



# Thorough

Volume 27 January 2025



# *A Message from the Chair*

## *Welcome to another edition of Thorough, the annual newsletter of the Kitchener Scholars' Association!*

As my second year as Chair draws to a close, the Committee and I are reflecting on a good year for the KSA. We had 140 scholars and guests at the March 2024 Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony, thanks not least to a genuinely bumper crop of 33 new undergraduate scholars and four postgraduate scholars. You can read more about how the Fund is able to provide so many scholarships on page 12. Lady Emma Kitchener was absolutely delighted to see so many at the Victory Services Club.

We have been working hard to try to ensure that the KSA is not an Alumni Association where Alumni do not know each other. For the second year we have been subsidising get-togethers of Kitchener Scholars at the same university, albeit in different years, and this year seven groups of student scholars met up for an evening out, claiming their subsidy by submitting a photo and a short report. We also set up a WhatsApp Group Chat for 2023 scholars and have just done the same for 2024 scholars.

Listening to the results of the Membership Survey in 2023, where there were a few comments that the Association was too London/South East centric, we again organised an event north of London. In 2023, it was a trip to Bletchley Park and in 2024, we had a trip to the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, outside Cambridge. We would be very happy to hear from members wishing to organise events even further north!

Committee Member Kathryn Pritchard developed and launched a pilot mentoring scheme which saw a very respectable 27 matched pairs of mentors and mentees. You can read more about the scheme and how your Vice Chair, Ruairidh Cumming, proposes to take it forward on page 11.

The traditional events at St Paul's Cathedral in June and Remembrance Sunday were well attended and we are enormously grateful to our President for generously funding tea after St Paul's and the curry lunch in Chelsea after the Remembrance Sunday Service.

Our Careers Panels in September have become a regular feature in the KSA calendar. My thanks to Committee Member Fay Margo for convening another excellent panel of Kitchener Scholars to share their wisdom and experience with younger members.

We have three key social media channels: LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram, with LinkedIn the more professional of the three. The number in our private KSA group on LinkedIn has risen to 231, nearly double the number compared to January 2023. If you are not a member, do join. And we would love to hear from KSA members out there about what you are up to – otherwise it tends just to be me posting!

Our Hon. Historian, Charles Bryant, has been busy ensuring we meet one of the five Objects of the KSA, namely, to perpetuate the memory of Kitchener of Khartoum and you can read his reports of how he has gone about diligently doing that.

We asked three Kitchener Scholars to tell us what they are up to. What an impressive set of individuals they are! One is a second year undergraduate at Durham University who has founded the University's Diplomatic Society. Another is a postgraduate Scholar working in high energy physics. Finally, we have young a Scholar nearing the end of her year's officer training at Sandhurst. If you would like to feature in a KSA Newsletter, drop us a line and tell us what you are up to!



# *Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony 2024*

*Susan Saunders*

Although we had around 200 Kitchener Scholars and guests for the extremely special 2022 KSA Centenary Dinner in the Imperial War Museum, with 140 in attendance at the Victory Services Club in 2024, this was perhaps one of the best attended 'regular' dinners that I can remember as a former Committee Member of 30 years standing.

I suspect it was my position as a former Chair of the KSA that granted me the privilege of sitting next to the guest speaker and engaging dinner companion, General Sir Redmond 'Reddy' Watt. Commissioned into the Welsh Guards, he became commanding officer of the First Battalion in 1990, where – by strange coincidence – he tried unsuccessfully to persuade my cousin to remain in the battalion rather than leave for civilian life. Sir Reddy went on to become Commander-in-Chief, Land Command. In retirement, he was Governor of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, in which capacity he oversaw the fabulous fund-raising dinner for the Lord Kitchener Memorial Fund held there.

Sir Reddy has maintained a particular interest in the mental health of our service men and women, referencing in his after-dinner speech the importance of having a 'guiding light': someone whose example we can follow. He urged us, as Kitchener Scholars, to follow the example that the first Lord Kitchener of Khartoum set as a leader and individual of action.

For Sir Reddy, his own guiding light is the example of Major-General Merton 'Becky' Beckwith-Smith, who was Officer Commanding the Welsh Guards Regiment in the 1930s. He spoke movingly about Major-General Beckwith-Smith's service during World War II, particularly the fall of Singapore, where the British 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was surrendered to the Japanese in February 1942. Becky and his men were imprisoned in the notorious Changi POW camp. There, he rallied the spirits of his troops, created a makeshift theatre and university, improved hospital conditions and encouraged sport. A few months later, he was exiled to Karenko camp in present-day Taiwan, where he died in November 1942. He was the most senior officer to die in captivity in World War II, a tragic link to the first Lord Kitchener: the most senior officer to die in the first World War.

The story of Major-General Beckwith-Smith was, for me, a second coincidence. My husband's grandfather, Brigadier William Trott, commanded the 8<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade at the fall of Singapore and also led his men in both the Changi and Karenko camps. The two men must have met.

Sir Reddy ended his thought-provoking and stirring speech with the customary toast to Kitchener Scholars.



*Christopher Brooke, studying Classical Composition at the Guildhall School of Music and winner of the Lindsay Phillips Book Bursary, together with Lady Emma Kitchener and Simon Piggott*



*Lady Emma Kitchener and Geena Capps, reading Medicine at Oxford, winner of the Henry Kitchener Prize for the outstanding student studying STEM*

# *Annual Dinner & Awards Ceremony (cont'd)*



*Seated from left, our postgraduate scholars: John Cattermull (DPhil, Oxford, Potassium Ion Batteries), Abigail Blackwell (MSc, Bristol, Data Science), Jane Harsham from Annington Homes, Joshua Bex (PhD, Cambridge, High Energy Physics), Emma Gray (MLitt, St Andrews, Global Social and Political Thought)*



*Our bumper crop of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Kitchener Scholars! Many congratulations to all of you!*

# Visit to IWM Duxford, May 2024

Simon Piggott

A small but select group of military aeroplane enthusiasts assembled at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, outside Cambridge and just off the M11 on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May. I say enthusiasts, as Carol Fedida (KS 1985) had travelled, multi-modally by train and bike, from Central London. Mike Lakin (KS 1981) had only landed at Heathrow from Perth Australia at 5.45am, and we met up at 11.30am. Not only that, at about 6'2", he had not even flown Business Class. Former Committee Member Sara Hook (KS 2019) came with her husband, bonnie baby and her parents (both Members of the IWM). Dr Jane Elford (KS 2013) had brought her husband, Cieran Hodges, and we were very excited to learn that we had our very own Top Gun in our presence, as he is close to completing his training as a Lockheed Martin F-15 pilot with the RAF. Finally, former Chair Jonathan Price (KS 1976) came with his wife, daughter Aretha (I could not stop myself from saying "like Aretha Franklin?" when introduced, which the poor girl must have heard a thousand times) and Aretha's boyfriend.



Whilst we did avoid buying an Airfix kit of a Lancaster Bomber in the very large shop, Carol and my wife Judith, could not resist trying on the replica WW2 flying jackets. The majority of us headed off to the American Air Museum, as selfishly, this was the museum/hangar I did not have time to visit on my only other visit to Duxford. Assembling all KSs together for a group shot is rather like herding cats, and I failed dismally, but here are the other members of the party.

What exhibits were the most interesting? Well, the now retired Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird is extraordinary. A retired, long-range, high-altitude Mach 3 reconnaissance plane, it is 93% made out of titanium. It flew at 85,000 feet. 32 were built and 12 lost in accidents – tricky to fly? – but none lost to enemy action. We saw the B-17 Flying Fortress which dropped more bombs than any other US Aircraft in WWII. Also in the American Air Museum was an ominous looking Predator Drone. There was a nicely curated exhibition which shared the experiences of men and women in the US Air Force and their impact on Britain and Europe, as well as the collaborative working between the RAF and the USAAF over the decades.

With the weather improving, and during an al fresco convivial lunch, a Supermarine Spitfire (don't ask me which Mark) trundled out of a hangar, and after some engine revving and testing of flaps, took off and flew a couple of loops, with the sound of the Merlin engine sending shivers down the spine.

Our Hon. Historian, Charles Bryant, subsequently quizzed me as to what the connection was between Duxford and Kitchener. I explained that we are trying to hold more events outside London and the South East. Just to satisfy Charles, the final picture is of the WW1 two seat British reconnaissance aircraft and light bomber, BE2c. It was active over the Western Front until 1916, the year of Kitchener's untimely death, when it was withdrawn as it was vulnerable to attack from faster fighters. It did however continue to be successful destroying several German airships. All in all, and judging by the feedback I received from participants, it was a jolly good day out and a visit is highly recommended.



# *A Year of History*

*Charles Bryant, Hon. Historian*

In May, a few Kitchener colleagues made a visit to the recently opened **Raffles Hotel OWO**, located in the meticulously refurbished former War Office on Whitehall, in a splendid Edwardian building which housed over 2,500 army administration staff during both world wars. As Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener occupied a rather grand office overlooking Whitehall, now a suite, which we visited. I was able to sit in the chair and at the desk which Kitchener used. We were also able to marvel at the staircase and reception rooms. A concierge at the hotel is a historian and regaled us with many fascinating facts and stories. One or two members of the Kitchener community have worked in the OWO when it was occupied by the Ministry of Defence; the transformation was noticeable, and memories certainly aroused!



## *A Year of History (cont'd)*

In June, my daughter and I visited Orkney and attended a local ceremony at the **Kitchener Memorial on the west coast of the Orkney mainland**. On the afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> June 1916, the cruiser HMS Hampshire with a crew of over 700 left the sheltered waters of Scapa Flow Harbour, Britain's principal naval port during the First World War. On board was Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, the Secretary of State for War, and his staff, who were on their way to Russia to carry out a diplomatic mission. The objective was to persuade the Czar to maintain the fight against Germany and its allies at a critical moment during the war. In a Force Nine gale, the ship struck a mine and tragically sank within 15 minutes with the loss of over 737 lives including Lord Kitchener, whose body was never recovered. Only 12 survived.



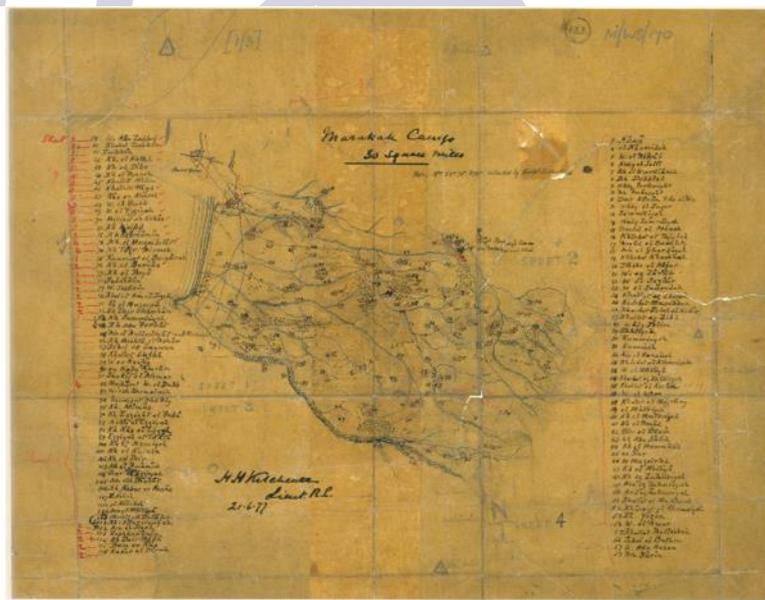
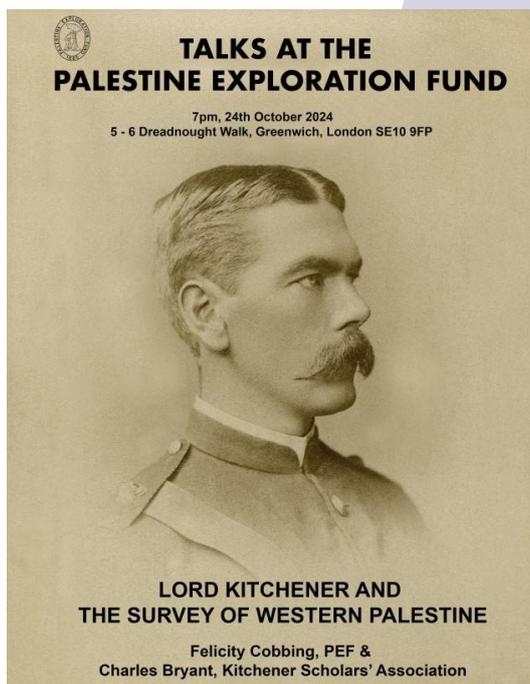
In 1926 a memorial in the form of a stone tower was unveiled at Marwick Head on the steep cliffs overlooking the site of the sinking which is visible from the monument. The evening of our visit was very windy, but during our moment of silence we noticed that the clouds parted, and shafts of sunlight lit the sea in a dramatic way. It is an RSPB Nature Reserve, and many birds were in our company. The views are spectacular, and we could even see the rock stack – the Old Man of Hoy- some 20 miles away. Our

group was small and diverse including local farmers and Orkney residents. We also viewed the inscriptions on the additional monument erected in 2016 which records the names of all the crew members and several would-be rescuers who lost their lives. Scholars, please think about visiting Orkney with its Neolithic remains and amazing landscapes for outdoor activities, as well as wartime traces.



# A Year of History (cont'd)

In October, the KSA was invited to mount a joint event on the time Herbert Kitchener spent in Palestine. Following his training as a Royal Engineer, he was seconded as a surveyor, aged 24, to the **Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF)** to join and subsequently lead the Western Palestine Survey (1874-77), which successfully mapped the rugged landscape of the Southern Levant – maps still in use today. Aside from explaining the Palestine setting and context, and the founding and work of the PEF a leading learned Society, Felicity Cobbing, Chief Executive and Curator of the PEF, and I delved into the influence that this experience had on the life and career of Herbert Kitchener, his adventures on horseback and under canvas, and his highly regarded accomplishments and legacy. What started as a 'gap year' became a stepping-stone to his iconic career in the context of great power politics, the army, and British imperialism.



Field Sheet 1877

Attendees were given access to archive material such as Kitchener's correspondence with the PEF and the survey maps which he and his team produced.

A recording of the one-hour talk is being prepared by the PEF for publication on its YouTube Channel and as soon as it is available, we will let you know.

*Simon Piggott, KSA Chair, said: "This was a fascinating talk, and it was a special experience to review some of the maps which Kitchener helped to prepare as well as see numerous pieces of Kitchener's correspondence. If you are ever in Greenwich during the week, do book an appointment to drop into the PEF. The staff are very friendly and will be delighted to see you and show you around. And you could combine it with a visit to the Cutty Sark which is virtually next door."*

# St Paul's Evensong & Remembrance Service

Simon Piggott

As is tradition, a group of Kitchener Scholars and guests gathered for general Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral at 3pm on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the closest Sunday to the anniversary of the death of Kitchener of Khartoum on 5th June 1916. Older KSs may remember that we used to have our own service in the little chapel next to All Souls' Chapel, which is where the KoK Memorial is to be found. We used to have around a dozen of the Cathedral's choristers come and sing. Standing about two yards in front of the choristers, with their incredibly high standard and beautiful singing, used to send a shiver down my spine. Mind you, the KSA did have to pay for the privilege of having a section of the choir specifically for the Association. Around 2011, St Paul's asked that we join General Evensong rather than having a bespoke Evensong, the *quid pro quo* being we had priority seating directly under the magnificent dome. Furthermore, the Association maintains profile with a piece about both the LKNMF and KSA on the back of the Evensong Service Sheet and we continue to have clerical representatives lead the short service in All Souls' Chapel itself.



Both last year and this year, we were lucky that this was led by the Dean himself, the Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett, who is *de facto* the most senior priest in the Diocese of London. This year, with a little lobbying, to maintain the profile of the KSA at this service, I was invited to read the Old Testament Reading. (I admit to using ChatGPT for an analysis of Jeremiah Chapter 5 verses 1-19 in simple English to assist me in making as clear as possible to the congregation the reading of the King James Version of this text.)

After General Evensong, we gathered in All Soul's Chapel for a short Service of Remembrance after which our President laid a wreath at the foot of her forbear.

The majority of our group, including the Dean, joined Lady Emma Kitchener, her husband, Lord Fellowes, their son Peregrine and his fiancée Henrietta, for tea in the nearby Café Rouge. Peregrine and Henrietta had announced their engagement two weeks earlier and we offered them our heartfelt congratulations. We are also very grateful for the generosity of Emma for hosting the tea.

Even if you are not particularly religious, I do recommend you experience this service at least once. All Souls' Chapel is normally shut, so not only is it an opportunity to visit this chapel, but also an opportunity to see the marvellous memorial to KoK and pay respects to the 126 Kitchener Scholars like yourselves you lost their life in the Second World War.



# Remembrance Sunday 2024

Ruairidh Cumming

## *Brightly coloured earplugs and a delicious curry: The KSA remembrance event pays tribute to the fallen*

As 10<sup>th</sup> November dawned grey and cool in London, some 55 scholars and guests made their way to Horse Guards Parade for the annual KSA remembrance event.

Security was very significantly upgraded from last year, so a great deal of thanks is due to Neal Clifton and Mervyn Basset for arranging access passes and communicating the new procedures in good time. Gathering initially on the Green Park side of the road, we were checked off against a list and our ID documents were scrutinised by Hi-Viz jacketed emissaries of the Department of Culture Media and Sport. DCMS had required the list of attendees some four weeks in advance, which regrettably precluded KSs and guests attending at short notice. Nonetheless the heightened security measures are probably overdue.

Passing through the security cordon, we were afforded a great view of the final preparations for the parade — bands marched into position, gun carriages were drawn past by slightly skittish horses and the last stragglers of the KSA were issued with badges and waved over the road to us.



With 11am drawing closer we moved round to the Kitchener memorial statue and were invited through the cordon and past the St John Ambulance tea van to get a better (and indeed closer than ever before) view of the field gun that would fire to mark the start and end of the two minutes silence. This year, the gun was positioned further towards the Whitehall side of Horse Guards meaning that we stood front of it as opposed to off to the side as has been the case before. Those of us not wise enough to accept the brightly coloured earplugs offered by the St John Ambulance crew found that our ears had barely stopped ringing as the gun fired again to mark the end of the silence.

Our small ceremony was led by Peregrine Kitchener-Fellows this year, who proved himself an able substitute for Lady Emma who was away in Florida. The traditional definition of “young scholars” had to



be stretched slightly to find enough readers for all ten pages of the Roll of Honour, namely the 126 Kitchener Scholars who gave their lives in service of their country in World War II, but the slight shortage of scholars did not prevent The Lord's Prayer and the hymn, *He Who Would Valiant Be*, from sounding out strongly across the square, perhaps to the bemusement of the general public in St James's Park.



## *Remembrance Sunday (cont'd)*



With the formal portion of the day concluded, scholars and guests moved back to the road to watch the parade march past and had an excellent view of HRH The Prince of Wales receiving the salute. This year, some of the parents of scholars were marching and our numbers swelled as the parade went on until the royal close protection team had to call in reinforcements to keep us in our assigned area.

Afterwards, the party retired to the Great India Restaurant in Chelsea for a traditional curry lunch and a toast was raised to Peregrine and Henrietta who had just returned from their seemingly short honeymoon. We hope a longer one is planned in due course! The staff of The Great India were pleased to have us back again and the food was simply delicious.



*Newlyweds, Peregrine and Henrietta  
Kitchener-Fellows*



*The Blythe sisters, Polly and Betty. Can you  
guess which one studied Classics and which  
one studied Biochemistry?*

# Mentoring scheme

Neal Clifton & Ruairidh Cumming

In the Spring of 2024, KSA launched a pilot for a new Mentoring Scheme, with the aim of connecting scholars (both new and not so new). For those being mentored (the “mentees”), it was a way of receiving academic guidance, career insights, networking opportunities, coaching of soft-skills and other personalised support.

For the mentors, it was an opportunity to share knowledge, experiences and expertise with the next generation of scholars, helping to build the KSA community and enhance their leadership and coaching skills.

Those interested in the scheme (either as mentors, mentees or indeed both) applied using a Google form and were then matched according to their skills and interests by Committee Member, Kathryn Pritchard. Of course, it wasn't always possible to find suitable or useful matches for everyone, but all names were kept on file in the hope of finding a good match at a later stage.

Each matched pair decided how they wanted to operate, choosing how often they wanted to meet and whether they wanted to chat remotely or face-to-face. For some it served as short-term support at a particular stage in the mentee's career, but for others it provided longer-term support and guidance.

## Feedback survey

In September, Kathryn asked for feedback on how the mentorship scheme had gone, to help us with planning for future schemes.

Here are the key points from the survey:

- We were able to match 27 pairs of mentors and mentees.
- 75% of survey respondents had met at least once, and some on up to four occasions.
- The majority rated their experience as positive or very positive - very encouraging for a trial scheme!
- 80% intended to continue their mentoring relationship.

## Some comments from the survey:

- *I liked the personalisation of the matches. I felt I got a lot out of our conversations.*
- *Just happy to engage with someone from a younger generation.*
- *I learnt a lot from my mentee!*
- *Discussing motivations and career possibilities.*
- *Connecting with an experienced professional and access to advice.*
- *I was matched with a very like-minded individual who has relevant experience within my field of engineering.*

## What happens now?

Existing mentor/mentee pairs will continue to arrange their own meetings to suit their schedules. There are still opportunities for new joiners to the scheme so if you are looking for some advice to progress your career or to mould the minds of the next generation of the KSA, please do get in touch with Committee Vice Chair Ruairidh Cumming at ([Ruairidh.Cumming+KSAMentoring@gmail.com](mailto:Ruairidh.Cumming+KSAMentoring@gmail.com)) to learn about next steps.



# *Lord Kitchener National Memorial Fund Report*

*Lt.Col. Mervyn Bassett BEM, Fund Secretary*

The LKNMF continues to fulfil its Royal Charter's objects by providing scholarships for the children of serving and retired forces personnel. Funds under management remain at around the £2.5 million mark, a significant improvement on the figure of only £600,000 in 2018. The increase is primarily due to a small number of very generous legacies from former Kitchener Scholars, listed at the bottom of this report. Huge thanks must go to the former and some current scholars who have so generously donated money to the Fund which ensures its ability to continue to award these scholarships. If you would like to consider a donation, regular or one off, or leaving a legacy in your will, please do contact me at [secretary@lknmf.com](mailto:secretary@lknmf.com)

This year we had 111 (2023: 129) applicants. Our Finance Committee led by Christopher de Mattos (KS 1986) provided guidance that we could budget for undergraduate scholarships numbering in the low 20s at a value of £2,000 and together with funding from commercial third parties, notably Annington Homes, these 111 were screened down to 58 candidates for interview, requiring 12 sets of interview panels. Each panel consists of three panel members. I act as Panel Secretary and am effectively the common denominator across all interview panels.

If you have time to assist during the months of July and August, your presence on a panel would be most appreciated. There will always be an experienced panel member in the chair to guide less experienced members and there is a comprehensive guidance note for panel members. We would very much welcome some younger and indeed female interviewers. I am sure this could be regarded as a good development opportunity. Drop me a line at [secretary@lknmf.com](mailto:secretary@lknmf.com) if you are interested.

After the reintroduction in 2023 of postgraduate awards after many years of not having the financial fire power to make such awards, the Finance Committee was also able to allocate funds for postgraduate awards for a second year running.

We were able to make awards to 29 (2023: 33) undergraduates and three postgraduates (2023: four). As has been the trend over the last few years, female applicants are more successful than male applicants, almost by a factor two to one. Awards this year were broadly evenly split between on the one hand, independent schools, and on the other hand, maintained sector (state) schools and sixth form colleges. The Scholarship Committee chaired by Simon Piggott has continued to develop and update the Scholarship Application Form and the guidance note for panel interviewers. He also provides comprehensive statistical reporting to the Executive Committee about the scholarship application process.

We are tracking accurately how applicants learn about the award. 40% of applicants hear about Kitchener Scholarships from their school, the same proportion as who hear about them from their parents, family and friends. Only 20% are using sources such as [www.scholarshiphub.org.uk](http://www.scholarshiphub.org.uk), which is the definitive repository of all scholarships and bursaries available to students studying at UK universities, the MOD intranet or other online resources. We have around 200 secondary schools and sixth form colleges in our database.

Nicholas MacFarlane, our legal advisor stands down as a Trustee from the Fund after 12 years of loyal service, to be replaced by Mark Bunch (KS 1980), latterly Managing Partner at the law firm, Bates Wells. As ever, the Fund's Report and Accounts are available on the Charity Commission website, Charity Number 313525.

The Trustees of the LKNMF wish to express their thanks for legacies received since 2017 from the following Kitchener Scholars or their widows: William Arthurton; Dr Rober Bogden; Ethyl Fyfe; Rupert Harvey; Dr Edward Inett; Victor Lake; William McCleery; Eric Morgan; Robert Simpson. The Trustees are enormously grateful to the late John Dunscombe for a particularly generous legacy.

# University “Get-togethers”

Simon Piggott

To try and establish stronger ties and relationships between Kitchener Scholars at the same university, in 2023 we started a scheme whereby, providing there were three students or more at the same university, the KSA subsidised an evening of students at this same university but in different years, to go out for a light meal and a drink. The only requirement to claim the subsidy was to submit a photo and a short report. We were in delighted that in 2024, proactive students at the following universities took us up on the offer: Durham, Edinburgh/Glasgow, Exeter, Oxford, St Andrews and Warwick. Here are the pictures to prove it! Invitations have just gone out to students for 2025 meet-ups.



Durham



Glasgow / Edinburgh



Exeter



Oxford



Warwick



St Andrews

## Your LinkedIn Group needs you!!

The number of members of the KSA LinkedIn Group, to which only bonafide Kitchener Scholars are admitted has increased to 231. The Committee would like to encourage all members to post about what they are up to. If you haven't joined, why not join up now, and if you are already in the Group, **let's have some posts please!** Links to these three social media channels (LinkedIn would consider itself as more than a social media channel) can be found below.



# Founding a University Society

Alex McDermott KS 2023

My interest in politics started at 14 years old, when I gave a speech at the Despatch Box in the House of Commons, addressing the UK Youth Parliament on why the voting age should be lowered. It was an awesome experience: my speech got viewed five million times on social media, was branded as a ‘William Hague moment’ in the national press, and John Bercow even made fun of my height! But the euphoria was short-lived, as my Twitter feed was swamped with over 13,000 hate comments – click here to see if you agree with one user that I’m “the reason why wedgies were invented”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u894bXZoyZs>! I learnt some formative lessons along the way – some about handling trolls, but mainly about how fortunate I was to be afforded this unparalleled opportunity, and how similar initiatives could similarly pique other young people’s interest in public service.

So last year, I founded the Durham Diplomatic Society (DDS) at university. DDS’ aim is to equip students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds with opportunities, supporting them towards careers in international relations. To achieve this mission, we hold speaker events with some of the top voices in foreign policy, from Dr Fiona Hill to Sir David Lidington. In December, we hosted David Petraeus, when 150 Diplomatic Society members gathered to hear the General’s learned insights into the Middle East, Ukraine, and lessons in leadership. There are definitely fewer earnest ways to spend a Wednesday evening at uni!

Off campus, the Diplomatic Society runs termly trips to London as part of its ‘Ambassadors Programme’, which is designed to bring members to the heart of public service in practice. Across the first two Ambassadors Programmes, DDS has taken 75 members to London, visiting seven embassies, along with various think tanks and government departments. Last December, our group be toured the Home Office and Foreign Office, whilst enjoying roundtable Q&As with figures from Lord Dannatt to former Chief of MI6, Sir John Sawers.

Juggling the society, my degree, Northumbrian University OTC, football, and making the most of the north’s cheaper pints can be a bit of a challenge. But thanks to the immense support of the university community, students, our speakers, and career public servants who volunteer for our mentoring scheme, DDS runs smoothly and affords me the bandwidth to keep up with everything else! The ‘80/20 rule’, contending that 20% of your effort often leads to 80% of your results, is a useful guide for keeping the plates spinning, and prioritising the stuff that really matters. I’m immensely grateful to the KSA for supporting my time through Durham, which is incredibly fertile ground to try lots of new opportunities.

Whilst this spectrum of fantastic opportunity can keep you very busy, I would definitely recommend

getting stuck in as much as possible, even if it seems a little overwhelming at first.

*Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you did not do, than by the ones you did do!*

Thank you for taking the time to endure my rambling - if any member of the KSA community is ever in or near Durham, you would absolutely be more than welcome to attend any of our events. Stay tuned on our Instagram (@durhamdiplomacy) for updates!



*From the Doughnut to Durham - hosting Sir David Omand, former Director of GCHQ, with 130 Diplomatic Society members in attendance.*

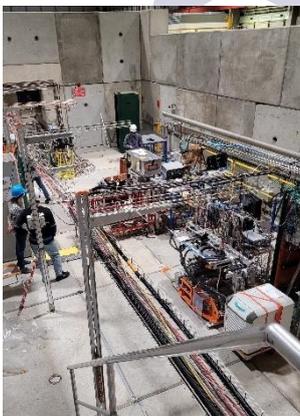
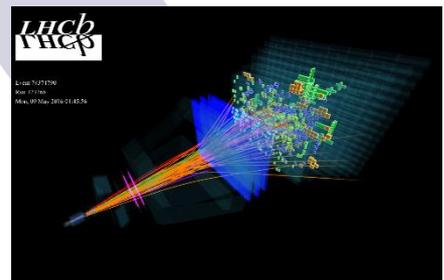
# *Life as a High Energy Particle Physicist*

Joshua Bex KS 2016

I am a third year PhD student studying Particle Physics at the University of Cambridge. More specifically, I spend much of my time analysing data to search for rare decays of very heavy particles—called “beauty” or “b” quarks—and contributing to the development of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) LHCb experiment. I was fortunate enough to spend a year based at the experiment, located in CERN, Geneva. I will do my best to give some insight into what I do and recap on my recent year in Switzerland.

LHCb is one of the four detectors based on the 27-kilometre underground ring that is the LHC. It unfortunately has a rather uninspired name, but you may have heard of its more famous siblings, ATLAS and CMS (which together definitively revealed the Higgs boson). The LHCb detector is a 21-metre long, 5,600-tonne detector; it is a complex machine designed to detect products of high energy collisions between particles—primarily protons—accelerated to close to the speed-of-light by the LHC.

A large amount of my time is spent analysing data from the LHCb experiment to search for rare decays of a specific type of particle. You can think of this particle as a heavier version of the protons and neutrons that form the vast majority of visible matter around us. The key idea is the following: if the measurement of the rareness of the decay (or the “branching fraction”) is different to its prediction, then there is evidence of physics we do not yet understand. You can see an image of a characteristic event at LHCb produced by a collision of two protons. The solid lines represent the paths of particles, and the boxes the response of the detector. By filtering over billions of events such as these, we compute the number of times our decay is observed; as you can imagine, confidently observing a specific decay in the presence of others is difficult, for which a key tool is training neural networks to decipher between real decays of interest, and polluting decays which have a similar experimental signature.



While based at CERN, I became involved in a different side of the experiment – the development and testing of sensors to be used in a future upgrade to the LHCb detector. I found this process fascinating, with one of the highlights being testing the prototype electronics and photon sensors in a proton beam. When the system of accelerators at CERN are not supplying the LHC, protons are sent instead to other locations. We place our system in this proton beam to test how it will respond to the characteristic conditions of the real experiment, impossible to create in the laboratory. In the second image I captured the setup; the beam enters from the top left and exits in the bottom right, passing through various sensors on the way through, during which we take data. I am currently analysing data taken during this time, and from the laboratory, to provide insight on sensors to be implemented in the next LHCb iteration in the early 2030s.

I can reflect on a hugely positive experience at CERN, with the opportunities to meet incredible colleagues from all around the world, who have encouraged and enabled me to grow as a scientist. This is not to mention being able to ski and hike in the Alps on the weekends and explore the amazing place that is Switzerland! Now back in Cambridge, I am focusing on wrapping up my projects before turning to an impending thesis, whilst teaching undergraduate students in particle physics and statistics. I am extremely grateful to the LKNMF for my postgraduate award which I received in 2023 and meeting the other postgrad recipients at the 2024 Annual Dinner. Moving to Switzerland for the year was a large financial undertaking that the scholarship helped support. My PhD so far has been an exhilarating time, and I would highly encourage anyone considering graduate study.

# *A year at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst*

Alex Jackson KS 2020

Having received my undergraduate Kitchener Scholarship in 2020, I went on to study International Relations at Durham University, graduating last Summer. Whilst at Durham, I was a member of the Northumbrian OTC and in my second year of university, I was awarded an Army Enhanced Undergraduate Bursary, so for me, going to Sandhurst had been in my sights for a few years. On leaving university, I took some time to get myself fit and ready to embark on the Regular Commissioning Course at RMAS in January 2024.



As I arrived, ironing board and black grips in hand, I was both nervous and excited for what the upcoming year would throw at me. As I said goodbye to my mother and began to embed myself into 1 Platoon, Blenheim Company, 11 months did not seem like it would fly by at the rate that it indeed has. My first term focused primarily on the basics, both in barracks, (learning drill) and in the field (learning the skills and drills of soldiering). Highlights for me



include 'Passing Off the Square' on Week 5 and Exercise Long Reach on Week 8 which consisted of a challenging 70km patrol in Brecon over a 30-hour period, aimed to test our navigational skills. Juniors was wrapped up with a week of Adventurous Training, sailing around the South Coast with fellow Officer Cadets, which was such a laugh!

Intermediate Term really was as busy as everyone warned me it would be. From an 11-day Battle Camp in Brecon and 6 days of sleep deprivation digging trenches in Thetford, to a trip to the battlefields of France, to analyse the commanders' challenges in the Second World War, I was now applying what I had learnt in Juniors to situations where I was in charge and figuring out what type of leader I wanted to be. Outside of exercise, I hugely enjoyed debating and discussing a variety of topics in our War Studies and Defence and International Affairs seminars and the term was rounded off with a Company Dinner Night and Academy Sports Day.



Going into Senior Term, I struggled with an injury I had been carrying since Inters, however having received an unconditional offer from my first choice of Regiment, The Queen's Royal Hussars, following our Regimental Selection Boards at the beginning of term, I was determined that come rain or shine, I would be slow marching up the steps of Old College in December...! Although it has been a mental and physical challenge, I have been able to manage it thanks to the right support at RMAS and enjoy my Senior Term. As we moved through this term, we had greater autonomy of action and decision making on exercise and learnt how to operate in the urban environment which was hugely exciting. I particularly enjoyed playing civilian population on our Stabilisation Exercise and rioting against the Royal Marines!

As I placed my QRH beret on my head for the first-time last week as our final exercise, Dynamic Victory,



drew to a close in snowy Germany, I couldn't believe that my time at Sandhurst was nearly at an end. It is safe to say that I have learnt a lot over the last three terms about the Army and my place within it, however more importantly, I have learnt a lot about myself, specifically the type of officer I want to be and how I want to lead my soldiers. I look forward to attending my Phase Two training at Bovington in the New Year where I will learn to be a tank commander, before arriving at Regiment as a Troop Leader in the Summer.

# Kitchener Scholars 2024

Name	Subject	Institution
Phoebe Allen	Cybersecurity	Aston
Charles Andrews	Quantity Surveying & Commercial Management	University of the West of England
Lucy Badcock	German & Russian	Bath
Emily Butler	Medicine	Queen's Belfast
Mark Cattell	Medicine	Brighton & Sussex Medical School
Amelia Colquhoun	Classics	St Andrews
Lily Crossley	Computer Science	Birmingham
Eleanor Currie	Human Geography	Aberystwyth
Chloe Dachtler	Natural Sciences	Homerton College, Cambridge
Connor Fox	Law	York
Jemma Hayden	Law	Downing College, Cambridge
Finlay Horner	PPE	Exeter
Lucy Holdsworth	International Relations	Durham
Arabella Johnston	Mathematics	Bristol
Lucy Johnstone	Filmmaking	Kingston
Benjamin Lakin	Biological Sciences	Warwick
Katie Millard	Mechanical Engineering	Southampton
Louis Parkinson	Medicinal & Biological Chemistry	Edinburgh
Isis Pinches	Biomedical Sciences	Sheffield Hallam
Aidan Ryder	Design Engineering	Imperial College, London
Wilfred Sargent	Geography, German & Economics	Durham
Eva Scullion	Music	Durham
Aleksander Tarnowski	Politics & International Relations	Exeter
Edem Tepre	Computer Science & Engineering	Birmingham
Samuel Unsworth	History	Durham
Emma Warner	Occupational Therapy	Derby
Heather Watson	Sports Management	Loughborough

## Deferred from 2023

Thando Best	Economics	Bath
Ryan Mupesa	Advanced Business	Queensland Australia

## Deferred to 2025 (taking Gap Year)

Alice Bryant	Sociology	Durham
Jessica Esland	Nursing	Glasgow Caledonian

## Postgraduates

Jonathan Bell	MSc, War and Psychiatry	Kings College, London
Benjamin Smeaton	MSc, Prehospital Medicine	Queen Mary, University of London
Anna Winthrop	PG Certificate, Medical Education	Newcastle

*We look forward to welcoming the undergraduate Scholars to the KSA and presenting you all with your certificates at the Annual Dinner on 28th March!*

# *AGM Report*

Neal Clifton

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held at the Guildhall complex in London on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Our Chair, Simon Piggott, and Treasurer, Francesca Cumming, had circulated their reports in advance to members who had asked to attend either in person or on-line. It had been another busy and successful year with the usual principal events and some other initiatives to bring scholars together and improve networking - in particular we are trying to organise occasional events outside of London. Simon reminded the meeting that his key objective during his tenure as Chair is to increase engagement among scholars, and he is pleased with progress in this respect, with generally increasing numbers attending events and more interaction between scholars while at University and indeed in subsequent careers.

The Annual Dinner held at the Victory Services Club was very well attended where nearly all the new scholars were present to receive their certificates along with their parents or other guests. As usual we held our wreath-laying ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral in June, a Careers Panel in September and gathering on Horse Guards Parade on Remembrance Sunday. There are reports on all these events elsewhere in the Newsletter. It is good to see a number of scholars taking advantage of funding to facilitate get-togethers in their Universities. We have a WhatsApp group for 2023 and 2024 scholars and of course many continue to connect on other social media platforms. A new Mentoring Scheme (again more fully described in a separate article) had been generally well received and we hope that in some cases this will lead to an enduring and fruitful partnership!

Francesca reported that the Association's finances are healthier with an annual surplus for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 of £3,437 after several years of deficit. Year end cash reserves stood at £12,330. Francesca was pleased to report an increase in the numbers paying the correct subscription (£20 annually) though there are still some scholars not paying the full amount and there is a reminder and clarification about this below in the newsletter. The KSA remains grateful to the LKNMF for funding new scholars' annual dinner each year, much of the KSA Secretariat expenses and subsidies for other events.

In September, Kathryn Pritchard stood down from the Committee due to her work commitments and also her involvement with Army Reserves. Kathryn had been a highly committed and supportive member. At the Committee Meeting following the AGM, we were very pleased to welcome Angus Morton (KS 2018) as a member of the Committee and look forward to working with him in the coming months. We are always keen to hear from members, perhaps retired or semi-retired with some time on their hands, who feel they may be able to contribute to the Committee. Do contact me or Simon Piggott for more information.

## *Upcoming Events – Save the Dates!*

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### ***The Kitchener Scholars' Association Annual Dinner and Awards Ceremony*** ***A few places remain!***

*Drinks reception from 6:30, Dinner 8:00pm, Carriages 11pm, 28th March 2025*  
*Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF*

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### ***St Paul's Evensong and Memorial Service***

*Further details including timing in due course but likely to be 3pm, 1st June 2025*

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### ***Remembrance Sunday Services on Horse Guards Parade***

*From 11am, 9th November 2025*

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***More events in planning!***

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# Your KSA Committee

Your KSA Committee for the coming year is as follows:

## KSA Committee

<b>Chair</b>	Simon Piggott <i>simon.piggott.t21@btinternet.com</i>
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Ruairidh Cumming
<b>Secretary</b>	Neal Clifton <i>secretary@kitchenerscholars.org</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Francesca Cumming
<b>Newsletter Editors</b>	Archie Taylor, Simon Piggott
<b>Hon. Historian</b>	Charles Bryant
<b>Social Media</b>	Grace Girling
<b>Other Committee</b>	Fay Margo, Angus Morton, John Ryder
<b>Members</b>	
<b>Website</b>	<i>Caroline Mathews at MySuperVA</i>

Our special thanks to **Sara Thornton (KS 2001)** and owner of Webholism who for many years has supported the KSA's website. Sara is off to pursue her interests as a writer and movie creator. Good luck, Sara! Our Webmaster as of last November is now Caroline Mathews at MySuperVA.

Are you retired or semi-retired, with time on your hands, and looking to develop further outside interests? Do you think you could contribute to the Committee, for example, in organising an event or bringing some IT skills to bear? Then please drop me a line!  
Simon Piggott

## Subscription Reminder

### *Please check you are paying the right amount*

Just to remind you how subscriptions are used. A key use of Funds is subsidising the Under 30s tickets at the Annual Dinner as well as various printing costs associated with the Dinner, including printing this Newsletter for Scholars attending the dinner. Subscriptions also fund the Secretariat, the website and webhosting and subsidising events we organise such University Get-togethers, the Bletchley Park visit (2023), the Duxford visit (2024), and face to face Careers Panels where we provide refreshments.

We are not draconian about enforcing payment of the £20 pa subscription. A number of Kitchener Scholars pay lower amounts which, for example, prevailed in years gone by and we do recognise that some of you living a long way from London or overseas have little opportunity of taking advantages of the events we currently organise. You will still stay on the mailing list (assuming you are still opted-in!).

However, we do ask that if you attend one of the Annual Dinners, any tea after St Paul's, lunch after Remembrance Sunday or a subsidised event, you are paying the correct subscription – and our Treasurer and Secretary now more rigorously check this. We hope you agree that this approach strikes the right balance! **We ask you to check you are paying the correct subscription of £20 by standing order, ideally on 1<sup>st</sup> October (the start of our financial year), 1<sup>st</sup> December or 1<sup>st</sup> January.**

**ACCOUNT NAME:** Kitchener Scholars' Association

**BANK:** NatWest

**SORT CODE:** 60-03-25

**ACCOUNT NUMBER:** 03808742

*Thank you! Francesca Cumming ACA KS 2015, KSA Treasurer*