



**Queen's Own Highlanders
Regimental Association
Edinburgh Branch**

BRANCH NEWSLETTER – MAY 2012

Report - Amalgamation Dinner 2012 (originally published in the Caber Feidh website)

The Edinburgh Branch Amalgamation Dinner 2012 was held on **Saturday 11th February at Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club**

The 2012 celebrations to mark the 51st Anniversary of the formation of the Regiment started in good style with over one hundred members, partners and friends of the branch turning up for a celebration dinner at Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club. Unfortunately we were oversubscribed and for the first time ever had to turn people away! This is something we will need to think about for future dinners, but a decision that had to be made due to capacity issues with the catering facilities. On a positive note however, it does show that the Branch is thriving and attracting new members all the time.

George Givens, the Branch Chairman, welcomed all regular attenders and gave a special welcome to those travelling from further afield ie Seoras McIntosh and Ian MacKenzie from the Highlands, Dave Henderson (Big Hendo) and his wife Linda from the south of England, and Maurice Stirling from Yorkshire. The Branch had additionally invited two guests from the Royal Scots Regimental Association (Jimmy Ovens and Jimmy Laws) and the Garrison RSM, Graham White of the Scots Guards. Hidden in the crowd were also a couple of old faces who will hopefully return for future functions – Dick Barker, accompanied by his wife Sharon and Alan Stewart (zero zero to everyone who knew him in the Battalion)

The Chairman's words of welcome were followed by a minutes silence to remember Absent Friends, in particular those members of the Regimental Family who had sadly passed away since the last Amalgamation Dinner.

George Givens went on to explain that Dougie Shepherd, who was supposed to say Grace had sadly dislocated his hip and was at home recuperating. Fortunately Dougie had an understudy who went on to recite the Grace (in verse) that Dougie had specially prepared for the evening. It was indeed remarkable what a bit of makeup did to transform (Padre) Eddy Maley into Dougie Shepherd – so much so that hardly anyone noticed the difference!

The Grace, of course went down very well and hit all the right notes for the start of what proved to be an excellent evening (thank you Dougie for preparing it, Eddy for delivering it, and General Seymour for taking it in good spirit).

As usual, Eleanor and the staff of the club provided a very tasty and filling four course meal and looked after us extremely very well. Meanwhile, members of the committee flitted from table to table giving their impressions of wine waiters who knew what they were doing!

After the customary comfort break, the second half of the evening started with an excellent performance from two pipers and a drummer from Edinburgh Academy. As usual, the young lads, all under the age of eighteen, produced an excellent repertoire of tunes starting with Caber Feidh and ending with the March of the Cameron Men.

The senior piper then came back and was thanked by our Guest of Honour, Major General Seymour Monro for an extremely polished performance. The General noted that the school's Pipe Major, Michael Gray, had started off in his company as a young private soldier and it was the General who had taught him everything he knew!

At this stage George Givens informed the assembled company that it was customary in the Regiment for the piper to give the Regimental Toast in Gaelic but as Edinburgh Academy didn't include this in their curriculum, he called upon Bobby Munro to do the necessary business. To the surprise and astonishment of those sceptics in the company, Bobby gave a flawless rendition of the toast. However, after the young piper was applauded out of the room George asked Norman Robertson, a native of Skye and a fluent Gaelic speaker, to mark Bobby out of ten for interpretation, pronunciation, and use of the Gaelic language. In true Len Goodman fashion Bobby was given a severnnnn!

After the Loyal Toast was given, George went on to introduce the Guest of Honour for the evening, Major General Seymour Monro. General Seymour had started off as a young Platoon Commander in Delta Company in 1970 and proceeded to rise through the commissioned ranks, having filled most of the key Battalion posts en route to becoming Commanding Officer and taking the Battalion to West Belfast and the first Gulf War. He was therefore in a perfect position to recount some extremely funny stories of twenty plus years of personal reminiscences of battalion life. His tales, linked to mentions of regimental characters, brought back long forgotten memories to many of the assembled company (and too incriminating to commit to paper!). To finish off a very entertaining talk, General Seymour proposed a Toast to the Queen's Own Highlanders, to which there was an enthusiastic response from the assembled company.

The floor was then handed over to Lieutenant Colonel Charlie Millar, who reminded everyone that the spirit of the regiment lived on in the young soldiers of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, which had recently returned from a successful tour in Afghanistan in November. The proposed toast was therefore "The Highlanders".

General Seymour then drew out tickets for the raffle before Dave Lewis, a local entertainer, proceeded to entice everyone on to the dance floor.

All in all, a very successful and enjoyable evening was had judging by the positive feedback being received. Photographs of the evening can be found in the Photo section of the website.

Finally a big thank you must go to General Seymour for his tales of times gone by, to the Committee for making the evening go so smoothly, for Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club for their hospitality, to Bobby Munro for the Regimental Toast in Gaelic, and for all those members who donated a record number of prizes for the raffle.

Future Venues for the Amalgamation Dinner

As mentioned in the last article, due to the limited catering facilities at Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club we unfortunately had to turn people away who wanted to attend the Amalgamation Dinner ie Eleanor is more than happy to produce buffets for fairly large numbers at our other functions but is pushed to produce a decent three course meal for over a hundred people in the limited kitchen space she has at the club for the Amalgamation Dinner.

Our Branch membership is gradually growing and guests and visitors from other Branch's are keen to come along to our functions. It would therefore be sad to turn people away who are eager to attend and consequently it would seem that we have two options – limit the numbers to future Amalgamation Dinners or look around for an alternative venue.

This is a subject that we will probably have to talk about at the AGM, however to pre-empt any decisions the committee have been thinking about other venues that would fit the bill ie able to facilitate over a hundred people, be able to provide decent catering, have good bar prices, and be available on a Saturday night. Thankfully, Kenny Reid had used such a venue before and recommended that the committee go and look at it - the venue being a hall in the Students Union in Teviot Row. It certainly ticked all the boxes, however the cost of the Student Union producing a three course meal would necessitate the price of tickets being increased to something like £20.00 instead of the usual £15.00. This is probably still cheap for a three course meal with wine, port, pipers, and after dinner entertainment all included, however it is something we will need to discuss further at the AGM

Summer Dance 2012 – Saturday 23rd June 2012

The Branch Summer dance will take place at Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club on Saturday 23rd June 2012. Danny Carruthers has booked a talented local duo "Limited Edition", who are able to produce a broad range of songs and tunes to suit everyone's tastes from the 60's right up to Take That. We are maintaining the price of tickets at £15.00 per head so please fill in the return at the back of this newsletter and get it back to Danny before all the places are snapped up.

Armed Forces Day Parade – Saturday 30th June 2012

We have been getting limited information about this year's Armed Forces Day Parade, however we do know that this year's march will be through Princes Street Gardens on level ground, which should make it easier to march for our less mobile members. The plan will be to assemble in the area of Kings Stables Road at about 12.40 pm. The Veterans will then step off at 1.00 pm and march the length of West Princes Street Gardens, passing the saluting dias in the vicinity of the Ross Bandstand. All Members of the Regimental Family are invited to march behind the Branch Standard and if you are in possession of regimental tartan or glengarries please wear them. There will be the usual stands set up after the event but I am sure many of you will depart for the nearest watering hole or back to Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club. We will keep you informed if there are any changes to this plan.

Newsletters

The Branch newsletters are sent out in two ways – for those of you with email addresses they are sent out via the web - for those without an email address they are sent by Royal Mail. As many of you know the cost of postage has recently shot up so if you are still getting your newsletter by post and you have a valid email address you are urged to let Danny Carruthers know so he can make the adjustments and we can save on postage.

Annual Subscriptions

Annual subscriptions are generally due at about the time we hold our Branch AGM. However, collecting the subs is sometimes a hit and miss affair! It is therefore proposed that annual subs are collected by Direct Debit. This will mean that members do not have to remember to make the payment as the subs will be automatically debited from accounts at the same time each year. It also means that the Treasurer does not have to chase people for the cash and will only need to worry about those members who decide to opt out and pay by cash or cheque. We will keep you informed of our plans and will let you know in the next newsletter how to go about arranging the Direct Debit.

Branch Forecast of Events:

Saturday 23 rd June 2012	Branch Summer Dance
Saturday 30 th June 2012	Armed Forces Day (parade through Princes Street Gardens)
Sunday 14 th October 2012	Branch AGM
Saturday 15 th December 2012	Branch Christmas Dance

Last Post

For those of you that do not have access to the internet, the following news of the deaths of former members of the Regimental Family has been reported on the Association website since our last newsletter

January

Brian Christie *Seaforth Highlander and Queen's Own Highlander*

February

Patsy Murdoch *wife of Geordie Murdoch*

March

RSM Tommy Hamilton *QOCH and Queen's Own Highlander*

April

Davie Nicoll *Queen's Own Highlander*
Roddy (Goggs) Martin *Queen's Own Highlander*
Davie Oag *Seaforth Highlander*
Ann Bashford *wife of Terry Bashford*

“We Shall Remember Them”

For the Latest News:

You will find details of future events, lots of Regimental information, and photographs of Association members & functions on the Association web site at:

RETURNS FOR THE SUMMER DANCE – SATURDAY 23rd JUNE 2012 & ARMED FORCES DAY – SATURDAY 30th JUNE 2012

Name:	Address:
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My Email Address for future correspondence is:
It would also be very handy if we had your up-to-date telephone number in case Danny needs to make a quick contact. If you are happy to share it please add it here

I wish to attend the <u>Summer Dance</u>	Numbers?
and I enclose a cheque/postal order for.....	Name.....
(£15.00 per head). Please <u>send</u> a Cheque or Postal Order –	£.....
<u>NO</u> payments on the night please	

I will be attending the <u>Armed Forces Day Parade</u> and <u>will march</u> through Princes Street Gardens	Yes / No
I will be attending the Armed Forces Day Parade but have mobility problems and <u>will not march</u>	Yes / No

(Please make your cheque out to QOHLDR Regtl Assn, Edinburgh Branch so it can be paid directly into the Branch Account and please **NOT** made out to Danny Carruthers)

Please return ASAP to: **Danny Carruthers,**
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