

Performing Arts Center

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS



The Pipes and Drums of *The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards* (Carabiniers and Greys)

The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are Scotland's senior regiment and only regular cavalry regiment. The Regiment was formed in 1971 from the amalgamation of the 3rd Carabiniers (whom were themselves the result of the amalgamation of the 6th Dragoon Guards the Carabiniers and the 3rd the Prince of Wales Dragoon Guards in 1922) and The Royal Scots Greys (2nd Dragoons).

The history of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards is therefore the record of three ancient regiments. Through The Royal Scots Greys, whose predecessors were raised by King Charles II in 1678 the Regiment can claim to be the oldest surviving Cavalry of the Line in The British Army.

Displayed on the Regimental Standard are just fifty of the numerous battle honours won in wars and campaigns spanning three centuries. The most celebrated of these are Waterloo, Balaklava and Nunshigum. At the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 the Scots Greys took part in the famous Charge of the Union Brigade. It was here that Sergeant Ewart captured the Imperial Eagle, the Standard of Napoleon's 45th Regiment. This standard is now displayed in the Home Headquarters of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards at Edinburgh Castle and in commemoration the Eagle forms part of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards cap badge. During the Crimean War

in 1854 two Victoria Crosses were awarded at the Battle of Balaklava against the Russians in the famous Charge of the Heavy Brigade. In World War II the battle honour Nunshigum was won by B Squadron of the 3rd Carabiniers against the Japanese in Burma.

The Pipes and Drums

The Pipes and Drums of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards have their origin in the small pipe band that came to The Royal Scots Greys in 1946 as a result of demobilisation of certain Scottish Territorial Armoured Corps units. This was The Scots Greys' first official pipes and drums. Although prior to this time there had been smaller and quite unofficial pipe bands in The Regiment, including one in India in the 1920's which performed mounted.

The late King George VI took a great interest in The Pipes and Drums of The Royal Scots Greys and personally designed much of their uniform. It was King George VI who granted The Pipes and Drums the privilege of wearing the Royal Stuart tartan.

With the Royal Stuart kilt and plaid the pipers wear a dark blue doublet. The sporran is of grey horse hair (reminiscent of the grey horses) with tassels of black and red similar to the jowl plumes which hung from the officers bridles. The feather bonnets have the yellow vandyke band and a white feather plume. The plaid brooch bears the White Horse of Hannover. The Eagle and Carabines badge is worn as a plume clasp in the feather bonnet and on the sporran cantle.

In full dress uniform the drummers wear the Regimental uniform of a bearskin hat, scarlet tunic, blue overalls, George boots and spurs. Not being classed as bandsmen who wear a red plume in the bearskin, the drummers wear the normal white plume.

The bass drummer however wears the distinctive white bearskin with a red plume. The white bearskin was given to the Regiment by Tsar Nicholas the Second of Russia in 1894, on his becoming Colonel in Chief of The Royal Scots Greys.

Today, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards horses have long been since replaced by tanks and other armoured vehicles. Most recently the Regiment has the honour of being the first in the Army to be equipped with the new Challenger 2 Main Battle tank. All members of The Pipes and Drums are first and foremost fully trained tank crew members.

During the Gulf Conflict 1991 The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards were deployed as part of the 7th Armoured Brigade (The Desert Rats). In the ground war the Regiment spearheaded the attack through Iraq and into Kuwait and many members of The Pipes and Drums served on active duty in the Gulf War and in more recent times as part of the NATO lead Stabilisation

Forces helping to keep the peace in the Former Yugoslavia state of Bosnia, two tours of Kosovo and again in the Gulf in 2003 and 2006.

The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards although a top class Pipe Band is but the tip of the iceberg, behind the spectacular sight and sound lies fully trained and experienced Tank crewmen ranging from the newly trained Drivers and Gunners of the younger Band members, through the combat experienced (Gulf and Bosnia and Kosovo Gulf 2003) first class crewmen of the older members, who's experience and skills range from the Tanks themselves right through to the tactical Command, Control and Communication of the Armoured Regiment to the fully Qualified and experienced Tank Commanders of the Pipe Major and the Pipe and Drum Corporals.

In the British Army of today to maintain the high standards of skills demanded of an armoured crewman is hard enough but, to maintain the highest standards in piping and drumming and be held in high regard in the civilian competition world requires the utmost dedication, determination, enthusiasm and patience, for example one day they could be sitting round the table practicing the next they are in the fields and woods or on the firing ranges of Germany, something which should be considered when you look at The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on parade before you, making them truly second to none.

The Amazing Grace Story

The Regimental Band and The Pipes and Drums enjoyed great success with the release of "Amazing Grace" in 1971, particularly for their unique brand of combined music. The 1971 recording of "Amazing Grace" became a worldwide multi-million pound seller and was Number One in the British pop charts for over six weeks.

Now after thirty-seven years in the public eye Amazing Grace is as popular as ever. Sadly due to operational draw down our Regimental Band is no longer with us.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is the Colonel in Chief of the Regiment.

The Pipes and Drums appear by kind permission of Lieutenant Colonel Ben Edwards and are lead by Pipe Major Derek Potter.