**THE KING’S OWN SCOTTISH BORDERERS ASSOCIATION**

**MINDEN DAY 2022**

**PRESIDENT’S SPEECH**

I can’t express adequately how wonderful it is to be here again in Berwick for Minden Day, after a three-year gap, the consequence of the dreaded Covid-19. The time has flown past, however, and here we are, together once again, for the 263rd anniversary of the Battle of Minden on 1 August 1759. I said in my message last year that it was my earnest hope that 2022 will be ‘business as usual’, and it largely is – if it were not for the rail strike that has denied some of our number getting here today. I thought we’d left the 1970s some way behind us…….

My thanks to the Pipes and Drums, the Military Band, and Nancy’s Dancers for the ‘pre-match’ entertainment and musical accompaniment, which has added significantly to today.

Given that it has been three years since we have collectively met to remember those momentous events of 1759, when the British Infantry earned immortal glory on the field of Minden, I am delighted that Bill Heaney refreshed our memories of the battle by reading the Minden Address to us just now. Just in case anyone was in any doubt, we remember our forebears and their courage that day with immense pride, and wear the red rose in our hats in recognition of their valour. I am delighted that Caroline Pryer, Vice Lord Lieutenant for Northumberland, is with us today to present the roses; besides her official capacity, Caroline has impeccable credentials to be our guest today, as her late father was Lt Col David Ward, who was Regimental Secretary 1979 -1991, and her brother Angus also served with the 1st Battalion in the 1980s. Caroline, we welcome you most warmly back to the family.

I also welcome the Mayor, Cllr Mike Greener, and the Sheriff, Eddie Mullins, along with all our other guests.

It would be easy to think that Covid-19 and the restrictions that it has placed on us all in so many ways have meant that little has been going on in Association terms. Nothing could be further from the truth, although much of it has been under the radar. Our Executive Officer and Assistant Officer have been working ‘above and beyond’ in the past two years to keep things on track and I thank Spike and Gerry and all the Association HQ staff and volunteers for all that they do on our behalfs.

Our benevolence towards those of our number in need or want continues, and in the year to March 2022 we provided financial assistance to some 50 Borderers, and assisted others in a variety of ways to make their lives better; the work of our Trustees, our Treasurer and our Executive Officer, in conjunction with RHQ SCOTS, has been invaluable in this regard, and I thank them all for their input to this, the most important of our functions. It remains to be seen what impact the cost of living crisis is going to have on our veterans, but we are ready to assist where we can.

Our heritage is also fundamental to what we do, and our Museum Committee and volunteers worked extremely hard to maintain and improve our collection and its display during lockdown, and the Museum is once again open to the public in the Spring, Summer and early Autumn. As ever, I pay tribute to the selfless work of the volunteers who keep the doors open every weekend, and if you feel that you can help out, please let Spike Thornton know.

Plans for the redevelopment of this site as a ‘Living Barracks’ has proceeded in the past year, and the pace has picked up. The Berwick Barracks partnership, of which we are a member, was awarded £4.2m in the late Spring towards the £9m or so costs of the work, and a further bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund for significant additional funding is being prepared. I will keep you all up to date with the plans as they develop and become clearer, especially the likely dates for the start and completion of work, and our plans for the collection and Association HQ in the construction phase.

However, we do need to fund some of this work from our own resources, and also underpin the longer-term financial health of our Association, and so a fundraising appeal is being planned to seek to raise in excess of £200,000; this is an ambitious target but I am confident that, by various means, we can meet it; more to follow.

This year sees two important Regimental anniversaries, which are:

* The 70th anniversary of the 1st Battalion’s departure from Korea in 1952 at the end of its tour of duty with the UN – just after Minden Day. Willie Purves, who as you know is one of our Korean veterans, was meant to be with us today to present the roses, but had to admit defeat, probably for the first time in his life I imagine, at the hands of the LNER train drivers! We once again send all our veterans our very best wishes.
* The 50th anniversary of the 1st Battalion’s tours of duty in Belfast in 1972 when we lost three NCOs KIA – LCpl Peter Sime (7 April 1972), LCpl Barrie Gold (25 April 1972) and Sgt Henry Middlemass (10 December 1972). I am delighted that members of their families are here with us today – Peter’s widow Jean; Barrie’s son James (who himself served on A Company in the 1980s) and Rachel Middelmass, Henry’s sister. It is lovely to welcome you all to this family gathering.

Very sadly, we have also lost a considerable number of our own since Minden Day 2021 and who, despite their rank or length of service, are equal in our eyes as Borderers; I name them here:

**BORDERERS DEATHS SINCE MINDEN 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | SGT | SHUG McCRINDLE | 31 JUL 21 | 1ST BN 1969-88 |
|  |  | ARCHIBALD BARKER | 06 AUG 21 | 1ST BN MALAYA |
|  |  | JOCK REDPATH | 09 AUG 21 | 1ST BN 1950s |
|  |  | ALAN LYALL | 10 AUG 21 | 1ST BN MALAYA |
|  |  | WILLIAM CORRIGAN | 27 AUG 21 | 1ST BN 1950s |
|  |  | THOMAS HALL MESSER | 7 SEP 21 | 1ST BN KOREA |
|  | PTE | PHILIP KAY | 5 OCT 21 | 1ST BN 1957-59 |
|  | PTE | JAMES STENHOUSE | 13 OCT 21 | 1ST BN 1989-91 |
|  | PTE | THEO DALGLIESH | 6 NOV 21 | 6TH BN WW2 |
|  | SGT | MARK MUIR | 11 NOV 21 | 1ST BN 1972-94 |
|  | PTE | GEORGE BOYD | 26 NOV 21 | 1ST BN 1950s |
|  | MAJ | KEN FRASER | 30 NOV 21 | 1ST BN 1950-2021 |
|  | WO2 | CHARLIE ‘BUDDA’ SMITH | 13 DEC 21 | 1ST BN 1957-77 |
|  | LCPL | NORMAN PATTERSON | 31 DEC 21 | 1ST BN 1970-76 |

**BORDERERS DEATHS SINCE JANUARY 2022**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SER | RANK | NAME | DoD | REMARKS |
| 01 | PTE | LAWRENCE MOFFAT | 05 JAN 22 | 1ST BN 1954-56,5TH BN 56-59 |
| 02 | PTE | ROMAN CASCINO | 18 JAN 22 | 1ST BN 1967-73 |
| 03 | WO1 | COLIN RIMMER | 22 JAN 22 | 1ST BN 1955-77 |
| 04 | CPL | JOHN SMAIL | 29 JAN 22 | 1ST BN MALAYA 55-57 |
| 05 | CPL | IAN RAE | 28 JAN 22 | 1ST BN 1970s |
| 06 | LCPL | JIM HILDERSLEY | 7 FEB 22 | 1ST BN 1969-78 |
| 07 |  | ROBERT HAIG | FEB 22 | 1ST BN 1969-? |
| 08 | PTE | DEREK HULME | 19 MAR 22 | 1ST BN 1959-61 |
| 09 | CPL | ROBERT BURNS | 24 APR 22 | 1ST BN 1966-75 |
| 10 | PTE | ALAN SKELDON | 05 MAY 22 | 1ST BN 1962-73 |
| 11 | PTE | DAVID McCOLL | 18 APR 22 | 1ST BN 1990s |
| 12 | MAJ | ALLAN CAMERON | 06 MAY 22 | 1ST BN 1946-78 |
| 13 | LCPL | THOMAS McGILLVRAY | 13 MAY 22 | 1ST BN 1960-78 |
| 14 | LT COL | IAN CROOKE DSO | 17 MAY 22 | 1ST BN & 22 1962-85 |
| 15 | PTE | WILLIAM CRAWFORD | 21 MAY 22 | KOREAN WAR VET |
| 16 | PTE | JOHN GALLOWAY | 21 MAY 22 | KOREAN WAR VET |
| 17 | SGT | JAMES MURRAY | 27 MAY 22 | 1ST BN 1959-81 |
| 18 | CPL | KEN MURPHY | 29 MAY 22 | 1ST BN 1974-94 |
| 19 | CPL | ROBERT BROWN | 01 JUN 22 | 1ST BN 1996-2012 |
| 20 | PTE | RON WEBB | 7 JUN 22 | 1ST BN PALESTINE 1946 |
| 21 | LT | ALASTAIR PENMAN | 14 JUN 22 | TA 1970s |
| 22 | SGT | BOB KERNAGHAN | 29 JUN 22 | 1ST BN 1956-67 |
| 23 | PTE | JIM McMULLEN | O1 JUL 22 | 1ST BN 1980-83 |

Their service stretches from World War 2 through to Northern Ireland, and we pay testament to their loyal service both to the Crown and to the Regiment.

As to the future for the Association, there is a much to look forward to. We have a broadly normal Regimental calendar this year, with Remembrance events both in Scotland and at the Cenotaph (and please let Gerry know if you want to attend that). Thereafter, we have the Cruickshank Dinner in November, and then into what we hope is an equally full programme in 2023. At this range, Minden Day looks to be on Saturday 29 July 2023, and I look forward very much indeed to welcoming you and your families here once again to our Regimental Day.

Meantime, now that we are once again together, let’s parade through the town to remind Berwick that we are still here, and take the chance to swap war stories and rekindle old friendships, while always remembering

‘Once a Borderer Always a Borderer’