

# SCOTS GUARDS ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER



**That some no longer serve with the colours does not matter,  
What does matter is that we are all of us Scots Guardsmen.  
Bound together in the Queen's service until we die by a chain,  
the links of which are invisible but which are as strong as steel:  
Constantly striving, in all that we do, to maintain the high traditions  
of loyalty and devotion to duty upon which the Scots Guards are founded.**

**General Sir Michael Gow GCB**

**Neil Crockett  
Secretary & Editor**

**Email: [sga@scotsguards.org](mailto:sga@scotsguards.org)**

**Palace of Holyrood 1965**

**November 2021  
Volume 22 Issue 10**

**Tel: 01383 – 721530**

## Front Page Photographs ~ At This Time Of Remembrance

**Scots Guardsmen who are part of the team at the Lady Haig Poppy Factory, Edinburgh. They've been working hard throughout the year making poppies and preparing for the Remembrance period.**

**Top: Donnie McLeod, Craig Dickson, John Mitchell**

**Bottom: Willie Urban (Chairman Tumbledown Veterans & Families Association), Fraser Rowand, Paul Dickson**

All 6 are members of the Scots Guards Association, Edinburgh & The Lothians ~ recruited into the Branch by former Poppy Factory Foreman Danny Minto (Branch Secretary).

On Monday 25 October the Garden of Remembrance, Edinburgh Princes Street Gardens was officially opened with a service and wreath laying. We took the opportunity for a photograph and afterwards those of us who didn't have to go back to work enjoyed a pie & a pint in the Scots Guards Club.



L-R: WO1 A Gibson (GSM Edinburgh Garrison), Major Mark Cape, Donnie McLeod, Gavin Dickson, Neil Crockett, Kevin Gray MM, Danny Minto, Paddy McEnhill, Kenny Lawson, Major General Bruce of Cronaich OBE (Governor Edinburgh Castle). Ted Middlemass, Les Braby, Gdsm RST, Mark McKay, Peter Simpson, Lt HAM Dingwall, Brian Ward (Events Manager, RBL Scotland).



## WE REMEMBER THOSE KILLED DURING NOVEMBER IN CONFLICTS SINCE 1945

### Northern Ireland 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion

4 November 1971	24141254 Gdsm Stephen McGuire	Age 19	Left Flank, Killed Ballymurphy, Belfast.
27 November 1971	24141336 Gdsm Paul Nicholls	Age 18	G Company, Killed St James (Off Falls Road), Belfast.



**Gdsm Paul Nicholls, 8 Pltn, G Company 1SG**

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### BRANCH DINNERS NOVEMBER 2021

SGA Branch Dinners take place as below. Why not contact the local Branch Secretary and find out how you can attend.

Fri 5 November	Ayrshire	RAF Club, Prestwick
Sat 6 November	Corby, Central& Eastern England	<b>Cancelled</b>
Fri 12 November	Fife	Dean Park Hotel, Kirkcaldy GOH Major WJ Inglis
Fri 19 November	Preston	Masonic Club, Preston
Sat 27 November	London (St Andrews Dinner)	Union Jack Club

### 2022 ~ EARLY DATES TO SAVE IN YOUR DIARY

Fri 21 January	SGA Glasgow Burns Supper, Lok Bar & Kitchen, Shawlands, Glasgow.
Sat 29 January	SGA Berks, Bucks & Ox Burns Supper, Datchet Golf Club.
Sat 19 February	The Rabbits Breakfast, Scots Guards Club, Edinburgh.
Sat 5 March	Swallae Ho, Scots Guards Club, Edinburgh.
Sat 2 April	SGA AGM, Wellington Barracks.
Sun 3 April	Regimental Remembrance Sunday, Guards Chapel.
Thu 2 June	Queen's Birthday Parade.
2 – 5 June	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday Weekend.
Sat 4 June	Drums Company 2 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion Scots Guards Reunion, Scots Guards Club, Edinburgh.
10 – 13 June	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration & Reunion, Tumbledown Veterans & Families Association, Blackpool.
30 July (TBC)	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Op Motorman Reunion, Scots Guards Club, Edinburgh.

### Edinburgh Branch

The Branch holds its Meetings on the First Wednesday of each month, the next meeting is 3 November @ 1900 for 1930hrs. This is to fit in with the Scots Guards Club opening on this day for groups to hold their meetings. The Club is not open to the public after 6pm and is for groups who have permission to hold their meetings.

### Preston Branch



### Scots Guards Association - Preston Branch

Music Evening in aid of Rainbow Hub  
Celebrating the 60s, 70s, 80s and more!  
St Gregory's Club Preston  
Friday 3rd December 2021

For more information contact  
Michael  
07976 909 001  
Jimmy  
07990 583 720  
Tickets £3.00  
Food available



Help us to help disabled children every day



### **Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Branch**

Branch Meeting: Friday 26th November 2020 Datchet Golf Club 1930 for 20.00hrs. This meeting will take the form of an updated talk from Colin Foster (for all members but especially for those who missed it last time). Subject: Debut At Caumont, 3rd (Tank) Battalion Scots Guards, Operation BLUECOAT, 30th July 1944.

If you would like to attend the talk and have some curry, please inform the Branch Secretary as soon as possible. Rab Ritchie  
Tel: 07776 411120 Email: [rab.ritchie@icloud.com](mailto:rab.ritchie@icloud.com)

Also contact Rab to find out about normal Branch Meetings which take place at Datchet Golf Club on the last Friday of the month.

Forecast of 2022 – 23 Events all at Datchet Golf Club:

Fri	25 March	Branch AGM
Tue	3 May	Ramsay Trophy Golf (TBC) inc Breakfast and Dinner
Sat	13 Aug	Branch BBQ
Sat	15 Oct	Branch Annual Dinner
Sat	21Jan 2023.	Branch Burns Night

### **Borders Branch**

The Branch give early notice of their Diamond (60<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary Dinner which will take place at Hawick Rugby Club on Saturday 6 March 2022. Scots Guardsmen in the Borders and beyond are invited to attend.

Branch Secretary is Eck Barclay email: [eck01uk@yahoo.com](mailto:eck01uk@yahoo.com) Tel: 07802 4422878

### **London Branch**

Major Tom Ormiston (Branch Treasurer) has co-ordinated the Scots Guards Detachment taking part in the Act of Remembrance and march past the Cenotaph, Whitehall on Sunday 14 November. If watching on the TV ~ look out for them in column A.

## **DEATHS**

### **Non Association Members**

Sgt Alexander Mathieson Died 5 October 2021. Served 2SG Falkland Islands to 1990. Lived Scottish Borders.

Sgt Alexander Crawford. Died 9 October 2021. Served mid 1960s to late 70s. Served 1SG Sigs Pltn, 2SG & Gds Depot, Lived Fife. Funeral Wednesday 3 November, Kirkcaldy Crematorium 1100hrs.

Robert Lawson. Died 1 October 2021. Age 86. Served 1955 – 1975 including 22 SAS.



## SCOTS GUARDS ASSOCIATION DINNERS

We are half way through the autumn period of SGA dinners. Since the start of October the following Branch dinners have taken place. Pipers, Dundee & Angus, Carlisle Dumfries & Galloway, Aberdeen & North East Scotland. All much enjoyed by those who attended, all slightly different as Branches put their personal stamp on proceedings.

On 30 October the Durham & Yorkshire Branch dinner took place at the Sgts Mess, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Scots Guards, Somme Barracks, Catterick, thanks to RSM Paxton. Here are some photo's from the night.



Major Jon Bull (OC HQ Coy), CSM Tom Morris (HQ Coy & SGA Berks, Bucks & Oxon) Captain John Craib (TQM & President SGA Durham & Yorkshire)



L-R: Phil Neill, Major Jon Bull, CSM Tom Morris, Darren Whelan, Andrew Rae, Neil Crockett



L-R John Findlay (D&Y Treasurer), Major Barry Veitch (Past D & Y President)

John Findlay & Neil Crockett enlisted as Junior Leaders together in September 1966 – friends of 55 years.



LCpl David McRobb – Sets the tone with a fine display of piping.



### Durham & Yorkshire Senior Members Jim Woods & Geoff Delaney

Jim served in 2SG in Malaya 1948 – 1951 & beyond. Geoff joined 2SG on their return to London in 1951 - both took part in the busy ceremonial period of the funeral HM King George VI, 2SG Queen's Birthday Parade in 1952 & the Coronation of HM The Queen in 1953. Two great old soldiers & great friends of many years.

### SGA Dinners in November

4 more Dinners take place in November – attend your local Branch Dinner – contact Secretaries in advance (See separate list for dates).

## **THE SERVING REGIMENT**

### **1SG October Update**

The main focus for the Battalion throughout October has been the 'Road to the Jungle' for Exercise Mayan Storm. Exercise Mayan Storm is an Overseas Training Exercise in Belize. 1SG deployed from 18 Oct and will all have returned by 10 Dec 21. The Battalion will deliver a dry and live-fire exercise to B Coy (with a fourth PI attached from Household Cavalry Regiment); C Coy (with a fourth platoon attached from 4 SCOTS), and A Sqn Royal Lancers. Training will be conducted using facilities provided and enabled by British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB). The overseas training exercise is maximising deployment opportunity - with 470 service personnel deploying from across 23 units. There will be a firm focus on mastering the basics (shoot, move, gives communicate, medicate) and individual and small team soldiering leading up to Coy and Bn activity. The OTX will culminate with adventurous training and what will be some well-earned rest and recuperation. There will be Defence Engagement throughout with community projects being delivered throughout 1SG's time away.

### **Right Flank**

Right Flank has been busy delivering training and support to the rest of the Battalion before it deploys to Belize. Alongside this they have been focussing on their night fighting capability to take the lead in the Battalion for this critical element of training. The Alma Platoon (Rehab Platoon) is also under the Right Flank construct, and much work has been done to get injured soldiers back to being fully fit.

### **B Company**

B Company has been busy on the ranges and conducting exercises to best prepare themselves for Ex Mayan Storm. Alongside this the Company has kept its focus on its Anti-Tank specialism for 2022.

### **C Company**

C Company has been busy on the ranges and conducting exercises to best prepare themselves for Ex Mayan Storm. Alongside this the Company has kept its focus on Readiness in 2022 with emphasis on its driver and vehicle platform capabilities.

### **HQ Company**

HQ Company has been enabling all that the Battalion does as ever. The Activation Party and Advance Party are already in Belize to ensure the smooth arrival of the main body.

### **Left Flank**

Left Flank has returned from its deployment to the Western Balkans - the end of what has been a successful operational deployment. Elements of the Company are deploying to Belize to make up the Permeant Range Team delivering the Live Firing Phase of the exercise.

### **Miscellaneous**

- The Battalion secured a Bronze on the Cambrian Patrol in a team led by 2Lt Coughlan and LSgt Swindle.
- The Fijian members of the Battalion celebrated National Fiji Day.
- Ten Scots Guards recruits passed out of ITC and head to F Company. The recruits secured the following awards:
  - Gdsm Strachan – Best Recruit and Best Shot in his Platoon.
  - Gdsm Ward – Best Recruit and Best PT in his Platoon.
  - Gdsm Lindsey – Best Endeavour in his Platoon.

### **Look forward to:**

Ex Mayan Storm Belize – 18 Oct – 10 Dec 2021.



## **BITS & PIECES**

### **Unveiling of Guards Parachute Association Memorial at the National Arboretum**

On the 8 October the Memorial was unveiled at the National Arboretum by Major General Sir Robert Corbett KCVO, CB

The Guardsmen of the Sky Memorial is dedicated to all Guardsmen of the Household Division who have served in Airborne Forces.

At the unveiling the Regimental Band, Scots Guards provided musical support. Lieutenant Colonel James Leask MBE (Regimental Lieutenant Colonel) and Lieutenant Colonel Guy Anderson (Comd Off 1SG) both attended.



**Joe Farrell MBE remembers his service in the Guards Parachute Company as he pays his respects at the memorial.**

## The Scottish Veterans Awards

Rewarding Veterans in Business, Fitness, Sport and the wider Community In Association with The ABF Soldiers' Charity. The awards were held on 6 October 2021 at the Village Hotel Edinburgh. Sponsored by TMT Construction. Scots Guards veterans Les Mason and John Bradley were recognised and were presented awards. WO1 Gibson (GSM Edinburgh Garrison) also attended the event.



**L-R: John Bradley, GSM Gibson, Les Mason**

## Right Flank Memorial Bench in Memory of LSgt G Stewart

LSgt Graham Stewart was killed on 5 May 1990, shot while on covert operations near Cullyhanna, South Armagh. He is laid to rest at Jeanfield Cemetery, Perth.

A group of friends have arranged for a memorial bench to be unveiled.



**LSgt Graham Stewart's Grave**



**The Memorial Bench**

On Friday 6 May 2022 those attending the memorial bench unveiling are invited to gather together at The Station Hotel, Perth. If you want to stay overnight email the hotel, [events@perthstationhotel.co.uk](mailto:events@perthstationhotel.co.uk) quote memorial and they will book you in as part of the group.

On Saturday 7 May 2022 a memorial bench will be unveiled at the Jeanfield Cemetery in Graham's memory. Peter Harvie will be piping at the ceremony. All Scots Guardsmen past and serving are more than welcome to attend. For more information contact Jim Strachan email: [jimmyjnr33@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jimmyjnr33@yahoo.co.uk)



## **Right Flank Ride The West Highland Way – Submitted by Neil Smith & Gerry O'Donnell**

In 2020 five Scots Guards veterans (Right Flankers) Neil Smith, Gerry O'Donnell, Garry O'Hara, Jimmy Strachan, and Ian Armstrong. (with an average age of 57 and everyone a fine specimen of health and fitness!!) It was over a few drams and many war stories, that a discussion led to, we need a challenge, and it would be good to raise some money for a meaningful charity. Many suggestions regarding the event and the charity were thrown about, but after a lot of whisky the event and the charity was decided:

- **Event** - it would be the challenge of cycling the West Highland Way in Scotland. The total distance is 96 miles, from Milngavie, the outskirts of Glasgow to Fort William in the Highlands.
- **Charity** - The charity selected would be Scotty's little soldiers, this charity aims to provide relief from the effects of bereavement for young people who have experienced the death of a parent who served with the Armed Forces.

The initial plan was to complete this challenge in April 2021 but was delayed to September 2021 due to COVID restrictions and the dreaded midges. The team dynamics was to be 3 cyclists and 2 drivers/logistics

- Cyclist - Garry O'Hara, Gerry O'Donnell, and Neil Smith,
- Logistic - Ian Armstrong and Jimmy Strachan.

Unfortunately, during a training run Neil ruptured his Achilles tendon (that old chestnut), so we were down to 2 cyclists, but with no encouragement!! The bold Strach's stepped in to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> cyclist and please note with no training whatsoever!! well maybe the odd bottle of Iron Bru and a deep-fried pizza?

**Day 1, 13<sup>th</sup> September** - Was logistics and travel, after Jimmy and Garry had made their way to Birmingham from Bracknell and Bournemouth respectively. where they were joined by Neil Smith, the 3 amigos then made their way to Preston where they were joined by Gerry O'Donnell, it was then that the 4 musketeers set off to Accrington to pick up the mode of transport and the accommodation for the remainder of the week. A nice pristine Fiat a 6-berth motor home... yes, I know you are all thinking how the hell did 5 Right Flankers fit into that motor home. TBC

Once the bikes and the stores for the week were loaded up onto the motorhome, the 4 headed North to Scotland and to the start line of the West Highland Way, in Milngavie, where Ian Armstrong joined us the 5th member of the team. Time was getting on and as we had been on the road a long time we thought we had better load up with some good healthy Scottish food, but alas we ended up with a chippie and deep fried haggis, sausages, steak pie and Jimmy ensured he loaded up with extra calories with a deep fried pizza as a dessert, of course washed down with 3 bottles of IRON BRU... with that finished and sleeping arrangements completed we set about getting some rest before the start in the morning. More of the sleeping arrangements later but it's fair to say that the roof was lifted clear off... during the so-called silent hours.

**Day 2, D-Day 14<sup>th</sup> September-** As you would expect in Scotland, it was a cold and very wet start which was unrelenting for the remainder of the day. So here we were at the start of the West highland way lined up for the departure picture, and low and behold



there is only a Greggs baker there, so coffees and bacon roll all round, it was a good hearty breakfast to get the guys going. Gerry, Garry, and Jimmy set off with the 1<sup>st</sup> RV point being about 8 miles away, myself and Ian then set off to refuel and replenish the wagon.

We arrived at the RV point in plenty of good time, the cyclist arrived well Garry and Gerry did and after a few minutes, we were like where is Jimmy and to our relief we saw him coming along the track as he got closer we were thinking that's not Jimmy that guys a funny blue/grey colour ,we quickly realised it was Jimmy by this point was turning more grey by the second, I was thinking have we got a defibrillator!! . Only joking after a cup of tea Jimmy was back to his normal colour but had realised that this was no easy task, and not having done any training respectfully withdrew to the logistic team. Garry and Gerry then set off on the next leg which was to Drymen

where we were joined by Stephen Spiers another x Right Flanker, the 2 cyclists then arrived after a quick drink and water supply the set off on what was going to be a tough leg and the majority without the support team being able to access them and involved then catching the ferry back across to the Ardlui side of Loch Lomond. But that's another story within itself ...

**Day 3, 15<sup>th</sup> September** - Day 2 had taken its toll with both cyclists being injured after coming off their bikes, resulting in sprained ankle, knee, and damaged tendons. which also meant that Gerry had to change his bike due to damage to the other one. But in true Scots Guards fashion the boys cracked on with day 3. Day 3 was tough, and the guys managed to meet up at all planned RV points. So, it was shower time and look to find a restaurant to get the calories back into the guys but as we were starting to find out covid had taken its toll on the hospitality trade and a lot of establishments were either closed or operating with restricted timings. But we found somewhere to fill our belly's, unfortunately to Garry's dismay it was deep fried haggis and chips again, washed down with a few bottles off red wine. This might be the time to mention the sleeping arrangements or could be the lack of sleeping due to the Jimmy and Ian's snoring concerto, in my life I have never heard such co-ordinated snoring, it was like a jackhammer, quickly followed by which can only be described as a camel being strangled by a crocodile, I have evidence if anyone wants to listen. But like all good logistics out came the ear defenders, it was better but not by much.

**Day 4, 16<sup>th</sup> September** – Which in some reviews was listed as the easier stage, but if you ask the two cyclists, they will say different, again mainly without the support of the logistics team. The next time we would see the guys would be in Fort William at the finish point. The guys arrived in Fort William, tired but in good spirits looking forward to a few pints and a good curry (recommendation Best Western hotel at the bottom of Fort William if you want a good curry this was superb). The challenge was successfully achieved with many great memoirs of the trip and the camaraderie of fellow Scots Guardsmen, who have known each other for 37 years.

**Day 5, 17<sup>th</sup> September** – Was a relaxed day with a bit of sightseeing before heading back down South to hand over the motorhome or what was left of it... (that's all I am going to say on this point) But like a proud father I can honestly say that the motorhome was handed back with all the beds intact and most bizarrely dry! The day saw us visit the commando memorial and the David Stirling memorial a fellow Scots Guardsman.

At this point I would like to thank the extended Scots Guards family, our own families, and friends for supporting us in the venture and donating to the charity, which we raised over £3387.



The challenge was achieved not without difficulties (weather, injuries, and terrain) but was achieved without question.

Despite the length of being “stood down” as active Scots Guardsmen, the tradition of collective teamwork and getting the job done instilled in us was in unmistakable evidence.

We could explain this in our own words, but we feel this can be encapsulated better by the words of The Reverend David “Hutch” Whiteford, Chaplain to the Scots Guards from 1944 to 1953 who described:

“The traditions of this Regiment mark you and mould you and stay with you and never let you go. But as each man must know himself, so each generation must know its own times. The issues men faced in days before our own are not precisely or the same issues which we face now. Their day was their day. Our day is our day. What they have handed on to us is an example and tradition. What we do with it is our responsibility.”