

High-Light



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



ERS Gold Awards
– Pages 6 & 7

2022: an extraordinary year

Those long, hot and dry days of summer covered in the last edition of *High-Light* seem a very long way off now.

As I type there is an Amber weather warning in place for flooding in the east of Scotland and the Chancellor is setting out the tax raising and departmental savings plans for Defence and others in the Autumn statement. A series of reviews of the RFCA outputs are working their way through, most notably how the Volunteer Estate is to be managed within the Future Defence Infrastructure System, tranche two of the RFCA Estate Optimisation Programme is being worked on, and we still await confirmation if time will be found in the fourth session of parliament in London to produce the enabling legislation to create the RFCA non-departmental public body that will replace the RFCAs. So plenty of change and turmoil to keep us on our toes!

Happily, most of what follows in this edition focusses on the benefits and value of what our teams continue to deliver for the three Services and their cadet organisations in the Highlands of Scotland. Be that designing, funding and installing a new cadet hut for the Army Cadet Force in Mastrick in Aberdeen;

modernising the RAF Air Cadet facility in Alloa; hosting the Gold employer recognition awards event for Scotland in Stirling; relaunching the ChamberFORCE initiative with four Chambers of Commerce; or by administering and providing the logistic support for a series of successful cadet camps in the face of

last-minute changes in location due to the Ukraine crisis. All of our teams have been fully stretched over the last six months and I pass on my thanks to all of them for the professional and positive way in which they have helped the reserves and cadets to function and thrive.

In the coming months we will see the completion of a major upgrade to the cadet training centre in Boddam, improvements to Invergowie reserve centre and a new boiler system for parts of Oliver Barracks in Dundee. Fingers crossed, I very much hope we will be able to announce the signing of the contract to rebuild the Army Reserve Centre in Dunfermline. The next round of applications for employer recognition awards will get under way as will planning

for the 2023 cadet camps. We also expect to see the outcomes of the winter crop of adventure training exercises that have been part funded by HRFCA.

2022 has been an extraordinary year for so many reasons and it would be nice to have a little ordinariness in 2023. We shall see.

Mark Dodson



Work on the major improvements at the cadet training centre in Boddam are ongoing.



The joint Highland/Lowland RFCA Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards took place at Stirling Castle on November 3. General Officer Scotland Major General Bill Wright presented the Awards to guests including Alison Henderson of Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce.

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Members updated at Area Meetings



Northern Area.



Eastern Area.



Southern Area.

The Highland RFCA Southern, Northern and Eastern Area Committee members gathered face-to-face during October.

The HRFCAs membership is geographically divided into three Area Committees. The members include Armed Forces and Veteran champions as well as the Heads of the Service Cadets and the Armed Forces units in the Highlands and Islands area. The Committees typically meet annually to network and discuss any relevant challenges, developments, achievements and future plans.

The Southern Area Committee Meeting took place on October 6 at the 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) Headquarters at Forthside Army Reserve Centre in Stirling.

This was the first meeting led by the new Southern Area Chair, Captain (Retd) Chris Smith. STEM Employer Representative Member, Major (Retd) Wendy Findlay, was also introduced as the new Vice Chair. Both were elected at the Annual Association Meeting (AAM) on March 26.

C Company 7 SCOTS hosted the Northern Area Committee Meeting on October 11 at the Army Reserve Centre in Elgin. The Northern Area Vice Chair, Major (Retd) Alec Rose, chaired the meeting on behalf of Chair Commodore (Retd) Angus Ross. HRFCAs Deputy Chief Executive, Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) Andrew Macnaughton, updated the members on key changes since the AAM on behalf of Chief Executive Brigadier (Retd) Mark Dodson.

Northern Area Representative Member and Aberdeenshire Council HR Manager, Ms Glenda Gray, shared her personal

involvement with Operation Unicorn. She reflected on the experience as a member of Aberdeenshire Council's task force at Balmoral Estate in September.

One of the speakers, Aberdeenshire Council Internal Auditor Mr Graeme Flood, joined the meeting virtually via Zoom to give a short presentation on RAF Reserves Lossiemouth. He discussed his career as an RAF Reservist, the benefits and the support given to him by his employer, Aberdeenshire Council. The Council is one of the Armed Forces Covenant signatories and Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award holders in the HRFCAs-area.

Afterwards, Major (Retd) Rose held a presentation on the history and tradition of Cadet and Reserves Piping and Drumming, quizzing the members on songs and drawing on his personal experience. The Officer Commanding of C Company 7 SCOTS, Major Malcolm Dalziel-Job, delivered a presentation last, delving into the vital role of engagement from an Army Reservist's perspective.

Last but not least, the Eastern Area Committee Meeting was facilitated by Angus and Dundee Battalion Army Cadet Force at their Headquarters at Barry Buddon Training Camp on October 18. The Eastern Area Chair, Colonel (Retd) Jim Kinloch, led the meeting. HRFCAs Regional Employer Engagement Director (REED) and second-in-command of 154 (Scottish) Regiment RLC, Major Ray Watt, shared the successes as well as the trials and tribulations of the Regiment's 15-day Annual Continuous Training exercise in Germany in September.

HRFCAs members will gather next at the AAM on 25 March 2023.



One of the sections is lowered into position.

Mastrick cadet hut installed

Highland RFCA's new cadet hut has been successfully installed in Mastrick, Aberdeen.

The building was lifted into place by a crane in five sections on October 11.

The sections were manufactured off site with the building ready for occupation a month later. The modern, energy-efficient design replaces the old Spooner huts that have passed the point of economical repair.

The building was designed to the

specifications of the Army Cadet Force (ACF) and Highland RFCA by JAMstudio in Aberdeen and built and installed by Healthmatic Ltd.

JK Crane Hire in Aberdeen took care of the heavy lifting on the day.

It forms part of Highland RFCA's £1.4 million programme of cadet building replacements and follows similar builds in Newport, Bo'ness and Banff.

Cadets from 2nd Battalion The Highlanders ACF will use the Mastrick facility.

Major Stuart Eddie, Cadet Executive Officer for 2nd Battalion The Highlanders, said: "It is great to see a fantastic new facility being provided for the Mastrick Detachment. This Detachment has always been strong in numbers and well supported by the Mastrick community, and this new building shows support from HRFCA to the youth in this area of Aberdeen."

"It will make an enormous difference for our cadets already parading and for all those youngsters looking forward to joining us."



The sections arrived by lorry before being removed by crane and moved into place.



Left: One of the modules. Right: With all sections in position, work begins on making the building ready for cadets.

ERS Gold Awards



The Highland RFCA-area winners with Major General Wright and Commodore Quinn.

Sixteen employer organisations had their outstanding commitment to the Armed Forces recognised at the 2022 Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Awards.

The prestigious event was held in the Great Hall at Stirling Castle on November 3.

The recipients represented a diverse range of organisations and companies including some from Councils, the NHS, Chambers of Commerce, and charities.

The regional event was hosted jointly by Highland and Lowland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations.

Nationally, 156 organisations received the award and recognition from the UK Government for their support towards the Armed Forces community.

Of the winners, 44% are either micro-organisations or small and medium-sized enterprises, while 33% are public organisations. This demonstrates both the growth in numbers and the depth of supportive employers.

Recipients in the Highland RFCA area: Abertay University; Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce; Dundee & Angus

Chamber of Commerce; Fife Council; Meldrum Construction; Moray Chamber of Commerce; NHS Forth Valley; Sport Aberdeen; Worrall Wealth Management Ltd.

Guests at the event included: General Officer Scotland Major General Bill Wright; Head of the Reserves Commodore Martin Quinn; Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland (NRC SNI) Brigadier Andy Muddiman; Deputy Commander of HQ 51st Infantry Brigade Colonel Tony Phillips; and Air Officer Scotland Air Vice-Marshal Ross Paterson.

Music was provided by Private Murray from 7 SCOTS and The Royal Marines Scotland Corps of Drums.

General Wright said: "I'm delighted to have been asked to represent the Secretary of State for Defence, Ben Wallace, at the 2022 Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards for Scotland. Having presented the Silver Awards in the Highland-area last year, it is particularly nice to see some familiar faces coming through to the Gold level within 12 months."

He then spoke about the various mobilisations Reservists have been involved in over the past year, adding: "There is a common thread throughout all of these mobilisations, and the many other Reservists on operational tours going on around the world right now – the employers.

"Your willingness to allow and support members of your workforces to become members of the UK's Reserve Forces is quite possibly the most important deciding factor for the potential Reservist. Your foresight in recognising the benefits the employer gains from the considerable number of military and specialist skills that are readily transferable to the civilian workplace and vice versa, is commendable.

"I thank you very much on behalf of the Secretary of State for making the decision to commit to this level of support."

Commodore Quinn said: "It is tremendously encouraging to see such a variety of businesses and organisations from across Scotland winning the Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Award this year.

"These Awards distinguish those employers who continually seek to support both past and present members of our Armed Forces. I would like to thank each and every one for their invaluable efforts."



Sport Aberdeen were delighted with their award.



Meldrum Construction.



Moray Chamber of Commerce.



Louise Worrall Wealth Management.



Private Murray of 7 SCOTS in the Great Hall at Stirling Castle.



The Royal Marines Scotland Corps of Drums performed.



Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce.



Fife Council.



Abertay University.



Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce.

Royal visitor for Skye, Raasay

By Joanie Whiteford, Lord-Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty

The Princess Royal visited Skye and Raasay, touring a community company, a school, a distillery, and finally a walled garden.

Here Lord-Lieutenant Joanie Whiteford recalls the exciting day.

It was our great pleasure to welcome The Princess Royal to Skye and Raasay on September 7, in a day bathed in sunshine. I was most ably accompanied by my Lord-Lieutenant's Cadet, Sergeant Kai Greig from 1st Battalion The Highlanders ACF's Alness Detachment.

Our first venue was Broadford and Strath Community Company (B&SCC) where The Princess Royal was introduced to Councillor Biz Campbell, Vice Convenor of The Highland Council and Ward Manager, John Finlayson, who is also Chair of The Highland Council's Skye and Raasay Area Committee.

Broadford and Strath Community Company were awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June, which is the highest award given to volunteer groups. The Princess Royal was shown around by Directors, Nicholas Kelly and Dr Alison MacLennan, firstly to the campsite, which was full to capacity and set to expand further, then to meet the pigs who were entrusted with clearing the next piece of ground. These community pigs belong to West Highland College.

We were next shown around the extremely impressive Growers Hub, met Judy and Claire the Horticultural Therapists with their hard-working group from Kyleakin Connections, enjoyed a moment in the Sensory Garden, before meeting those who were busy in the Men's Shed. Seven-year-olds, Ella and Jac, escorted HRH to Corry Capers Outdoor Learning Area, which was full of happy children.

I then invited The Princess Royal to present The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service crystal and certificate to Nicholas and Alison, before HRH was presented with gifts by Ella and Jac.

As I said in my citation, B&SCC's strength of character is exceptional, exemplified by their steadfast commitment to achieve their goals without compromising their environmental principles. They had the foresight to envisage a strategic, environmentally aware plan that has transformed their community into an area with strong economic prospects.

Next we flew over to Raasay and the first venue was Raasay Primary School. The Princess Royal was met by Andy Townsend, Deputy Lieutenant, who presented the



The Lord-Lieutenant and Cdt Sgt Greig wait for the Princess Royal (exiting helicopter).

Head Teacher, Wilma Duncan, who in turn introduced her staff and pupils. HRH was treated to a tune by Calum and Gaelic poetry beautifully recited by Alexander and Hamish and then all the children sang 'Tobhta Fearna' a Gaelic song composed by themselves together with Gaelic singer, Anne Martin. Mrs Duncan gave Princess Anne some background to Calum's Road whilst Eddie Seaman, the school piping tutor, was playing Calum's Road in the background. HRH was presented with gifts by Hamish, Calum and Alexander, she then signed the visitors book, before being waved off by the children.

I welcomed The Princess Royal to Isle of Raasay Distillery, where I presented co-founders, Alasdair Day and Bill Dobbie, Operations Director Norman Gilles, and Assistant Manager Chloe Leeman. We were given a most interesting tour of the state-of-the-art production area, malt silo, bottling area and visitor centre, all set under the magnificent backdrop of the Cullins and Dun Caan. Construction of the distillery only began in 2016, production began in 2017, its visitor centre opened in 2018, their Isle of Raasay Hebridean Gin was launched in 2019, their inaugural release single malt in 2020. They launched their signature Isle of Raasay Hebridean single malt in 2021, followed by a second release and a special distillery edition all in that year. The company currently exports to 25 countries. Together with an ever-increasing workforce, this is a wonderful success story for Raasay.

Our final visit, was to the community owned Raasay Walled Garden, a serene space being beautifully restored to provide produce and a safe opportunity for volunteers to both help the community and look after their own welfare. I presented Katherine and Anne Gillies, both Directors of Raasay Community Company, and then Katherine proceeded to show

The Princess Royal the stunning Rose Garden, which was planted in the former cold frames. En route to the impressive volunteer plots being worked by Simon, we were shown this winter's ambitious project that is to repurpose the dilapidated Victorian Greenhouses. We walked through the apple and plum orchard, laden with fruit, many of the trees having been dedicated in memory of lost loved ones. We then viewed the polytunnels, the first ablaze with chrysanthemums, dahlias and sweet peas, and the others full of ready-to-harvest vegetables and salad produce – and the all-important kettle! Volunteers always need a coffee and cake station!

We enjoyed a lovely exchange with some of the garden volunteers before Nelly Blair presented HRH with a bouquet of flowers and basket of produce.



The Princess Royal at Raasay Walled Garden.

We escorted The Princess Royal back to her helicopter, thanked her for visiting us in Ross and Cromarty Lieutenancy, and that we look forward to welcoming her back soon. The final image of the day was the children enthusiastically waving off The Princess who visited their school – a day they will remember forever.

My grateful thanks, as ever, to everyone in the Lieutenancy Team who helped to make this such a memorable and successful day.



Left: Lt Col Douglas Young speaks to guests (pictured, right). Centre: 7 SCOTS Bugler Ralph Brill played The Last Post, Reveille, and Fanfare.

Highland RFCA had the honour of attending the unveiling of a permanent memorial in Kingussie for soldiers from the Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC).

Head of Engagement Michelle McKearnon travelled to the Highland town's Gynack Gardens on September 20 for the ceremony.

The black granite memorial pays tribute to the men of Force K6 (later re-named the Indian Contingent) who served in the Animal Transport (AT) companies of the RIASC during the Second World War.

The Indian Contingent was a detachment of the Indian Army briefly stationed around the Cairngorms, Golspie, Corgarff and Aberdeenshire during the second World War.

Kingussie New Cemetery represents the single largest graveyard in the United Kingdom where Force K6 soldiers are interred. There are also graves in England, Wales, France and Germany.

The RIASC provided logistical support to the frontline in both world wars. They were tasked with transporting supplies over terrain that was inaccessible for the British Expeditionary Force's (BEF) motorised transport companies.

Kingussie's Am Fasgadh Regeneration Company was awarded £20,706 through Highland Council's Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) to put towards the match funded Force K6

Memorial Project. The project was led by local facilitator, Mrs Heather Taylor (who is also a Major at 51st Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland).

On the stone's inscription, tribute is paid to the 14 members (13 Muslim and one Hindu) of Force K6 who were stationed and all of whom died in Scotland. The stone also recognises Kingussie-native, 99-year-old Isobel Harling and recipient of the British Empire Medal (BEM), who served in the Women's Royal Naval Service during the war, and who tended their graves for over 70 years. Her brother died after being shot down over Leuven, Belgium during the Second World War.

The graves are now under the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Young said: "The memorial is a very fine tribute to these men who came to Scotland in the cause of freedom, and it has been wonderful to see the result of years of work across diverse communities and relationships."

From June 1942 the soldiers had several camps in Badenoch and Strathspey from where they supported winter warfare training in the Cairngorm mountains. The soldiers were popular in the local communities. After postings to other locations in the Highlands, they returned to India by early 1944. Fourteen of the Force K6 men died in Scotland, with nine of them buried in the New Cemetery at Kingussie. Some of the soldiers died while training in harsh conditions in the Highlands.

ChamberFORCE relaunched



From left: Damon Scott (Dunbartonshire Chamber), Sarah Young (Dundee & Angus Chamber) and Alan Mitchell (Fife Chamber) accept the Amazon sponsorship cheque from Jamie Strain, Amazon Dunfermline General Manager.



Five Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award holders have partnered up to relaunch the ChamberFORCE project.

The relaunch event took place at the Amazon Fulfilment Centre in Dunfermline on August 23. Amazon staff and senior management had the opportunity to engage with a variety of military stands, vehicles and equipment.

Regional Learning & Development Officer, Lieutenant Commander Garth Atkinson RNR, represented the Royal Navy. 154 (Scottish) Regiment Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment and 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) attended the event to represent the British Army. 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force represented the Royal Air Force. Regular units, including soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), also attended.

Vehicles on display included a Foxhound Protected Patrol Vehicle, Field Ambulance, and an EPLS MK3 truck. Visitors had the chance to get hands on with equipment including Army Bergens as well as

trying out a virtual reality simulator. The tri-service stands were followed by a presentation of a £15,000 cheque for sponsorship funding from Amazon to ChamberFORCE. The funding will be available over a three-year period. Fife Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Alan Mitchell accepted the cheque on behalf of the other participating Chambers from Amazon Dunfermline General Manager Jamie Strain.

ChamberFORCE is a partnership programme between selected Chambers of Commerce in Scotland and their local Navy, Army and RAF units, designed to bring tangible benefits to Chamber members and to Defence. The founding Chambers of Commerce have all signed the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved ERS Gold Awards: Fife Chamber of Commerce, Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce, Moray Chamber of Commerce and Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce.

Highland RFCA first launched the initiative in November 2018, with the aim of bringing the participating Chambers of Commerce and Armed Forces Reserve units closer together. Defence Relationship Management (DRM) supported the pilot.

ERS Gold Award holder, Amazon,

sponsored a virtual leadership event with Fife Chamber back in 2020. Keen to develop the relationship with other Chambers of Commerce, Amazon is sponsoring the next phase of the ChamberFORCE project. Amazon is now the official corporate sponsor of ChamberFORCE for the next three years, enabling the participating stakeholders to deliver advocacy for Defence.

This year, through its Military Programme, Amazon will recruit over 300 veterans, Reservists and military spouses in over 35 different jobs.

Alan Mitchell, Fife Chamber Chief Executive, said: "On behalf of all the participating Chambers of Commerce, I want to thank Amazon for embracing ChamberFORCE."

"We are all very excited about working with the Amazon team and our friends at HRFCA to create an exciting programme of events that will strengthen the bonds between the businesses and the military units across the four regions that we represent."

"Amazon has benefited enormously from employing ex-military personnel and Reservists, and we want ChamberFORCE to provide a platform for many other businesses to enjoy the same benefits."

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce was represented by Chief Executive Damon Scott, and Dundee and Angus Chamber by Sarah Young, Events and Marketing Manager. Scottish Chambers of Commerce Deputy Chief Executive, Charandeep Singh, was also in attendance.

ChamberFORCE
Business skills in Reserve

Supported by **amazon**



The winning team celebrate their success.

Fun event kick-starts project

HRFC A joined Fife Chamber of Commerce and Amazon for a fun day at Cluny Activities to kick-start the re-launch of ChamberFORCE.

More than 40 participants took part in an afternoon of clay pigeon shooting, archery, golf and rifle shooting at the centre near Kirkcaldy.

The event on October 7 allowed businesses and organisations to connect with Fife Chamber, Amazon, Highland RFC A and military units, providing a great opportunity to strengthen connections and build opportunities.

Fife Chamber Chief Executive Alan Mitchell welcomed everyone to Cluny Activities, telling the participants: "I have

absolutely no doubt about the value of the Armed Forces, so we are super-excited about this first ChamberFORCE event."

Daniel Stewart, a senior leader at Amazon, then spoke, spelling out his company's commitment to supporting the Armed Forces and introducing veterans from Amazon who have successfully transitioned from the military to civilian life.

Participants were broken into four teams and the fun began! Following trips to the four stands the overall scores were totted up and the winning team announced by Highland RFC A REED Roy McLellan. In a close-run contest Team Orange (main image, top of page) pipped Team Blue to first place by 0.2 points. Team Yellow was third, with Team Green

narrowly behind in fourth. The winners received prizes as did the individual highest scorers in clay pigeon and rifle shooting, and archery.

Those attending came from a wide range of organisations who are all members of Fife Chamber of Commerce. These included: Amazon, Bank of Scotland Commercial, Blackadders LLP, Burness Paull LLP, Datel Solutions, Eat & Go Phoenix Food Co Ltd, Workplace Cleaning Solutions, Henderson Loggie, Old Course Hotel Golf Resort & Spa, Purvis Group, Quicksafe Security Ltd, Shand & Burns Financial Ltd, St Andrews Shuttle Ltd, GrowMyself, Pro-Duct Group, Workplace Cleaning Solutions, Career Transition Partnership, 154 (Scottish) Regiment RLC, 603 Squadron RAF, and 71 Engineer Regiment.





Medical Reservists load a 'casualty' onto a USAF C-17. Above right: Visitors watch as the Reservists prepare to move the casualty. Right: The visitors had the chance to see inside the C-17.



RAF demonstrates capability

HRFCA had the privilege of attending a demonstration of Aeromedical Evacuation Capability at Leuchars Station on October 7.

Among those watching the demonstration by 612 Squadron of the RAF Reserves was the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland Professor Sir Gregor

Smith, NHS executives and clinical professionals.

The event gave the Reservists the opportunity to demonstrate the Operational Patient Care Pathway from point of injury to Strategic Aeromedical Evacuation.

The demonstration also involved the United States Air Force's 911th

Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron. Visitors were given the chance to see inside one of the unit's eight impressive Boeing C-17 Globemasters.

During the day visitors also had the chance to hear from RAF Reservists, including Keir Lynch who spoke about the benefits and transferable skills he has gained as a Reservist.

Highland RFCA joined 80 guests onboard HMS Enterprise while the multi-role survey vessel was visiting Aberdeen.

The event on September 27 allowed guest to tour the ship, giving them an insight into the workings of the vessel that is manned by experts in examining and mapping the seafloor. She also acts as a floating base for mine countermeasures activities.

Brigadier Andy Muddiman RM, Naval Regional Commander Scotland & Northern Ireland, and the ship's Commanding Officer Commander Malcolm McCallum hosted the reception and capability demonstration.

The capability section of the visit enabled guests to look at the ship's weapons systems, surveying capabilities, firefighting equipment, and the medical facilities.

HRFCA's Roy McLellan and Hayley Munro hosted guests from a range of organisations in Aberdeen and the surrounding area. They were Nickie Scorgie (Sport Aberdeen); Duncan Bonnar (Assurance of Learning Limited); Lesley



Strachan (Aberdeen City Council); and Jim Savege (Aberdeenshire Council).

Three of the organisations are Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award holders, and Assurance of Learning Limited is an Armed Forces Covenant signatory and ERS Bronze holder.

Over the past five years, HMS Enterprise has been involved in a diverse span of activities, from detecting mines in the

Arabian Gulf to saving lives and disrupting the work of human traffickers as part of a European taskgroup – Operation Sophia. The ship's company is 50.

She has surveyed hundreds of thousands of square miles of ocean floor, filled in as the Falkland Island's Patrol Vessel, and most recently acted as the flagship to Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group 2.



Ray Watt (centre) with Tom Vincent (right) and Tony Marks of 20/20.



Left: Aker Offshore Wind. Centre: SV24-7 Vending. Right: Hazelnuts Catering.

Firms receive Bronze Awards

Four organisations were recently presented with Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Bronze Awards.

The Award is in recognition of the support the companies give to the Armed Forces.

Aker Offshore Wind received the Award from Highland RFCA Regional Employer Engagement Director (REED) Ray Watt on September 5 in Dyce, Aberdeen. Chris Taylor, Head of Commercial UK, accepted the Award on behalf of Aker.

Aker Offshore Wind has been recognised as an Armed Forces-friendly organisation that values the contribution of serving personnel, reservists, veterans

and military families to the region's economy and communities. Aker previously signed the Armed Forces Covenant in November 2021.

The Covenant is a commitment to ensure those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

SV24-7 Vending received the Award from Highland RFCA REED Roy McLellan on October 4 in Alloa.

Director/Owner Fiona Chambers accepted it on behalf of SV24-7 Vending.

The company had previously signed the Armed Forces Covenant in April 2022.

Hazelnuts Catering received the

Bronze at Highland RFCA's Eastern Area committee meeting held at Barry Buddon. HRFA Chief Executive Brigadier (Retd) Mark Dodson presented the Award to owner Hazel McFadzean on October 18.

The Perth-based company had previously signed the Armed Forces Covenant in July 2022.

20/20 Business Insight Limited received their Bronze from HRFA's Ray Watt on November 8.

Tom Vincent (CEO) and Tony Marks (CEO of 20/20 Business Group) accepted the Award at Highland RFCA headquarters in Dundee.

20/20 Business Insight Limited had previously signed the Armed Forces Covenant in March 2022.

Annual Camps return



Angus and Dundee Battalion ACF at the Barry Buddon Training Area.

Army Cadets from across the Highland RFCA area returned to Annual Camps in July, their first in three years.

Due to COVID-19 and the related regional travel restrictions throughout the pandemic, cadet organisations had been unable to hold camps since 2019.

160 cadets from 1st Battalion The Highlanders enjoyed two weeks at the Battalion's Training Centre in Dingwall following a last-minute cancellation to their intended destination of Warcop in Cumbria.

Due to limited bed spaces at Dingwall, the Battalion was split into two one-week camps, with different Companies attending each week. The cadets were able to take part in a number of challenging activities that included camping out overnight, a fieldcraft exercise, learning navigation, first aid and drill. All cadets also took part in a two-day Adventure Training package which included rock climbing and mountain biking.

The Battalion Commandant, Colonel Mike MacDonald, said: "We had a large number of challenges to overcome with the change in venue at very short notice, but the dedication of the staff ensured that the cadets were able to learn new skills

and experience some challenging activities for the first time. Camp has been a huge success and we hope the experience will encourage others to join."

150 cadets and 50 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) from 2nd Battalion The Highlanders deployed on 16 July to Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Strensall for their two-week camp.

Due to operational reasons 2 Highlanders were joined by their sister battalion, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

The hot weather had some impact on training, but over the fortnight cadets took part in the training syllabus of skill at arms, target shooting and of course every cadet's favourite – fieldcraft. This year cadets also took part in expedition training under the guidance of the Battalion Expedition Officer Lieutenant Georgia Pinson – assisted by some CFAVs.

Other camp highlights included a trip to Carlton Lodge Activity Centre. This saw cadets take part in a variety of activities including zip wire, climbing wall, obstacle course and command tasks with some nature and environmental information provided by the staff. A visit to Eden Camp, a modern history museum originally built to house Italian prisoners of war captured

in North Africa, was also organised for the cadets. The Battalion was also delighted to welcome Brigadier Ben Wrench, Commander 51 Infantry Brigade and Colonel Alex McNamee, Colonel Cadets 51 Infantry Brigade to visit the Battalions during camp. During their visit they spent time chatting to cadets and CFAVs.

Angus and Dundee Battalion held a successful camp at the Barry Buddon Training Area near Carnoustie.

Cadet Force Adult Volunteers delivered the varied programme under the direction of Battalion Commandant Colonel Scott Dunn, with support provided by the Battalion's Permanent Support Staff.

The camp ran from 17-30 July and saw around 80 cadets enjoying a packed programme of activities with a renewed focus on military skills. The bulk of these were one-star cadets. Other camp highlights included a 15km expedition to Braemar and trips to Go Ape at Dalkeith Country Park, Edinburgh Castle and Willowgate Activity Centre for watersports.

Annual Camp was rounded off with an Open Day on 30 July for parents/carers.

Meanwhile, The Black Watch Battalion travelled to the Garelochhead Training Centre for their camp.



Left: Angus and Dundee cadets during first aid training. Centre: Camps are all about fun. Right: Cadets from 1 Highlanders.



Cadets take to the water at Strensall.



Angus and Dundee cadets enjoying a navigation exercise.



Camps provide opportunities to enjoy time with old friends and new.



Black Watch cadets at Garelochhead Training Camp.



Enjoying a well-earned break at Queen Elizabeth Barracks.

Alloa ATC building refurbished

The ATC hut at Alloa belonging to 383 Squadron of the RAF Air Cadets has been refurbished.

The internal works were completed by BMES Scotland LTD.

The works included fitting an energy efficient heating system; installing energy efficient LED lighting; fitting factory finished wood veneer doors; new floor coverings; and decoration.

The improvements will benefit both the cadets and the Adult Volunteers of the Squadron, giving them an improved space in which to train, learn and enjoy all the fun activities the Service Cadet organisations have to offer.



The refurbished drill hall.



A fresh look for one of the offices at 383 (Alloa) Squadron.



www.hrfca.co.uk



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HighlandRFCA

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

Contributions are always welcome

Email hi-offcomms@rfca.mod.uk
or call 01382 631033



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