

# High-Light



THE TRI-SERVICE MAGAZINE OF HIGHLAND RESERVE FORCES' AND CADETS' ASSOCIATION



**Employers meet  
Reservists – Page 7**

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# Value of people recognised

**W**elcome to the Spring edition of *High-Light*, once again packed with articles and news items that I hope you will find both interesting and informative.

Much of the focus of this issue is on people and, in particular, those who have continued to support the Association in its work. They range from employers who pride themselves on their commitment to the Armed Forces community and put time, effort and resources into fulfilling their commitments, through role models from all walks of life (Page 13), to Reserve Units themselves, providing us with opportunities to demonstrate to a variety of audiences in a practical way what being a reservist is all about.

You will find further examples in the following pages, as well as reference to ChamberFORCE (see Page 7), an in-house initiative that aims to showcase the potential benefits of maximising our involvement with Chambers of Commerce and the networks they represent.

Supported by various reserve units and organisations, ChamberFORCE is already taking on a momentum of its own and we look forward to reporting on it in more detail in the next edition of *High-Light*.

The early part of this year has also seen renewed effort on the part of the HRFCA Chairman and Executive Board to embrace the important principle of diversity, initially in the Association's membership, and through it to provide practical help to the

single Services in achieving their own diversity and inclusion targets. With this in mind, a new Engagement and Outreach (E&O) Committee has been created with the task of identifying practical ways of making ourselves as representative of the society from which we draw our support as possible. This is an exciting development and one which will help us to ensure that we remain an agile and relevant organisation for the future.

Much activity is ongoing too on the Estate side of things, with the Dalgety Bay Air Training Corps hut (on Page 9) being just one example of betterment enhancements recently completed. Work continues on another 17 cadet betterment projects, and we will update you on some of these in the next issue.

And finally, again on the subject of people, it really is quite an achievement of Jackie Ireland's to have given loyal service to the Association for no less than 40 years (see Page 9), and there are one or two other members of the team who are not far behind; it's hard to imagine a better example of the continuity and 'corporate memory' that we seek to provide to our key stakeholders than represented by Jackie (pictured).

Lastly I would like to pass on my thanks and gratitude to Dai John, our Head of Engagement, who leaves us at the end of April after four years with the Association. The first of his kind, he has done an enormous amount to drive structure, policy and process to the developing engagement area both within the Highlands and nationally, and we wish him the best of fortune in his future endeavours. Dai will be replaced by Michelle McKearnon.

*Mark Dodson*



HRFCA's ChamberFORCE initiative has been going from strength to strength since its launch at Dundee City Chambers on 21 November.

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# Wood lends support



Speakers and guests at Wood's Partnering with Defence event.

## Local businesses and Reservists gathered for a Partnering with Defence event hosted by Wood Plc on 21 March in Aberdeen.

With over 50,000 employees and 60 offices worldwide, Wood employs large numbers of Reservists, Veterans and Military Spouses from all three Services and prides itself on being an Armed Forces Friendly employer.

Opening the event, Malcolm Norman, Chief Information Security Officer for Wood said: "Wood looks to the Armed Forces as a parallel career which allows us to do business and take advantage of mutual opportunities. The Armed Forces Community shares our company values of care and commitment, and delivering to the highest of standards. Supporting them in any way we can is not just good business practice, it is also the right thing to do."

Since signing the Armed Forces Covenant in 2017, Diversity and Inclusion Manager Louise MacDonald has continued to develop the company's pledges of support and has successfully renegotiated workplace terms and conditions for serving personnel. These ensure that Reservists and Cadet Adult Volunteers have a workplace policy that works alongside their Armed Forces and Service Cadet commitments, allowing them to fulfil both careers simultaneously.

Louise believes that getting involved in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) helps keeps the business focused and works collaboratively with both Defence and Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (HRFCA) to develop armed forces friendly working practices.

Guests also heard from Royal Engineer Major Keith James, the OC of 503 Specialist Team Fuels Infrastructure of the Army's 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group; and Captain Niall Raeper, OC Forbes Company UOTC and a Wood employee.

Both stressed how vital it is to have a supportive civilian employer in order to have a successful Reservist career and how a successful Reservist career makes for an invaluable civilian employee – the two careers are mutually beneficial with a host of transferable skills.

The event ended with a presentation from Paul Barrett and Ian Clark from IED

Training. Paul and Ian represented the large percentage of smaller businesses across Scotland who support the Armed Forces Community, and shared their story of transition from being Royal Marines to being business owners. Ian feels very strongly that the military ethos of professionalism and a "can do" attitude which underpins their company, is vital in the world of commerce and that former service personnel are a huge asset in any workforce.

Wood Plc are currently working on their submission for an ERS Gold Award and are hoping to take their support for the Armed Forces Community international.



Wood's Louise MacDonald with Paul Barrett and Ian Clark from IED Training.



Malcolm Norman gives some background on Wood.



Above right: The HRFA table for the event. Left: Niall Raeper talks about the benefits of Reserve service. Right: Major Keith James gives a talk on life in the Royal Engineers.



## Iconic aircraft make Leuchars flypast

**M**arch saw the retiral of the Tornado jet after 37 years of frontline service with the RAF.

The occasion was marked with three days of flypasts as part of the Tornado Farewell Flypast tour.

The final leg of the tour took place on February 21 with jets soaring over the skies above Leuchars Station in Fife, RAF Tain and RAF Lossiemouth.

HRFCA joined hundreds of people at Leuchars Station eager to catch a glimpse of the iconic aircraft as they flew overhead.

The Tornado – which was originally built at the BAE Systems site at Warton in Lancashire – first entered service in 1979.

The fast jet was used in operations across the globe, most recently striking ISIS in a bid to push the terrorist group back through Syria and Iraq. It finally returned from operations for good on 5 February.

The aircraft's first use in live operations was during the Gulf War in 1991, when 60 GR1s were deployed from bases in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Two years later they were upgraded to the GR4 model, which was used over Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.



Crowds (below) gathered at Leuchars to see the aircraft pass overhead (above).





# Explorer delivers inspiring talk

**In 2018 Army Captain Louis Rudd became the first Briton to complete a solo, unsupported crossing of Antarctica – relying on 6,000 calories a day, one pair of underpants and a handful of Winston Churchill biographies!**

After reading about famous past explorers such as Scott, Amundsen and Shackleton, Louis was inspired to join the Army at the age of 16 and take advantage of the Adventure Training Scheme.

Fast forward a few decades and he had completed his first polar expedition with friend Lt Col Henry Worsley, OBE. This expedition saw Louis getting his first taste of -45C

temperatures, frostbite and dentistry skills after a frozen chocolate bar caused Lt Col Worsley to lose a tooth.

Sadly, Captain Rudd's inspiration for the record breaking expedition last year was the loss of Henry, who died while attempting to break the same record in 2016.

For Louis, the success of this expedition was based on years of preparation, training and minimising the potential risks as much as possible.

Unable to restock and consuming around 6,000 calories for 75 days and carrying lifesaving kit, Louis spent months reviewing his pulk (sled) and coming up with ways to make it lighter; cutting the handle off his toothbrush, cutting labels out of clothes and wearing the same clothes

and underwear for two months straight.

Dropped off at the start point with the words of the pilot ringing in his ears "I just feel so sorry for you right now" Louis set off in the footsteps of his role models.

When asked what strategy he had and how he kept going, Rudd said he followed the rule of '11 more steps' – scientists worked out that if Scott had taken 11 more steps each day of his polar expedition he would have made it home alive.

... 11 more steps later and Louis completed the expedition in 56-days, a new record!

Louis is now sharing his stories with children, the Armed Forces, businesses

and members of the public to inspire them to keep developing their skills and achieve their goals – on a large or small scale. This extreme example of resilience, determination, commitment and self-confidence can form the basis of day to day achievements.

Louis' talk took place in March at Gordon Barracks in Aberdeen, hosted by the city's UOTC unit. Unit CO, Lt Col Geraint Davies, said: "It has been terrific to have Lou visit us in Aberdeen, spending time visiting schools and talking to our Officer Cadets, Cadets and Reservists. He has an inspirational message, delivered in a humble style, making his remarkable achievements seem accessible to all."



Left: Louis met Sgt Maj George Seathwood after the talk! Right: Louis lines up with some staff members from Aberdeen-based Wood.

# Reservists in action



7 SCOTS soldiers prepare to fire the General-Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG).

As part of Highland RFCA's ChamberFORCE initiative, a group of employers travelled to the Barry Buddon Training Area near Carnoustie to see Reservist soldiers from 7 SCOTS in action.

This provided a unique opportunity to see Army Reservists demonstrating the skills and expertise that make them valuable employees in the civilian world.

The employers – Aberdeenshire Council, McRoberts LLP and Muir Construction – were able to watch a variety of training events including General-Purpose Machine Gun live firing, mortar fire drills, and counter improvised explosive device training.

Before moving on from each training drill, employers were given the opportunity to speak with the reservists about their time with 7 SCOTS and the ways in which their military skills can be used in their civilian jobs; the resounding response being their strong sense of self confidence. The morning was a great success and left employers with a greater understanding of the benefits of hiring reservists and how better to support them.

The Commanding Officer of 7 SCOTS, Lieutenant Colonel Matt Sheldrick, said: "Our objective is to engage with Chamber members so that they gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the quality of our people and the value of their transferable skills in order to encourage the employment of Reservists, which will in turn allow for a receptive audience in which to promote the Reserve Forces and 7 SCOTS in the workplace."

Employers will have further opportunities to see Reservists in action this year, through the popular Exercise Executive Stretch and Exercise Mini-Stretch.



Above: Mortar fire drills and (right) Glenda Gray from Aberdeenshire Council in a fox hole.



Left: Employers with 7 SCOTS personnel.



The cast of 5 Soldiers with Rosie Kay and Captain Alan McEwen of 7 SCOTS.



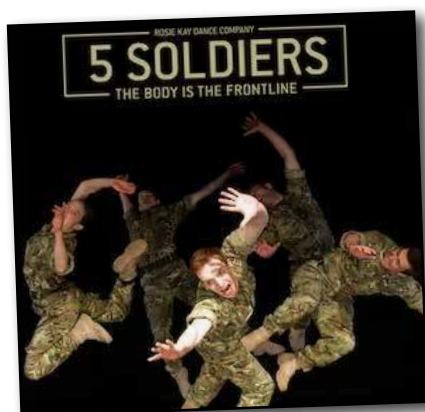
# Drama and dance in Perth

**H**ighland RFCA attended the five-star production of *5 Soldiers* at Perth Theatre, choreographed and directed by the Rosie Kay Dance Company.

*5 Soldiers* is a moving and dramatic dance work that looks at how the human body remains essential to war, even in the 21st Century.

HRFCA was joined in February by guests; Perth and Kinross Provost Dennis Melloy and his wife Livvy, Second Lieutenant Andy Cross, and the Armed Forces Champion for Perth and Kinross Council, Chris Aherne.

During research for the production, Rosie Kay joined with 4th Battalion the Rifles to watch and participate in full battle exercises



and also visited the Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre. What came of these observations was an accurate and relatable

representation of the mental and physical effects of war.

The cast consisted of individuals from diverse dance backgrounds and a serving Trooper with the Welsh Cavalry, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.

Following a moving performance, Captain Alan McEwen of 7 SCOTS took part in a question and answer session with Rosie and the cast and spoke about how well the production showcased parts of deployment that the public don't see – for example the way the soldiers play games and take part in banter to get through the long days.

They are due to finish their UK tour this month, before taking it international and heading to Denmark and the USA.



A Q&A session followed the performance (left) with (above) Capt McEwen sharing his experience.

# Jackie's 40 years at HRFCA

**H**ighland RFCA Facilities Manager Jackie Ireland has reached an impressive milestone – 40 years working with the Association.

Jackie, who celebrated the anniversary on 6 March, said: "I started in 1979 when we were known as the Territorial Auxiliary & Volunteer Reserve Association (TAVRA). In that time I've worked with six Chief Executives – originally they were called 'Secretary'.

"I've seen many changes over the years mainly, of course, with the staff. There have been so many that I honestly can't remember all of them!"

We asked Jackie (pictured) what her most memorable moment of the last 40 years at HRFCA is. She said: "It has to be the fire in the front office which started from the stamping machine which had been left plugged in. The whole of the downstairs was smoke damaged and had to be redecorated. Upstairs, there was a flat for the Deputy Secretary and his wife, who had to get a fireman's lift out the window. Staff had to change offices whilst the redecoration happened. The Estates department – known then as the Works Office – was accommodated in No.1 Married Quarter."

With four decades under her belt we wondered what Jackie saw as her greatest achievement.

She said: "After 40 years, it has to be making it this far. When I first started as



Jackie at the Association's HQ in Dundee.

a typist in the Front Office I was informed that the position might not be for very long as they were looking at closing the offices down. I nearly didn't take the job!"

Finally, we asked what funny moments stuck out?

She said: "One thing that sticks in my mind was when one of the past Secretaries thought it would be funny to put a closed sign on the downstairs ladies WC. It was April Fool's Day and at that time this was the only toilet for the ladies as the upstairs was the Deputy Secretary's flat. All the girls spent the whole morning with crossed legs, which only he found extremely amusing."

Chief Executive Brigadier Mark Dodson paid tribute to Jackie.

He said: "It is very humbling to consider that Jackie has worked for us for all her working life. 40 years is a massive shift to put in and we are enormously grateful for her commitment and contribution to the Association, and the benefit this has had on the reserve and cadet forces we support. This is a major milestone and Jackie fully deserves our thanks and appreciation."

■ Jackie's story was taken to an even wider audience when she was interviewed by BFBS Scotland on 21 March.

## Dalgety Bay refurbishment completed

**T**he external refurbishment of 859 (Dalgety Bay) Squadron's ATC hut has now been completed.

The project consisted of stripping the external envelope of the building, insulating the structure using solid slab insulation and re-cladding the building with Marley cement fibre boarding.

All the windows have been replaced with new UPVC double glazed units, and external doors have been upgraded with new units.



# Jack's big birthday surprise

## A Second World War veteran has celebrated his 100th birthday.

Jack Adamson received a special surprise on 20 February when the Commanding Officer of 7 SCOTS, Lieutenant Colonel Matt Sheldrick, arrived to congratulate him.

The battalion also provided piper Corporal Alan McDougall to play several tunes, including Happy Birthday.

Jack's three daughters, son and son-in-law looked on as Lt Col Sheldrick marked the occasion by presenting Jack with a card, regimental tie and Brigade Coin.

Highland RFCA Head of Engagement Dai John was on hand to congratulate the Falkirk resident on behalf of the Association.

Dai also presented Jack with a special print of one of the Association's promotional posters featuring an image of Jack at the HRFCA tent during last year's Stirling Military Show.

Jack – who served in conflicts all over the world as a member of 1st Battalion The Black Watch – is also a recent recipient of France's highest order of merit. He received the Legion of Honour medal at a special ceremony in the French Embassy in Edinburgh last May.

He has also been awarded six other medals for his military service. These are the 39-45 Star, Africa Star, Sicily and Italy Star, France and Germany Star, Defence Medal and General Service Medal.

Jack arrived with The Black Watch on the beaches of Normandy in June 1944 – just three days before the June 6 D-Day landings.

After being demobilised in 1946, he returned to civilian life with his wife Isabelle. He worked as an iron moulder at Falkirk Foundry before taking a job with ICI in Grangemouth.



Jack with (from left) Dai John, Lt Col Sheldrick, and Cpl MacDougall.



Above: Dai John presents Jack with the special print. Left: Lt Col Sheldrick looks on as Cpl MacDougall plays Happy Birthday to Jack.



Jack showing his medals to Lt Col Sheldrick.



Jack with his family, Lt Col Sheldrick, Dai John and Cpl MacDougall.

# IED takes pride in Afghan return



Managing Director Ian Clark.

**A**rbroath-based IED Training Solutions has become the first UK training consultancy to deliver IOSH-approved courses in Afghanistan.

The firm, which signed the Armed Forces Covenant at RM Condor in 2017, holds the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award and is aiming to secure the prestigious Gold Award.

IED Training, which was founded by former Royal Marine Ian Clark, was commissioned by a Scandinavian-based logistics organisation to facilitate delivery of 11 IOSH-approved Working Safely and Managing Safely courses to employees working in a number of locations throughout Afghanistan, including Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Herat.

Employees of the company – which supplies clients with fuel management solutions and related logistical requirements while operating in challenging environments worldwide – include personnel from a wide range of areas, including transport, logistics, and operations.

IED Training's Managing Director, Ian, served in the Royal Marines for 22 years,

including three operational tours of duty in Afghanistan. The Scandinavian company first approached him last year.

He said: "Afghanistan holds many memories and emotions for the IED team, including those of pride, of the friendships forged and the teamwork, as well as great sadness for those colleagues who didn't return home with us or who were injured.

"It is incredible to think that we now return to that country to facilitate nationally recognised health and safety training with the aim of ensuring people remain safe in the workplace. The company with which we are working was previously sending its people to Dubai for IOSH training, which was proving expensive, as well as taking them out of business for days at a time.

"We were able to work with them to ensure the training could be delivered in-country, by IOSH-approved trainers and administered by IED. The benefits have been a significant reduction in the company's financial outlay as well as ensuring that a minimal amount of time is spent away from job roles. It has also been able to take ownership of the training and ensure quality assurance throughout.

"IED Training works with clients across

the UK in a wide range of sectors, but it is always very satisfying to support anything to do with the military, especially the ongoing effort to maintain peace and stability in that region. We are very proud to be involved in the delivery of IOSH training courses in Afghanistan."

Dina Alkhalidi, Head of Customer Engagement at IOSH, said: "IOSH's globally-focused Working Safely and Managing Safely courses have been designed to enhance the safety, health and wellbeing of workers anywhere, in any sector, worldwide. They provide workers with the knowledge and tools required to work safely, leading to greater productivity, an improved organisation-wide culture of safety awareness and an increased appreciation of safety measures."

The Working Safely course provides individuals at any level, in any sector with a grounding in the essentials of safety and health; the Managing Safely course is designed for managers and supervisors in any sector and any organisation worldwide.

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health – the world's largest professional health and safety membership organisation, approve the nationally recognised qualifications.



# Exercise Team Spirit

**F**irst-year nursing students braved wet and windy weather to take part in Exercise Team Spirit at Oliver Barracks in Dundee.

The 27-28 November event was a collaboration between 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment and the School of Nursing and Health Sciences of Dundee University.

There were eight different military/medical command tasks for the students to tackle.

These tested leadership, teamwork and problem-solving abilities as well as providing an insight into how a reservist is trained both physically and mentally.

First stop for group one was 'Tent Fever'. Armed with nothing but their initiative the students were given 25 minutes to put together the medics' tent. With no prior instructions and a pile of poles on the floor this tested teamwork and problem-solving under a strict time constraint. Whilst some teams struggled, one team managed to do it in a record seven minutes – almost ten minutes faster than the

average Army time! Other tasks on the day included archery, large scale mine sweep, gun runs and 'toxic swamp' – using materials around you to build a bridge over the fatal toxic swamp – all tasks needed a touch of imagination.

On completion of the eight tasks the scores were added up and the winners announced.

Students commented on how being put in a team with people outside their normal peer group encouraged them to communicate more and widen their trust circle.

The day ended with Commanding Officer Lt Col Sarah Lambirth thanking her team at 225 (Scottish) Med Regt for all their hard work and the students for being brave enough to volunteer to take part.

Her speech inspired the students to keep working hard to achieve their goals.

The exercise was a great success and provided an insight into what it takes to be a reservist and the value the skills and training can add to any vocation.



The students get to grips with command tasks.



Lt Col Sarah Lambirth talks to the students.

# Star of Navy advert drops by

**B**orn in St Andrews but made in the Royal Navy – this was the case for Louise Dorsett, a member of the Naval Recruitment team currently affiliated with HMNB Portsmouth, whose face you may recognise from the National Royal Navy campaign ‘Made in the Royal Navy’.

Having been in care from the age of six, Louise joined the Royal Navy in April 2016 after being encouraged to do so by her foster mum. The discipline proved a shock to the system as she likes to describe herself as a ‘free spirit’ but it was an opportunity to learn how to be the best version of herself and one she took advantage of.

During her time serving on HMS Diamond Louise competed as part of the Royal Navy Skeleton Team (Winter Sports), gymnastics and the RN and United Services hockey teams. She also won the Captain’s prize for the best recruit in phase one training, and was selected to be featured in the ‘Made in the Royal Navy’ campaign.

Louise visited HRFCa towards the end of last year to meet the Engagement team.

When asked how the advert has



impacted her, Louise said: “The advert spreads positivity for women, it’s empowering! I hope that I can be seen as a role model to other young girls; I think having that strong female figure in my early life would have made a difference.

“It also reminded me that it isn’t always the people in the spotlight that are the fascinating ones, the people you can’t see are equally fascinating – for example the production team, media and those behind the scenes.”

Looking to the future, Louise hopes to combine her passion for sport and fitness with supporting others and focus on becoming a PTI (physical training

instructor) and complete the All Arms Marine Commando Course, to gain her green beret.

She also hopes to get a degree through the Royal Navy and potentially commission as an Officer in the future. Louise hopes her story will help young people by having someone they can relate to.



Louise during her HRFCa visit.

**C**aptain David Barclay sent us this image taken at RMA Sandhurst at the end of February where he was attending the commissioning parade for three Professionally Qualified Officers (PQO) from 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment.

Congratulations to Captain Hugh Ferrier – RN(A); Lieutenant Alexandra Coulthard – physiotherapist; and Capt Harjinder Singh-Baines – doctor. They are pictured with Capt Barclay – Potential Officer Mentor (right).



**Next edition: AAM report, Armed Forces Day events and much, much more!**



# New commander for Wing

## Wing Commander Sean Harrison RAFAC has assumed command of North East Scotland Wing Air Training Corps.

He has taken over from Wing Commander Kelvin Martin who has retired.

Sean first joined the ATC on 3 July 1979, becoming part of 121 (Nuneaton) Squadron at the age of 13 yrs and 3 days. He went on to attain his Staff Cadet Classification and reached the rank of Cadet Warrant Officer, being promoted to that rank on his 18th birthday. During his time as a cadet he went gliding in the Sedbergh and Kirby Cadet T Mark 3, both of which were open cockpit, winch-launched gliders, before completing his Gliding Proficiency, including a solo circuit, at RAF Little Rissington in a Venture T2 motor glider. Sean also attended a number of camps including an overseas camp in Gibraltar in July 1982.

Following a family move to North Wales in the summer of 1984, the then CWO Harrison transferred to 271 (Colwyn Bay) Sqn but, due to the pressure of starting work as a lorry driver and the time taken to get to the squadron, he had to leave the ATC.

After a further family move to North Shropshire, in autumn 1987 Sean rediscovered the ATC and joined 79 (Whitchurch) Sqn as a 21-year-old Civilian Instructor; he then went into uniform as

an Adult Warrant Officer in March 1989 and was commissioned into the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in April 1995. In the summer of 1997, the then Fg Off Harrison transferred to 79 (Market Drayton) D/F, a unit he had helped to run at the beginning of the decade, and was one of the members of staff who oversaw its transformation into 24 (Market Drayton) Sqn.



Wg Cdr Sean Harrison

After a career change, Sean moved to the north east of Scotland and transferred to 1990 (Ellon) Sqn before then being asked to move to 2489 (Bridge of Don) Sqn to help out there. Whilst at 2489, Sean was presented with his Cadet Forces Medal for 12 years uniformed service. In August 2002, Sean was promoted to Flight Lieutenant and moved back to 1990 (Ellon) Sqn, but this time as its Commanding Officer.

In July 2004, Sean successfully applied to become a Wing Staff Officer and moved

onto Wing with responsibility for Media Communications and Special Projects.

In June 2006, Sean became the Wing Training Officer and in February 2007 was promoted to Squadron Leader. Sean was Wing Training Officer for more than 12 years and in that time oversaw the introduction of the new online assessment process as well as the new cadet classifications.

In June 2016, Sean was presented with the Wing Commander's Sword and in August 2016 he was awarded a Commandant's Certificate of Meritorious Service.

On 2 Jan 2019, Sean was promoted to Wing Commander and assumed command of North East Scotland Wing. In a cadet career spanning almost 40 years, he has now served at every rank within the organisation from Cadet through to Wing Commander.

Outside of the Air Training Corps, Sean has been an Air Traffic Controller since July 1999 and has been based at NATS Aberdeen since July 2000. He holds Tower and Approach ratings and works as an Approach Radar controller for Sumburgh Airport, as well as looking after the offshore helicopters on two offshore radar sectors. He is also a qualified instructor and examiner.



# HRFCA lays wreath at war memorial

## The annual Combined Cadet Force Service of Remembrance was held at Aberdeen's Robert Gordon's College.

The event was arranged by Wing Commander Dan Montgomery who invited HRFCA to lay a wreath at the college war memorial.

Prior to the service, guests were given a tour of the facilities and had lunch with Head Simon Mills, members of staff and cadets representing the Army and RAF contingents of the CCF plus the pipes and drums and adult volunteers.

Following lunch the cadets took poppy crosses and laid them at the headstones of former pupils who had died in the service of their country.

Citations were read by Cpl Yasmin Brown, Col Sgt Niall McDowell, Sgt Rowan Monaghan and Pipe Sgt Hugo Gamba before guests

were piped a lament by Pipe Major Daniel Milne. On return to the college, cadets provided the guests with presentations about their experiences of the CCF and what they have gained from their membership.

The service of remembrance followed, attended by parents and guests, including civic leaders and Flt Lt John Cruickshank VC – the sole remaining WWII Victoria Cross winner awarded for sinking a German U-boat and then, despite serious injuries, safely landing his aircraft.

After the moving service, the CCF paraded and were inspected by reviewing officer Air Chief Marshal Sir Anthony Bagnall, who congratulated the cadets on their smartness and drill.

Prior to guests and students dispersing, the Gordon Campbell sword was awarded to Col Sgt Niall McDowell.



Cadets read citations during the service.





**A dedicated volunteer from 1st Battalion the Highlanders has been recognised for his long service to young people in the Highlands.**

Company Sergeant Major Instructor Ian Woolley (58), from the Battalion's Ross Company, was awarded his 1st Clasp to the Cadet Force Medal, marking 18 years of service to the Cadet Forces. Ian joined the battalion in 2000 as a Detachment Instructor. He later transferred to the Battalion's Pipes & Drums Detachment based in Culloden where he was the

detachment's Commander from 2009-2014. Ian has held several appointments within the Battalion, including being the Battalion's Regimental Sergeant Major from 2007-11.

Taking a step back from Cadet Music Ian transferred to Ross Company where he was appointed Dornoch Detachment's Company Sergeant Major.

As CSMI he is now responsible for ensuring that the cadets are receiving the correct training.

CSMI Woolley was presented with his clasp by the Battalion's Commandant Colonel Iain Cassidy.

**Cadets and Adults from 1st Battalion the Highlanders travelled to Edinburgh to cheer on Scotland for their opening Six Nations match against Italy.**

Twenty-four cadets from Inverness and Aviemore Detachments watched the match at BT Murrayfield. For the majority of them it was the first time they had ever watched Scotland play up close.

The cadets departed from the Highlands at 0630hrs on Feb 2 to make the match in plenty of time. Due to the early departure the visit also included a tour of Edinburgh Castle, as well as a visit to the various museums it holds – including the Museum of the Royal Regiment of Scotland which the Battalion is badged under.

After the visit to the castle the Inverness cadets went for a slightly long walk from the castle to the stadium to watch Scotland. The highlight for everyone was of course singing the National Anthem, as well as watching Scotland win 33-20 – which they had a perfect view of – from right behind the Italy posts during the first half.

Initial planning for the trip started in the middle of last year when the company applied for tickets under



Scottish Rugby's "Youth Groups and Schools Ticket Offer", which allows clubs, schools and youth groups from across Scotland to apply for special discounted tickets for matches throughout that rugby season. Similar to the Army Cadet Force's own Values & Standards, Scottish Rugby has similar values that apply for young people to enjoy Rugby – Leadership, Enjoyment, Achievement, Engagement, Respect – and under these values they want to bring young people to support Scotland in the best, easiest and most affordable way to allow young

people to experience these values – and watch thrilling international rugby – in a safe and friendly environment.

The overall planning of the trip was done by Second Lieutenant Debra Ennis (52), Aviemore Detachment Commander, who said afterwards: "This was an amazing experience for our cadets who did themselves proud. The long walk from the castle to the stadium was no problem at all, but the walk back was slightly quieter. There were a few sore throats (and feet) – but it was definitely a resoundingly successful trip."

**A piper has received national recognition for his dedication to Cadet Piping & Drumming at the annual Army Cadet Force Association Dinner held at the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in Covent Garden, London.**

Cadet Corporal Alan Hasson (16), from 1st Battalion the Highlanders' Pipes & Drums Detachment in Culloden, was awarded the BAE Systems Recognising Excellence Award in Piping & Drumming.

The award recognises the hard work and outstanding contributions cadets and adults made to the Army Cadets across five different categories; Bands & Corps

of Drums, Duke of Edinburgh, First Aid, Piping & Drumming and Sport.

Cpl Hasson has been an active piper within the Battalion's Pipes & Drums since he joined the Cadet Force in 2014 and throughout his time he has played at almost every engagement that the band has been involved in, from the Highland Military Tattoo to Armed Forces Day. He is also an active member of the Army Cadet Force Pipes & Drums, where he has performed at Edinburgh Castle, the Rorkes Drift Concert in Wales and even Horseguards Parade in London.

Alan was presented with his award by Major General Duncan Capps CBE, Commanding Officer Regional Command.



Alan with his award.

# DFC for former RGC pupil

**A** former pupil of Robert Gordon's College in Aberdeen has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC).

Flight Lieutenant Thomas Philip Hansford, a Typhoon pilot with 1 (Fighter) Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth, received the honour for his September 2017 actions against ISIS targets in Syria during Operation Shader.

Flt Lt Hansford was tasked to provide combat air power in support of coalition and partnered forces. However, this was amended and he became the first RAF pilot to switch from a Close Air Support task, to provide Air Presence.

The mission was then urgently switched back to Close Air Support, to support friendly forces and civilians under fire in an ISIS stronghold.

Now five hours into a nine-hour night mission, Flt Lt Hansford had to lead his formation through severe thunderstorms that were capable of damaging his aircraft. He positioned overhead ground forces that had identified multiple Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices thwarting a friendly advance and preventing a civilian evacuation. Minutes later, he expertly employed his entire weapon load of Paveway IV laser-guided bombs to strike four vehicles which posed a significant threat.

Such was the complexity of this simultaneous strike it required 235 sequential in-cockpit switch selections, a single error would have resulted in



Flight Lieutenant Hansford

certain mission failure, and a direct threat to life for friendly forces.

Flt Lt Hansford displayed outstanding commitment and composure during this complex, fluid and demanding night mission.

Following the mission Flt Lt Hansford flew back to his base at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus.

He said: "I feel incredibly proud to have been awarded the DFC, yet lucky to be in this position when I am confident that any other pilot on the squadron or Typhoon Force would have achieved equal success if tasked with the same

mission. It still feels surreal to be receiving such a prestigious award and I am truly honoured. It is very important to remember that while I have been fortunate to be the one receiving this award, none of the Typhoon operations against Daesh (ISIS) would be possible without the teamwork and tireless support of our ground crew and the air-to-air refuelling units."

The DFC recognises an act or acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst flying in active operations against the enemy and has been awarded since 1918.

## Forthcoming Events

18 April  
22 April  
27 April  
8 June  
13 June  
15 June  
22 June  
26 June  
29 June  
29 June  
2-24 August

Exercise Mini-Stretch (Aberdeen)  
Royal Gun Salute (Stirling Castle)  
ACFA Scotland Beating Retreat (Edinburgh Castle)  
Laying up of Colours (Fort George)  
Inverness Concert (Ironworks)  
Piping at Forres  
Armed Forces Day Dundee  
Reserves Day (Events nationally)  
Stirling Military Show  
Armed Forces Day (Events nationally)  
Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo



## What do YOU want to see in your *High-Light*?

Contributions are always welcome from readers

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