling, Kent.

Close in age and temperament, the brothers spent holidays with their grandparents in Ireland where, with too much time and too little adult monitoring they indulged in practical jokes. These included wrapping up a shoebox in brown paper and string that they would leave on the quiet Dublin to Waterford road for someone to come and try to pick up. Then, with relish and a stifled guffaw, the two would pull the package back towards them using the piece of fine nylon fishing line attached to it.

In 1961, Alan met Wendy at a roller-skating party when he was stationed at RAF Watchfield at Shrivenham in Wiltshire. "It was love at first sight," Wendy said, "and I loved him until the day he died." They married at 18 and had Richard, a chef, Simon a care worker, Nicholas, who runs a business, and Sarah, also a care worker.

Family life, and particularly children, was important to Alan, and in 1986 he was appointed MBE for his fundraising for the Bethlehem Orphanage in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia as well as his organisation of food drops during the famine.

He declined a promotion to Lieutenant Colonel as he was happy with his job and did not want to move again and in 1996, he left the Army to live in the Welsh farmhouse in a valley filled with red kites near Aberystwyth that he had bought in the 1980s. However, after many winters of wind and rain, he and his wife

decided to move south to a remote corner of Sicily beneath Mount Etna. When he developed leukemia (he believed from exposure to depleted uranium during the Gulf War) he returned to Wales, where he lived alongside his daughter. His funeral took place at Strata Florida Abbey, a ruined Cistercian abbey near Tregaron in Wales, and included two standard bearers sent from his former regiment.

Major RH (Rex) Woodward TD by Lt Col Bob Pow TD

Major Rex Woodward passed away from a heart attack on Wednesday 27 May 20, in Stoke Mandeville Hospital, where he had incredible care. Regrettably given the COVID-19 situation, his funeral could only be attended by close family members and was a very simple affair. His family asked that news of Rex's passing be forwarded to all who knew him.

Rex was commissioned into the RASC from Mons in February 1947 and did most of his National Service in Egypt. In 1951, he joined 508 Coy in Croydon. Part of 44 Div Coln, he then transferred to 559 Coy at Caterham in Surrey, which was transferred to 128 Coln and returned to 44 Div Coln in the early 1960s. In 1965, he had to resign from the Territorial Army as his civilian employer transferred him to Hong Kong.

Rex was a staunch supporter of the Waggon Club, becoming honorary treasurer in the 1980s giving sterling service in those pre-computer days. In recognition of his outstanding service, he was offered a vice presidency and the AGM overwhelmingly voted for this. He continued in this role until fairly recently. He was also an avid supporter of both the RASC/RCT Officers' Club and the RASC/RCT Officers' Luncheon Club. In recent years, Rex was so pleased that he got to attend two RASC & RCT Luncheons for the over 90's.



Major Rex Woodward TD

Terry Suddaby by Mike Mason

On 18 April 20, a light was turned off in Clayton block and we sadly lost another member of our group. Terry Suddaby joined Clayton Platoon in 1965 in the final term before rebadging into the RCT. He arrived at Norton Manor from school in Bramley, Leeds and quickly established friends with fellow entrants. Some of those friendships were to last a lifetime. Terry was a very popular band member, liked by all and remembered for his ever-cheerful good humour and mischievous sense of fun. He quickly became an accomplished trumpet player and was appointed Silver Trumpeter. Terry, together with his wife Cathy, was a regular supporter of our group annual reunions. Terry and Cathy first met when she visited a friend's family in Hameln in Germany. There began a whirlwind romance, engaged after only three months, and they married 6 June 1970. Next month would have seen them celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary. His sudden passing has shocked and saddened all of us who knew him. Despite health issues in the past, Terry remained stoic and good humoured throughout. A keen golfer, Terry epitomised the saying 'Keep Calm and Carry On'. More recently, he contracted symptoms of COVID-19 and after a short stay in hospital was discharged to self-isolate at home. Within only a matter of days, Terry was rushed back into hospital after suffering a stroke. Following a further massive stroke, Terry slipped into a coma and never recovered consciousness. On behalf of the Group I extend our deepest sympathies to Cathy, sons Darren



Terry Suddaby

and Jason, their daughter Michelle and grandsons Harry, Aiden and Patrick. A limited-attendance funeral service will be held on 7 May 20 and a recording can be viewed up 28 days after.

David Halsall by Mike Mason

It was with great sadness that members of the Norton Manor Group learned of the death on 14 February 20 of David Halsall, nicknamed Allie when at the Junior Leaders Battalion RASC, Norton Manor Camp, at Taunton. David joined Junior Leaders at the age of 15, straight from school in January 1962. He spent his training term in Connaught Platoon and then transferred into Clayton Platoon, the Battalion band, as a trumpeter, and remained until late 1964. David was a very popular and well liked individual, always remembered for his good sense of humour. His first posting was to 36 Company RASC (Motorised Ambulance) in Catterick Barracks, Bielefeld which on 15 July 1965 became 36 Ambulance Squadron RCT. Much of his time in these early years was spent in Norway where he met and married a local girl, Ingeborg. Following tours with five (Airportable) Infantry Brigade and Training Depot RCT, David left the Army in 1973 to pursue a career in Norway. David worked his



David Halsall

way up to the post of Operations Manager before taking early retirement in 2006 because of health problems. He continued to pass on his skills in a part-time role as an Instructor and Course Leader in Transport and Logistics for adult trainees. We as a group were delighted to meet up with David at various UK mini-meets and at our annual reunion in 2016 which he and Ingeborg both attended. He thoroughly enjoyed meeting up with old friends and fellow battalion band members whom he had last seen over 50 years ago. Sadly, his wife Ingeborg passed away in 2019 leaving David devastated at her loss. Many close friends and colleagues will forever remember David for his loyal friendship and great sense of fun.

Cyril Cannon by John Cunningham

Cyril was a life member of the Aberdeen Branch RASC/RCT Association for over forty years. He was just the sort of person the TAVR needed - totally dependable, skilled at his job and (usually) cheerful.

After his National Service which took him to Aden, he joined the RCT and, as a Corporal, became the officer commanding's driver, doing a grand job whether digging in at Sherwood Forest or bombing along the Autobahn in 88ER88, our favourite Land Rover. Cyril was also one of the founder members of the Blue Arrows Motor Cycle Display Team.

In civilian life, Cyril was a valued employee of Stoneywood Mills driving HGVs. In his family life, he was a Grandfather to eight, enjoyed holidays in Benbecula in the Western Isles and Canada and was a staunch supporter of the Roman Catholic Church.

A very well attended celebration of his life took place at St Columba's Roman Catholic Church on 18 February 20.

Douglas Oliver by John Cartwright

Douglas Oliver peacefully passed away on 13 March 20 aged 86 years, survived by his wife Valerie, daughter Yvonne, and son Douglas.

Doug was very proud of his military career, as after being in the Cadets he then served some 30 years or more as a soldier in the Royal Engineers, working his way up the ranks from Private to Captain. He was very proud to have been awarded the Malayan Campaign, Northern Ireland, Queens Jubilee and Long Service medals whilst in service. He was also very honoured that in 2004, the King and Government of Malaysia recognised his service to Malaya by awarding him the

Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal for the time he served with the Gurkhas. He then served a further lengthy period of time as the Permanent Staff Admin Officer in the Territorial Army with 216 Squadron RCT(V) based at Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear.

On retiring, Doug devoted a lot of his time in a number of roles for SSAFA – the Armed Forces Charity. He was one of the founding members of the Tyneside Branch of the Association. Its members, who knew Doug from the 216 Squadron days, were greatly disappointed that they were not able to give him the military send-off that he so deserved because of the Coronavirus lockdown.

Colonel Peter Blyth MBE, CMC, FAIM, MIMC, Late RACT and Mrs Julia Blyth MBA, BA, CAHRI, AIMM, JP (Qual)



Colonel Peter Blyth MBE, CMC, FAIM, MIMC

Colonel Peter Blyth MBE was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1935 and following schooling entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon at age 16 years. Peter graduated in December 1955 with solid military skills and was a proven sportsman, especially in cricket and Australian Rules football.

Following post-graduate specialist training and a regimental appointment, Peter was seconded to the British Army, 55 Company RASC (Air Dispatch) in the Far East (Singapore). Here he met a Sydney lass, Julia. They

were soon married. It was a wonderful time for the couple that featured long in their memories.

Peter and Julia returned to Australia where Peter was assigned to his Corps school as the Senior Instructor of the Air Dispatch Wing, training officers and soldiers in those important skills. Peter was subsequently assigned to the 3rd Division before returning to his specialist field at 1 Air Supply Control Section RAASC.

In 1964, the family was sent to England where Peter was again seconded to the British Army at their specialist Corps school in South East England. Here he assisted in the training of officers and soldiers and gained an enviable reputation. On arrival back in Australia, he returned to his Corps school until he was selected to attend Australian Staff College. Following Staff College, he was immediately assigned to the headquarters of the Australian led combat force (1st Australian Task Force) in Vietnam - initially as the senior personnel and logistics officer (DAAQMG). Unexpectedly, he was reassigned to be the senior Operations Officer (Brigade Major) during 1970. He excelled in this highly unusual appointment for a logistics officer. Peter was awarded the MBE in 1971 for his vitality, competence and dedication in this critical appointment in Vietnam.

On his return to Australia, Peter served in Army Headquarters and was heavily involved in the formation of the Royal Australian Corps of Transport. He was subsequently assigned to the Headquarters of Logistics Command then attended Joint Services Staff College before being selected for the Directing Staff at the Australian Staff College. Once again, because of his professional competence and personal demeanour, he gained the admiration and respect of all at the college.

Peter was promoted to Colonel in 1977 and assigned as the Senior Project Officer to restructure

officer training and development before being appointed the Director of Movements and Transport for the Australian Army. He held this appointment until June 1982 when he and Julia made the decision to use their considerable skills and experience to pursue a career outside the Army.

However, Peter and Julia retained their close association with the Army and in 1983 Peter was appointed Representative Honorary Colonel and Colonel Commandant RACT 1st Military District where he again served with distinction supported by Julia and his family.

During Peter's time in the Army, Julia pursued her own professional development and career, gaining significant tertiary qualifications, bearing two children and holding important administrative appointments.

On forming their own consultancy company, Peter and Julia worked as a team. Their reputation as professionals and their ability to produce effective results spread throughout industry in Australia and overseas. Major Australian mining, manufacturing and service companies sought their counsel as did international clients. It was a highly successful endeavour.

Following retirement, Julia developed significant gradually debilitating medical conditions and Peter became her carer. Over time, Julia's health continued to deteriorate. In 2019, Peter managed a return to 'old haunts and friends' in the United Kingdom. It was a trip that he really enjoyed.

In early 2020, Peter was diagnosed with cancer yet he demanded that the few who knew say nothing. He was stoic and loving as Julia's condition deteriorated. Sadly, Julia passed away in early May 20. Following her farewell, Peter's condition worsened by the day and he passed away on 5 June 20.

Just as this edition of The Waggoner went to press, we received the notice below from the Royal British Legion. This gives details on how VJ Day will be marked. This update also gives notice that arrangements for Remembrance Sunday are under review; in particular

the Cenotaph Dispersal – the military veterans' component of the traditional Sunday ceremony on Whitehall. Further guidance will be disseminated to you through the Officers' Club and the Association's regions and branches.

The Royal British Legion



On Friday 8 May this year, the nation commemorated the 75th Anniversary of VE Day under challenging lockdown conditions and I am writing in the first instance to thank all of those that reacted so positively and at in such short notice to ensure that the service and sacrifice of the Second World War generation did not go unmarked within our communities. I also wanted to update you on preparations for the upcoming 75th Anniversary of VJ Day, as well as provide some sense of where we are in terms of planning for this year's Remembrance Sunday ceremony.

On the 15th August 2020, the nation will commemorate VJ 75 and the recent easing of HMG social distancing restrictions means that we are now able to develop plans for a formal event centred around the Act of Remembrance at 11am. This year's commemoration will be broadcast on BBC One from the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and will incorporate wreath-laying activity at several of the relevant memorials and artefacts linked to the WW2 campaign in South-East Asia.

In consequence, this will allow for a wider attendance than would normally be the case under extant social distancing restrictions although regrettably, it is highly unlikely that we will be able to allow for mass attendance by members of the public.

That evening on BBC One, there will be a second 90 minute broadcast based on a MoD-led commemorative programme from London.

Whilst the war against Japan was truly Tri-Service, it is worthy of note that the Fourteenth Army in particular, was notable for being the most diverse fighting force raised in modern times with less than 20% of those involved in fighting originating in the British Isles.

The coordinated effort of servicemen and women from over 40 countries very much reflected the diversity of the UK's modern-day communities and organisations such as the Armed Forces and the Emergency Services and this theme will be integral to this year's event programme.

The Royal British Legion is therefore asking all organisations and associations, both military and civilian, that share our commitment to remembering the service, suffering and sacrifice of all those involved in that most challenging of environments to either lead or participate in local activity centred on the Two Minute Silence at 11am on Saturday 15th August. The Legion strongly urges all those planning events to adhere to extant HMG and Local Authority guidelines on social distancing and to shape their commemorations in whichever way is most meaningful to their local community.

At this time of year, it would also be usual for the Legion to initiate proceedings in support of The Cenotaph Dispersal, the military veterans' component of the traditional Remembrance Sunday ceremony on Whitehall. This year is the centenary of the unveiling of the iconic Whitehall war memorial, designed and built by Edwin Lutyens, and the Legion is working closely with all of the relevant HMG agencies to ensure that this year's event can go ahead in some form.

Mindful that mass events are not permitted under current restrictions, a range of representative options are under consideration by HMG; the Legion will provide the relevant details as soon as we are able. Similar restrictions will also apply to community based remembrance activity and direction for these will be promulgated by the appropriate civil authorities.

Yours Aye,

Bob Gamble OBE
Assistant Director of Commemorative Events

Last Post

Atkinson - On 10 June 2020, Mr (Lt) PJ Atkinson RASC

Baldry - On 18 January 2020, Col P Baldry OBE TD, Late RCT

Batty - In 2020, Maj ARJ Batty MBE RASC/RCT

Beal - On 6 May 2020, Maj CH Beal RASC/RCT

Blyth - On 8 June 2020, Col PW Blyth MBE RAASC

Bowman - On 26 February 2020, Mr P Bowman RCT

Bidmead - On 25 March 2020, Col J Bidmead CBE, Late RASC/RCT

Brown - On 9 April 2020, Mr J Brown RASC/RCT

Brown - On 9 March 2020, Mrs P Brown

Burgess - On 8 February 2020, Mrs H Burgess

Carter - On 21 February 2020, Maj DJ Carter RCT

Connon - On 8 February 2020, Mr C Connon RASC/RCT

Cowie - On 9 May 2020, Mr I Cowie RCT

Edwards - On 27 March 2020, Mr B Edwards RCT

Elms - On 19 March 2020, Mr RJ Elms RCT

Ewart - On 28 January 2020, Maj BJ Ewart TD RASC/RCT

Fleming - On 14 February 2020, Mr BC Fleming RCT

Graham - On 24 February 2020, Mr J Graham RCT

Griffin - On 6 January 2020, Mr EWO Griffin RCT

Griffiths - On 20 April 2020, Maj RW Griffiths RCT

Halsall - On 14 February 2020, Mr D Halsall RASC/RCT

Hayes - On 1 February 2020, Lt Col W Hayes RASC/RAOC

Hodder - On 21 April 2020, Col IM Hodder RASC/RCT

Hunt - On 25 April 2020, Mr V P Hunt RCT

Jones - On 10 May 2020, Lt Col DEB Jones RE/RCT

Loaring - On 8 May 2020, Mr DA Loaring RASC

Lord - In January 2020, Mr P Lord RASC/RCT

Loftus - In 2019, Mr B Loftus RASC/RCT

Lukins - On 25 November 2019, Mrs R Lukins

Maclean - In February 2020, Col A Maclean TD Late RCT

Mortimer - On 29 May 2020, Mr JA Mortimer RASC

Norvell - On 6 March 2020, Mr WF Norvell RASC/RCT

O'Hare - On 1 May 2020, Col CD O'Hare RASC/RAOC

Oliver - On 13 February 2020, Mr D Oliver RE/RCT

Patterson - On 25 May 2020, Maj KR Patterson RASC/RCT

Payne - On 10 May 2020, Mrs JK Payne

Price - On 29 December 2019, Maj IW Price RCT

Reece - On 27 April 2020, Maj KF Reece MBE RCT/RLC

Rivett - On 15 Apr 2020, Mr G Rivett RCT

Simmonds - On 3 April 2020, Maj E Simmonds RCT/RAPC

Simsey - On 27 January 2020, Mr D Simsey RCT

Speight - On 4 January 2020, Mr G Speight RE/RCT

Stewart - On 11 April 2020, Maj I H Stewart RCT/RLC

Suddaby - On 18 April 2020, Mr T Suddaby RASC/RCT

Tubbs - On 27 February 2020, Mr JK Tubbs RCT

Westlake - On 17 January 2020, Mrs J Westlake

Williams - In April 2020, Mr AE Williams RASC

Williams - On 14 May 2020, Mr K Williams RASC/RCT

Whyte - On 3 March 2020, Maj P Whyte RASC/RCT

Woodward - On 27 May 2020, Maj RH Woodward TD RASC/RCT

Wooles - On 1 April 2020, Lt Col DS Wooles RASC/RCT

THE RASC & RCT OFFICERS' CLUB
Taunton Curry Lunch
Sunday 20 September 2020
40 Commando RM Officers' Mess
Norton Manor Camp

Rank Name

Address – Post Code

My party will consist of:

Myself (£10)

Wife/Partner/Guest 1 (£10)

Name Guest 2 (£10)

Name Guest 3 (£10)

I require the following: Curry Roast

Vegetarian/Special Diet

I wish to be seated with:

Car details: Make Colour VRN.....

I enclose a cheque for Payable to: **The RLC Association Trust Fund** and forward to:

The RASC & RCT Council Secretary, RHQ The RLC, Building 204, Worthy Down Camp, Near Winchester, SO21 2RG

N.B We are limited to 50 places - first come, first served!

Closing Date 4 September 2020

THE RASC & RCT OFFICERS' CLUB
AGM and Annual Dinner
Friday 20 November 2020
Potter's Lakeside International Hotel, Frimley Green, GU16 6JB

Name

Address – Post Code

I will be attending the AGM in the hotel at 1815 hrs. Yes/No

I will be attending the dinner. Yes/No

I require accommodation. Yes/No

Dietary requirements

I wish to be seated with

£25 - Dinner only

£35 – Dinner, bed & breakfast

Please make cheque for Payable to: **The RLC Association Trust Fund**

Please complete this application by **20 October 2020** and return, with the appropriate cheque, to:

The RASC & RCT Council Secretary, RHQ The RLC, Building 204, Worthy Down Camp, Near Winchester, SO21 2RG

