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THE ROYAL WELSH**

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Charity Commission Number: 1166089 CRM:0001188

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue 10 / October 2025

Upcoming Diary Dates

2025

Sunday 9th November 2025: The Royal British Legion - Cenotaph Parade, London

Friday 14th November 2025: Royal Welsh Officers' Society dinner (The Cornerstone, Cardiff)

2026

Tuesday 13th January 2026: Wreath laying at the 24th Chillianwallah memorial, Royal Hospital Chelsea, on the anniversary of the battle

Sunday 25th January 2026: Isandlwana and Immortal defence of Rorke's Drift Service and Lunch (Brecon)

9-15th February 2026: Royal Welsh rugby ball run across Wales carrying the Six Nations 2026 match balls –fundraising event led by the 3rd Bn ending up at the Principality Stadium

Saturday 7th February 2026: The 59 Regimental Dinner to be held at the 1st Bn in Tidworth, inviting all Colonels of The Regiment, Commanding Officers, and Regimental Sergeant Majors from the 20 years of 1, 2 and 3 Royal Welsh (March 2006-March 2026)

Sunday 1st March 2026: 20th anniversary Service, Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff.

Sunday 8th March 2026: Officers' and Ladies' St David's Day Lunch, 1 R WELSH, Tidworth

Saturday 21st March 2026: Royal Regiment of Wales / Royal Welsh family and friends annual Dinner and Dance (Cardiff – coordinated by Tony Kane: tonykane1955@yahoo.com)

Saturday 28th March 2026: A King's Legacy 1879 Remembered - Honouring the spirit of Zulu history and heritage across continents, The Barracks, Brecon

Friday 24th April 2026: Royal Regiment of Wales Lunch (London). Organised by Lt Col (Retd) Peter Kerruish and Col (Retd) J Pughe-Morgan

Saturday 6th June 2026: RWF Officers' and Ladies Lunch, Broughton Village Hall (near Stockbridge, Hampshire). For further information, contact Col Jeremy Broad at jerbroad@gmail.com

Saturday 25th July 2026: Regimental Reunion South (Cardiff)

Saturday 5th September 2026: Regimental Reunion North (Wrexham)

TBC 12th September 2026: Royal Welsh 20th anniversary event in Wales

TBC Nov 2026 onwards: Homecoming Parade for the 1st Bn personnel deployed to Estonia

Introduction

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of the RHQ The Royal Welsh Newsletter.

This issue includes a list of upcoming diary dates for 2025 and 2026, including details for the Isandlwana/Rorke's Drift Commemoration Service and Buffet Lunch in January. We also sadly announce the passing of Fusilier R. N. (RO) Napolioni of the 1st Battalion and offer our condolences to his family and friends.

In this edition, we congratulate Band Sergeant Major WO2 Mark Ebdon on being presented with the King's Volunteer Reserves Medal. We also introduce the new Royal Welsh Regimental Harpist for 2025-26, Miss Rose Graham. Additionally, you can read updates from the 1st and 3rd Battalions, including Fusilier Skinner being named Top Student at the recent Battle Camp and the 3rd Battalion's feature in the BBC series "Just One Thing."

Editor's Note:

The views expressed in these articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of Regimental Headquarters.



Last Post: Fusilier R. N. (RO) Napolioni (1 R WELSH)



It is with deep regret that the regiment announces the death of Fusilier R. N. (RO) Napolioni, of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh. Fusilier Napolioni sadly passed away at Liverpool Hospital in New South Wales, Australia, on 25 September 2025.

The thoughts and condolences of the entire regimental community are with Fusilier Napolioni's family and friends at this difficult time.

King's Volunteer Reserves Medal (KVRM) investiture for WO2 Ebdon

On Tuesday 30th September, Band Sergeant Major WO2 Mark Ebdon was invited to Windsor Castle for his Investiture Ceremony where he was presented with the King's Volunteer Reserves Medal (KVRM) by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.



Announced as part of His Majesty The King's Birthday Honours in June 2025, the KVRM recognises exceptional dedication and service within the Volunteer Reserve Forces, particularly when that service is of considerable value and serves as a positive example to others. Only 13 KVRMs can be awarded in any given year.

For over 40 years, WO2 Ebdon has exemplified selfless service, musical excellence, and inspirational leadership within The Royal Welsh Band.

From leading the Band through high-profile events like Op BRIDGE, GOLDEN ORB, and numerous appearances at The Welsh Rugby Union matches in Cardiff's Principality Stadium, to transforming infrastructure and mentoring musicians, his impact has been profound.



His tireless commitment has not only elevated the Band's reputation but also strengthened the bond between the British Army and communities across Wales and the UK. Congratulations to WO2 Mark Ebdon KVRM VR CQP MCQI Tech IOSH.

First Aid for Mental Health Courses (Project FLASH)

RHQ will be hosting the next batch of First Aid for Mental Health courses, to help grow our network further, and spread understanding of the challenges faced by some of our service leavers and veterans.

Courses:

Wrexham (Hightown Barracks) – 5th December 2025



October 2025

Swansea (Morfa Army Reserve Centre) – 16th January 2026

Please register for the course below (there is also a section to register interest in future courses). [Register to attend here.](#)

1st Battalion: Ex DRAGON CYCLONE - Flash Company Update

Exercise DRAGON CYCLONE has seen FLASH Company deploy as part of the 1 Royal Welsh Battlegroup.



During this phase of the exercise it has been honing its mounted close combat skillset, supporting Combined Arms Manoeuvre School courses, and delivering mounted tactical training to our attached arms.



3rd Battalion: Fusilier Skinner Named Top Student at Recent Battle Camp

Fusilier Skinner (3rd from the left), accompanied by two fellow members of B (Rorke's Drift) Company, recently completed the second phase of his basic training - BATTLECAMP.



Throughout the course, Fus Skinner demonstrated a strong grasp of his role and consistently displayed enthusiasm across all lessons. His physical fitness stood out among his peers, and he approached every physical training session with exceptional grit and determination. Thanks to his outstanding performance, Fus Skinner was deservedly recognised as the top student on the course - an accolade that reflects both his commitment and capability. His next challenge will be the Combat Infantryman's Course at ITC Catterick, where he will continue to build on this impressive foundation.

3rd Battalion: 3 R WELSH Feature in BBC's "Just One Thing" to Promote Healthy Living

On Thursday, 2nd October, personnel from the 3rd Battalion The Royal Welsh, alongside members of the University Officers' Training Corps (UOTC) and 157 Royal



Logistic Corps, gathered at Maindy Barracks to take part in a physical training session for the upcoming BBC series, *Just One Thing*.



Presented by Clive Myers, the programme challenges participants to adopt simple, positive lifestyle changes that aim to improve overall health and wellbeing. The Service Personnel who attended demonstrated how structured physical activity and discipline contribute to long-term wellness.



The series is scheduled to air on the BBC in January 2027, showcasing the role of the Armed Forces in promoting healthy living.

New Royal Welsh Regimental Harpist Selected For 2025-26

The annual Regimental Harpist competition took place at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCM&D) on Tuesday 7th October 2025.

The three bests harpists from RWCM&D competed to be crowned as the Regimental Harpist of The Royal Welsh 2025-26 (academic year).

The judging panel consisted of Kathryn Jenkins (Head of Harp, RWCM&D), CO 3 R WELSH (Lt Col Mark Adams), Director of Music, The Regimental Band of The Royal Welsh (Captain Richard Burton), Assistant Regimental Secretary (Mr Richard Tuffney) and the Regimental Secretary (Col (retd) Rob Dickinson).

The three harpists: Miss Rose Graham, Miss Mistletoe Chapman and Miss Yinglian Zhang had to play God Save The King, Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau (The Welsh National Anhthem), and a piece of their own choice to the judging panel. All three harpists were superb demonstrating the traditional and modern capability of the harp.

The judging panel then went into an extended deliberation to select the winner. Miss Rose Graham from Crickhowell, POWYS was the eventual winner and will hold the title of 'Regimental Harpist of The Royal Welsh' until the end of the 2025-26 academic year. She will receive her award formally at the graduation and awards ceremony in the summer of 2026. Rose is already booked to play at three regimental events in 2026, as part of the 20th anniversary celebrations, and we welcome her into the regimental family.





The Regimental Harpist is also available to play at additional events throughout the regimental calendar. Anyone interested in booking the Regimental Harpist should contact the Regimental Adjutant (Captain Harry Merriman) in the first instance.

Exercise JERSIAISE DRAGON (Jersey) 2025: What Happened in Jersey Between 1939 and 1945? And What Happened in August 2025?

During the Second World War, the Channel Islands, including Jersey, became the only part of the British Isles to be occupied by German forces. In 1940, following the fall of France, the Germans landed unopposed on Jersey, beginning a five-year occupation that would leave a lasting mark on the island. The occupation ended in May 1945 with the German surrender, but the physical and emotional scars of those years remain visible to this day.





Fast forward to August 2025, and a group of 19 members of the 3rd Bn landed on Jersey, also unopposed. This time, however, they were not invaders but visitors, welcomed by WO1 Adrian Thomas, a former member of 1WG, 3 RWELSH, and now part of RMONS RE(M) Jersey Squadron. Their accommodation, which boasted 6 or 7 stars on Tripadvisor, also served as an Alternate Reserve Centre (ARC). The purpose of their visit was to study the German invasion, occupation, and eventual surrender, as well as the enduring influence of these events on the island and its people.

The Germans left behind a significant legacy in the form of fortifications, bunkers, and tunnels, many of which remain intact today. These defensive structures were part of Hitler's Atlantic Wall, a vast network of coastal defences intended to repel an Allied invasion. Jersey, despite its small size, was heavily fortified, and exploring these sites provided the group with a deeper understanding of the island's wartime history. However, navigating Jersey proved to be more challenging than expected. The group ambitiously set out to walk around the entire island, visiting various study sites, but the task was never fully achieved. Nevertheless, they managed to cover a significant number of locations, gaining valuable insights into the ground once occupied by German forces.





The German Occupation and Its Legacy:

The German occupation of Jersey remains a deeply emotive subject. The island's inhabitants faced a complex and often harrowing situation, where day-to-day survival was paramount. While the Germans were generally tolerant of the local population, provided rules were followed, the same could not be said for the thousands of forced labourers brought to the island from across occupied Europe. These men and women, many of them political prisoners or captured resistance fighters, were subjected to brutal conditions and forced to construct the island's formidable defences. Many paid with their lives to build structures that, in the end, were never used in combat.

Among the most notable defensive sites on Jersey are the following:

Bunkers and Gun Emplacements: The island is dotted with concrete bunkers and gun emplacements, many of which were designed to house heavy artillery. These fortifications were strategically placed to cover key landing points and provide overlapping fields of fire. Notable examples include the Batterie Lothringen at Noirmont Point, which housed a naval gun capable of firing across the Channel.

Underground Tunnels: The Germans constructed an extensive network of tunnels on Jersey, including the Jersey War Tunnels (formerly known as Höhlgangsanlage 8). These tunnels were used for storage, workshops, and as a hospital. Today, they serve as a museum, offering a sobering insight into life under occupation.



Observation Towers: Several observation towers were built to provide panoramic views of the surrounding sea and coastline. The most famous of these is the Marine Peilstand 1 (MP1) tower at Les Landes, which remains a striking reminder of the island's militarisation.

Anti-Tank Defences: To prevent an Allied landing, the Germans installed anti-tank walls, beach obstacles, and minefields along Jersey's coastline. Some remnants of these defences can still be seen today.

Command Bunkers: These served as the nerve centres for German operations on the island. One of the most significant is the Command Bunker at St. Ouen's Bay, which was part of the wider Atlantic Wall defence system.

A Complex Legacy

The occupation left a profound impact on Jersey's residents, both during the war and in the years that followed. For the local population, life under German rule was a delicate balancing act. While some collaborated with the occupiers, others resisted in subtle ways, such as hiding radios or aiding escaped forced labourers. The moral complexities of occupation continue to be a topic of discussion and reflection on the island.



Today, Jersey's wartime history is preserved through its many museums, memorials, and preserved fortifications. These sites serve as a reminder of the resilience of the island's people and the sacrifices made by those who suffered under German rule. For the 19 members of 3 R WELSH who visited, the trip was not only an opportunity to study history but also to reflect on the enduring lessons of conflict, occupation, and survival.

Exercise COMBINED WARRIOR By Major Lee Davies

Not one to shy away from an opportunity, two weeks observing Exercise COMBINE WARRIOR (CW) with Infantry Battle School (IBS) on Sennybridge (SENTA) was one I jumped on.

Ex CW is the IBS capstone exercise of the new optimisation construct. It provides students from across Land Warfare Centre (LWC) courses a focus for interface, interaction and integration whilst enjoying the physical and environmental challenges only SENTA can provide. The role of an infantry commander on the modern battlefield has advanced with technology, IBS Seizing the Initiative delivers the Drone Pilot course to all NCOs and is currently developing counter Drone Drills. Integration happens across the exercise and provides an integrator of capabilities for all students who complete their final exercise as part of Ex CW. What IBS has designed creates a foundation from which innovation can occur, doctrine can be tested in the modern battlefield and the environment remains mentally and physically demanding.



Calian (old Mabway) enemy role players have significantly enhanced the level of support to the training audience. Calian is structured to replicate Russian doctrine and it delivers mass numbers, simulation effects in the form of VISMODS (BMP platforms) and noise simulations for exercising troops to improve the enemy scenarios.

The regulars are adjusting to the modern battlefield, advancing with technology and integration where and whenever possible. As a Reservist, 3 RWELSH aim to follow suit by building SQEP with Drones, understanding the Combined Arms Manoeuvre (CAM) and look to integrate as part of a reserve Ex COMBINED DRAGON later next year. To top the two weeks off, a dawn attack on my birthday. Plenty of BATSIMs but sadly no cake.

RWF Museum's "RWF Fest 25"

The RWF Museum ran its third "RWF FEST" at Hightown Barracks on Saturday, 27 September. The now well-rehearsed formula of talks, displays, and demonstrations drew 93 attendees to the event. Sponsored by Wrexham Lager and Wrexham Council, the audience heard from four excellent speakers.



Steve McCarthy, a retired senior civil servant, moved to a small village in Devon and discovered the grave and memorial of Lt Col Jack Hill, RWF, who fought in 40 battles and engagements with the Regiment throughout the Napoleonic Wars. Having begun to research Hill (whose three-times-great-grandson, Maj Ed Hill, served with 1 RWF and 1 R WELSH), Steve was hooked, and three years later produced a substantial



biography: *An Astonishing Infantryman – The Life and Letters of Jack Hill, Royal Welch Fusiliers, 1778–1838*. Steve's talk recounted Hill's incredible story, every bit as dramatic as the tales of the fictional Capt Richard Sharpe!

Next, local historian Alister Williams explained the origins of the Victoria Cross and the acts of valour that resulted in the first four RWF recipients: Capt Edward Bell, Sgt Luke O'Connor, Cpl Robert Shields, and Surgeon Sylvester.



In the afternoon, William Graves, son of poet and author Robert Graves, spoke about his father's relationship and service with the RWF. William was followed by Guy Holmes, who spoke about his grandfather, Pte Frank Richards, author of *Old Soldiers Never Die* and *Old Soldier Sahib*. Guy also presented the museum with his family's Frank Richards archive, including Frank's medals, gold pocket watch, letters, and the manuscripts of his books with Robert Graves's handwritten edits on them.

The final speaker of the day was Col (Retd) Peter Knox, who spoke about the destruction of 1 RWF in France in 1940 during their valiant last stand at St Venant, buying time for the BEF to be evacuated. He also recounted the remarkable stories of



courage of two junior ranks, Fred Sheedie and Bateman, who escaped their PoW camps—one to die fighting with the Polish resistance, the other to escape via Russia and return to the UK.



© Ray Jones

In addition to the talks, visitors had the opportunity to view treasures from the museum's reserve collection not normally seen by the public. These included original drafts of Robert Graves's poems, a chalk carving given to Graves by the RMO, Capt James Dunn, and Graves's own copy of *Goodbye to All That*. Medal collector Richard Ward also displayed his remarkable RWF medal collection, featuring some of the rarest medals awarded to Royal Welchmen throughout the Regiment's history. Finally, there were re-enactors portraying 6 RWF in the Second World War, complete with weapons and equipment.

RWF FEST has become a regular feature of the Museum's programme, and a huge thank-you goes to the Friends of the RWF Museum Committee for organising another cracking day. The event raised over £5,000 for the museum, supporting continued educational work in schools across North Wales. Planning has already begun for next year, with a focus on the 250th anniversary of the American Revolutionary War.





Sea Cadets National Trafalgar Day Parade, Trafalgar Square, London

Peter Kerruish laid a Regimental wreath in memory of those soldiers of the 69th Foot who fought as Marines in Nelsonian times at the 2025 Trafalgar Day parade in London



on 19 October, by tradition the nearest Sunday to the battle on 21 October 1805. The parade is essentially an opportunity for 400 Sea Cadets aged from 9-17 and from across the country to display their abundant talents ranging from a physical display including Club Swinging and the Hornpipe to the massed bands performance. There followed an inspection, this year by Admiral Sir Tony Radakin KCB ADC, former Chief of the Defence Staff and culminated in the March Past by 10 platoons, two of whom are furnished annually by request by the Army Cadet Force and the Royal Air Force Air Cadets, following which they march from the Square along the Mall, finishing in Wellington Barracks in Birdcage Walk.



It is always a pleasure to see so many young boys and girls, led by committed volunteers, determined to give of their best in front of several hundred proud families as well as all those in and around Trafalgar Square at the time. It would be excellent if one of our cadet platoons were to take part in the future.



My Regiment and Trafalgar Day by Lieutenant Colonel Peter Kerruish

It may come as a surprise to readers that my Regiment remembers this link every year at the Sea Cadets' annual Trafalgar Day Parade in, of course, Trafalgar Square in London and on the nearest Sunday to the anniversary of the battle, fought on 21 October 1805.

My Regiment was not in fact involved in this particular battle but the Sea Cadets generously asks those Regiments with a Naval link to be present on the day and lay a Regimental wreath in memory of their soldiers who fought and, in many cases, died while in Naval service. Traditionally it has been the lot of the London Branch of my Regiment to carry out this memorable and happy task and for many years it has been my great privilege and pleasure so to do.

There were three occasions when soldiers of the 69th Foot, a Regiment formed by the 2nd Battalion of the 24th Foot in 1758, later amalgamated with the 41st Foot in 1881, fought as Marines.

The first occasion was on 12 April 1782 in the Battle of the Saints, or Dominica, when France and Spain, having taken advantage of Britain's involvement in the American War of Independence, declared war on Britain. The French navy quickly captured the island of St Kitts. The 69th had earlier been sent to Barbados in order to strengthen its garrison and early in 1782 was embarked as Marines in Admiral Hood's fleet. Several more islands in the West Indies chain fell to the French who then turned their attention to Jamaica. Admiral Hood was reinforced by a squadron under Admiral Rodney and on 12 April 1782, the French fleet under Admiral de Grasse was brought to battle. By the end of the day, the French admiral was a prisoner of war and his fleet was in full retreat. Jamaica was saved and the 69th was awarded the unique Battle Honour 'Naval Crown, superscripted 12 April 1782'. In 1783 when the fleet returned to England, both Houses of Parliament passed a 'Vote of Thanks' to the 69th and awarded the Regiment 'an embroidered Laurel Wreath around the Regimental Number on the Colour'.



The second occasion was during the Napoleonic Wars, 1793-1815 when the 69th again spent the first years of the war serving in the Fleet as Marines. One detachment on board HMS Barfleur was present at Admiral Howe's victory over the French fleet on the 'Glorious First of June 1794', fought 400 miles West of Ushant in the North Atlantic Ocean.

And the final occasion was on 14 February 1797 when the British and Spanish fleets met off Cape St Vincent, the South West tip of Portugal. Detachments of the 69th were then serving as Marines in Admiral Jervis' fleet including one party under Commodore Nelson; initially in HMS Agamemnon and then in HMS Captain. Nelson typically sailed straight into the Spanish fleet and with the help of the 69th, captured the San Nicholas followed by the San Josef. The day ended with a great British victory and the 69th was awarded the Battle Honour 'St Vincent 1797'. And one nickname for the 69th became 'The Old Agamemnons' and by happy circumstance, my amalgamated Regiment, The Royal Welsh is twinned with HMS Agamemnon, the sixth of the Astute-class nuclear powered fleet submarines currently undergoing final stages of construction and fit out in Barrow-in-Furness.

And to this day we proudly look upon the Colours of The Royal Welsh displaying the unique double Naval crown.

The Parade itself is a splendid opportunity for the Sea Cadets to show off all their many and varied skills to a wider audience. And many of these skills lead to employment qualifications. Over 400 cadets took part this year from all over the country, including their quite excellent massed band and corps of drums. A physical training display was a most professional performance, as was their marching. The Royal Marine cadets of course were prominent and looking extremely smart and self-assured, as one would expect. A senior Royal Naval or Royal Marines Officer takes the salute every year and this year we had Rear Admiral Angus Essenhigh OBE RN, late Commanding Officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth, the first of the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers.



Following the parade inspection and wreath laying ceremony, the Last Post was sounded and a Drumhead Service was conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet to the Royal Navy. The Parade then concluded with the traditional March Past. The Royal Navy also asks for a platoon from both the Army Cadet Force and the RAF Air Cadets to take part and this year was no exception. The whole parade then marched from Horse Guards down the Mall to Buckingham Palace and into Wellington Barracks where a splendid Reception was held. It was very good indeed to see so many very proud parents, family and friends, as well as many other bystanders applauding their boys and girls who fully deserved this approbation.

I would encourage anyone living in or near London to attend future Trafalgar Day Parades. It is such a splendid opportunity to see on display what I call the enthusiasm of youth; boys and girls determined to give of their best. Their strapline fully explains their ethos of an adventure that launches young people for life. And if you live some way away, then why not use the Parade as a good excuse for a most enjoyable long weekend in London. You will certainly be hugely enthused by this Parade on the Sunday morning.

Lieutenant Colonel Peter Kerruish was commissioned into the 24th South Wales Borderers and later commanded the 1st Battalion of his amalgamated Regiment, The Royal Regiment of Wales (24th/41st) in Hong Kong.

1915-18 Salonika Campaign Remembrance by Chris Penney

I was privileged to attend the Salonika Campaign Society's (SCS) annual battlefield tour of Greece and North Macedonia last month, which, under the expert eye of IWM Head of First World War Alan Wakefield, visited ground fought over by the Allied Armies of the Orient and those of the Central Powers between 1915-18. The tour was a personal pilgrimage as Lt Gwynne Humphreys, my grandfather, served with 7th (Service) Battalion South Wales Borderers, which formed part of British Salonika Force (BSF) sent to Greece in 1915 under command of General George Milne.





The SCS Battlefield Tour atop the Grand Couronné, North Macedonia

Events began with an inaugural Greek British Ceremony of Remembrance at Exochi's CWGC Kirechkoi-Hortakoi Cemetery that contains 588 Commonwealth WWI burials. The location served as BSF XVI Corps HQ from January 1916 – soon after the opening of the Salonika campaign – until the advance to the Struma in September 1916. The cemetery remained small until September 1917 when the 60th, 65th and 66th General Hospitals moved in and those that did not survive treatment were laid to rest within it.

Through summer 1918 other hospitals concentrated in the locality and casualties from the influenza epidemic that raged for three months from September 1918 filled three-quarters of its available plot. Sixteen members of antecedent regiments of the Royal Welsh lie here. Wreaths were laid by national, regional, and local government representatives of Greece and for the United Kingdom by General Milne's granddaughter, The Honourable Ann Straker, Salonika Campaign Society Patron.





General Milne's granddaughter, The Honourable Ann Straker, lays a wreath at CWGC Kirechkoi-Hortakoi Cemetery.

While you can gain insight on particular actions by reading accounts nothing beats visiting the battlefield itself to view the landscape and appreciate the terrain over which fighting took place.

Although the ground over which the 1918 Second Battle of Doiran was fought has today become a tangled maze of scrubland, standing atop the 'Devil's Eye' (as it was known) at 2,000ft above Lake Doiran in North Macedonia, it's clear the Bulgarian Army held a commanding position over the network of ravines below and that any Allied assault would prove costly: so it was to prove.

'Devil's Eye' was the name given by soldiers of the BSF to the Bulgarian observation post on the highest ridge line (designated Grand Couronné on Allied maps) above Lake Doiran. This natural feature dominates the battlefield and was held by experienced and battle-hardened Bulgarian units who were well dug in with fortified artillery positions, first and second line trenches and a third defensive line.





An Unknown South Wales Borderer at the CWGC Doiran Cemetery.

At the Bulgarian frontline positions on Grand Couronné Alan Wakefield described the attack put in jointly by the Greek Serres Division and 67th (Welsh) Brigade of the 22nd Division on 18 September 1918. He explained that during this action the 7th Battalion South Wales Borderers under the determined and energetic leadership of Major (T/Lt-Col) Daniel Burgess continued to advance under a hail of enemy fire, "with no thought but to reach the enemy."

Although the Grand Couronné attacks at Doiran on 18-19 September were halted by stout Bulgarian defence the overall Allied campaign strategy proved successful as advances made elsewhere on the Salonika front necessitated a Bulgarian withdraw from Doiran by 21 September. The 18 September action subsequently led to the award of the Victoria Cross to Daniel Burgess and, in recognition of his battalion's fighting spirit, France's highest honour – the Croix de Guerre – to the South Wales Borderers.





Chris Penney detailing the award of the SWB Croix de Guerre won during fighting on the slopes below the Grand Couronné ridgeline.

I was able to inform the society on the issuing of 67th Infantry Brigade Special Order, dated 3 March 1919, quoting GOC General Louis d'Espèrey's Croix de Guerre Order to the South Wales Borderers: "In spite of heavy losses it pressed on...and thereby gave proof of its tenacity and offensin spirit, and formed an example of self-sacrifice of the highest praise." This brought a very personal journey full circle as I had previously handed over the fragile and significant March 1919 document to the Royal Welsh at Tidworth in 2019 during a St David's Day parade marking the 100th Anniversary of the Croix de Guerre presentation.



2019 St David's Day Parade.



No visit to the region is complete without viewing the hugely impressive CWGC Doiran Memorial. Designed by Sir Robert Lorimer, it features four square piers, each bearing name panels, placed to form a square around a 40 feet high central pillar carved with lions and stone wreaths. The lions wear different expressions; an angry lion facing former Bulgarian positions and a sad lion overlooking the Allied rear. Largely paid for by subscription from the officers and men who served on campaign, it commemorates the 1917-18 First and Second Battles of Doiran and remembers the more than 2,150 BSF members who fell in three years of fighting on the Salonika front and have no known grave.



BSF Doiran Memorial to the Missing overlooking Lake Doiran.

The tour concluded by attending Greece's national anniversary commemorations marking Bulgaria's surrender on 29 September 1918. Held at the Allied Five Nations First World War Memorial in Polykastro, the ceremony is dedicated to the armed forces of Greece, UK, France, Serbia, and Italy who fought and died together on the Salonika or, as it is also known, Macedonian front. Wreaths were laid by government and military representatives as well as the SCS and the ceremony closed with the national anthems of all five nations. A civic reception hosted by the mayor at the town's Hellenic Army headquarters was then enjoyed by all.





Allied Five Nations Memorial, Polykastro, Greece.

The SCS Battlefield Tour departs ever September, and you do not have to be a member to participate. To attend is to follow in the footsteps of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, South Wales Borderers, and the Welsh Regiment.

Anecdotes

- On the first night the area where we were staying experienced a mild earthquake at 2AM – an unnerving experience in the dark.
- The CWGC have started replacing worn Welch Regiment burial headstones with the inscription "Welsh Regiment". Consulting my Concise Royal Welsh History this would *appear* to be a correct alteration.

Isandlwana / Rorke's Drift Commemoration Service and Buffet Lunch: Sunday 25th January 2026

We are pleased to invite you to the annual Isandlwana / Rorke's Drift Commemoration Service and Buffet Lunch, which will be held on **Sunday, 25th January 2026**.



The commemoration will begin with a service at Brecon Cathedral, followed by a buffet lunch at the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, Dering Lines. We hope you will be able to join us for this important Regimental occasion.

You can read and download the invitation letter here: [Isandlwana / Rorke's Drift Commemoration Service and Buffet Lunch](#)

To confirm your attendance:

- **Individual Members:** Please confirm your attendance by downloading the individual return form at the following link: [Individual Return Proforma](#)
- **Branch Members:** Please arrange your attendance through your Branch Secretary, who should use the Branch return form provided at the following link: [Branch Return Proforma](#)

*Please note that the correct cost of a lunch ticket is **£21.00** per head.

To ensure we can finalise arrangements with the caterers, we kindly request that you submit your response no later than **Friday, 9th January 2026**.

Please do not hesitate to contact Regimental Headquarters for any further information.

1 WELCH Hong Kong "Border Tie"

Many will recall the intense period of Internal Security duties during the 1967 troubles in Hong Kong, particularly the operations supporting the Hong Kong Police and 48 Gurkha Infantry Brigade on the Border with China.

For veterans of 1 WELCH who served in Hong Kong during the tour from July 1966 to June 1968, a unique and unofficial award was the "Border Tie." An initiative is now underway to have this memorable tie produced again for all ranks who served in 1 WELCH who qualify.

The historic design features a Police Blue and Gurkha Green background with red and blue lines representing the Border and the Shum Chung River.





If you believe you are eligible and would like to register your interest in obtaining the tie, please get in touch with Brigadier John Anderson by email at: j.anderson6gr@googlemail.com

Last Chance: Limited Edition Royal Welch Fusiliers Wrexham Lager Keg

Last chance to purchase a limited-edition Royal Welch Fusiliers Wrexham Lager keg. In this exclusive partnership with the RWF Museum, Wrexham Lager has commissioned a limited-edition 5L export keg. £5 from every sale will go to the RWF Museum which is a registered charity.



Quantities are limited – secure your piece of history while stocks last! [Pre-order here.](#)



RAF Valley 5K Remembrance Run

A 5K Remembrance Run in support of the RAF Valley Veterans Hub and The Royal British Legion will take place on **Wednesday, 5th November at 12:15 PM.**



The event, open to gym members only, will be held at RAF Valley and will proceed regardless of the weather.

Participants can compete in the following categories:

- 1st Female
- 1st Male
- Mixed Team of 3 (Male/Female/Veteran)

Those interested can register by emailing karen.martin617@mod.gov.uk or can sign up on the day of the event. A bucket collection will be held to raise funds for the two supported charities.



Anglesey Military Veterans Hub: A Concert for Anglesey's Veterans

The Anglesey Military Veterans Hub is now up and running at its base on RAF Valley. This hub serves as a central point for social gatherings, support, training, and welfare for veterans across Anglesey.

Veterans are welcome attendees at our regular monthly "Coffee and Cake" sessions. These gatherings, along with craft and music sessions, are held at the hub, which is open to all Tri-Service Military Veterans in North Wales.

In addition, three of Holyhead Branch Members are part of the Hub's Veterans Band, 'Line of Duty'. The band has already held several public performances, and their next appearance will be at a special concert at the Ucheldre Centre in Holyhead.

You are invited to an evening of "Remembrance Through Music" in aid of the Anglesey Military Veterans Hub.

Event Details:

What: Remembrance Through Music Concert

Date: Friday, 14th November

Time: 7:30 pm

Venue: Canolfan Ucheldre Centre, Millbank, Holyhead, LL65 1TE

Performers: Featuring the veterans' band 'Line of Duty', Friendly Voices, Holyhead Male Voice Choir, Dr Arwel Williams, Gethin Wyn Griffith, and more.

Tickets: £10

To book your tickets, please call the Ucheldre Centre box office at **01407 763361**.



Job Opportunity: Customer Satisfaction and Liaison Officer with Milrem Robotics



Looking for a job at the sharp end that makes a difference?

Milrem Robotics (www.milrem.com) is looking for a veteran for the following role: **Customer satisfaction and liaison officer** for our growing fleet of vehicles in Ukraine.

The candidate would be an energetic self-starter with high EQ and military credibility. They need the intellect and experience to understand and analyse how UGVs are being used on the front line and then relay the information to other Milrem staff. It is not a full time UA based role but would require up to 10-14 days in country each month to meet with the Milrem user community, identify faults, assist our in-country partners and gather critical information to influence how we develop current and future products.

The candidate would be responsible for collecting feedback and engaging with different departments in the company; product development, project delivery, training, and concept development. They would also be required to represent the company at events and potentially speaking on panels.

This post is aimed at high-quality ex-WOs, SNCOs, NCOs or Junior Officers looking for a challenge in this growing area of the defence industry. The candidate requires



excellent communication skills (written and verbal) and is a self-starter, comfortable operating independently in testing environments.

For more information or a call to discuss the role, please send a DM or email Paul Clayton at paul.clayton@milrem.com



Army Rejoiners Job Fair

HQ Infantry will host an Army Rejoiners Job Fair to support veterans considering rejoining the British Army. This event is an excellent opportunity for those who have left within the last three years to discover what the Army can offer them now.

The aim is to brief potential rejoiners from all regiments and corps on recent changes within the Army and to showcase the diverse career opportunities available across all branches. **Please note**, this is a purely informative event with no obligation to begin the re-joining process.

Date: Wednesday, 19th November 2025

Time: 0830 hrs - 1400 hrs

Location: Blenheim Hall, Waterloo Lines, Warminster, BA12 0DJ

A central brief for potential rejoiners will commence at 1000 hrs in Blenheim Hall:

1000 hrs: Opening Address by Colonel Infantry

1010 hrs: Update on the Army

1020 hrs: How to Rejoin? (Presented by NRC)

1040 hrs: Corps/Unit Updates



October 2025

Followed by: A Question & Answer session (up to 60 mins) and a 'walk and talk' session.

In addition to the brief, there will be informational stands from all Army units, not just the Infantry. This will provide a chance for you to engage directly with representatives from branches you may be interested in.

For more information and to register your attendance, please scan the QR code on the poster below.



Wrexham Job Fair - Thursday 4th December 2025

The North Wales Employment Fair, in partnership with the Welsh Government, RFCA and 160 (Wales) Brigade, will take place at Wrexham University on **Thursday, 4th December (10 AM to 2 PM)**.

This free event is exclusively for **Service Leavers, Veterans, and their families**, connecting you with top local and national employers ready to hire.



Last year's fair had a fantastic mix of companies, and this year promises to be even better.



Armed Forces in Wales, Employer Conferences

Building on the success of last year's events in both North and South Wales, the Armed Forces in Wales Employer Conferences will return in 2025. These free-to-attend conferences are delivered by the RFCA for Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government and the Ministry of Defence, offering a valuable opportunity for businesses across the country.

The conferences are designed to promote the significant business benefits of engaging with the Defence community. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the Armed Forces family, learn practical ways to access its diverse talent pool, and have the chance to network with like-minded organisations. A key feature will be sector-focused breakout sessions covering Health, Manufacturing and Defence, Logistics and Planning, Cyber, AI and IT, and Construction and Engineering.

Two dates are available for employers to attend: Wednesday, 5th November at Cardiff City Stadium, and Thursday, 4th December at Wrexham University. The events will



run from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, with complimentary refreshments, a breakfast roll, and lunch included.

Places are limited, so early registration is highly encouraged to secure your attendance. The full conference programme will be made available on the 17th of October 2025. Please use the link below to register your interest. [Register your interest here.](#)

Walling2Recovery Event for Veterans in Wales

Walling2Recovery (W2R) is offering a unique opportunity to learn the basics of dry-stone walling in the beautiful surroundings of Betws-y-Coed, Wales. This event is a fantastic chance to connect with other veterans, learn a traditional skill, and enjoy the great outdoors. W2R is a company that focuses on supporting the mental well-being and mindfulness of military and 'blue-light' veterans through dry stone walling events.



Event Details:

Dates: 8-10 April (Arrive 1230 on 8 April, depart 1230 on 10 April)

Location: FSC Centre, Rhyd-y-Creuaau, near Betws-y-Coed

Accommodation: Shared rooms at the FSC Centre

Food: All meals provided from the evening of 8 April to lunch on 10 April

Cost: The cost of this event is the responsibility of the individual.

- Full board accommodation: £60 per person
- Training: £40 per person (based on maximum participation of 10)
- Total cost: £100 per person
- A deposit of £50 is required by 31 October 2025 to secure your place.



Participants: A Maximum of 10 veterans.

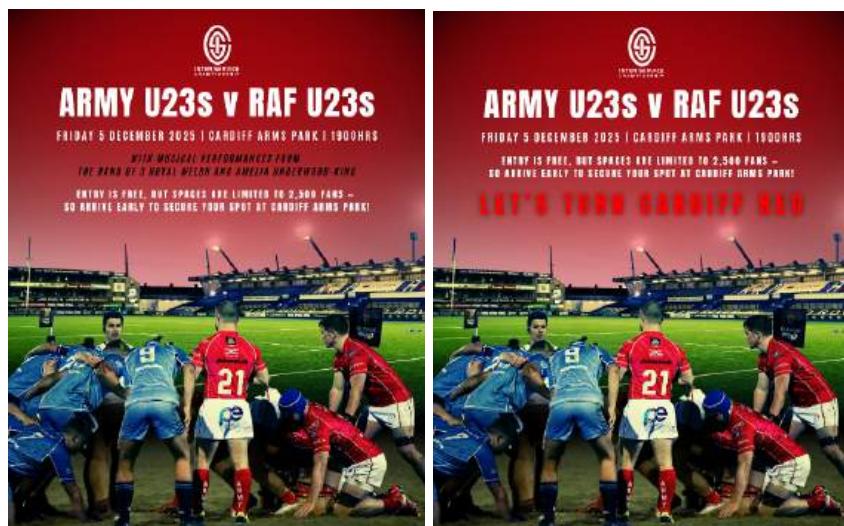
This two-day event aims to teach the basics of walling. The walling site is conveniently located directly across the road from the accommodation, simplifying logistics. To register your interest, please email your name to RHQ at infhq-union-rwelsh-0gpmailbox@mod.gov.uk.

*For veterans who may be experiencing financial difficulties, please contact RHQ to inquire about potential financial assistance. Each case will be considered for a subsidy. [Click here to visit the Walling2Recovery website.](#)

Army U23s Vs RAF U23s: Cardiff Arms Park - Friday 5th December

The Army and Royal Air Force Under-23s rugby teams will face off at the Cardiff Arms Park on Friday, 5th December 2025. This Inter Service Championship match promises an evening of passionate rugby, with entry completely **FREE** for all spectators.

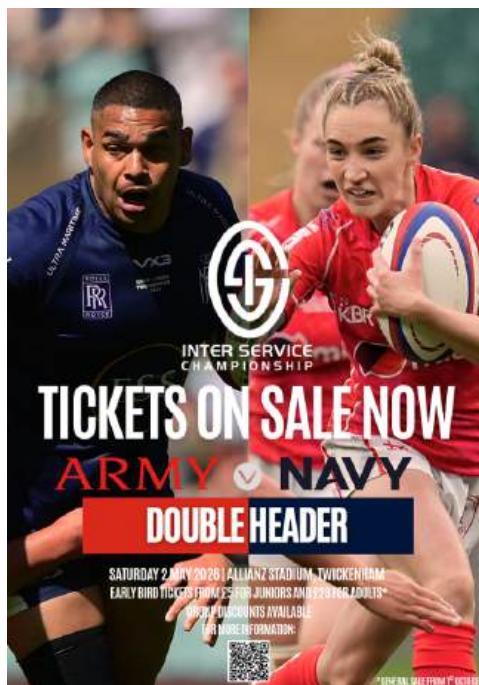
The fixture is due to kick-off at 1900hrs. Spectators are encouraged to arrive early to secure their place, as capacity is limited to 2,500. The evening will also feature musical performances from the Regimental Band of The Royal Welsh and Amelia Underwood-King. Further details and updates can be found on the official Inter Service Rugby Championship website and social media channels.



Tickets Now Available for the 2026 Army v Navy Rugby Fixture

This exciting event will feature a Double Header, with matches from both the men's and women's teams competing for the title. The event will take place on Saturday, 2nd May 2026, at the Allianz Stadium in Twickenham. Tickets are now available for purchase, with a limited-time Early Bird offer where Junior Tickets start from £5 and Adult Tickets from £28. Group discounts are also available.

For additional details and booking, please scan the QR code on the event poster or visit <https://www.interservicerugbychampionship.co.uk/190/3362/army-v-navy-2026>. Please note that the general sale for tickets will begin on 1st October.

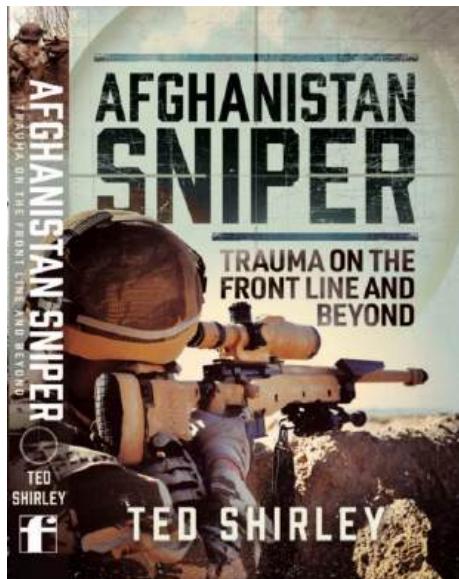


Pre-Order “Afghanistan Sniper” - Released 30th November

Although written as a pseudonym, those who deployed on HERRICK 11 will recognise both the writer and, if served in the MRF or B Coy over that period, maybe yourselves within the book. A fantastic read that not only documents an important period in our



history from a soldier's perspective but also delves into the challenges of mental health struggles and successes.



Released in November, you can pre-order below, with plans for talks (from the author) to coincide with Royal Welsh Club Activities/gatherings around Wales to follow.

"The war in Afghanistan had grown to its most violent of times, and Helmand Province had made for some of the bloodiest battles. With their departure to the front lines fast approaching, a Welsh infantry battalion was in the process of selecting its very best men to be put forward for sniper training.

The young Welshmen selected grew to become the closest of friends as they navigated their way through the difficult sniper cadre. After losing one of their own to the Taliban shortly after the course, Ted and the rest of the lads deployed to Helmand Province and the raging war for the second time. Follow their journey as they take on the Taliban, from enemy snipers to Taliban leaders. Deploying on the biggest air assault operation since the Second World War, they made shots from a mile away and even took out two enemy fighters with one round. They were battle winners, and they earned their title of sniper, but it was not without cost.

As the tour in Afghanistan came to an end, Ted began to feel the effects of what would later be diagnosed as post-traumatic stress disorder, and it quickly took over his life,



sending him on a downward spiral. This was a humbling, terrifying experience which lasted for over a decade and very nearly took his life. With an uninspiring diagnosis of no known cure, Ted decides to take control of his life and find his own solutions in this riveting story.

With detailed accounts of the unravelling of his mind and intricate insights into the taking of a life with the squeeze of a trigger, Afghanistan Sniper takes readers through a journey of the highest of highs and the lowest of lows known only to those who have been on that same journey”.

Pre Order here - <https://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Afghanistan-Sniper-Trauma-on-the-Front-Line-and-Beyond-Hardback/p/56903>

Wellbeing support through Leafyard

Back to routine after the summer break? Build mental fitness into your daily practice. 80% of users from our regimental family show measurable improvement within 12 weeks of registering. Transform your wellbeing with proven techniques: <http://www.leafyard.com/royalwelsh>

Apply for or replace a medal or veterans' badge

The government website, accessible via <https://www.gov.uk/apply-medal-or-veterans-badge/replace-a-medal-or-badge>, is an essential tool for the veteran community, and it is suggested that it be saved for easy access.

One of the key services on the government website is the process for replacing lost or destroyed medals. Veterans who have lost their medals in incidents such as fires or floods are entitled to official replacements. To be eligible, the loss must be documented with a police crime report or a successful insurance claim that lists the individual items. While there is a cost for the replacement medal and an administration fee, this service ensures that veterans can regain their awards. The website specifies that this service applies to medals awarded for service after World War I.



The application process involves downloading and completing a medal application form, which is then posted to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Medal Office. This must be accompanied by a letter explaining the circumstances of the loss and the necessary supporting documentation. The MOD aims to respond to applications within 10 working days, at which point successful applicants will be informed of the cost and payment process. Once payment is received, the replacement medal is typically dispatched within four weeks.

A Guide to the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card



The HM Armed Forces Veteran Card is an official identification card for former members of the UK Armed Forces, designed to provide a tangible link to their service and simplify access to a range of support and benefits. This card serves as a formal means of verifying that an individual has served in the armed forces.

Who is Eligible for a Veteran Card?

Individuals who have served as a regular or a reserve in the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, or Royal Marines are eligible for a Veteran Card. Eligibility may also extend to those who served in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary or the Merchant Navy in support of UK military operations. However, individuals who served in the armed forces of another country are not eligible.



How to Obtain a Veteran Card

For service leavers who left the armed forces after December 2018, the Veteran Card is automatically issued as part of their service leavers' pack and should be received within six weeks of leaving.

Veterans who left the armed forces prior to this date must apply for the card. The application can be completed online through the GOV.UK website.

<https://www.gov.uk/veteran-card>

To apply online, you will need:

- A GOV.UK One Login account to verify your identity.
- Your service number from your last period of service.
- Your National Insurance number.
- The approximate years you started and ended your service.
- A recent digital passport-style photograph of your head and shoulders.

For those unable to apply online, or for those applying on behalf of someone else, a postal application form can be requested by contacting the Veterans UK helpline. Email: veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk. Telephone: 0808 1914 218.

The New Digital Veteran Card

In a recent development, veterans can now access a digital version of their Veteran Card through the GOV.UK One Login app. This digital card, launched in October 2025, offers a faster and more convenient way for veterans to prove their status using their smartphones. The digital card displays the same information as the physical card, including name, photo, latest service, and date of birth, with security features to protect personal information.

Benefits of the Veteran Card

The HM Armed Forces Veteran Card offers a wide array of benefits, facilitating access to various services and discounts. These include:



- **Proof of Service:** The card is a straightforward way to verify your veteran status.
- **Discounts:** Many businesses offer discounts to veterans on products and services, such as at restaurants, shops, and gyms. The card can also be used to obtain a Defence Discount Service Card.
- **Travel Concessions:** The card can help in obtaining travel discounts, including the Veterans' Railcard, which offers up to a third off most rail fares.
- **Access to Services:** It can make it easier to access specialist veteran support for physical and mental health. This includes services like Op RESTORE for physical health and Op COURAGE for mental health.
- **Housing and Employment Support:** The card can be used to access housing support through Op FORTITUDE and employment initiatives like Op ASCEND.
- **Voting Identification:** The Veteran Card is an acceptable form of photo ID for voting in person.
- **National Insurance Relief:** It can be used to claim National Insurance relief for employers in a veteran's first civilian role after service.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Tuffney



RHQ Contact Details

Cardiff

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