



SEPTEMBER 2025



THE KING'S GURKHA ARTILLERY

Ex CYPHER STRIKE 25

7 PARA RHA  
FOOTBALL TEAM

# GUNNER

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

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# GUNNER



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## CONTENTS



Gurkha recruits are seen here celebrating a cap badging ceremony at the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) in Catterick. Image taken by Sergeant Andrew Grayson, Photographer at Army Strategy Centre

## FEATURES

- 4 Guest Editorial The Chief Joint Fires and Influence Branch
- 5 Forces Pension Society
- 6 Master Gunner succession
- 8 The King's Gurkha Artillery
- 10 Scotland's Last Burma Veteran is saluted in Edinburgh
- 12 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
- 14 5th (Gibraltar 1779-1783) Battery 19th Regiment Royal Artillery
- 18 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
- 20 A Royal Artillery Officer's charity ride across Malaysia

## SPORT

- 22 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery



## REGULARS

- 26 Royal Artillery Charities News
- 36 Forecast of Events
- 37 Obituaries & Death Notices
- 42 Notices

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**Brigadier Robert Alston**  
**Chief Joint Fires and Influence Branch**

The Gunners, as the primary source of the Army's firepower, have an important role to play in delivering the increased lethality demanded of the Army by the recent Strategic Defence Review (SDR). Along with CGS's speech at the Land Warfare Conference in June, the SDR lays out the threat that the UK faces and the role of the British Army in deterring that danger. It should not be lost on any of us that the likelihood of an attack against a NATO member in Europe is credible and more proximate than at any time since the end of the Cold War. The role of NATO in deterring such an attack through demonstrating its preparedness to robustly defend itself has therefore never been more important.

CGS has framed the British Army's response to this operational context through his challenge to double our lethality by 2027 and triple it by 2030; the SDR raises the challenge further to a ten-fold increase in lethality. As the providers of the majority of the Army's lethality, the Gunners will make a critical contribution to delivering this transformation and we are already heavily engaged in that process.

CGS also talks about the 'third era' of NATO, by which he means a return to its core purpose of being ready to fight a conventional war in defence of NATO's eastern border. This is in some ways 'back to the future' and it should not be a surprise that our response to Putin's new threat has echoes of how we prepared for the 'old threat' from the Soviet Union - ancient history for our soldiers and subalterns, many born post-9/11. These historical echoes are most tangible in the reconfiguring of the British Army for fighting as a corps, rather than as individual brigades during the decades of counter-insurgency, or the more recent focus on fighting as a division. CGS also announced in June that the British Army was escalating its enabling brigades to directly support the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) and that he had placed the two divisions under tactical command of HQ ARRC. The process of turning the UK's corps HQ back into an enabled corps is far from complete, but the significance of this evolution should not be overlooked - it is corps that NATO looks to its member states to provide and is the metric against which our contribution will be judged.

These changes offer hugely exciting opportunities for Gunners across the Field Army. Already we have seen the announcement of a deep recce strike brigade for the 1st (UK) Division, demonstrating the Army's commitment to providing organic find and strike for both our manoeuvre divisions and providing the organisational framework around which these capabilities can, in time, grow. 7th Air Defence Group has already pivoted to working directly to the Corps HQ. It is leading the way in demonstrating how such a shift in focus must be accompanied by changes in structure, equipment and doctrine to meet the greater challenge of operating at the higher tactical level and into NATO command structures. On corps fires there is more to do, as we do not yet have a corps recce-strike formation to replace the 1st Artillery Brigade of old, but work is ongoing and the reservists of 100th Regiment RA are doing fantastic work in generating an artillery formation HQ for the ARRC when required.

Structure without capability is of limited utility however, and doubling formation HQs does not double our lethality unless it comes with an uplift in equipment and the communications systems to link it all together. The SDR announcement of £1Bn for the Digital Targeting Web, in combination with the Army's Project ASGARD and associated work in the Army HQ, promises to enable artillery staff at all echelons to integrate 'any sensor' and 'any shooter' into our plans, which is an exciting proposition. The seemingly unlimited potential of uncrewed air systems (UAS), both to find and strike targets, is also an area in which the Gunners are primed to exploit, alongside the imminent upgrade of our M270 GMLRS platforms.

This autumn therefore promises to be an exciting time for the Gunners as 1st Deep Recce Strike Brigade exercises its units on TITAN STORM and the ARRC conducts a mission rehearsal with HQ 7th AD Group and both divisional HQs on AVENGER TRIAD. These activities will see us exercising at all levels from company to corps and I look forward to reading all about it in future editions of The Gunner!



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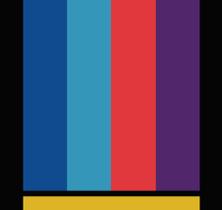


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*From Lieutenant General Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL*



**Artillery House  
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United Kingdom**

*Master Gunner St James's Park*

*To the Royal Regiment of Artillery*

*10<sup>th</sup> July 2025*

It was the greatest honour of my professional career when I took over as the 32nd Master Gunner St James's Park on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017. The role has clearly evolved since it was first established in 1678 to site the cannons to protect the Palaces of Westminster, Whitehall and St James's! Now, as the representative of the Regiment's Captain General, my responsibility is to provide overall guidance and direction across the Royal Regiment; this includes growing our operational effectiveness, sustaining the Regimental family, enhancing our reputation and operationalising our history and heritage.

While, inevitably, there are challenges - a shortage of young men and women joining the Army and a lack of equipment, especially 155mm guns, being the most immediate ones, I am clear that the Royal Regiment is now in a very strong position and well placed to seize future opportunities.

After two decades of counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the return to warfighting and the direction from the Chief of the General Staff to double and triple the Army's lethality will require the totality of the artillery 'system of systems'. To make this a reality, the investment in and the growth of Air Defence, neglected since the end of the Cold War, is overdue and very welcome. The re-energising and re-balancing of Deep Recce Strike capabilities to both divisions also reflect the importance of fighting at range. Though we have not yet fully filled the gap left by rightly gifting our AS90s to Ukraine and training hundreds of their people, we are learning a great deal as we make ARCHER a capability and we look forward to the arrival of the Mobile Fires Platform in the next couple of years. All this fits within our new strap line of 'Find and Strike', something that emerged from the Operational Purpose and Distinctive Competencies work of 2018/2019. It is also very good news that we have formed the King's Gurkha Artillery; these fine officers and soldiers will add a great deal to our professionalism and operational capability. When discussing operations, I also pay real tribute to the families of our officers and soldiers who live with a great deal of separation, worry and stress; without their support, the Regiment would be non-effective.

The Royal Artillery Association, after a lengthy period of waning numbers, is now growing and with new Branches forming. This includes a Commonwealth, a female Gunners', a bikers', battery and other 'novel' branches alongside the more traditional geographic communities. Ensuring everybody who is serving or has served as a Gunner - and their families, remain part of the Regiment is essential for welfare, camaraderie and a sense of belonging. The Regiment's charities continue to provide invaluable support to serving and retired personnel in many different ways - welfare, sport, grants to the serving regiments, Royal Artillery events and more, and, due to good management, their resources have grown in recent years. I would urge all to come and join one or more of the main Regimental gatherings: the Remembrance commemoration at Hyde Park Corner; the Royal Artillery Association Assembly in Blackpool; the RA Gold Cup at Sandown Park; the annual service at the National Memorial Arboretum; St Barbara's Day at Larkhill and many others. As part of this and to enhance our reputation, a good deal of work continues to make the Regiment's communications to all audiences more effective; Gunner magazine is in a new format, our website has been revamped and we are raising our profile on social media, not least to assist with recruiting.

I am delighted His Majesty King Charles III agreed to become the Regiment's Captain General and we were greatly honoured by his visit to Larkhill in June; if we find ourselves short of a Light Gun layer, we know who to ask! I am also delighted that we have finally signed an agreement to lease with the Ministry of Defence for ground next to Larkhill for the Regiment's museum where we can, once again, put our magnificent collection on public display. While I am aware that there is some scepticism about whether the Museum will ever materialise, I would make three points: firstly, while there have been some 'false starts', I am confident we now have a viable plan and realistic business case; secondly, our Collection is important and dispersing it, which has been explored, is not an option; and thirdly, we will not 'bankrupt' the Regiment in bringing this to fruition. Celebrating and using our heritage is of fundamental importance to a Regiment of our size, stature and history.

I am very proud of this wonderful Regiment and all that has been achieved over the years and during my time as the Master Gunner St James's Park. However, I have decided now is the right time to hand the baton over to the next generation. I am therefore delighted to announce that Lieutenant General Mike Elviss, currently the Regimental Colonel Commandant, will take over from me on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025; I know he will continue to nurture all aspects of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and that you will give him the very warm and committed support that you have given to me and Sally.

*Andrew Gregory*



## A huge honour: Feeling proud and making history with the King's Gurkha Artillery



The recruits were presented with khada's, a traditional Tibetan scarf symbolizing respect, auspiciousness, and goodwill, deeply rooted in Tibetan Buddhist customs.

They're the bravest of the brave – Gurkhas have fought alongside the British for more than 200 years.

First came the Rifles, then the Engineers and the Signals. Then Logistics, the Band and Personnel Support followed on.

And now a brand new cap badge has been born – the King's Gurkha Artillery, or the KGA.

This is a really big day for the Gurkhas. The King's Gurkha Artillery is the very first regiment to be named after King Charles III.

It's the seventh Gurkha badge, and it's the first new Gurkha unit in more than a decade.

The first 80 members come from across existing Gurkha units but, in the coming weeks and months, they will be transformed into gunners.

They beat competition from around 300 other applicants to become part of history.

The new cap badge features the standard Royal Artillery badge of the Tudor crown, cannon, rammer and motto – Ubique Quo Fas Et Gloria Ducunt – Everywhere Where Right and Glory Lead.

But this time, the badge has been superimposed by crossed kukris.

The Royal Artillery is embracing the new Nepalese element.

The old pass office at Larkhill has been repurposed as the temple, and staff there are learning fast.

Major Alex O'Neill, Battery Commander 34 Battery King's Gurkha Artillery, said: "It's quite hard to put into words, if I'm perfectly honest. It's quite a monumental occasion."



"Over 300 years of Royal Artillery history and over 220 years of Brigade of Gurkhas history. It's difficult to understand quite how important it is. But it's a huge honour."

Sergeant Tejendra Pun explained why he had applied to join the new unit. "I want to be a part of history-making. That's why I applied to the KGA."

When asked what he was looking forward to, he replied: "First thing is the training – definitely new skills. [I'm] excited to learn

these guns [the 105mm L118 Light Gun], then definitely operations in the future."

Warrant Officer Class 2 Pradeep Rai added: "I would say it's a bit emotional as well, because I'm just leaving... 1RGR forever."

"So, it's like mixed emotions. A bit of a sad part, but looking forward, it's really proud and making history and a milestone as well."

Eventually, three more batteries will be formed and the full regiment will be 400-strong.

by Hannah King  
BFBS



A total of 274 trainee Gurkhas has successfully completed their basic training at the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) in Catterick, marking the occasion with a cap badging ceremony to receive their new unit insignias.

**The mission of the Gurkhas is to transform young Nepalese recruits into highly trained soldiers who uphold the proud traditions of the Brigade of Gurkhas.**



Lt Col Stuart pictured with CO and members of 105 Regt RA along with Regional Representative and members of the Scottish Region RAA

Lt Col Stuart Guild (aged 101) is believed to be the only holder of the Burma Star living in Scotland. On 15 August 2025, serving and retired Gunners joined Lt Col Guild and his family in Edinburgh to mark the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day. Col Jim Kinloch, Col Comdt RA (Scotland) represented the Master Gunner, supported by Lt Col Doug Bertram, CO 105 Regt RA and Lt Col Mike Blair, Chairman RA Council of Scotland. Sgt David Corkhill led representatives from 93 (Le Cateau) Bty, the descendants of 37/47 Fd Bty in which Lt Col Guild served.

Maj Willie Nicol, President Scottish Region RAA addressed the gathering. He paid tribute to the wartime generation, emphasised the contribution of Commonwealth troops, especially in the Far East, and highlighted specific aspects of the campaign. The following paragraphs of his speech are reported in full.

'We remember the soldiers who were captured in the early stages of Japanese success. We think of long marches, harsh discipline, manual labour and limited food and medical supplies. We think of those

who provided leadership, medical aid and pastoral support while they themselves were at their lowest.

We remember the reconstituted British Army which turned defeat into victory; the soldiers who proved that the Japanese were not invincible and who proved that the jungle was neutral. We think of the men of the Royal Artillery who dragged guns through jungles and quagmires without the benefit of roads and before the invention of helicopters. We remember their ingenuity in mounting guns on landing craft and using the rivers to best advantage.

We remember the Arakan Campaigns. We remember the Chindits and their courageous, irregular and deep incursions behind Japanese lines. We remember the battles of Imphal and Kohima, the offensive from the Chindwin to the Irrawaddi, the capture of Mandalay and the race for Rangoon.

Today especially we acknowledge the contribution of a young Lieutenant called Stuart Guild. He abandoned his studies, put his life on hold and took a different path,



leading to hardship and wounds in battle, to active service beyond VJ Day in Malaya and French Indochina, to eventual return to his home and the career in law which was his destiny.

Stuart's name is emblazoned on the history of the Far East Campaign. His personal account of waterborne artillery support is held by the Royal Artillery Historical Trust. The published Regimental history of the Far East Theatre quotes him and lists him as a source. His television interviews will serve as a national record in all time coming.'

A letter from the Burma Star Memorial Fund was read. The piper, Mr John Moffat played The Flowers of the Forrest, Mr John McCue paraded the standard of the Edinburgh Branch RAA and the gathering observed 2 minutes silence.

Major Nicol quoted the epitaph from the 2nd British Division memorial at Kohima. 'When you go home, tell them of us and say, "for your tomorrow, we gave our today".'

Footnote: In 2016, Lt Col Stuart A Guild TD was awarded the Royal Artillery Medal.

by Major (Retd) W D Nicol RA  
President Scottish Region RAA



Lt Col Stuart Guild



## Ex CYPHER STRIKE 25: Forging the Future



Bdr Mills demonstrates a UAS FIND and STRIKE system with THOR a 10km BVLOS quadcopter, FPVs and OVERWATCH loitering munition all working together

From 30th June to 12th July, 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (7 Para RHA) undertook Ex CYPHER STRIKE 25 (Ex CS25), a landmark event that introduced the 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team's (16X) Recce-Strike Group and drove innovation across the entire Regiment. This exercise not only validated the Regiment's operational readiness but also showcased the potential of the Recce-Strike Group to revolutionise the way 7 Para RHA and 16X operate in the modern battlespace.

The exercise began in Merville Barracks Colchester, where the Regiment utilised the Joint Fires Synthetic Trainer to rehearse missions, refine processes, and integrate ISTAR feeds into their targeting cycles. This simulation phase was critical in ensuring that every soldier understood their role within the Recce-Strike Group and was prepared for the challenges ahead.

The second phase of the exercise

transitioned to the demanding terrain of Sennybridge Training Area in Wales, where the Regiment conducted live-fire training. This marked the first deployment of the newly formed Recce-Strike Group, which merged 16X ISTAR and JETG to enhance lethality and agility.

The Regiment's FSTs deployed into sub-surface Observation Posts after a two-day, 30km tactical insertion, supported by 21 Battery's PUMA, 226 Sqn Light Electronic Warfare Team (LEWT), and 53 Battery's LCMR. Together, these assets formed a multi-layered and multi-spectral ISTAR screen, providing unparalleled situational awareness and target acquisition capabilities.

The Gun Group, comprising F, G, and I Batteries, deployed as the primary STRIKE asset. Working alongside engineering equipment from 23 Para RE, the Gun Groups dug in their positions and established c-UAS



nets to protect against potential threats from FPV drones. Mortars from 1 R IRISH, and 2 PARA, added firepower to the Recce-Strike Group, further enhancing its ability to deliver joint fires.

### Innovation in action

The exercise was a proving ground for new techniques and equipment. The Regiment trialled new gun-towing vehicles as a potential replacement for the venerable 6x6 Pinzgauer, with the double-cab Land Rovers performing well. This increased mobility allowed G Battery to conduct a Gun Raid, demonstrating the improved flexibility and reach of the Gun Group.

Adding to the realism, the Regiment employed THOR, an sUAS with a 10km range and payload of 10Kg to conduct reconnaissance of Gun Group positions. THOR provided a talk-on for FPV drone pilots, who attempted to penetrate the c-UAS nets. While the nets successfully defeated two out of three FPVs, one managed to get through. A sobering moment for both sides, as they heard, saw and felt what sUAS can achieve now.

The Regiment also operated a fully dispersed Echelon, with Workshops, the Ammunition Control Point, and a Forward Echelon spread across the AO to increase survivability. This tactical dispersion ensured that logistical support remained robust and resilient, even under enemy pressure.

A key focus of Ex CS25 was testing the processes and efficiency required to cross-cue targets detected by multiple ISTAR assets and assign them to the best effector. Whether the target was engaged by a Gun, Mortar, sUAS, or Aircraft, the exercise emphasised the importance of prioritisation

and deconfliction to deliver timely and accurate fires.

The Brigade Joint Fires Cell was responsible for controlling the Recce-Strike Group and was deliberately overloaded multiple times to stress-test its capabilities. Meanwhile, the Fire Direction Centre managed the Regiment's Gun Group, coordinating the movement of 3,000 high-explosive rounds, tonnes of rations, 10,000 litres of fuel, three Gun Raids, and 12 direct fire lanes. The scale and complexity of these operations underscored the importance of effective command and control in a high-tempo environment.

### Looking ahead

As Ex CS25 concluded, the Regiment had not only validated its readiness, trialled new technology and equipment but also demonstrated the transformative potential of the Recce-Strike Group. The lessons learned from this exercise will be carried forward, ensuring that 7 PARA RHA remains at the forefront of innovation and readiness. Ex CS25 was more than just a validation exercise – it was a glimpse into the future of how the British Army fights.

by Captain Cohu RA  
Regimental Signals Officer  
7th Parachute Regiment Royal Artillery



I Bty deployed c-UAS nets to protect their Gun Pits from FPVs whilst they are resupplied by CH-47



## ARCHER: How the Scottish Gunners are pushing the boundaries of modern artillery on NATO's Eastern Front



5 Bty Tactical Group at ENDEX on Exercise HEDGEHOG

In March 2025, following months of preparation, 19th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Scottish Gunners) deployed the British Army's new 155mm artillery system to NATO's Eastern Front. Under the stewardship of 5 (Gibraltar 1779-83) Battery Royal Artillery, six ARCHERs were shipped from Larkhill to Tapa Camp in Estonia, where the guns found their new home as part of the Battery's deployment on Op CABRIT 16 in the 1 MERCIAN Battlegroup. This marked a monumental achievement following a rapid acquisition and training pathway but also opened the next chapter of development for the Battery as they continue to operationalise the capability.

It was a busy start to the tour, kicked off by a visit from the Prince of Wales in his capacity as the Colonel-in-Chief of 1 MERCIAN. This provided a unique

opportunity for many members of the Battery to meet the prince and for him to experience driving ARCHER. Following this, it was straight to business as the Battery had one month to train and prepare for their first deployment, Exercise BOLD EAGLE 1. This was the first full deployment of the Gun Group as part of the 1 MERCIAN Battlegroup and was thus ARCHER's first operational test. The Fire Support Teams deployed with the bulk of the Battlegroup on the Central Tapa Training Area, whilst the Gun Gp deployed on the South Tapa Training Area. The Battery used the six-day exercise to evaluate ARCHER standard operating instructions, and the new ARCHER ODOPs insert, whilst also developing several additional lines of effort for ARCHER WARDEV.

The Gun Group initially focused on refining procedures to expedite quick



deployments and engagements with the guns. Due to ARCHER's innovative, highly advanced Fire Control Software and excellent mobility, the guns were able to achieve an impressive time of three minutes between receiving a fire mission and having (simulated) rounds on target. ARCHER is able to deploy from hide to firing point and come into action far more quickly than previous 155mm guns, and this exercise allowed the Command Post and Gun Detachments to push the limits of what was previously understood to be possible by collectively identifying and implementing marginal gains to streamline the deployment processes.

In addition to refining basic drills, the exercise also afforded the Battery with the

perfect opportunity to work hand in hand with Estonian counterparts to prepare for the realities of modern warfare. An Estonian sUAS team facilitated the Battery practicing and refining counter-UAS drills by attempting to observe gun hides using a combination of electro-optical and thermal imaging sensors. This enabled the Gun Gp to address how it might mitigate against the significant threat posed by UAS. Key focus was placed on camouflage, concealment, deception and dispersal (C2D2) and immediate action drills, capturing lessons throughout to continue to evolve ARCHER survivability.

The Gun Gp also tested increased survivability by designing and digging ARCHER gun pits with 33 Armoured



ARCHER deployed on Exercise BOLD EAGLE 1



Engineer Squadron. The roll-in-roll-out design enables hasty occupation and provides a significant increase in hide survivability. Combined with camouflage configurations, it is assessed that gun pits of this design provide greater protection from the UAS and counter-fires threat.

Having conducted low-level training for the initial phase of the exercise, later phases tested the Battlegroup against an opposing force simulating a peer enemy with an armoured capability. This enabled the British and French elements of the Battlegroup to train their own interoperability against Estonian, US and Polish forces. This further tested the Gun Gp's ability to react to calls for fire under pressure in an environment where getting rounds on target is time critical and can be the difference between victory and defeat. This also provided the opportunity for the Tac Gp to continue to test refined calls for fire, maximising ARCHER's strengths and employing various ARCHER-specific mission and ammunition types in support of the Battlegroup. All whilst refining voice/data procedure to ensure information formats are correct to enable computation and engagement through ARCHER's firing computer.

Maximising the training opportunity of Exercise BOLD EAGLE 1 and subsequent exploitation sessions to refine the employment of ARCHER meant the Battery had a good understanding of how to best fight the artillery battle in Estonian terrain. This prepared us well for the Battlegroup's validation, Exercise HEDGEHOG; a large, multinational NATO exercise, involving numerous nations including the US, Lithuanians, Polish, German, Estonians,

and numerous other formations and units from the British Army who deployed for the duration of the exercise.

Exercise HEDGEHOG saw the 5 Battery Tac Group return to the Central Tapa Training Area for 6 days of peer-on-peer actions supported by a synthetic wrap (TES and SCOPIC). The Gun Gp deployed to Soodla Training Area, a nature reserve to the west of Tapa, as part of the wider Estonian Artillery formation. The large-scale exercise was a step change in pace and complexity, operating in congested and complex terrain against a large, dismounted force supported by armour with a significant UAS capability.

The Gun Gp spent the week balancing survivability and lethality. They moved from well-prepared hides to engagement locations to mass effect and rapidly move across the Artillery Manoeuvre Areas before they could be targeted by UAS or counter-fires radar. The most pressing threat to the Gun Group came in the form of UAS, both FPV drones and OP drones, which were piloted by teams of experienced Ukrainian UAS operators, again providing valuable real-world training for our gunners.

Overall, the exercise was a success, and the Battlegroup achieved validation as part of the Estonian Brigade. It also proved that the developed method of fighting ARCHER was both lethal and sustainable. Throughout the exercise the guns were not successfully found or targeted, despite a special purpose forces presence and a proliferation of UAS. This enabled continued support to the Battlegroup, combined with the close integration of mortars, which resulted in 35% of all enemy casualties being caused



by artillery. A credit to unrelenting drive to operationalise ARCHER and make the capability more lethal and more survivable across all elements of the Battery.

Now the Battery turns its focus to the second half of the tour and the opportunity to live fire ARCHER for the first time in Estonia. This will be coupled

with continuing to evolve ARCHER's employment in the Armoured Battlegroup context and strengthening ties with NATO partners in the JOA to increase artillery interoperability across all nations in theatre.

by 2Lt Nick Wells RA  
5th (Gibraltar 1779-1783) Battery  
19th Regiment Royal Artillery



The Prince of Wales talks to an ARCHER crew as part of his visit to the 1 MERCIAN Battlegroup



## French Parachuting Interoperability



Personnel from 7 Para RHA having completed their jump

Early June saw Capt Salzano and Gnr Elliott from 7 Para RHA's HQ Bty, alongside other staff from 16AABCT HQ, travel to Saint-Malo, in northern France. The main effort of this visit was to engage in interoperability opportunities with the French 11th Parachute Brigade (11e Brigade Parachutiste) prior to the 16AABCT and 11e BP joint exercise in February and March 2026. As part of the preparation for this joint exercise, Capt Salzano and Gnr Elliott got the opportunity to join their French counter-parts in a parachute jump over the famous and picturesque drop zone of Mont-Saint-Michel. This was made all the more special as it took place on the 06 Jun, the 81st anniversary of D Day.

Capt Salzano and Gnr Elliott undertook French ground training, learning the various

differences between the British Low-Level Parachute (LLP) and the French Ensemble de Parachutage du Combattant (EPC). One of the great advantages to the French EPC is comparison to the British LLP is the ability to dampen the effects of wind on the drift of the parachutist in the sky, a welcome relief to negate the strong winds off the English Channel into the Northern French coastline!

Then came time for the jump. The 7 Para RHA pair and their French counterparts donned their parachutes and loaded onto the cramped French aircraft. A short flight from the airstrip to the dropzone (DZ) at the picturesque Mont-Saint-Michel and the parachutists were ready to earn their French wings. Within seconds of the plane getting over the drop zone, the mixed stick



of French and British paratroopers hooked up their static line, the green light came on and out the door they jumped. Before they knew it their canopies were open above their heads, and they got the opportunity to take in the stunning views of the DZ before coming in for a soft landing.

Once at the rally point, Capt Salzano and Gnr Elliott, alongside the other members of 16AABCT, were presented their French Parachute Wings from their instructor in the traditional French way; having the metal wings punched into their chest. A small moment to take in their stunning surroundings was taken before they quickly had to get back into their vehicles and endure the long drive back to Colchester. A *bonne journée* for all involved and focus now shifted on the joint exercise to come in the new year.

by LBdr Jacob Dawson  
E Battery  
1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery



A soldier gets their French wings



A view from the jump



**Exercise BERSAMA BERBASIKAL 2025**



Afternoon heat Major Doug Webster RA to the right

As the Royal Artillery continues to serve with distinction around the globe, its members often find unique and inspiring ways to give back to the communities they engage with. One such example is Major Doug Webster, currently serving at Headquarters Integrated Air Defence System (HQIADS) in Malaysia, the coordinating headquarters of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA). In addition to his core military duties, Major Webster has recently completed an endurance challenge for charity—an effort that reflects both the spirit of international cooperation and the Royal Artillery's commitment to service.

**A Unique Posting and Strategic Role**

Major Webster's current post at HQIADS places him at the heart of the FPDA, the oldest multinational defence collaboration in Southeast Asia. Established in 1971, the

FPDA is a collective security agreement between the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore. The FPDA facilitates mutual defence cooperation through regular joint military exercises, consultations, and numerous training events.

HQIADS, based at RMAF Butterworth on the Malaysian Peninsula, serves as the C2 node for FPDA exercises and activities. In this multinational environment, Major Webster plays a key role in fostering interoperability between the five partner nations, contributing to regional stability and deepening defence relationships in the Indo-Pacific region.

**BERSAMA BERBASIKAL: A Ride for Remembrance**

Beyond the staff work and strategic planning sessions, Major Webster turned



to pedal power to make a tangible impact locally. In March 2025, he led the organisation of *BERSAMA BERBASIKAL*—a charity bike ride that crossed from the west to the east coast of the Malaysian Peninsula and back again, starting and finishing at Butterworth Airbase, the home of HQIADS.

The ride covered a punishing 660 kilometres over four days, with 8,000 metres of total climbing. The route took riders from Butterworth to Kota Bharu on Malaysia's eastern coast and back, traversing the hilly heartland of Peninsular Malaysia. The event was more than just a physical feat; it was a carefully coordinated initiative involving logistics planning, route safety, support teams, and extensive liaison with local authorities and sponsors. In addition, there was also the genuine threat of being charged by wild elephants whilst crossing the highlands!

**Supporting Local Veterans**

The chosen beneficiary for the ride was the **Penang Veteran's Association**, a local organisation dedicated to supporting former members of the Malaysian Armed Forces. The charity provides welfare assistance, health services, and community engagement for retired service personnel in Penang and the surrounding areas.

By selecting a local charity, the *BERSAMA BERBASIKAL* initiative reinforced the FPDA's long-standing ties with its host nation. Individuals from several FPDA nations participated, reflecting the shared commitment to not only defence cooperation but also community support. The event raised significant funds and awareness for the Penang Veteran's Association, and helped build new bridges

between international service members and Malaysian society.

**A Lasting Impact**

*BERSAMA BERBASIKAL*, and the FPDA, stands as a fine example of the opportunities presented when posted overseas to make a difference—both within the context of defence cooperation and in the broader community. It enabled the opportunity to demonstrate physical resilience, organisational skill, and, above all, a deep respect for the enduring partnerships at the heart of the FPDA.



As the Royal Artillery continues to operate on the world stage, opportunities like this remind us that the reach of the Gunners extends well beyond the battlefield. Whether coordinating multinational defence efforts or climbing mountain passes on two wheels, opportunities for members of the Royal Regiment to make a mark on an international stage are there for the taking.

by Major Doug Webster RA  
SO2 Concepts A  
Development Directorate (British Army)  
Headquarters Integrated Area Defence System (HQIADS)  
Butterworth Airbase



## Football Team: A Historic Season (2024/25)



7 Para RHA starting XI posing before their historic semi-final win in the Major Units Army Cup

The 2024/25 season will go down as one of the most remarkable in the history of the 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (7 Para RHA) football team. The team defied expectations, broke long-standing barriers, and demonstrated unwavering spirit, marking a new golden era for Regimental sport.

For the first time in 25 years, 7 Para RHA reached the Army Cup Major Units Final, an extraordinary feat that sparked pride across the unit. Their semi-final journey to Inverness, Scotland, was the standout moment. Travelling by air, the team showed both style and ruthlessness in a thrilling 5-3 win over 39 RE. This performance underlined their attacking prowess and laid the foundation for the rest of the season. The final was a tense, tactical battle against 23 Para Royal Engineers, ending 0-0 after full time. Despite the heartbreak of a narrow

defeat in extra time, the players' courage and determination earned widespread respect and admiration.

Refusing to dwell on the Army Cup disappointment, the squad bounced back in emphatic fashion in the Royal Artillery Cup. In the semi-final, they outclassed 14 Regt RA in a spectacular 6-3 victory, rekindling hopes of silverware. The RA Cup final against 1 RHA proved a grueling test, ending 1-1 after full time. In the dramatic penalty shootout that followed, Bdr Timmins emerged as the hero, saving two spot-kicks to clinch a 4-1 win and secure the coveted trophy for 7 Para RHA.

Meanwhile, F (Sphinx) Parachute Battery Football team carved their own piece of history in the Battery Shield, one of the oldest competitions in English football at all levels. Their campaign was nothing short of dominant, sweeping aside King's Troop and



E Battery before delivering a commanding 4-0 victory over reigning champions D Battery in the final.

This season has been a testament to both the resilience, and skill of the 7 Para RHA football team. The bitter losses in last season's RA Cup and a series of near-misses in the Army Cup over the past decade served as the fire that fueled their determination. Each setback only sharpened their desire, and it was clear from the opening whistle of this season that the squad was intent on rewriting history.

With silverware secured and the double won, the Regiment can look back with immense pride, knowing that this campaign is the result of hard-earned redemption. They will now look forward to next season, with renewed ambition to build on this momentum.

by Lieutenant Walton RHA  
7th Parachute Regiment Royal Artillery



Sgt Lewis goes in for a tackle



### RA Service of Remembrance



Standard Bearers & Chelsea In-Pensioners



Venerable Stephen Robbins CB conducts the service



Standard Bearers march to the RA Memorial Garden



Brigadier M N Pountain CBE inspects Standards



RAA Service Gold Awards Recipients



Controller & Regimental Colonel, RA Memorial Garden



Lancashire Artillery Volunteers Band, 103 Regt RA



Controller presents Certificate of Merit to Mr Frank Mills, Coventry Branch



RA Memorial Garden, Wreath laying



### Royal Artillery Service of Remembrance

On Saturday 5th July, the RA Service of Remembrance was held at the National Memorial Arboretum. The Regimental Headquarters welcomed over 400 members of the Royal Regiment of Artillery; serving, veterans and families.

The day began with the Controller, Chairman of the RAA, Regimental Colonel, and the Royal Artillery Sergeant Major inspecting Royal Artillery Standard Bearers and In-Pensioners of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Following the inspection, the Honorary Chaplain led the commemorative service and at the end of the Service, awards were presented to Branch Members who have completed 5, 10 and 15 years service in Committee roles. Towards the end of the Service the Controller presented Mr Frank Mills, Coventry Branch with a well-deserved Certificate of Merit.

Guests then made their way to the RA Memorial Garden for the wreath laying ceremony.

Thank you to the Lancashire Artillery Volunteers Band who performed at the Service and entertained us all on Heroes' Square.

And a further thank you to everyone who attended this event to make it successful, it was wonderful to see representatives from the King's Gurkha Artillery, a warm welcome to the Gunner family.

The Service next year will take place on 4th July 2026.

### The Artillery Clerks' Association: A Memorable 90th Reunion Weekend

On Saturday 21st June 2025 — the longest and quite possibly the warmest day of the year — the Artillery Clerks' Association gathered at the Royal Artillery Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess in Larkhill to celebrate a remarkable milestone: the 90th Reunion Dinner. The event brought together 45 members, partners, and guests from across the globe, including attendees from Malta, Germany, France, Australia, and the Isle of Man.

Joe Falzon, Association Chair, welcomed a distinguished group of Guests of Honour: Major General Richard Clements CBE, Director Army Basing and Infrastructure; Major Dickie Davies, Secretary of the Royal Artillery Association; and WO2 (BSM) Simon Godfrey, representing our affiliated battery, 34 (Seringapatam) Battery RA — whose support to the Association throughout the year is immeasurable.

Continuing a valued recent tradition, the Association also welcomed Mrs Helen McNamara, widow of the late Sgt (AC) James McNamara, as an honoured guest. Helen and her companion, Mrs Jill Palmer, were warmly hosted throughout the reunion weekend by Chris and Julie Shuter.

One of the highlights of the evening was the introduction of a new accolade: The Kemish Award, named in memory of the late WO2 (QMS(AC)) Trevor Kemish. This award recognises exceptional dedication, community spirit and service to the Association. The first recipient, Dave



Cussell, was presented with the inaugural award by Lieutenant General Richard Nugee CB CVO CBE, Honorary President of the Association. The award celebrated Dave's outstanding commitment, loyalty and leadership over more than 25 years — a fitting tribute to a stalwart of the Association.

This year also marked the end of an era, as the Association bid a heartfelt farewell to Roy Deal, who stepped down after serving eight years from his role as Reunion Secretary. In recognition of his tireless efforts and the impeccable organisation of these treasured events, Roy was presented with a commemorative gift from the Association. His work has ensured that each reunion remained a meaningful and seamless gathering for all involved.

The evening featured a traditional regimental dinner, with musical accompaniment from The Wiltshire Police Band which was well received.

We look forward to continuing this proud tradition in the years ahead.



### Bloxwich and Walsall

Mr Victor Ralphs, a Life Member of Bloxwich and Walsall Branch recently celebrated his 100th Birthday. The Master Gunner St James's Park sent a letter and card to Mr Ralphs congratulating Victor on his centenary celebration.

14673393 Gnr Victor Ralphs joined the Royal Artillery in 1944, served with 50 Field Regiment, India; 136 Field Regt, Burma; 114 Field Regt, Malaya; 178 Field Regt, Java and 1 Medium Regt, Burma.



### RAA Sec Visit Round-Up

#### Lewes

I had the pleasure of visiting Lewes Branch for their early summer social, a wonderful dinner at the Lewes Golf Club and an opportunity to conduct a number of Committee Service Awards within



the Branch. I want to also thank Mark Harding who as Regional Representative plays a key role in the Branch but is also working with me to grow the declining branches in the region and we will be closing the detail on both Portsmouth and Southampton locations working closely with the GBAD Regiments in the South to make these plans a reality.



**Canterbury**

I spent a wonderful afternoon in Canterbury, this was an important meeting as I was simply attending a routine branch meeting and it is really helpful for me to understand the true health of a branch that you only get from this type of gathering. Needless to say there was nothing but positives to report, it is a very well attended and conducted meeting and I look forward to see them all again at the Lodge in Canterbury Cathedral for their Christmas function later in the year.

**Sidcup and District**

This was by my admittance a long overdue visit, I have been enthused by the Branch at Sidcup who I have had the fortunate pleasure of meeting at various RAA events over the last couple of years,

of note their support to Gunner Sunday and Hyde Park Remembrance Parade. I have to say meeting them on home turf only confirmed my thoughts that this is a vibrant, well attended and dare I say, relatively youthful branch. Whilst I was able to present a service award I genuinely look forward to next year, as by then, the team that pulled together four years ago to pull this branch back from the brink will all simultaneously reach their 5 year Bronze award status and I feel strongly that this bench mark, which demonstrates what can be done, needs to be recognised formally... Leave it with me, I will come up with a plan, but until then keep doing the amazing work.



**Bury St Edmunds**

From a Branch that in its recent incarnation is relatively young, I moved across the river and east to visit Bury St Edmunds where I had the privilege of attending their 80th Anniversary celebrations. This was a truly wonderful event for which the weather was kind and the venue most accommodating. The interesting piece is their story, which is similar to that of



Sidcup, with Bury St Edmunds Branch also being pulled back from the brink, all be it some 20 years ago, but it does demonstrate the ebb and flow of some of our Branches.



**Germany**

The Association Secretary had the pleasure of recently representing RHQ RA, supporting a collection of events in Germany.

At the centre of the programme was the 25th Anniversary of the Friendship and Freedom Accord that 26 Regiment RA have with the town of Rheda-Wiedenbruck, a legacy of the considerable time that the Regiment occupied Mansergh Barracks in Gutersloh (the last Gunner Regiment stationed in Germany-BFG).

It was a huge pleasure to be also joined by both the current Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major of 26 Regiment RA. The event started with the joint signing of the 25th Anniversary Certificate by ourselves, the Burgermeister, along with a representative of the veteran 26 Regiment RA community in Rheda and key members of the Rheda Schützenvereine (shooting club). The overarching signatory being placed on the certificate, was that of the Royal Artillery Regional Representative

of Germany, Mr Michael Bridgman who has been the driving force behind the continued strong links between the town, the Veteran Community and the Serving Regiment.

What followed was a delightful lunch in the Rathaus, before taking our places alongside the wider UK veteran community, serving UK forces from several local units and three branches of the Schützenvereine. With Schützenvereine Gun Firing to denote the start, we marched to the Kirchplatz to parade, following an inspection by the outgoing Schützenvereine Queen. This was followed by a march across the whole of the town to the annual Schützenfeste (shooting festival) location. Schützenfeste are centuries-old traditions evolving from medieval militias into community-focused associations for sports shooting and social gathering.

This was where the third and final stage of the organised events took place, and as the clouds started to clear, an afternoon/evening was about to be undertaken, the long wooden tables were occupied by a unifying mix of RAA Branch members from Germany Veterans Branch, North Germany Branch and those who form part of the National Web-based branch (Germany Remainers) along with all our friends old and new within the Schützenvereine.

This brought to an end the 25th Anniversary of the 26 Regiment RA Friendship and Freedom accord, a look forward to further events later in the year, with the 30th Anniversary of the RAA North Germany Branch at the end of September, being held



in Celle and next year the unveiling and blessing of the Rheda-Wiedenbruck RAA Standard, which the Schützenvereine and its veteran Gunner Members have already commissioned.

A final thanks to our own RAA Regional Representative and RAA branch membership, the Burgermeister and local dignitaries of Rheda, CO and RSM of 26 Regiment RA along with all their current and past members and all the members of the Rheda Schützenvereine for your generous hosting and enduring friendship.... Prost!!



**Future plans 2025**

Taking a break early Summer I will be visiting all the Branches in Scotland, Aigburth & Merseyside and Branches in the North East. I am also looking forward to spending time in our new region of North Central as I work with the Regional Rep (Steve Otter).

We'll Meet Again.....

In mid-June the Regimental Headquarters gathered together to say a fond farewell to the Regimental Secretary, Colonel Matthew Carter, and Dickie also presented Matthew with a gift from Norwich Branch.



**RAA Battery Grants**

One of the charitable objects of the Association is to promote comradeship, fostering esprit de corps and preserving traditions. Each year the Association makes funds available to Batteries in the form of annual grants to help fund Battery events, improve conditions for members of the Battery and their dependants.

Find out more information from carla.brawn100@mod.gov.uk or through your chain of command.

**13 (Martinique 1809) Battery, 19th Regiment Royal Artillery**

On the 27th February 25, 13 (Martinique 1809) Battery celebrated Battle Axe Day 25.



The event was celebrated throughout the day by all serving and veteran members of the Battery. It started with a breakfast in the JRD, this allowed for a collective of past and present members to reunite. After breakfast, all members engaged in numerous sporting activities that was organised by committee members. The Battery then came together for a curry lunch supplied by SSgt Watkinson and his team before the day's activities closed with an official football match (Battle Axe Cup) between 13 (Martinique 1809) Battery & 74 Battery (The Battle Axe Company). Unfortunately, 13 Battery lost to 74 battery 4-3.

In the evening, members of 13 Battery both past and present came together for a formal dinner night, where the Battery Commander opened the evening by bestowing the importance of tradition, leadership and Battery heritage. This time was also used to praise the Battery and certain individuals for outstanding achievements and contribution to the Battery. Pipe-Major Macey-Lillie recited the regimental toast in Gaelic for the Battery and then translated the meaning for all members to understand. The evening function was closed by the BSM who bid farewell to the Battery for the last time before assuming his new role as MG.



**A Night of Honour and Farewell**

**106th Regiment Royal Artillery Marks 25 Years**

In late Spring 2025, the respective messes of the Officers' and WOs' & Sgts' of 106th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery came together for a remarkable evening at London's historic Cutlers' Hall to mark two significant milestones: the Regiment's 25th anniversary and the farewell of several longstanding and respected members. The celebration served as the centrepiece of a Regimental conceptual study weekend, bringing a memorable punctuation to a period of reflection, learning, and tradition.

Founded in 1999, 106 Regt RA is the British Army's only reserve unit dedicated to ground-based air defence. With batteries based across London, Portsmouth, and Southampton, the Regiment has carved out a proud identity within the Royal Artillery, often punching above its weight and always maintaining a sharp operational edge. With RHQ in Grove Park, both the City of London and Woolwich have always been a major part of the Regiment's history and identity, and it was fitting to hold such an event straddling both spaces.

The Regt's pride and professionalism was on full display at Cutlers' Hall — a location steeped in its own legacy. Hidden away on Warwick Lane, just off Newgate Street, the Hall has been the headquarters of the Worshipful Company of Cutlers since 1888. The Cutlers' Company itself dates to the early 1300s, with a Royal Charter granted in 1416 by Henry V. Inside, the hall is a stunning fusion of Victorian craftsmanship



and medieval symbolism — with gleaming wood panelling, a soaring hammer-beam roof, and a gallery of arms and shields adorning its walls. For members of 106, it offered a fitting stage to commemorate their journey so far.

Attendees arrived by coach from Woolwich, dressed in mess kit, and gathered for a three-course dinner served in the grand main hall. The mood was celebratory, but also reflective. This occasion wasn't just about anniversaries, it was about honouring those who had given decades of service.

Among the individuals recognised were:

Lieutenant Colonel Sinclair OBE, the Commanding Officer, whose leadership and vision have left a lasting legacy.

Major Coney, Regimental Second-in-Command, the Regiment's longest serving member, having served in every rank from Gunner to Major, all within 106.

Major McQuillan, Quartermaster Reserve, retiring after a remarkable 40 years in uniform who will be sorely missed.

Major Butcher, Battery Commander of 457 Battery, and a long-serving and valued member of the unit.

Captain Boucher, Adjutant, who departed after two years highly dedicated service in the Regiment.

Captain Haines, PSAO 265 Bty, who although unfortunately couldn't make the evening, left the Regiment after 40+ yrs total service (Reg+Res) and a tour-de-force in Grove Park.

Warrant Officer Class 1 Si McCrossan, PSAO 295 Bty, moving on after nearly a decade of highly dedicated service to the unit.

Staff Sergeant Kelly Way, concluding a 30-year career (Reg+Res), who has been a highly valued member of the Regiment since concluding a full regular career.

The evening's speeches reflected both deep respect and warm camaraderie, as memories were shared and futures toasted. For all present, it was a chance to acknowledge the people who shaped the Regiment's first 25 years — and to look forward with pride to the next chapter.



### 46 (Talavera) Battery 32nd Regiment Royal Artillery

On Thursday, 24 July 2025, 46 (Talavera) Battery marked its annual Talavera Day with a memorable celebration, honouring its historic engagement in the Battle of Talavera. The day was designed to provide all ranks with an opportunity to reflect on the Battery's proud heritage, foster teamwork, and strengthen cohesion through a mix of activities.

The morning events took place at Larkhill, where personnel participated in team-building activities that highlighted



the importance of collaboration and camaraderie. The day then transitioned to Newbury, where the Battery enjoyed a relaxed social evening at the Newbury Races, offering a perfect setting to unwind and bond as a team.

The event was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Royal Artillery Association, which provided a financial grant of £500. This grant assisted with funding the day's activities, ensuring the event was accessible and enjoyable for all.

The entire Battery benefited from the day, which not only celebrated its historical legacy but also reinforced the strong sense of unity and pride that defines 46 Talavera Battery. A heartfelt thank you goes to the Royal Artillery Association for their invaluable support in making this special day a resounding success.

Talavera Day 2025 was a fitting tribute to the Battery's storied past and a testament to the enduring spirit of its people.

32 Regt RA, 46 (Talavera) Battery was granted £500 from the Royal Artillery Association, in support of our celebrations. The RAA disburse over £150,000 annually in support of 'Community Welfare' which focuses on supporting our veteran community through the RAA Branch network (in which all active Batteries are Branches) and through activities that bring the serving and retired elements of the Gunner family together (RA Assembly, Remembrance, Sandown, National Memorial Arboretum etc). Of that, over £40,000 is distributed annually directly to Batteries and

Regiments in support of events that build unit cohesion and strengthen the relationship between the serving soldiers and the veteran community. The Battery Commander and all ranks thank the RAA for their continued support.



### G Parachute Battery (Mercer's Troop) 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery

G Parachute Battery (Mercer's Troop) celebrated Waterloo Day this year by having members of the Battery attend an event at Nuclear Races, followed by a formal dinner in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess.

The event consisted of the Battery throwing themselves into a challenging obstacle course. An excellent way for the Battery to enjoy a team cohesion event and to unwind during a busy CYCLONE training period. Scaling walls, crawling through muddy trenches, and diving down waterslides was also a great medium for team bonding and enabled us to challenge ourselves in an extremely enjoyable environment. Having tired ourselves out, wading in the mud and jumping off platforms, the Battery returned to Merville Barracks, Colchester.

The evening played host to a formal mess dinner in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. This was a brilliant opportunity for the Junior ranks to



proudly wear their No2s and experience the prestige of their Seniors' mess. Whilst the Officers and Seniors donned their mess dress. To begin the night, we had an in-depth brief from Mr Ian Patterson, the Regimental historian. This focused on the Battle of Waterloo and the vital role Captain Mercer played during the fight. Crucially staying by his guns and pushing back French cavalry while others withdrew; the bravery of Captain Mercer and his men is something the Battery is inspired by to this day.

Throughout the dinner, three Gunners prepared individual briefs, which touched on World War Two stories about previous members of the Battery. This highlighted the proud history of the Battery and helps strengthen our sense of pride and belonging. Additionally, Mr Ian Tate from the Royal Artillery Association was invited to the dinner, he kindly shared stories about his time serving with the Artillery – captivating members of the Battery throughout the evening.



### 30 Battery (Rogers's Company)

#### 16th Regiment Royal Artillery

30 Battery, Rogers's Company, recently hosted a Battle of Waterloo dinner evening at the Thorney Island Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess. All members of the Battery were invited to attend in celebration of the Battery's birthday.

The evening featured an introduction to Mess etiquette for those unfamiliar with its traditions and included a historical overview highlighting significant events from the Battle of Waterloo, with particular focus on the Battery's role in the conflict.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the RA Association for its generous financial contribution, which was instrumental in enabling the event. On behalf of all members of the Battery, we are truly grateful for your continued support."



#### RACF SUPPORT TO THE REGIMENTAL FAMILY

The RACF to date has provided 403 Gunners help with household goods, bereavement costs, annual grants and other essential items. The RACF has provided £351k in help this year alone. Can we help you or someone you know? Reach out to us so we can help our Gunner family. Unfortunately we cannot help with needs such as private medical or legal fees.

The team is here to help and we can be contacted by email: RARHQ-RACF\_WELFARE-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk, or via our website RA Charitable Fund Application - RA Association (thegunners.org.uk). We aim to respond in 3 working days. We can signpost you and discuss the next step to help. Our office number is 01980 634309 or 0303 379 4560 if you would like to speak to someone or leave a message. If your serving pop in and see your UWO for help or advice.

Alternatively call SSAFA on 0800 731 4880, the Royal British Legion on 0808 802 8080 to get a case up to us.

#### Thank You's

"Thank you for the very generous support shown at this very, very difficult time. It is very much appreciated and has had an enormous positive impact on the family." Thank you! - Serving Soldier

"I am deeply grateful for the financial support you have provided. Your generosity will play a crucial role in helping me achieve one of my personal goals this year and that is obtaining British citizenship before December. I am sincerely thankful for your assistance and will always appreciate your support." - Serving Soldiers family

### REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS CARDS ORDER FORM 2025

- A**  **Foiled RA Badge**  
£13.50 per pack of 10  
incl p&p\*  
140x102mm  
With Best Wishes for  
Christmas and the New Year
- B**  **The Regimental Family**  
£9.50 per pack of 10  
incl p&p\*  
105x148mm  
With Best Wishes for  
Christmas and the New Year
- C**  **The Royal Artillery War Memorial in Winter**  
£9.50 per pack of 10  
incl p&p\*  
105x148mm  
With Best Wishes for  
Christmas and the New Year
- D**  **RA Coat of Arms with Ribbon**  
£15.00 per pack of 10  
incl p&p\*  
171x127mm  
With Best Wishes for  
Christmas and the New Year

Name and address:		Quantity required:	
		<b>A</b>	<input type="text"/>
		<b>B</b>	<input type="text"/>
		<b>C</b>	<input type="text"/>
		<b>D</b>	<input type="text"/>
Tel No:		<b>Total:</b> <input type="text"/>	

\*Please contact the RAA for additional overseas postage. Payment to Royal Artillery Association BACS Account 00181906 Sort Code 30 99 88 or send UK Sterling cheque to: Royal Artillery Association, Artillery House, Artillery Centre, RA Barracks, Larkhill, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 8QT. All proceeds raised are in aid of the Royal Artillery Association. For enquiries please email fay.chapman107@mod.gov.uk



Date	Event	Location
2025		
18 Sep	RACF Welfare Committee	Larkhill
02 Oct	Alanbrooke Lunch	London
08 Oct	RAA NEC Meeting	Larkhill
15 Oct	RA Awards Dinner	Larkhill
24 Oct	Alamein Dinner	Larkhill
06 Nov	Field of Remembrance	Westminster Abbey
09 Nov	RA Ceremony of Remembrance	Hyde Park Corner
14 Nov	HM The King's Official Birthday Salute	National
26 Nov	RA Board of Management	Larkhill
27 Nov	Sports Awards Dinner	Larkhill
05 Dec	YOs' Dining In	Larkhill
07 Dec	St Barbara's Day	Larkhill Garrison Church
11 Dec	Master Gunner's Committee	Larkhill
2026		
23-25 Feb	WO1 Convention	Larkhill
19 Mar	RA Boxing Final	Larkhill
20 Mar	Gunner 26 Conference	Larkhill
20 Mar	Spring Dinner	Larkhill
04 Jul	NMA Service	NMA



## LAST POST

### Notification of Death:

John McBride Walsh 20 June 2025  
 John Love June 2025  
 Desmond Barnett June 2025  
 Tony Groves June 2025  
 John Rafferty 24 July 2025  
 Brian Hawley July 2025

**BLOOMFIELD** - Capt (Retd) Peter James Bloomfield RA. Passed away on the 9th June 2025 at the Lindsey Lodge Hospice, Scunthorpe, aged 75 with his family at his side. Peter (Blue) enlisted in February 1969 and, initially with 12th Light Air Defence Regiment RA, served in an Air Defence capacity throughout his career, qualifying as a member of the Gunnery Staff in December 1977 and serving as a Master Gunner in both BAOR and the UK, before being commissioned in 1989. In October of that year, he joined 22nd Air Defence Regiment RA as UTO/TIG again serving in BAOR and in Cyprus. He retired from Army life in November 1993 settling with his family on a small holding in Barrow upon Humber, North Lincolnshire. Pre-deceased by his eldest son, Craig, he is survived by his beloved wife Sue, children Steven and Samantha, grandchildren Hannah and Ben.

**DANN** - Maj Keith Gabriel Frederick Dann passed away 21st June 2025. Maj Keith Dann was an experienced and thoughtful Gunnery Instructor in Air Defence Branch, Royal School of Artillery in the 1980s. Commissioned in 1957 he retired after 33 years, in 1990. In December 1966, as a Captain, he was Mentioned in Despatches. As part of his contributions outside the Gunners he was seconded to the British Olympic Teams as a QM for the 1968, 1972 and 1976 Games.

**WESTON** - Col (Retd) Anthony Ralph Nugent. Died peacefully after a long slow decline bravely borne. Much loved husband, beloved father of Christopher, Charles and Frances and adored grandfather to seven grandchildren. He will be sadly missed.

## Subscription Price List

To addresses in the UK and BFPO:

The Gunner - £24  
 The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £10  
 The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £34

To addresses in Europe:

The Gunner - £39  
 The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £14  
 The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £53

To addresses in the rest of the world:

The Gunner - £49  
 The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £17  
 The Gunner and The Journal of the Royal Artillery - £66

## RA Historical Society 2025 Programme

Date and Timings	Event	Subject	Lecturer/Lead	Bookings Close
Friday 24 October 1030-1600 hrs	Shrapnel Lectures, Artillery Centre, Larkhill	Wolseley and the Ashanti Expedition 1873-4.	Dr Stephen Manning	Friday 10 October
		Napier and the Abyssinia Expedition 1867-8.	Dr Christopher Brice	
		Kitchener and the Sudan Campaign 1898.	Dr Keith Surridge	
		Constructing the 1914 British Expeditionary Force	Dr Spencer Jones, RA Regimental Historian	
Wednesday 19 November 1930 hrs	Webinar	<b>The Royal Artillery in the New Zealand Wars 1845-72</b>	Col Michael Phillips	Friday 14 November

These events are open to all Gunners. To register please email Lt Col Clayton, RAHS Secretary: richard.clayton312@gmail.com by the dates shown

All Gunners are eligible to join the Society. Please contact the Secretary for details.



## Major General Brian Pennicott



Brian Pennicott with Moore and Lt Col Mike Scott, CO 2SG, before the attack on Mount Tumbledown

**British army officer who witnessed the Argentine surrender in the Falklands has died aged 87.**

Wars seldom end tidily. Even surrender takes negotiation. To his surprise, in June 1982, Colonel Brian Pennicott found himself a last-minute witness to the Argentine capitulation in the Falklands conflict. The process had begun a week earlier, but it took several excruciating final hours for Major General Mario Menéndez, the Argentine commander, to submit to the finer details to which Pennicott became a signatory.

On June 7, as British troops neared the heights above the capital, Port Stanley, the commanding officer of the 22nd Special Air Service Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel (later General Sir) Michael Rose, made radio contact with Menéndez's headquarters on behalf of the landing force commander, Major General Jeremy Moore, to urge the Argentinians' surrender. For the next seven days, using Captain Rod Bell, a Costa Rican-

born Royal Marine as interpreter, Rose coaxed him towards ending the conflict using negotiating tactics honed during the siege of the Iranian embassy in London two years earlier. Fortunately, Rose had a satellite telephone, a novelty in 1982, lent by a friend in US special forces, which allowed him to deal directly with Downing Street via SAS headquarters in Hereford.

When British troops finally took the heights on June 14, Pennicott, the landing force's artillery commander, was in Moore's headquarters at Fitzroy, some twenty miles south-west. With Argentine troops streaming from the heights back towards Stanley, some in ugly mood, Menéndez's head of civil affairs in "the Malvinas" invited Rose to fly to Stanley to discuss a possible surrender as neither side wanted to involve the civilian population. Rose took with him a copy of the surrender document agreed by London, which at Moore's insistence on No 10's behalf, included the words "unconditional surrender". Menéndez faced a dilemma: continued fighting in Stanley itself would mean many pointless casualties, including civilians, but the Argentine army code required 50 per cent of the troops to be casualties and 75 per cent of the ammunition expended before surrender.

After several hours'

negotiating, Rose persuaded Menéndez to relent by conceding that surrender would not be "unconditional" but "with honour", agreeing to privileges such as allowing officers to keep their side arms (without ammunition). Rose then radioed to Moore that he could now fly in to accept the surrender formally. However, Rear-Admiral Sandy Woodward, overall commander of the British task force, suddenly insisted that he be present. Rose protested that they could not risk the war starting again "just because we need the admiral". Woodward, who was at sea and would have had to fly in worsening weather, relented. Pennicott, as the next most senior officer available, was therefore deputed to witness Moore's signature.

Towards evening, Moore and Pennicott flew in a Sea King helicopter from Fitzroy to Stanley, landing in a snow squall near the Falklands government building, the Argentine HQ. Just as they were ready to sign, however, Menéndez pointed out the word "unconditional" in the surrender document. Rose told Moore what had been agreed with both London and Buenos Aires. Pennicott scratched out the word, and Menéndez signed, Moore then signed and Pennicott countersigned. The conflict would officially end at one minute to midnight.



Moore and Pennicott went off and found a bottle of whisky to drink the health of the Queen under her picture, which Rose had discovered in a broom cupboard and rehung in place of that of General Leopoldo Galtieri, leader of the military junta in Argentina. Moore then retook possession of the governor's house before going to meet a gathering of islanders. Pennicott flew back to Fitzroy. There was practical work for his gunners still to be done.

Brian Thomas Pennicott was born in Portsmouth in 1938, the only son of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Pennicott, Royal Artillery (RA), and Vera, née Gale. He was educated at Portsmouth Northern Grammar School and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, whence in 1957 he was commissioned in the RA. He saw service with 29 Commando Regiment RA during counter-insurgency operations in Cyprus, the deterrent deployment to Kuwait in 1961, the Troubles in Northern Ireland, and on secondment to help raise the Malaysian artillery after independence. After attending the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, and then the general staff course at Camberley, Surrey, he joined the project management team for the Anglo-German-Italian 155mm FH70 (field howitzer for the 1970s), which was being

introduced to give the RA extra weight of fire.

In 1962, he married Patricia Anne Chilcott, daughter of a Royal Marines officer, who worked in telecommunications. She died in 2010. He is survived by their two sons and three daughters: Stephen, a management consultant; Clare, a former Cordon Bleu chef; Alex, a businesswoman; Lizzy, an interior designer; and Christopher, head of operations for a property company.

Having commanded 29 Commando Regiment for almost three years from 1977, being therefore artillery adviser when Moore commanded 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines, it was not surprising that Moore picked him for the headquarters he was pulling together to retake the Falklands. Pennicott found it frustrating, though. Besides overall control of the two field artillery regiments supporting 3 Commando Brigade and the 5th Infantry Brigade, and an air defence regiment, he was responsible for the co-ordination of naval gunfire and ground-attack aircraft in support of the brigades, commanding more assets in action than any British artilleryman since Suez (1956). However, the hasty, ad hoc assembling of the task force and cobbling together of Moore's own headquarters, with limited communications, made for messy

command and control, not helped by the extraordinary decision to advance on Stanley across East Falkland on two axes out of artillery range of each other. To co-ordinate the fire support of 29 Commando Regiment and 4th Field Regiment in the final battles for the heights above Port Stanley, two entirely different radio systems — one high-frequency and the other VHF — had to be used, with voice relay. Like most aspects of Operation Corporate, it was not textbook, but it just about worked.

After the Falklands, Pennicott was sent to Washington briefly as assistant military attaché, and then in 1983 became artillery commander of the 1st Armoured Division in Germany. On promotion to major-general in 1989 he was appointed Director RA, seeing into service the 155mm AS90 ("artillery system for the 1990s") self-propelled gun. Both the FH70 and AS90 are now in action in Ukraine. In 1992 he became assistant chief of defence staff (personnel and reserves), leaving the army two years later to become group human resources director at Sun Alliance and, from 1999 to 2008, chairman of the Simplyhealth group.

**Major General Brian Pennicott CVO, Falklands veteran, was born February 15, 1938. He died of cancer on June 18, 2025, aged 87**

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### About the Aaron Lewis Foundation

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

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Standard Bearers and Chelsea In-Pensioners marching to the RA Memorial Garden