



Edinburgh Branch - Amalgamation Dinner 2010
Held in Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club, Edinburgh on Saturday 6th February 2010

The 2010 Amalgamation Dinner managed to surpass last years large turnout with an even bigger number of attendees sitting down to the meal ie just short of one hundred members, their wives and guests attending – enough to fill the club's function room and keep the staff fully occupied!.

George Givens, the Branch Chairman, welcomed everyone and gave a special mention to Lillian Duffus and Barbara McGraw who had both travelled down from Inverness especially for the dinner, and also to Jimmy Cummings, on his return to the fold after his recent illness. George commented that it was good to see so many people wearing regimental tartan, despite the sound of straining kilt straps and popping buttons!

Rev Matthew Robertson, the Battalion's Padre in Edinburgh, Sharjah, and Osnabruck then said a special Grace he had composed for the evening. Once again Matthew delivered the Grace in verse - as always an excellent start to the evening and a great ice breaker.

The staff of Leith Ex-Servicemen's Club went on to produce a hearty four course meal and did an excellent job of looking after the packed hall.

Angus Lutton and Jamie MacLean, a couple of young fifteen year old pipers from Edinburgh Academy, resplendent in Queen's Own Highlander No 1 dress and regimental head dress, played two sets of pipe tunes during the evening. They received warm applause after each set and everyone remarked on the very high standard of their playing and the number of tunes in their repertoire - a tribute to their instructor, Pipe Major Michael Grey, a former Queen's Own Highlander of course! (note to Pipe Major Grey – your young pupils need to learn the March of the Cameron Men, if only to keep Charlie Millar happy!)

Ritchie Turner was the guest of honour for the evening and started off by proposing a toast to the Queen's Own Highlanders. He then proposed a further toast to the young jocks of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (The Highlanders) who were ably followed in the footsteps of their predecessor regiments

Ritchie then went to recount that in February 1961 he was witnessing the amalgamation of the two battalions from a whole different perspective from

everyone else in the regiment ie as a guest of the Commanding Officer in the Caber Feidh Hotel! He went on to recall how he managed to turn his fortunes around after his brief holiday in Colchester and went on to advance his career in the army,just as the new regiment was also developing to become one to the finest battalions in the British Army. Ritchie's tales of his escapades throughout the years mirrored the Battalions progress through its first twenty two years (plus a bit extra for jail time!) and held everyone spellbound.

After the speeches "Dinger" Bell and Johnny Meechan cracked on with the raffle and George Givens gave a big thank you to all those members who generously donated the prizes and to Doris Anderson and Sue Ryan for selling the raffle tickets.

The evening finished with more pipe tunes and plenty of war stories. The very successful and enjoyable evening came to an end sometime after midnight and pictures of the evening will shortly be available on the website courtesy of Norman Robertson

George Givens
Chairman
Edinburgh Branch