

**MINUTES OF THE SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS REGIMENTAL  
ASSOCIATION LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD AT THE SEAFORTH CLUB NAIRN  
ON FRIDAY 28 AUGUST 2009**

1. **Convening Order**

The convening order was accepted as published.

2. **Present**

Those who attended the meeting are listed at Annex A.

3. **Obituaries**

Members stood in memory of those members who had died since the last meeting. A list of names is published at Annex B.

4. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Lt Cols Davie MBE MC, NNC Lockhart, IM Fraser, Major GJT Ripplingall, DS Kennedy Esq and Mr C Gusterson.

5. **President's Opening Address**

The Chairman welcomed all those present especially as this is the last AGM as such. Many of those present had been attending the meeting for many many years. He went on to say that as one gets older it is more difficult to organise things in the same manner than when we were younger. This inevitably means change and the Association was set up to look after old soldiers, their welfare, and to assist them when there was hardship and to retain comradeship and in order to do this a number of branches were set up across the country to look after people and those present had contributed immensely to that and these will not change in amalgamating with the Queen's Own Highlanders. What will change is that it will cost rather less to organise events and ensure that the maximum amount of money goes to those who deserve it and it is on that basis that we move forward and everyone present should be proud of belonging to an exceptionally good Association and that branches will continue to be Seaforth branches except that everyone will be working in a different organisation and the Secretary will continue as such in the new organisation.

It was at this stage that the Chairman made presentations to Mrs Sharon Ward Manager of the Club, Mrs Isabel Bowie who came in specially to look after those attending the AGM and Mr Martin Ashford for their kindness and assistance to the Trustees, the Executive Committee and members.

6. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held at the Seaforth Club Nairn on Friday 29 August 2008 were passed as an accurate record of the meeting.

### Matters arising from Previous Minutes

7. Incorporation of the Seaforth Highlanders Regimental Association and the Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth & Camerons) Regimental Association (Minute 7)

The Chairman informed the meeting that he had attended the Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Association AGM in July. They will function in the same way as the Seaforth Association and it was hoped that the 2010 AGM would be held at the same time, late August. This has yet to be agreed and the branches would attend in the usual way. If branches had problems then they should contact General Hopkinson, who is a Trustee of the Queen's Own Highlanders and represents Seaforth matters on the committee, he envisaged a smooth transition in the process. It was anticipated that there would be a regimental weekend with events and possibly a church service at Fort George.

8. Christmas Card 2009

The Chairman informed the meeting that The Highlanders were not producing a Christmas Card but that The Royal Regiment of Scotland had produced a series of 3 separate cards. As this was the last year of the Association, it was thought there should be a reprint of the most popular card ever produced 'the Battalion marching in the snow' which was published in the early 1990's. The Trustees at their previous meeting agreed to produce the card with the Seaforth badge.

9. Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Association Pipe Band (Minute 13)

As agreed in the previous minutes the Association made a grant of £1,000 towards the upkeep of the band and have uniformity in their dress, also it is getting more expensive to maintain sets of pipes. As a result of the appeal, they currently have approximately £9,000 in the fund. There would be a committee to supervise the running of the Pipe Band, this would be chaired by J.I. Col Gilmour and Mr Alexander Rose as an officer of the Queen's Own Highlanders a piper himself and Pipe Major Andy Venters would form the nucleus of the committee.

The Chairman thanked those who had contributed to the fund.

It was suggested that the branches may wish to contribute to the fund. The Chairman said that branch funds were there for the welfare and comradeship of branch members whereas the Pipe Band appeal was aimed at individuals.

### New Business

10. Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009

The Chairman said that although the Association had, with effect from 1 April 2009, been incorporated with the Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Association, the Association remained a charity until the account for the year ended 31 March 2009 had been approved by the Annual General Meeting and the Trustees, it would then be submitted to OSCR (Office of the Scottish

Charity Regulator). It is only then that the Association will no longer have charitable status and the name will be removed from the Register of Scottish Charities.

The Treasurer took the meeting through the account in detail. It was proposed by Captain E Munro and seconded by PMA Ryder that the account be passed. Carried unanimously.

11. **Elizabeth Cross and Memorial Scroll**

Information in respect of the award had previously been circulated to Branch Secretaries who were requested to circulate this around their members. It was entirely up to the families of those that had died to apply direct to the MOD Medal Office. The Secretary said that Home Headquarters would help if required.

12. **Branch Reports**

Reports are attached at Annex C.

13. **ACOB**

**Communication**

The Chairman said that to continue in the spirit that there has always been, there is a greater requirement than ever to communicate with each other, especially with HHQ at Cameron Barracks as very often we hear of the passing of members far too late and it would be helpful if HHQ could be sent an obituary for publication in the Newsletter and also other branch news with photographs.

There is a website ([www.cabarfeidh.com](http://www.cabarfeidh.com)) and is well organised and enquiries of regimental matters should be sent via the web. It is currently run by Mr Tosh McIntosh who can, if necessary, be contacted by phone on 01343 549550. If any branch members are on the web then it could be downloaded and passed around.

The Chairman said that General Ian Robertson who is with us today has been a staunch member of the Association, also he has done a tremendous job at the Museum. He went on to thank the many others such as Colonel John Davie who has played a great part in the work of the Association, the Trustees, the Executive Committee and the Treasurer and Secretary. It was at this point the Chairman made a presentation to the Treasurer and Secretary for his unstinting and loyal service over many years which was graciously accepted and with some embarrassment.

There being no other business the last meeting of the Seaforth Highlanders Regimental Association was closed.

Annex A

Members Present at the Meeting

Major General JCOR Hopkinson CB	President, Chairman & Trustee
Major General IA Robertson CB MBE	Vice President
Lieutenant Colonel DJA Grant	Trustee
Lieutenant Colonel CJ Keil MBE	Member Executive Committee
Major RM McLaren	Member Executive Committee
Major RJG Whitelaw	Member Executive Committee
Major C Milne	Member Executive Committee
Captain MRM Leslie CVO	Member Executive Committee
Major Alf Blincow MBE	Hon Secretary / Treasurer
Major GD'A Anderson	
Mr AMH Matheson	Member Executive Committee
Mr D Oag	
<u>Notts Branch</u>	<u>Nairn Branch</u>
Mr TL Riddell, Chairman	Captain E Munro, Chairman & Secretary
Mr I Dear	Mr B Murray
	Mr M MacLeod
	Mr CA McKay
<u>London Branch</u>	<u>Ross-shire Branch</u>
PM A Ryder, Chairman	Mr WA Gillies, Secretary
Mr PJ MacDonald, Secretary	Mr I MacLeod
Mr J Fraser	Mr DG MacLennan
Mr GW Dodd	Mr A MacKenzie
Mr D McFarland	Mr W Williamson
	Mr R Shanks
	Mr I Munro

Obituaries

Mr A D Adams  
Mrs G L W Andrews  
Mr D Bowes  
Mr J W Grigor MM  
Mr E Gunley  
Mr L Jeans  
Mr I Kelly  
Mr G S Ligertwood  
Lt Col DAW Lochhead  
Mr J MacInnes  
Mr AD MacLeod  
Colonel W G McHardy  
Mrs W G McHardy  
Maj J H Nason  
Lt G A F Rands  
Mr P Snell  
Cpl R F Warr  
Mrs J E Weir

Branch Reports

Ross-shire Branch

Mr W Gillies – Secretary

The Branch remains active under the continued Chairmanship of Mr Duncan MacKenzie.

Our Committee meetings, usually monthly, are well attended and members enthusiastically involve themselves in attending Branch functions and in their support of the Dingwall Branch of the Royal British Legion. The Branch was well represented at the 2008 Remembrance Service in Dingwall and wreaths were laid on behalf of the Association at Dingwall, Invergordon and Avoch.

Some 30 Christmas grants together with copies of the Regimental Association Christmas cards were sent to veterans and widows. The many letters of thanks received were most appreciative of the Association's generosity.

The 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion Dinner was held on 13 March 2009 in Dingwall and was well attended by members from a wide area of the Highlands and beyond. Mr John Mackenzie, Depute Lord Lieutenant, was present and delivered the good wishes of Her Majesty The Queen for a successful 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner. We also had the good fortune to have present as Speakers Major General Hopkinson and his son Lieutenant Colonel Hopkinson. The Depute Lord Lieutenant wrote to the Association afterwards as follows. "To me the most striking and impressive feature however was the wonderful atmosphere which prevailed throughout the evening. If that was not a very practical demonstration of what comradeship means I cannot imagine what would be a better example".

The Branch was honoured when two of our 1939/45 War Veterans were asked to hoist flags at the Dingwall Council Offices and at Cameron Barracks indicating the start of Veterans Week. Mr Duncan MacKenzie did the honours in Dingwall and Mr Alex MacKenzie at Cameron Barracks. After the Dingwall Ceremony Mrs Janet Bowen, Lord Lieutenant, presented Veterans Badges to many Veterans including many Branch members. This was preceded by a well attended March through Dingwall by representatives of both the RBL and the Association Branch and other members of the Military. The Lord Lieutenant took the Salute at the War Memorial. The Parade was under the Command of Branch member Ali Lamont.

Branch membership is still holding up well despite the sad loss of a small number of members due to old age or serious illness. The Branch continues to be well represented at funerals and provides Association wreaths. The Branch wish to record the death of Mr Jack Shepherd, Dingwall a long serving and valued member of the branch committee.

The Branch wishes to put on record the close working relationship we have with the Dingwall Museum Trust under the Chairmanship of Mr Ian MacLeod, our former Branch Secretary for many years.

**Notts Branch**

**Mr T Riddell - Chairman**

We continue to hold our monthly meetings at Picasley Miners Welfare on the second Friday of the month. Any Seaforth or anyone who has served in the Regimental family and who lives in the area or is passing through is more than welcome to come along; we would be delighted to see you. Due to shortage in numbers and people having so far to travel this year, we will start having the meetings every two months from October 2009 onwards. They will still be held on the second Friday of the month.

Unfortunately this year we have heard that Ted Gunley passed away. Ted was a long standing member of the Branch and although he lived in Pitlochry he kept in regular contact by letter and telephone.

We had a very successful annual dinner in April which was held in the Masonic Hall, Mansfield. 79 attended and it was good to see guests from London and Leicester Branches along with members' guests. The meal was superb and the Pipes and Drums display was magnificent. We also had a very good Disco and an excellent night was had by all.

Our Pipes and Drums have now picked up on recruitment and have a few more learners attending. They practice every Thursday evening in the Verney Institute, Pleasley. They led the Mansfield Remembrance Parade again this year and have carried out some other engagements throughout the year.

Finally, thank you to all at HHQ who look after our interests. Sadly this is the last Seaforth Highlanders AGM as we are now incorporated into the Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Association. We will see you in July next year rather than August.

**London Branch**

**PM A Ryder - Chairman**

On Thursday 6 November 2008 our members attended the opening of the Field of Remembrance by HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. Allan Ryder stood in front of our plot and was spoken to by the Duke of Edinburgh. Due to illnesses and a bad weather forecast we did not attend the Field on Saturday 8 November 2008 as was our usual custom.

On Saturday 29 November 2008 we held a formal lunch in the Union Jack Club. About 100 attended, mostly Seaforths and guests. A very good meal was served and the evening was much enjoyed. Children were encouraged and greatly enjoyed the occasion. A smart young piper played during the evening. These luncheons are the main part of our year. Many of our members travelled some way to meet old friends. We also had some guests from Notts Branch.

The member who gave our report at the AGM in Nairn took ill on returning home and sadly passed away in hospital. Len Jeans was a very good member who never missed a meeting and was looked upon as a future secretary. He acted as such on many occasions and made a very good job of it. Len did his Infantry training with the West Kents and on being posted to Normandy was enlisted into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn Seaforth

Highlanders. He was serving with them when he received a serious wound to one of his legs which troubled him until he passed away. He still remained cheery and got about as much as possible. He always wore the kilt and was proud to have served in a Highland Regiment. Len will be sadly missed in the London Branch. Len's funeral service was well attended at Westminster Cathedral.

We continue to meet in the Union Jack Club on the first Friday of every month except September.

We are busy planning our next lunch, something we intend to keep up to give the wives and family a treat.

#### **Nairn Branch**

##### **Captain E Munro -- Chairman**

The Nairn Branch continues to do reasonably well taking all into consideration. We managed to recruit 4 new members recently all from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion: at this minute in time our membership stands at 19 paid up members. Apart from the £2.00 annual membership fee our fundraising effort is by an annual tombola evening which usually generates enough cash to pay any Christmas Welfare grants required, our financial situation is quite healthy. We are extremely grateful to the band of loyal supporters who run this event for our fundraising.

Last Christmas we identified 9 people who were given a Christmas grant of £30.00 each.

General Robertson has graciously agreed to remain as our Honorary President and still takes a keen interest in the Branch. Our Committee are very active although we now only meet every 3 months, however the Committee are determined to soldier on as long as we can and in accordance with General Hopkinson's letter dated 24 April 2009.

We are indebted to Major Frank Blincow and HHQ for the help we receive and to the Management Committee and members of the Seaforth Club for their continuing support.

#### **Wick Branch**

##### **Mr D Oag -- Cathness**

On Remembrance Sunday wreaths were laid in Wick by Syd Barker and in Thurso by Willie Gunn MBE both ex Seaforths. David Oag, another ex Seaforth, was in Lybster and took the Salute on the march back from the memorial to the church for the Latheron Branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland. At 1430 hrs our members took part in the Thurso R.B.L.S church parade. It was a nice day.

On 23 February 2009 a number of us were at the funeral of the Rev Robin Gilmour. Robin was minister in Kiltarlity near Inverness. After his wife died he bought a house in Watton in Cathness to be near his daughter Flora. Robin was a very nice gentleman.

On 13 March 2009 Willie Gunn MBE and I attended the Ross-shire 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion Dinner. It was a full house and all had a great night. Major General JCOR



Hopkinson CB was the main speaker re The Highlanders and the reply was from his son Colonel James OBR. It was a great achievement for the Branch to have father and son to speak at their Diamond Dinner. It is always a great pleasure for us to meet the men of the old 4<sup>th</sup> Bn.

On 29 April 2009 we attended the funeral of Adie McClood of Bower Cairness. Adie was one of the founder members of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bn reunion dinner dances held in Lybster from 1970 to 1995. Sad to say we have only one ex 5<sup>th</sup> Bn Scaforth left in Cairness.

On 16 June 2009 our members all attended an AFD cocktail party in the rifle hall in Wick. It was hosted on behalf of the TA by 71 Engineer Regiment. We were treated to a pipes and drums concert by our Highlanders pipe band, the Highland youth and the Wick pipe band and there was a display of Highland dancing. All in all, a most enjoyable evening.

If I may I would like to pay a tribute to our friend Eion Munro of the Ross-shire Branch and who is a friend to many. Eion, who has Parkinsons disease, along with his friends raised over £2,500 for Ross Memorial Hospital Dingwall and the County Community Hospital Invergordon. Eion has supplied two Nintendo WII's and a number of state-of-the-art therapeutic computer games to help patients and out-patients at both hospitals.

Eion Munro wears his Blazer, Glengarry and Badge with pride. We all know the badge motto – Help the King. Eion's motto is to help others. Please show our appreciation to Eion for his great achievement in fundraising.