


Identity, Purpose and Belonging:

The First Scottish International
Conference on Armed Forces
Research in Society

22–28 August 2024

Edinburgh
Napier University
Craiglockhart
Campus



Scottish Armed Forces
Evidence and Research
AND
Centre for Military
Research Education
and Public Engagement,
Edinburgh Napier University



Identity, Purpose and Belonging:

The First Scottish International
Conference on Armed Forces
Research in Society

A very Scottish Welcome – Failte gu Alba

UK military personnel, Veterans and their families living in Scotland, through service to their country, are committed to safeguarding our security, supporting national interests and growth. As such they are an integral part of our community. On behalf of the conference team, Edinburgh Napier University's **Centre for Military Research, Education & Public Engagement**, (CMREPE) in partnership with the **Scottish Armed Forces Evidence & Research Hub** (SAFE&R), are delighted to host Scotland's inaugural conference "Identity, Purpose and Belonging: The First Scottish International Conference on Armed Forces in Society".

CMREPE was established in 2020 with an aim to consolidate existing knowledge through the development of a collaborative community of research and practice. In 2022 The Scottish Armed Forces Evidence and Research (SAFE&R) network was instigated thanks to funding from the Veterans Foundation. Aligned to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, our mission is to harness the combined knowledge of multiple academic institutions, military practitioners and service providers to provide rigorous analysis and incisive commentary that contributes to sound, evidence based policy and practice.

It is fitting that Edinburgh Napier University's Craiglockhart Campus, the site of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owens first meeting as poets, is the venue for our first international conference. Between 1916-1919 Craiglockhart was commissioned by the Government as a military hospital for the treatment of shell-shocked officers and became known for its sympathetic and effective treatment.

The conference is an opportunity to propose new concepts, theories and conceptual frameworks that represent the lifeblood of our field which will lead to further innovative collaborations. We have designed a combination of research seminars, colloquiums, workshops and public events offering delegates the opportunity to engage with peer, international and UK based, researchers and practitioners from a wide variety of disciplines - from Military Sociology to Strategic Studies, Art and Engagement to Veterans Affairs.

It is fitting that we have our first international conference in the garrison city of Edinburgh which seamlessly fuses the atmospheric and historical cobbled streets of the Old Town with the modern architecture of the New Town. Our active participation in Edinburgh's Festival Fringe with an exciting series of public events and exhibitions encapsulates our commitment to connect and critically examine the role of armed forces in our society.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make the conference a success and to everyone who has travelled to join this vibrant and committed community who will ensure the continued growth of this field of work.

Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith

**Director Centre for Military Research, Education and Public Engagement, chair SAFE&R,
Conference Chair**

SAFER Conference Team and Keynote Speakers



Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith – Director of Centre for Military Research Education and Public Engagement, Founder and Chair Scottish Armed Forces Evidence and Research Network (SAFE&R) Edinburgh Napier University

Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith is a Research Professor within the Business School. She is the founder and Director of the Centre for Military Research, Education and Public Engagement, Lead for the new Scottish Armed Forces Evidence and Research (SAFE&R) Hub and the University Research Lead for Military Research. She has a strong record of collaborative research within the arena of armed forces studies and has a demonstrated record of knowledge exchange and building strong research and practice relationships regionally, nationally, and internationally. In addition, she works with several voluntary and public sector organisations devoted to military transition, education, and wellbeing including regionally on the Edinburgh Military Education Committee (MEC) and nationally on the Council of Military Education Committees (COMEC). Her main areas of research cover Military transition, veterans in the prison system, the armed forces family and child, Armed forces Mental Health, Mental Illness and Wellbeing.



Dr Maggie Anderson – Education lead Centre for Military Research Education and Public Engagement, Edinburgh Napier University

Maggie is a lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation within Edinburgh Napier Business School. She is a senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy and Programme Lead for the MOD University Short Course Programme. She is creative and passionate, embracing advances in teaching and learning, to enrich the student experience. She is also interested in and has expertise in technology enhanced learning and widening access via CPD course development, and has worked with a variety of organisations, developing bespoke programmes. As Academic Lead for the Armed Forces at Edinburgh Napier she works to widen participation and develop programmes and initiatives across the University for those in the military.



Claire Biggar – University Armed Forces Covenant Lead, Public Engagement Lead for the Centre of Military Research, Education & Public Engagement

Claire Biggar joined Edinburgh Napier University in 2007 as the Executive Assistant to the Principal and is now the Colleague Health & Wellbeing Lead within the university. She is the Public Engagement Lead for The Centre of Military Research, Education & Public Engagement and the dedicated Armed Forces Lead for the university. Claire was instrumental in encouraging the Principal to sign the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant in 2016, leading the university to be the first Scottish University to receive the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award in 2019 highlighting the commitment the university demonstrates to support the Armed Forces Community.

Promoting education to the armed forces community as a viable option is a key commitment for Claire who is keen to ensure Scottish HE & FE institutions are recognised collectively as providing encouraging educational opportunities to help Scotland meet its ambition to be “*the destination of choice for the service leaver*”. Claire sits on a number of external committees and working groups to help achieve this ambition.



**Dr Colin Macpherson – Edinburgh Napier University Research Fellow,
Centre of Military Research, Education & Public Engagement**

Colin is a part-time Research Associate within the Centre for Military Research, Education & public Engagement and is a retired Royal Air Force officer. A Logistics officer by profession, Colin has a diverse portfolio of command and leadership experience both as a practitioner and in organisational leadership strategy, policy and doctrine development. Colin has extensive experience in operational planning and has been instrumental in the development and integration of experimental concepts into NATO’s operational doctrine as well as shaping specialist air integration into the Joint command-and-control environment. Colin is an emerging researcher and an experienced mentor and has recently graduated as a Doctor of Business Administration from Edinburgh Napier University.



**Professor Gary Kerr – Professor in Festival & Event Management,
School Academic Lead for Innovation & Enterprise, Edinburgh Napier
University – Chair Armed Forces Network**

Professor Gary Kerr is a Professor in Festival & Event Management at Edinburgh Napier University. He is passionate about supporting students who have an armed forces or sporting background. He is also the Dual Career Academic Tutor, where he provides academic support to students who are high performing athletes or coaches. He is Principal Investigator of a multidisciplinary research team that won the 2023 Cutting Edge Research Award (Silver Prize) for most significant contribution to Event Studies, for their research on how the arts can be more accessible for people living with dementia.

Gary is a Non-Executive Director of Newmilns Snow and Sports Complex – the UK’s only charity ski slope, and also sits on the board of the Autism Football Association – the governing body for neurodiversity in football. He serves as an Independent Prisons Monitor for His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons, where he monitors and inspects conditions in a young offender institute.

Gary is Co-Chair of the Royal Society of Edinburgh’s Young Academy of Scotland, and a Member of the Global Young Academy. He is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a Certified Management & Business Educator. He sits on the Scotland Advisory Committee at the British Council, and the Advisory Board for Creative Economies at the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities.



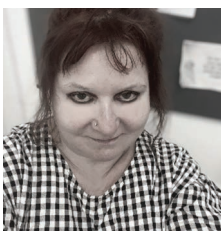
**Professor David McGuire – Head of HRM Subject Group,
Edinburgh Napier University**

David McGuire is a Professor of Human Resource Development and Head of the HRM Subject Group at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland. To date, he has published three textbooks and over 40 journal articles in journals including *European Journal of Training and Development*, *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *Human Resource Development Review* and *Human Resource Development Quarterly*. David was the recipient of the Irish American Fulbright Award and spent a year at Oakland University, Michigan. He is the recipient of a number of prestigious research awards including Scottish Crucible award, Government of Ireland scholarship and a number of Emerald Literati awards. He has significant experience in teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the areas of HRD, managing diversity and leadership and is deputy programme director of MBA programmes. David is Associate Editor of *Human Resource Development International*.



**Professor Wendy Ugolini – Professor of Second World War Studies,
School of History, Classics and Archaeology, The University of
Edinburgh**

Professor Wendy Ugolini is an award-winning historian of the Second World War specialising in ethnicities and identity formation. Educated at the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, she is a Senior Lecturer in Modern British History at Edinburgh. Her first book, *Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other'. Italian Scottish Experience in World War II* was awarded the Royal Historical Society's Gladstone Book Prize. Wendy's research interests focus on the relationship between war and identities in Second World War Britain, with a focus on duality. Wendy is the co-founder of the Second World War Network (Scotland) funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and PI on the ARHC project, *Beyond Borders. The Second World War, National Identities & Empire in the UK*.



**Dr Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick – Strategic Programme Manager, Thrive
Edinburgh and Substance Use SRO, Edinburgh Wellbeing Pact and
Community Mobilisation & Centre for Military Research Education
and Public Engagement**

Dr Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick has over twenty-five years senior leadership experience in strategic planning and delivery in health and social care and is an active researcher within the field of armed forces research. She leads on the development and implementation of Edinburgh Thrive – the city's ambitious mental health and wellbeing strategy. From work embarked on during the pandemic which explored people's relationship and meaning ascribed to health and care she developed Edinburgh's Health and Social Care Partnership's "*More Good Days*" strategy. She completed her Doctorate in Social Sciences focusing on the key mechanisms which drive successful intersectoral partnerships (the Incite model). Linda has a number of active research collaborations with Strathclyde (Glasgow), Queen Margaret, Heriot Watt and Edinburgh Napier. She has led and leads several large national grant funded programmes focusing on Veterans, armed forces personnel and their families and people with multiple and complex needs. Her research interests include intersectoral partnerships; people with multiple and complex needs; urban mental health, social determinants of health; space and health and Mad Studies. She holds two honorary senior research fellowships at Queen Margaret and Strathclyde universities.



**Emma Gall – NHS Lothian & Centre for Military Research,
Education and Public Engagement, Edinburgh Napier University**

Emma completed a masters in Forensic Psychology in 2018 and has a background in mental health, health and social care and strategic planning. She is embedded in a number of veterans partnerships which include the Scottish Veterans Wellbeing Alliance, funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust where she has developed a strong research interest in relation to veterans, their families and the impact of transition. Emma has been able to effectively collaborate with the strategic lead and partners to ensure positive partnership working with strong shared values. She understands the importance of data and its role in enacting change. In May 2023, she began her PhD research with Edinburgh Napier University, Centre for Military Research, Education and Public Engagement to understand how military partners construct, develop and maintain their sense of self and identity during active service through organisational, partner and wider social relationships and interaction.



**Dr Christine Haddow – Associate Professor of Criminology, Edinburgh
Napier University**

Dr Christine Haddow is an Associate Professor of Criminology at Edinburgh Napier University, and researcher within the Centre for Military Research, Education and Public Engagement. Her interests in military research lie in the lived experience of, and support for, justice involved veterans, particularly those in prison. She has completed 2 qualitative studies in this area, and supervised a doctorate to completion on this topic, this work has been shared with national and international audiences. She is an academic partner in the Veterans in Custody Support Officer network and is passionate about enhancing support for ex-military people in custody. Christine is also an experienced researcher in the scholarship of learning and teaching and is currently supervising a doctorate exploring sense of belonging for ex-military personnel in Higher Education.



**Harry Ross – Teaching artist, producer and doctoral student Centre
for Military Research Education and Public Engagement, Edinburgh
Napier University**

Harry Ross's multidisciplinary artistic career includes opera, large scale public realm work, site responsive theatre, socially engaged art for health, durational performance art, and immersive concerts, film screenings and exhibitions.

As a librettist for Dai Fujikura, he has co-translated *Solaris* (Theatre de Champs Elysées, 2015) and wrote *A Dream of Armageddon* (New National Theatre Tokyo, 2020), their next opera, *The Great Wave*, on the life of Ukiyo-e Artist Katsushika Hokusai, premières at Scottish Opera in 2026.

He was founding producer of *Secret Cinema* (2008-13), co-director of Kensington's flagship site-specific commissioning festival *InTRANSIT* (2013-17) producer of London Contemporary Orchestra's site-specific projects (2013-17), Special Projects Producer for The National Archives and National Trust (2015 – 2018), and Creative Director of *Army at the Fringe* for its final two seasons, winning the *Army a Fringe First* and the *Scottish Arts Club prize for best Scottish Theatre Production*.

As a performance artist he has presented performance work at the Berlin Month of Performance Art, Design Museum, Saatchi Gallery, Estorick Collection, Royal Scottish Academy.

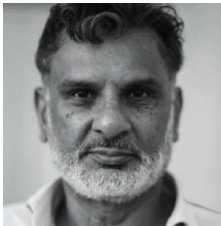
He is a Fine Art Lecturer at Moray School of Art, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Society of Scottish Antiquities, and the Royal Society for Public Health. He is currently studying for a PhD at Centre for Military Research Education and Public Engagement at Edinburgh Napier University.

He serves as member of The City of Edinburgh's Independent Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review Implementation Group.



**Dr Andrew Fran – Lecturer, School of Arts and Creative Industries
Edinburgh Napier University**

Dr Andrew Frayn is Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture at Edinburgh Napier University. He is the author of *Writing Disenchantment: British First World War Prose 1914-1930* (Manchester University Press, 2014), and numerous articles and chapters on topics in First World War studies and modernist studies. He was previously Chair of the British Association for Modernist Studies (2022) and is an Associate Editor of *First World War Studies*.



**Dr Amos Haniff – Associate Professor, Project Management,
Herriot Watt University**

Amos is an Associate Professor of Project Management, and Armed Forces Engagement and Community Lead at Heriot-Watt University. His research area focuses on the strategic alignment of projects, temporary organisations and project leadership. He currently serves as Convenor of the Edinburgh Universities Military Education Committee, Chair of the Association for Project Management (APM) Scotland and Vice-Chair of the Fair Justice System for Scotland Group through which he strongly advocates equality, diversity, and inclusion.



**Professor Murray Leith – Professor of Political Science, Director of
the Centre for Migration, Diaspora, Citizenship & Identity (CMDCI),
University of West of Scotland**

Murray Stewart Leith is Professor of Political Science at the University of the West of Scotland. He researches on national identity, nationalism, politics, and veteran studies, and he lectures widely on Scotland, the broader UK and the USA; especially on the rise of nationalism and identity politics in the 21st century, and the evolving state of Scottishness at home and abroad. He has published four books, and numerous articles and book chapters on all these issues. His most recent book, *Scotland: The New State of an Old Nation* focused on Scottish society, politics and culture. He has also published on the topic of veterans, having himself served in the Royal Navy, and was part of a major study on older veterans in Scotland, delivered in 2021.

Centre For Military Research Education and Public Engagement

Doctoral Students

Emma Gall

“Constructing, Deconstructing, Reconstructing: Exploring the impact of connection and the armed forces lifestyle on identity formation and wellbeing in military partners”

Sergeant Major James Lawson Glen

“Not Just Jobs for the Gang: An Investigation into the Career Trajectories of British Army Service Leavers”

Sqn Ldr Lucy Williams

“Changing Uniforms, Changing Identities: Exploring the Role of Social Identity Complexity in Veterans Transitioning to Civilian Work Within the Prison Services”

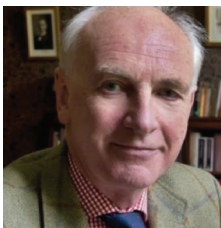
Harry Ross- Army Reserves

An exploration of co-production and value creation within and between military organisations at Festival Fringes.

Ruth Stewart Veteran Ex Army Reserve

“Community and Belonging in Higher Education: Exploring the Experiences of Military Veteran Students in Scotland’s Universities”

Keynote Speakers



Professor Sir Hew Strachan, FBA, FRSE

Hew Strachan, FBA, FRSE, Hon. D. Univ (Paisley) has been Wardlaw Professor of International Relations at the University of St Andrews since 2015. He is a Life Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he taught from 1975 to 1992, before becoming Professor of Modern History at Glasgow University from 1992 to December 2001. He was Chichele

Professor of the History of War at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of All Souls College 2002-15 (where he is now an Emeritus Fellow), and Director of the Oxford Programme on the Changing Character of War 2003-2012. He was a Commonwealth War Graves Commissioner 2006-18 and a Trustee of the Imperial War Museum 2010-17 and served on the national committees for the centenary of the First World War of the United Kingdom, Scotland and France. In 2010 he chaired a task force on the implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant for the Prime Minister. In 2011 he was the inaugural Humanitas Visiting Professor in War Studies at the University of Cambridge and became a specialist adviser to the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the National Security Strategy. He is a Captain in the King’s Bodyguard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers).

In December 2012, *Foreign Policy* magazine included him in its list of top global thinkers for the year. He was knighted in the 2013 New Year's Honours and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Tweeddale in 2014. In 2016 he was awarded the Pritzker Prize for Lifetime Achievement for Military Writing. His publications include *The Politics of the British Army* (1997); *The First World War: To Arms* (2001); *Clausewitz's On War: a Biography* (2007); *The First World War: a New Illustrated History* (2003); and *The Direction of War* (2013).



Major General Tim Hodgetts, CB CBE KHS OStJ DL HonDSc PhD MMed MBA – Master General Army Medical Services

Major General Tim Hodgetts is the Surgeon General of the United Kingdom Armed Forces; the Master General of the Army Medical Services; the Chair of the Committee of Military Medical Chiefs in NATO (COMEDS); and Deputy Lieutenant for the County of West Midlands. Tim was commissioned in 1983 and trained at Westminster Medical School, qualifying with distinction in 1986. He holds fellowships with the Royal College of Physicians of London, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Royal College of Emergency Medicine, Faculty of Pre-hospital Care, Institute of Healthcare Managers, and the Royal Geographical Society. He has a PhD in Public Health ('A revolutionary approach to improving combat casualty care'); Master's degrees in Medical Education and Business Administration; and is a Chartered Manager. He graduated from Joint Command & Staff College in 2011 and the Royal College of Defence Studies in 2018.

Tim's professional career began as a general physician in the British Military Hospital in Hannover, progressing to higher training in emergency medicine in Manchester and Sydney. He became Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Frimley Park Hospital from 1995, transferring to the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in 2001 on its inception, where he served until 2010. He was first appointed Professor in 1998 at the European Institute of Health and Medical Sciences, then at the University of Birmingham (2001), City University of London (2013) and the Military Medical Academy in Belgrade (2023). He was the inaugural Defence Professor with the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, and Penman Foundation Professor of Surgery in South Africa for 2011.

Within Defence Tim has been responsible for nurturing the specialty of emergency medicine from infancy to maturity. He has implemented concept, doctrine, equipment and practice changes to transform the early management of combat injury and led major trauma governance from 1997-2010. Clinical leadership appointments have included Defence Consultant Adviser in EM (1997-2008); and Assistant Director Clinical Services at RCDM (2001-2007). He has served on operations in hospitals in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Oman, Afghanistan (3 tours), Kuwait and Iraq (4 tours). On 6 of these tours he was the hospital's Medical Director, including the multinational Danish-UK-US hospital in Afghanistan, 2009. From 2011-13 he was Medical Director within NATO's Allied Rapid Reaction Corps; and from 2014-17 he was Medical Director for the Defence Medical Services. From 2018 until assuming his role as Surgeon General he has been the Army's Senior Health Advisor, the Head of the Army Medical Services and a Commissioner at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. He was elected by the nations to be Chair COMEDS in 2021 and was appointed Master General of the Army Medical Services in 2022.

Tim has published extensively (books & journal articles) and regularly lectures internationally as a keynote speaker on leadership, innovation at pace, disaster medicine and combat casualty care. He is co-author of *Major Incident Medical Management and Support*; *Battlefield Casualty Drills*;

Army Team Medic; Battlefield Advanced Trauma Life Support; and Clinical Guidelines for Operations. He co-founded the citizenAID® charity from 2017, designing a free multi award-winning app to support the public during a terrorist attack and inventing a new device (the Tourni-Key™) for the public to treat life-threatening limb bleeding.

Tim was made Officer of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in 1999; Commander of the British Empire in 2009; and Companion of the Order of the Bath in 2023. He received the Danish Defence Medal for Meritorious Service in 2010. Tim was Queen's Honorary Physician from 2004 to 2010, then Queen's Honorary Surgeon in 2018 and King's Honorary Surgeon from 2022. In 2010 he received the Defence Scientific Adviser's Commendation for contribution to research and has been awarded 18 academic medals, including the prestigious Mitchiner Medal of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. His academic department was twice recognised nationally as the "Training Team of the Year" and in 2006 he was honoured with the personal accolade of Hospital Doctor of the Year throughout the NHS. He was named in a British Medical Association dossier as one of the most innovative doctors in the country.



**Gerard R. Cox, MD, MHA – Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Quality and Patient Safety (17), Veterans Health Administration.
Phone: (202) 461-7571**

Gerard R. Cox, MD, MHA was appointed Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Quality and Patient Safety, effective October 14, 2018. Since joining VA in 2014, Dr. Cox served as Assistant Deputy Under

Secretary for Health for Policy and Services, Interim Medical Inspector, and Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Integrity. He was the Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Health for the Office for Organizational Excellence from October 2017 to October 2018.

During his previous military career of more than 30 years as a U.S. Navy medical officer, he served in a series of hospital leadership roles with increasingly complex responsibilities, including service chief, service line leader, chief operating officer, and chief executive officer. He held executive positions on the staffs of the Navy Surgeon General, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Commander of U.S. Navy forces in the Middle East, and the Naval Inspector General. He also served as a White House physician for Presidents William J. Clinton and George W. Bush.

Following his undergraduate and medical education, Dr. Cox completed a medical internship at the National Naval Medical Center and the combined residency program in emergency medicine at Georgetown University, George Washington University, and the University of Maryland. He is board-certified in emergency medicine, occupational medicine, and health care administration and is a Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American College of Preventive Medicine, and the American College of Healthcare Executives. His military awards include the Legion of Merit Medal (3 awards), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (5 awards) and the Presidential Service Badge.



Ben Chapman – CEO British Forces Broadcasting Service

Ben Chapman is the CEO of the British Forces Broadcasting Service and has a strong history of responding to changing audience behaviours in digital media. Most recently as the Senior Director of Content for Audible UK and formerly as the Head of Digital for BBC Radio & Music where he led the launch of BBC Sounds, the BBC's digital audio service.

He has 25 years' experience in broadcasting and digital media.

Ben works closely with creative teams and top global talent to develop innovative radio, podcast or television output. This includes the BBC's Glastonbury coverage, Radio 4's online services and Radio 1's social media platforms. Ben has exec produced Eurovision and The Proms coverage for BBC television, developed the BBC's red button TV service in music and been the digital editor for BBC Radio 1. He has also commissioned Audible's original content for the past three years as the world's premium audio book company expands into new formats and content. Ben is passionate about people, in particular enabling those around him to be confident, compassionate players in the success of their organisation, team or business



Professor Ben Wadham – Professor of Sociology (Defence and Veteran Studies). Director, Open Door: Improving the wellbeing of veterans and safety personnel and their families. Vice President – Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA – SA)

Professor Ben Wadham is the Director of Open Door: Understanding and Supporting service Personnel and their Families research initiative which is part of the Flinders Institute for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Ben is a veteran who served in the Australian infantry and as a Military Police Corporal before stumbling across university studies in 1992. Ben adopts a social health approach to veteran and family wellbeing. He has conducted pioneering studies in institutional abuse in the Australian Defence Force and recently completed the first national studies of incarcerated veterans in Australia.

He is a representative on the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Lived Experience Research Advisory Group. His current project includes the study Veteran Suicide: Investigating the Social and Historical Dimensions, a review of the DVA Chaplaincy Program and work on RPL/CPL for veterans adopting university as a transition pathway. Ben led the development of the Military Academic Pathway – the only foundation course for veterans in Australia that draws upon military skills and experience and doesn't require a tertiary ranking score or matriculation which has seen about 150 veterans find their way to university.

Ben has advised the DVA on the changes to veteran entitlement legislation the reorientation of their strategic research plan. He has also recently given expert testimony to the DVSRRC and advised them on military justice, ADF ranks and promotions and produced the report on military culture and military institutional abuse and its relationship to veteran self-harm and suicide which forms the basis of this presentation.



Professor Suzette Brémault-Phillips, OT, PhD. Director, HiMARC (Heroes in Mind, Advocacy and Research Consortium) University of Alberta

Professor Suzette Brémault-Phillips is an Occupational Therapist and Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, University of Alberta, and Director of the Heroes in Mind Advocacy and Research Consortium (HiMARC), a provincial hub for research, teaching and service in support of military members, Veterans, public safety personnel and their families. Her research interests include resilience, well-being, moral injury and mental health. Dr Brémault-Phillips is Chair and Principal Investigator of the Canadian Military, Veteran and Family Connected Campus Consortium (cmvf3c.ca).



Professor Karl Hamner – Clinical Professor and Director, Office of Evaluation, The University of Alabama

Karl is a Clinical Professor and Director, The Office of Evaluation Research and School Improvement in The University of Alabama's (UA) College of Education. He conducts mixed-methods research on improving transitions from military service to civilian life using mixed method community-based participatory research within an ecological framework, improving Veteran suicide prevention by using an ecological lens, the impact of biopsychosocial interventions to improve well-being, and the effectiveness of education programs and policies. He serves on the Alabama Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Servicemembers, Veterans and their Families, the UA Council for Community-Based Partnerships, and is Chair of the International Advisory Group for the Flinders University grant from the Australian Research Council "Veteran suicide: Investigating the historical and social dimensions." Dr Hamner received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1993.



Professor Matt Fossey FRSA – Professor of Public Services Research, Director, Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research (VFI) Anglia Ruskin University

Prof Matt Fossey is Director of the Veterans and Families Institute at Anglia Ruskin University. Over the last decade his team has led research looking at often marginalised communities in the U.K. military. Matt will present an overview of both research findings and how these have helped in the development and improvement of both policy and practice. He will focus on Early Service Leavers, non-U.K. personnel and women.



Professor Thanos Karatzias – Head of Research School of Health and Social Care, Edinburgh Napier University

Professor Thanos Karatzias, is the Head of Research in the School of Health & Social Care at Edinburgh Napier University, UK and Clinical & Health Psychologist at the Rivers Centre for Traumatic Stress, Edinburgh, UK. He is the former Chair of the British Psychological Society Scotland Working Party for Adult Survivors of Sexual Abuse (BPSSS) and he was a member of the Committee of the British Psychological Society (BPS) Crisis, Disaster & Trauma Section. He has spent his entire

clinical and academic career working in the field of psychological trauma, particularly on interpersonal psychological trauma. In collaboration with national and international research partners he has developed a special interest in the effects and treatment of psychological trauma on physical and mental health; on general, prison and veteran populations as well as on people with learning disabilities. The last few years he works in the area of Complex PTSD and its treatment, a new condition in the recently published ICD-11. Prof. Karatzias, has published widely in these areas.



Graham R. Short MBE, TD, Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES)

Graham attended King Edward VI Grammar School, Louth, Lincolnshire. Having attended both Cambridge and Glasgow universities he took up a post as a geography teacher in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire and ultimately became a school inspector with Strathclyde Regional Council.

After a succession of jobs in central education services Graham became Depute Director of Education in East Ayrshire Council. He was seconded to Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HMIE) to develop a framework for the inspection of education authorities (INEA) and participated in the inspections of a number of Councils. He also served on the national Expert Group on Parental Involvement and on the working group developing national guidance for the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004. In 2006 he became Executive Director of Educational and Social Services for East Ayrshire in which capacity he represented Scotland at an institute on the management of change at Harvard university. He retired from East Ayrshire in March in 2015 and was awarded the MBE for services to education in the Birthday Honours of that year. Graham was a commissioned officer in the Territorial Army for 19 years serving as a Cameronian, Royal Scots Fusilier and a Glasgow Highlander and attaining the rank of major. His hobbies include running (having completed marathons in London, New York, Las Vegas, Antarctica and Mongolia), reading, and gardening. He is married with two sons and five grandchildren.



Adrian Kirk – CEO Care after Combat

Adrian joined the Royal Navy in 1988 and served as an Aircraft Engineer for 29 years in the Fleet Air Arm, serving in several squadrons, units, and ships, and seeing operations in the Balkans and Gulf War II. Gaining a Commission in 1993, he undertook a broad range of appointments spanning media, HR, project & programme management, aviation regulation, as well as core Front Line aircraft engineering jobs. Having had a fantastic military career with opportunities he would never otherwise have had, upon leaving the Royal Navy in 2017, Adrian wanted to 'give something back' and became a Volunteer Mentor with Care after Combat. With the Covid 19 pandemic bringing even more challenges for our Veterans, he took up the offer of joining the team full-time and helped set up and develop a remote support service known as Bowman, a service which has proven a great success. He was commissioned by the board of Trustees to undertake a strategic review of the charity at the end of 2020 and was appointed as Chief Executive Officer in January 2021.



Dr Jane Jones – Clinical Research Lead Care after Combat

Dr Jane Jones, Doctor of Health & Social Care Practice. Jane is the Clinical & Research Lead for Care after Combat, in addition Jane is also the Clinical Lead overseeing a unique partnership of services between Nottinghamshire Offender Healthcare and Care after Combat.

The partnership known as Veteran Care through Custody meets the needs of military veterans who are subject to a custodial sentence. Jane has an in-depth understanding of mental health and well-being, particularly psychological trauma, taken from a career working across specialized mental health and forensic settings. 1989 – 2000 Jane worked alongside the Armed Forces Mental Health Services in the UK and overseas providing healthcare for serving military personnel and their families. 2000 – 2017 Jane co-developed and delivered psychological programs for the National High Secure Healthcare Service for Women and Male High Secure Personality Disordered Services Rampton Hospital. This work was adopted across medium and low secure services across the UK and abroad. 2017 – Jane developed and delivers the Veteran Care through Custody service specialising in the needs of military veterans in the Justice System.



Dr Jane Potter – Reader (Arts) & Postgraduate Research Tutor for Publishing Oxford International Centre for Publishing, Oxford Brookes University

Jane Potter is Reader in Arts at the Oxford International Centre for Publishing, Oxford Brookes University, UK. She is the editor of *A History of World War I Poetry* (2023) and *Wilfred Owen: Selected Letters* (2023).

Her other publications include *Boys in Khaki, Girls in Print: Women's Literary Responses to the Great War, 1914-1918* (2005) and with Carol Acton, *Working in a World of Hurt: Trauma and Resilience in the Narratives of Medical Personnel in War Zones* (2015).



Dr Alisha Ali – Associate Professor Department of Applied Psychology New York University

Alisha is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology at New York University. She heads the Advocacy & Community-Based Trauma Studies (ACTS) lab. Her research includes the development and evaluation of the DE-CRUIT program which uses theatre to treat the

effects of trauma among military veterans. Her other current projects include investigations into empowerment-based programs for domestic violence survivors and low-income high school students.

She has presented her research to a range of international audiences, including the World Economic Forum and the United Nations Development Program. She is co-editor (with Dana Crowley Jack) of the book *Silencing the Self Across Cultures: Depression and Gender in the Social World* (Oxford University Press), co-editor (with Niobe Way, Carol Gilligan & Pedro Noguera) of the book *The Crisis of Connection* (NYU Press), and co-editor (with Bradley Lewis & Jazmine Russell) of the book *The Mad Studies Reader* (Routledge Press). Her work has been funded by numerous agencies including the National Institute of Mental Health, the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, Allstate Foundation, the Military Psychology Division of the American Psychological

Association, Wellcome Trust, American Psychological Foundation, Loeb-Thirdpoint Foundation, Spencer Foundation, New York Community Trust, Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, Robin Hood Foundation, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Fordham Street Foundation, the Group Foundation for Advancing Mental Health, Humanities New York, and the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund. Doctor Ali received her B.Sc., M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Toronto.



Professor Bill Buchanan OBE, FRSRE – Professor • School of Computing Engineering and the Built Environment, Edinburgh Napier University

William (Bill) J Buchanan OBE, FRSRE is a Professor in the School of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment at Edinburgh Napier University, and a Fellow of the BCS and a Principal Fellow of the HEA.

He was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2017 Birthday Honours for services to cybersecurity. Bill lives and works in Edinburgh and is a believer in fairness, justice, and freedom. His social media tagline reflects his strong belief in changing the world for the better: *“A Serial Innovator. An Old-World Breaker. A New World Creator.”*

He also has a strong belief in the power of education and in supporting innovation from every angle and he currently leads the Blockpass ID Lab and the Centre for Cybersystems, IoT and Cyberphysical. In 2023, he received the Most Innovative Teacher of the Year at the Times Higher Awards (the “Oscars of Higher Education”), and, in 2024, he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (FRSE). Bill works in the areas of cryptography, blockchain, trust and digital identity. He has one of the most extensive cryptography sites in the World (asecuritysite.com) and is involved in many areas of novel research and teaching. Bill has published over 30 academic books and over 350 academic research papers. Along with this, Bill’s work has led to many areas of impact, including three highly successful spin-out companies (Zonefox, Symphonic Software and Cyan Forensics), along with awards for excellence in knowledge transfer and for teaching. Bill recently received an *“Outstanding Contribution to Knowledge Exchange”* award and was included in the Future Scot *“Top 50 Scottish Tech People Who Are Changing The World”*.



Dr Carl Strathearn – School of Computing Engineering and the Built Environment, Edinburgh Napier University

Dr Carl Strathearn is a lecturer in computer science at ENU. His research is focused on embodied artificial intelligence and socially assistive humanoid robots in domains such as education and healthcare. His work on machine learning for robotic lip synchronisation was listed in BBC

Science’s top 13 scientific moments of 2021 and his research in developing a Multimodal Turing Test for Robots was published in The Guardian and The Conversation. During his PhD he was a regular guest on BBC Radio as an expert commentator on humanoid robots and received the Sir Patrick Stewart Award for academic excellence. He is a co-editor for the D&D special edition ‘Embodied Conversational Systems for Human-Robot Interaction’ and was recently a guest speaker on the EPSRC Robotics & Autonomous Systems Network ‘Robot Talk’ podcast. He completed a three-year postdoc at ENU in which he developed a novel vision and language system for assistive robots using large language models (LLMs) and image segmentation for task-based rehabilitation and skills training. Website: www.carlstrathearn.co.uk



Dr Sharon McDonnell – Suicide Bereavement UK

Sharon is the founder and Managing Director of Suicide Bereavement UK, an internationally recognised award-winning organisation, which specialises in suicide bereavement research, training and consultancy. Sharon is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Manchester and a Winston Churchill Fellow. Sharon is also an ex army wife and personally bereaved by suicide. She has specialised in suicide bereavement research, for over 20 years and is recognised as an international expert in this field. Sharon has led several ground-breaking research projects including i) the translation of research findings into PABBS evidence-based suicide bereavement training, which is first of its kind internationally; and ii) led the national suicide bereavement survey, which is the largest suicide bereavement survey internationally. She has received several awards for her work in this field. She has recently led an Armed Forces suicide bereavement study, commissioned by NHS England. This involved interviewing people from the Armed Forces community (i.e. serving personnel, ex-service and families) who have lost someone serving/previously served to suicide. The findings from the study, informed the development of Suicide Bereavement UK's 'At Your Side' guides for those bereaved by suicide the Armed Forces community. Both the Armed Forces study and guides are first of their kind internationally. Sharon will discuss why it is important to care for those bereaved by suicide in the Armed Forces community.



Jilly Carrell – CEO Beyond the Wire

Jilly Carrell was an army spouse for 20 years and has been a military widow for 3. Their daughters were 12 and 14 when Nick died at the end of lockdown. Her husband Colonel Nick Carrell served with both the Lifeguards and the Adjutant General's Corps. As a family they experienced six tours of Afghanistan, and before his death, Nick was diagnosed with complex PTSD. Jilly had worked in the armed forces charity sector for 15 years, in policy, community development and funding. Prior to that she worked in public affairs for an investment bank in the City. Since becoming a military widow, Jilly has campaigned for greater awareness and better life pathways for bereaved armed forces families. 2 months ago, she founded beyondthewire.org.uk. She lives in Winchester with her two daughters who are at school there, her four dogs and two cats. In her spare time, which is like hens teeth, she writes stories about the home front. Last year she was shortlisted for four main literary prizes and her first work was published

Thursday 22nd August Morning

Doctoral Workshop

Emma Gall

“Constructing, Deconstructing, Reconstructing: Exploring the impact of connection and the armed forces lifestyle on identity formation and wellbeing in military partners”

A consistent message from the MOD Armed Forces Families Strategy (2022) is one of improved wellbeing. A number of factors can impact on the wellbeing of military partners. Firstly, the transitions that serving personnel and their families will encounter throughout their service, one such demand being that of operational deployment with higher reported martial unrest in the forces following lengthy deployment. Moreover, a sense of belonging and community has long since been associated with the Armed forces, not just in the UK but across all defence structures. So, it is unsurprising that a perceived familial and social support is associated with an improvement in wellbeing. Noticeably military partners are often situated within the caregiver role both during service and following transition to civilian life. Often they are recognised through the serving person’s identity, rather than as their own person. Typically having to seek support through their partners. There are key links between organisational and social expectations, perceived roles and related behaviours, the current research aims to understand the impact of these interrelated factors on how military partners construct and maintain their identity. This qualitative research will utilise semi-structured interviews and an interpretative Phenomenological Approach to analysis will be taken to explore how these individuals make sense of their experiences and the world around them.

References

Ministry of Defence. (2022). UK Armed Forces Families Strategy. Amey MOD Whitehall.

Sqn Ldr Lucy Williams RAF

“Changing Uniforms, Changing Identities: Exploring the Role of Social Identity Complexity in Veterans Transitioning to Civilian Work Within the Prison Services”

KEYWORDS: Veterans, Identity, Social Identity Complexity, Social Identity Mapping

Research shows US and UK veterans often seek employment in other uniformed or security organisations as a means of preserving elements of their former military identity. Across the wider veteran transition literature too, identity loss is frequently identified as an important theme however there is comparatively little research into why it is important or how it may affect the transition process. This problem is particularly salient for veteran prison officers because of their potential to experience conflicting identity relationships with veteran offenders. Social Identity Complexity (SIC), an offshoot of Social Identity Theory, is specifically concerned with the experiences of individuals with complex and dynamic social group identities making it an ideal framework for the context of this study.

This study will take a critical realist approach utilising mixed methods to explore the role of SIC in veteran employment transition for veterans working in the UK prison services. In the first phase, individuals’ social identities will be understood quantitatively using the Social

Identity Mapping (SIM) technique. Survey measures of work adjustment and well-being will be used as a marker of successful transition and analysed for any correlative or predictive relationships with the various elements of social identity. The second phase will follow up with participants from phase 1 utilising qualitative semi-structured interviews in order to explore the initial findings more deeply as well as to explore the personal experiences of individuals and how the social identities of veteran prison officers may impact their relationships with veteran offenders.

Ruth Stewart

“Community and Belonging in Higher Education: Exploring the Experiences of Military Veteran Students in Scotland’s Universities”

KEYWORDS: veterans; military; higher education; student experience; belonging

This study is a qualitative exploration of the lived experiences of military veteran students, focusing on belonging in higher education. The study aims to explore the lived experiences of military veteran students and their perceptions of community and belonging in Higher Education Institutes in Scotland. The focus of the study aspires to develop a nuanced conceptual understanding of belonging and community experienced by military veteran students in Scottish universities.

In the higher education context, students’ sense of belonging encompasses feeling valued, included and accepted at university; the complexities of belonging are highlighted in research which consistently emphasises that a multi-dimensional approach is required to enhance belonging (Ahn & Davis, 2020). The lack of understanding of ex-military students’ experiences of transition from military service to accessing and navigating their journey to and through university is highlighted in national and international literature (Cable et al., 2021). To address the significant gap in research of the lived experiences of UK military veteran students, the study employs a qualitative approach; complementary data collection methods comprise of individual, semi-structured, biographical interviews, a participatory visual mapping exercise for belonging in HE, and a focus group to elicit in-depth accounts. This study will potentially impact policy and practice in HE to enhance the student experience for military veterans students in Scottish universities and nationally, to develop effective interventions and initiatives in HEIs to provide institutional support for this student population.

References

Ahn, M.Y., & Davis, H. H. (2020). Four domains of students’ sense of belonging to university. *Studies in Higher Education (Dorchester-on-Thames)*, 45(3), 622–634.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1564902>

Cable, G., Cathcart, D. G., & Almond, M. K. (2021). The Case for Veteran-Friendly Higher Education in Canada and the United Kingdom. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, 7(1), pp. 46–54.
<https://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.v7i1.225>

Sergeant Major James Glen

“Not Just Jobs for the Gang: An Investigation into the Career Trajectories of British Army Service Leavers”

KEYWORDS: Transition Theory, Career Development Theory, Military to Civilian Transition, British Army Service Leavers, Career Trajectories.

This research investigates the career trajectories of British Army Service Leavers (SLs) transitioning to civilian employment. The study aims to understand the complexities of this transition, evaluate current military and associated support mechanisms, and provide actionable insights for policy and practice (Walker, 2013). Adopting a qualitative, phenomenological approach, the research seeks to capture the lived experiences of SLs through semi-structured interviews and group discussions (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Participants will include a purposive sample of SLs who have transitioned within the last five years, ensuring a diverse current military representation.

The study is expected to uncover challenges such as difficulties in skill translation, cultural adjustments, and psychological impacts of transition. It aims to enhance Transition Theory by illustrating the multifaceted nature of the transition process and applying Schlossberg's transition theory concept or Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field. In addition, the research will contribute to Career Development Theory by integrating military service aspects into career development processes, highlighting the importance of strategic and tactical skills and continuous education.

The proposed findings seek to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving military-specific career development and transition support programs. This research is original in its comprehensive approach and holistic understanding of the transition process, investigating valuable insights for theory and practice. The anticipated contributions will inform the academic literature on military transitions and guide policymakers and HR professionals in enhancing support mechanisms for SLs.

References

- Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2015). *Business Research Methods* (4th Edition). London: Oxford University Press.
- Cooper, L., Caddick, N., Godier, L., Cooper, A., & Fossey, M. (2018). Transition From the Military Into Civilian Life: An Exploration of Cultural Competence. *Armed Forces & Amp Society*, 44(1), 156–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327x16675965>
- Schlossberg, N.K. (1981). A Model for Analysing Human Adaptation to Transition. *The Counselling Psychologist*. (p.2-18).
- Walker, D. I., (2013). Anticipating Army Exit: Identity Constructions of Final Year UK Career Soldiers. *Armed Forces and Society*, 39(2), 284–304.

Harry Ross

An exploration of co-production and value creation within and between military organisations at Festival Fringes

The aim of this research is to investigate how Army at the Fringe and ADF Creative Arts association co-produce civilian military engagement through various artistic practices in a Festival Fringe context. Outside of ceremonial activities rooted in the traditions of the long nineteenth century, the use of art as a military public engagement tool is novel and not hugely researched. Understanding how these organisations collaborate to produce work will reveal in a unique, interdisciplinary way the manner in which militaries use Festival Fringes to engage with different audiences and to understand what the impact of such activity is.

To fulfil this aim I will use the following objectives:

Objective 1: To evaluate the academic literature within the fields of critical event studies, critical military research and arts in business in order to identify gaps within current academic literature pertaining to our understanding of arts engagement in a military context.

Objective 2: To conduct qualitative stakeholder and audience research and arts in business in order to gather data on the impact of the activity produced

Objective 3: To interview practitioners who work in the field of civilian military engagement, Fringe Festivals and the wider arts and military to understand where the idea of Militaries participating in Fringe Festivals originated and what their own perceptions of participation might be.

Objective 4: To analyse these various data sets in order to create recommendations for the future use of art in a contemporary combined arts context for military engagement professionals.

Colonel Richard Barrett (PhD Candidate, Curtin University)

Beyond War Art: Exploring the Everydayness of Military Life through Contemporary Military Art

Colonel Richard Barrett's presentation will redefine the scope of military art by introducing Contemporary Military Art, which emphasises the everyday experiences of military personnel alongside their operational deployments. His research challenges the traditional focus on war art, proposing that a broader artistic lens can offer deeper insights into the lives of service members. By highlighting various contemporary works, Barrett will demonstrate how this approach helps the military understand themselves better and provides nuanced perspectives for civilian society. His analysis will include examples from Australian, UK and US military artists, showcasing the diverse and rich narratives that emerge from this new artistic framework.

Thursday 22nd August

Military History

Professor Sir Hew Strachan

The Scottish Soldier and Scotland

Scottish military identity was forged in the context of the Union and in the aftermath of the '45 was popularly identified with the Highlands. The Scottish Enlightenment took a dim view of Scotland's martial reputation and it might have collapsed as the clearances and emigration undermined Scottish recruiting. By the middle of the 19th century, Scotland struggled to fill its Highland regiments with recruits but Queen Victoria's enthusiasm for Scotland kept the Scottish military establishment higher than its population base. This imbalance was rectified by the surge in Scottish voluntary recruiting in 1914. The fact that the British army expanded its infantry in the two world wars around the 1881 regiments gave Scottish military service a clear regimental identity. As regiments disappeared or were amalgamated from the 1960s onwards they acquired a political identity, a process that marched in step with the rise of the SNP. Paradoxically, the creatures of the Union were mobilised for the cause of independence. That moment has now passed, not least thanks to the creation of the Royal Regiment of Scotland.

**Professor Sir Hew Strachan, Dr David Forsyth, Professor Wendy Ugolini
& Dr Toby Kelly**

Expert Panel: Scottish Pacifists and Conscientious Objectors

As Britain was mobilised to fight between 1939 and 1945, around six and a half thousand Scottish men and women applied for exemption from military service on the grounds of conscientious objection. They included socialists, anarchists, nationalists and humanitarians, as well as large numbers of Christian pacifists, and many things in between. Although some were sent to prison, many more worked in agriculture, hospitals or did ambulance work, often near the front lines. The conscientious objectors of the Second World War have now largely fallen from popular memory, but many of them would later go on to have significant places in Scottish public and cultural life. This paper will examine who these people were, why they objected, how people responded to them, and what we might make of them over eighty years later.

Wendy Webster & Jenny Grant

Remembering the Second World War dead

Wendy Webster, University of Huddersfield

This paper is about the significance of writing in the lives of people across Britain and its Empire who wrote for the dead of the Second World War. Some writing came before a death, like the letters that were to be sent in the event of death. The news of a death was often communicated to next of kin by telegram or letter. There followed letters of condolence to the bereaved and the casualty lists, in memoriam notices, rolls of honour and obituaries published in a wide range of local, regional and national newspapers. Bereavement memoirs also followed, sometimes much later.

There was writing done on crosses that marked where the dead were buried. Carved or done in ink or paint, in copper wire or pencil, this sometimes recorded the name of the person in the grave, sometimes a wider group, or simply RIP. When the war was over, stone masons chiselled millions of names on memorials and headstones. They also chiselled epitaphs, usually written by the families of the dead. This writing, done by the living, was mostly about the dead but sometimes addressed them directly, even though they were no longer alive to read the words.

Who were these writers? What resources and conventions did they draw on? Did some of them find it easier to write of the dead and of their grief than to speak about them? What languages and scripts did they use? In addressing these questions, the paper considers some of the racial, class, family and generational conflicts generated by death writing.

“Before you return to Poland, sleep quietly here”: the Imperial War Graves Commission and commemoration of the Polish war dead, 1939-55.

Jenny Grant, Queen Mary University of London

The public expression of grief in Second World War Britain has only recently received scholarly attention; the experiences of loss specific to the exiled armies in wartime Britain have yet to be examined in depth. This paper explores the relationship which developed between the Imperial War Graves Commission and the Polish Armed Forces, from the arrival of the latter in 1940 through to the erection of permanent headstones by the mid-1950s.

The experience of the exiled Allies was distinct from that of British or Commonwealth servicemen. The journey which had brought these servicemen to the UK, the shared trauma of national defeat, experience of conflict, and ties of family and friendship, made the act of committing a soldier to foreign soil particularly emotionally laden. How, then, to mark such graves as identifiably Polish, for example, so that the significance of their sacrifice persisted?

The IWGC extended an offer to the Poles that it would maintain the graves of the fallen Poles as they did those of Britain and the Commonwealth. The generosity of the offer failed to anticipate two difficulties: the national cultural differences in commemoration which existed between the different armies, and the shape of the post-war world - who would take responsibility for the war dead in countries taken over by communists?

This paper will examine the network of relationships which developed between the Poles and the IWGC to determine how successfully a compromise was achieved between the IWGC's commemorative practices and those of the exiled Poles.

Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES)

Friday 23rd August Morning

Arts and Humanities in Armed Forces

Dr Jane Potter

Strange Meeting(s): Wilfred Owen at Craiglockhart

The site of one of the most famous meetings in literary history, that of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, Craiglockhart War Hospital is embedded in the cultural memory of the First World War. Crucial both in Owen's recovery from the trauma of his active service and his development as a poet, Craiglockhart also provided him with opportunities for many other significant meetings that were essential to his poetic and emotional maturity. This talk will highlight some of these 'strange meetings' and reflect on the lasting legacy of the place that Owen called 'this free-and-easy Oxford'.

Dr Major Cate Carter

Contemporary Military Art: New Perspectives on Identity, Purpose, and Belonging

This panel will introduce the concept of Contemporary Military Art, a sub-genre that extends beyond traditional war art to explore the everyday experiences and operational deployments of military life. By challenging conventional narratives, this approach provides a nuanced understanding of military identities and contributes to broader societal perspectives. The session will feature insights from three distinguished speakers—Colonel Richard Barrett, Major Cate Carter, chaired by Mr. Harry Ross—each presenting on different aspects of Contemporary Military Art, linking their discussions to the conference themes of Arts for Veterans, Military Art for Strategic Engagement, and Art as a tool to maintain or create Regimental Identities.

Dr Major Cate Carter & LT COL Rich Barrett

The Two-Way Street of Military Education

The coincidence of post-war recruiting and retention challenges in UK/Aus armed forces, with the heightened and disparate threats both domestic and expeditionary, presents a social problem of contemporary mobilization. This requires a civil-military partnership that acknowledges professional skill sets and the changing nature of the military profession.

What constitutes professionalism in the military is a contested term which spans a range from a specialist and discrete 'Profession of Arms', to a collective and diverse collection of skills borrowed from civil professions. Increasingly, the civil-military boundary is being crossed with a recognition that cross/multi-disciplinary skills enhance military capability and develop military people, while at the same time, build societal capital. Paradoxically, this approach appears to threaten modern, bureaucratic, military career trajectories which tend to reward management skills and risk aversion.

The creation and sharing of multi-disciplinary knowledge is crucial in this new civil-military space. Contemporary mobilization requires the military and academic institutions to respect and engage with each other more, not less; and the traffic on this ‘two-way street’ needs to flow unhindered.

To what extent can Music and Visual Arts serve as an interface for International Military Engagement?

Using the frame of two significant international Military Arts engagement activities as a jumping off point Lieutenant Colonel Wendy Faux, Major Brenden Wheeler, Captain Hugh Beattie, Lieutenant Shkumbin Bajraktari, Lieutenant Dario Salvi discuss the use and utility of art in international relations and strategic communication. Colonel Faux and Captain Beattie will discuss the art activities that took place as Britain first moved troops to Estonia in support of NATO’s Enhanced Forward Presence in Estonia in 2017. Major Wheeler and Lieutenant’s Bajraktari and Salvi will discuss the Royal Corps of Army Music’s enduring collaboration with the Kosovan Security Force Band, and its wider role in re-enforcing strategic links between the two nations.

Dr Alisha Ali

Treating Trauma Through Shakespeare and Science: The DE-CRUIT Veterans Program

This talk will describe the DE-CRUIT Veterans Program, a group treatment program that uses theatre to support veterans in the transition to civilian life and in coping with mental health problems. The talk will outline the components of the DE-CRUIT program, in particular the use of Shakespeare in addressing veterans’ trauma. In the program, veterans immerse themselves in Shakespeare’s verse with an emphasis on the many veteran and military characters in Shakespeare’s plays. They examine the Shakespearean monologue form and then each compose their own personal trauma monologue. In the final session of the program, each of the participating veterans presents their monologue – along with a monologue from Shakespeare matched thematically to the content of their personal monologue – to an invited audience of family, friends, and community members, thereby reinforcing the communalization of trauma. This talk will explore the effects of the DE-CRUIT program across numerous samples of veterans, as well as the ways that the program uses the latest findings from research on trauma to inform the application of theatre as a form of treatment.

Ben Chapman – CEO BFBS

Modern Media: Who Do You Trust?

His keynote speech will address the importance of critical thinking through understanding the creative process in a world of misinformation. BFBS is a trusted source of news and entertainment for the armed forces community; he will outline the work of the BFBS Academy, which provides courses for veterans wishing to enter creative industries.

BFBS is a military charity and media organisation that entertains, informs, connects, and champions the UK Armed Forces.

Monday 26th August Morning

Armed Forces Covenant, Transition and Artificial Intelligence

Professor Sir Hew Strachan

Armed Forces Covenant – Background and Beginnings

When Frederick Forsyth wrote a report on the idea of the covenant for the Conservative opposition before 2010, he created a false narrative, suggesting that the nation and the state had always looked after its service personnel and its veterans. They have not: even in the two world wars the care of service personnel could be reluctant and late. Moreover, the origins of the covenant do not lie here - not in the mutual obligations owed between the state and those who defend it - but in those between officers and other ranks and in the army specifically. When the Conservatives formed a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats in 2010, they made putting their version of the covenant into law one of the conditions for the formation of the new government. It commissioned a report on ways of implementing the covenant, worked with service charities on its delivery and ensured that there is an annual report on its progress to parliament.

Claire Biggar & Fiona Forrest-Anderson

Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Case Study

Several organisations in the UK, across a variety of sectors are now signatories to the Armed Forces Covenant, which was introduced in its current form in 2011. This is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly. The Armed Forces Covenant for businesses or charitable organisations is a voluntary pledge made by organisations who wish to demonstrate their concrete support for the armed forces community. In doing so they make a range of written and publicised promises to set out their support. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.

After signing the covenant in 2016 Edinburgh Napier University progressed quickly through the ranks of the ERS to be the first Scottish university to receive the Gold Award in 2019. This presentation explores the university's journey to that achievement, the processes that were put in place to maintain and grown this development. Finally, the benefits of the recognition scheme are explored in this case study on the eve of hopeful reaccreditation.

Jim Wilson

'The Armed Forces Covenant – Who needs it?'

Jim Wilson from Veterans Scotland will consider the obligations that statutory organisations have to meet the Armed Forces Covenant. Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved. Statutory providers of services, in particular in Health, Housing and Education, now have a legal obligation to give due regard to the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces.

In order to put some of this obligation into perspective, we will consider what some of those unique obligations and sacrifices are and what disadvantages they may result in. We will also look at some of the data that has come out of the Census in Scotland as it relates to those that have served. For the first time such data was collected as part of the National Census in 2021 in England & Wales and in 2022 in Scotland. This is helping us to build a picture of where former members of the Armed Forces live, their age profile and type of Service.'

Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith, Dr Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick & Emma Gall

The covenant : Maximising opportunities across Scotland

This presentation will provide insight into a number of key developments being delivered and conducted across Scotland thanks to the support of the Armed forces Covenant Trust

For Veterans, with a clear identity as a member of the armed forces, transitioning to civilian life can be difficult. Moreover, people's sense of self is derived from membership of social groups so creating spaces and places where veterans can be part of a social group will strengthen resilience and protective factors. By creating spaces for communities of veterans to come together we will increase the social capital (Putnam, 1993) of veterans in terms of trust, reciprocity and participation which we know to have clear advantages for mental health and wellbeing. (Morgan and Ziglio;2007; Maruma and Lebel, 2009).

The Scottish Veterans Wellbeing Alliance, funded by the Armed Forces Covenant was established in 2022 to provide spaces and places across Scotland where veterans and families can connect, receive and provide support, learn new skills and benefit from activities delivered by a compassionate workforce striving to nurture relationships with all who have an interest in veterans' health and wellbeing. Harnessing the assets of veterans themselves, the skills and experience of our workforce and the imagination and creativity of all in how we use spaces and places to connect and reconnect veterans to what is important and meaningful to them. Our focus on places includes connecting trusted and safe spaces which are already part of the veteran landscape; using different spaces which we appreciate have benefited other communities of interest and identity; and creating new places in which veterans can connect. Focusing on social prescribing interventions which form part of a holistic pathway to extend into and reach out from current pathways and those yet to be developed. The SVWA has led to further collaborative ventures, also supported by the Covenant, including:

Project ALERT which aims to research, innovate, teach and disseminate evidence-based innovations which support veterans at risk of suicide ensuring a specific focus on veterans who are most at risk, whether that is through identity, interest or place.

AFFIRM - Armed Forces First Interaction, Resolution and Management. The programme is focused on designing, implementing, and evaluating new procedures and training to improve the identification and follow on interventions of veterans utilising unscheduled care capabilities. Raising awareness around the armed forces community is a key priority for our health and social care system. Affirm will work with first responder care to veterans to ensure that the wide range of services and support are known, communicated and veterans are supported to access these at the point of crisis by these responders. This will enable faster and more efficient referral to veteran specific welfare support and provide data for a more comprehensive understanding of veterans' health requirements in Scotland.

Our most recent venture "**Fingerprints**" has explored the experiences and views of veterans and family members across Scotland to further develop our Alliance and associated programmes.

Professor Bill Buchanan OBE, FRSRE

Digital Trust, AI and the Future of Cybersecurity

The digital world we have built is often weak in terms of integrated trust, privacy and security, and where our existing digital identity and privacy methods have not quite integrated themselves into our systems. This talk aim to understand how AI can be used in offensive and defensive cybersecurity measures, and with a future on the risks and opportunities in using AI.

Dr Carl Strathearn

Future Applications of Social Robots for Veteran Healthcare.

Interest in the application of assistive social robots in domains such as healthcare and education has increased exponentially with recent advancements in natural language generation and computer vision. These technologies provide social robots with greater flexibility and understanding of the human language and task-based dialogue. For example, here at ENU we developed a hybrid language and vision system for social robots called 'Common Sense Enhanced Language and Vision (CiViL) which provides greater contextual understanding of everyday tasks like cooking using large language models (LLMs) and object recognition to generate new dialogue from common-sense knowledge databases. Such systems could be invaluable for providing around the clock care and support in areas like rehabilitation, wellbeing, companionship, and skills learning. In this talk we will explore these topics in detail and extend their potential use-cases and applications in veteran healthcare.

Tuesday 27th August

Armed Forces Family and Child, Transition, Employment, lifelong learning and the Criminal Justice System

‘Cadets: Life-Changing’

In this one-hour presentation we will be introduced to both school and university cadet units across Scotland. We will hear some of the outcomes of the Denny Report (2023), presented by the cadets themselves and have the opportunity to celebrate and applaud the impact the service units play in the development of our future generation.

Colloquium One: Family and Child

Professor Matt Fossey

Prof Matt Fossey is the Founding Director of the Veterans and Families Institute at Anglia Ruskin University. He will give a brief overview of three studies undertaken by his team. One study synthesising the literature on U.K. military children research and identifying gaps and research priorities and a further two pieces of work that examined children’s communication with service parents when on operations - both from the RN and RAF perspective.

Graham Short MBE

“A game of snakes and ladders”; Armed forces families whose children require additional support with their education - The issues emerging from a focused research project.

This session will look at the organisation of support for armed forces children who have “additional support needs”. The perspective taken will be that of the child and the family. It is developed against a background that while there is much anecdote and assertion about armed forces children, very little research has been undertaken to illuminate the substantive issues.

In addition to sharing new data on the armed forces children’s population in Scotland an analysis will be undertaken of the separation between policy and practice. Of particular interest is the divergence of provision across the United Kingdom and the barriers this presents for mobile families. This divergence is found in the vocabulary of support, the values that pervade systems, the transferability of records and the advice available to families.

Further barriers may be created as a result of the functional adequacy of support systems and the prominent publicity presently being given to some identified problems, particularly in resourcing. Fundamental questions will be raised about the nature of the additional support needs population in Scotland that are revealed by considering the armed forces child. It directly confronts the myth that there is a “UK Education System” but also calls into question whether all children’s needs can be adequately addressed in a system based on administrative boundaries.

Although focused on the armed forces child, this session will be of interest to anyone who works in the area of educational support.

Kirsty Davies

This research was a Pilot Study as part of a Doctor of Education (EdD). Considering the lack of recent and rigorous literature within the United Kingdom (UK), the aim of this research was to identify primary school teachers’ current knowledge, confidence and understanding in supporting the needs of Service children within a primary school setting, adopting an exploratory design (Stevens et al., 2013). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five teachers of Service children as well as a survey to qualified teachers to gather information on their teacher training experience and Service children. Findings showed that the main challenges faced by teachers were around mobility, transitions and deployments, supporting existing literature (McCulloch and Hall, 2016). Furthermore, 4/5 teachers interviewed had received no CPD around Service children, and none of the teachers were able to identify any resources they used to support Service children and felt that training and resources would be beneficial. In addition, 94% of teachers surveyed received no input on supporting Service children during their training. Due to the increased spread of Service children, guidance for teachers during their teacher training was expressed in the interviews (Baverstock, 2023) to increase teacher knowledge and confidence (McManus and Paul, 2019) with the results of the online survey suggesting this is something that is currently lacking in **Veteran Expertise: Transitioning Military Expertise into Civilian Work.**

Professor Cherie Armour

Who am I? A qualitative exploration of the identities of spouses/partners of UK Armed Forces Veterans

Military life can negatively affect partner health/well-being and their sense of identity during and after service. To date, most research has focused on the identities of personnel post-transition, with little examining partner identities. Using interviews with 37 current and former partners (31 female, 6 male) from the UK Veterans Family Study, the identities of Veteran partners were explored. Participants discussed military identity and culture, role-based identities, and loss of personal identity. Identities could be taken on or given to partners from within the military community and were often underpinned by military life and culture during and after service. Long-term impacts on self-esteem and confidence were reported, as were pride and resilience. Employment post-transition allowed restoration of personal identity but was sometimes at the cost of the community provided by being in the armed forces. Findings show the difficulties some Veteran partners experienced in maintaining personal identity during and after a Veteran’s service. Future research should concentrate on short- and long-term effects of identity loss/change among military and Veteran partners to inform and improve current and future strategies supporting families.

Colloquium Two: Transition

Professor Catherine Cox

Transitioning from the Transition: Helping Veterans Transition to Careers in Nursing Summary for Conference Proceedings The purpose of this presentation is to share the experience of our institution's response to a Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services (HRSA) Administration's funding call to nursing schools in the United States (U.S.) whereby the goal was to offer pro-Veteran learning environments, recruit and support Veterans interested in pursuing nursing careers, and facilitate academic credit for enlisted health care training. Hence, our U.S. institution now has over 10 years' worth of lessons learned, research findings, and best practice tips to share regarding the transition of military nursing students (e.g., active-duty members, reservists, National Guard, and/or Veterans) to a Veterans' Bachelor of Science in Nursing (VBSN) program. Our best practice tips include the following: 1) secure the support of the institution, 2) establish a point person for the VBSN Initiative, 3) maximize VBSN student success resources, 4) acknowledge past academic work and military experience, 5) hire prior-service Armed Forces Nurse Corps officers as faculty, 6) deliver training opportunities for non-military faculty to learn about Veterans, 7) offer VBSN students the opportunity to learn and socialize with their civilian peers, 8) capitalize on the assets Veterans bring to the classroom, 9) provide a structured learning environment, and 10) generate databased publications. Last, although this presentation speaks to nursing, there are many lessons learned applicable to other professions regarding the transition of Veterans to higher education and then onto their chosen profession

Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith & Dr Sara Sholl

'You're in Your Own time Now': Understanding Current Experiences of Transition to civilian Life in Scotland

Matthews-Smith, G., MacKay, D., Sholl, S., & Thomas, L.

Key words: Transition, Family, Health Education and Employment

Background

The challenge to the UK in terms of transition in and out of the Armed Forces is a complex one. While some may remain in service until the age of 60, it is recognised that the majority will retire or move into civilian life beforehand. For the country, and the Ministry of Defence (MOD), managing this changeover is important as it embodies a resource that can continue to give value, or a burden that can incur both personal and societal costs. The Armed Forces pride themselves on being composed of highly competent, professional, confident individuals who are resourceful, adaptable, problem solvers. A question therefore arises as to why transition should be regarded as such a significant issue of concern for this latter group in comparison to their civilian counterparts. This question is even more acute for Scotland where the national self-image is of a welcoming liberally minded country, proud of its military, and where in theory, transition should be 'easier'. The Scottish Government has stated its aim to "make Scotland the most attractive destination for service leavers and their families, offering high living standards, great job prospects and a society that respects and values their contribution" (Scottish Veterans Commissioner, 2020).

The veteran's population in Scotland is estimated to be in the region of 240,000, with an estimated additional 1,800 ex-service personnel and their families planning to settle in Scotland annually. While the Scottish Government appears to extend a welcome to veterans and embraces the Covenant on all levels of its structure, there are features of life in Scotland which may suggest otherwise. This paradox between policy and practice is clearly evident in several areas explored in this study. Leaving an environment where structure, excellence, discipline, and service, are core to the 'workplace', and moving to one where it may be difficult to identify a 'civilian equivalent' must be bewildering to a service leaver, particularly those with a long service history. Personal choices must often be made with minimal guidance, and even the work or wider values of the community of which they are now part may require sensitive exploration. These aspects are addressed in this study through a deeper comparison of life in the Armed Forces with that in the wider community, when viewed through the lens of the service leaver and their partner.

The report provides a detailed account of the Armed Forces milieu in Scotland set against developments and future plans for the expansion of several bases across the country. This set the scene for the study and allowed for an improved understanding of the implications and the outcomes of the study and how findings may be applied.

The project addressed the lack of current, in-depth analysis of data relating specifically to service leavers in Scotland, both in terms of demographics and lived experience. Its overall aim was to provide an evidence base that would influence and underpin policy making and service delivery, to enable ex-service personnel and their families to lead successful civilian lives.

Findings, Originality and Value

Overall, it is evident that there is solid support for veterans in Scotland, starting with the Scottish Government, who along with the other UK Governments, launched the Strategy for Our Veterans in November 2018. The Strategy set out a vision and principles to support veterans and their families; the Scottish Government published their refreshed action plan in 2023. The very existence of a Cabinet post with "veterans" in its title is a positive indication of a national welcome to members of the Armed Forces community and is echoed through the formal structures in Government. The Armed Forces Covenant has been signed by all 32 Scottish local authorities, all NHS Health Boards, the majority of Scottish universities, and the Scottish Government itself. In addition, since 2014 Scotland has had the specific post of a Scottish Veteran's Commissioner whose office has produced a range of valuable reports related to key aspects of the Armed Forces Covenant and its implementation in Scotland.

This study has demonstrated several similarities with other studies that have previously been conducted in relation to transition experiences in England and Wales. While not unexpected, it was interesting to note that many of the concerns experienced by the Scottish group in the process of transition were in line with those in other parts of the UK.

Our study provides a more nuanced understanding of the transitional support needs for veterans, serving personnel and their partners, contextualised in Scotland. It highlights the demand for continued services and the need for these to be expanded where possible, to support the wider AF community including partners and children, in relation to educational opportunities, employment, wraparound childcare facilities, and recognition of qualifications both from commonwealth groups and across the UK nations. There is significant potential

for the development of Welfare Centres, drawing from positive examples such as the Hive, and the use of social media by the Wives' Committee at Lossiemouth. Where social media has been used, updated, and maintained it has proved to be extremely helpful. Moreover, a major difference in this study is the clear pattern of partnership working evident in those who support our Armed Forces in Scotland.

Findings from our study suggest the need for further development to enhance engagement with the education system. The current funding system in Scotland hinders the development of an educational transition pathway and creates disadvantage for partners and children who may wish to engage with higher education. Furthermore, differences in national qualifications create barriers in recognition for education or employment. There is perhaps a lack of awareness in some areas of Veterans Champions across local authorities in Scotland, although this information is available on the excellent website run by Veterans Scotland.

Finally, the service leaver thinking of settling in Scotland must acknowledge the fact that in leaving the Armed Forces, they are moving from a UK-wide organisation to a separate nation within the UK. This change will be most marked for families physically relocating from elsewhere in the UK. Scotland, particularly since devolution, has developed in ways that are superficially similar to the rest of the UK, but which are fundamentally different. The political landscape of Scotland is also unique. These many factors – and others – will impact the service leaver, and so should the support that is provided for them.

Professor Laura Galloway, Dr Amos Haniff & Lærke Salhaug-Rasmussen

The self-employment and enterprise potential of veterans in the UK

Purpose

This qualitative study explores the potential for longer-term and wider engagement of enterprise education with military organisations in the UK.

According to the UK's Federation for Small Business (FSB 2019) there are just under one million veterans of working age in the UK. Veterans make up six percent of the SME population, and three quarters of these are self-employed or micro business owners. Given the pressures of the current cost of living crisis (Panwar et al. 2015), the expectation is that more people who leave military service may consider self-employment. The Centre for Entrepreneurs (2018) notes that currently, this is not particularly well catered for and that expectations and greater interest in self-employment and enterprise are not being met with initiatives that will upskills veterans appropriately. The purpose of the research and of this paper, therefore, is to explore the current situation, including limitations of current support for self-employment readiness, and demand-side experiences of its effectiveness. Opportunities for development, including partnerships with Universities, are informed by this research and recommendations are presented.

Methodology

Following a qualitative methodology, as appropriate for exploratory research (Stake, 1999), interviews with key stakeholders were conducted: a representative of Holts Military Bank; military personal in transition from army to civilian roles; and veterans who have started a business or become self-employed.

Findings

Findings contribute knowledge relating to skills, ambitions and expectations of military leaders, training and upskilling needs, and the potential for targeted enterprise and self-employment readiness training.

Implications & contribution

The study is timely given the current cost of living crisis and requisite shortage of appropriate employment for military leavers. Other practical outputs include better understanding of latent potential for contribution to the UK economy amongst ex-service men and women.

KEYWORDS: Self-employment, entrepreneurship, military, training, veterans, civilian life

Dr Sarah Minnis, Associate Professor

Veteran Experts: Transitioning Military Expertise into Civilian Work

KEYWORDS: Veterans, Transition, Employment, Expertise

Even with ongoing military activity, civilians are unfamiliar with military members' work and acquired skills. Human resource development (HRD) scholars have been engaged in understanding and explaining veterans' skills transition into civilian work. Veterans' successful movement into civilian work is one of the transition outcome indicators of Kintzle and Castro's Military Transition Theory. Grenier and Kehrhan defined expertise and developed the Model of Expertise Redevelopment as applied to the broad employment community. Minnis and Kirchner's previous work showed how Grenier and Kehrhan's Model of Expertise Redevelopment could provide a new way to understand veterans' expertise redevelopment into civilian work as the Model of Expertise Redevelopment for Veterans. The purpose of this conceptual working paper is to build on this previous work considering veterans' transition as it takes place in the liminal space of unbecoming military service members and becoming civilian employees while engaged in the sensemaking of moving from one cultural world to another, seeking a new identity in civilian life. Understanding their new identity and integrating their expertise into civilian work can create emotional disruption for veterans necessitating their engagement in sensemaking and reculturation. The Model of Expertise Redevelopment for Veterans should serve as a valuable way for HRD researchers and HRD practitioners to represent and articulate the unique experiences of military veterans' expertise redevelopment into civilian work.

Pamela Wilkinson

The role of occupational therapy within veteran support during the transition from military to civilian life: a scoping review.

KEYWORDS: Occupational therapy, Veteran, Transition

Purpose

This review sought to explore the role of occupational therapy in supporting veterans and their families during transition from military to civilian life.

Occupational therapy is well placed to provide transitional support in areas such as: community reintegration, life skills education, vocational rehabilitation and mental and physical health support. However, an initial search of the literature revealed a sparsity of empirical evidence specific to occupational therapy practice. It appears that this lack of profession specific

research has left room for other professions to fill this important gap (Vaughan-Horrocks et al., 2023; Eakman and Radomski, 2017). Initial literature searches also revealed a lack of consistency and clarity surrounding the position of occupational therapists within transitional support services as well as any support they offer military families. It was therefore important to investigate and clarify these points using scoping review techniques. This review also sheds light on the theoretical link between occupational therapy theory with the transition experiences of veterans. Concepts such as occupational justice, collective occupation and belonging are discussed within this review, demonstrating the unique perspective occupational therapy can offer at times of transition. The aims of this scoping review were therefore: to explore the role of occupational therapists in supporting veterans transition from military to civilian life, including the interventions offered as well as the settings within which occupational therapist are able to support UK veterans.

Methodology

A scoping review methodology was used for this study, following the five-step framework proposed by the Joanna Brigg's Institute (JBI) (Peters et al., 2020): (1) Identifying the research question, (2) Identifying relevant studies, (3) Study selection, (4) Charting the data, (5) Collating, summarising and reporting the results and recommendations for future practice.

To identify relevant studies a 3-step search strategy was conducted using the following databases; CINAHL plus, Psycinfo and Medline. This involved an initial limited search of at least two databases to uncover keywords, a secondary search with refined keywords and lastly, a thorough search of the reference lists from articles identified in the secondary search. To ensure that this review was as comprehensive as possible both unpublished and published literature were considered for inclusion. A total of 37 articles were to undergo full text screening using pre-determined inclusion/exclusion criteria. The use of broad inclusion criteria allowed a richer variety of literature to be included. Literature published in the year 2011 and onwards was considered as it was the introduction of the armed forces covenant within the UK which details the moral obligation that the UK government has to veterans and their families (Ministry of Defence, 2011). Therefore, literature published after this date is more likely to reflect the current practice. Only articles published in English were considered and they had to contain relevant information surrounding the transition for military to civilian life. There had to be specific occupational therapy involvement mentioned but literature from other professions was considered as long as an occupational therapist was present in the team.

Findings

Occupational therapy practice with military veterans was most prevalent in community and third sector organisations (n=8) and educational establishments. Occupational therapists working with veterans in government healthcare only made up 21.7% of the literature (n=5) and only one article mentioned occupational therapy occurring within the military context (n=1). In terms of geographical area, the selected publications all originated from 3 western societies; United States of America (n=18), the United Kingdom (n=5) and Australia (n=1).

Thematic analysis was conducted using the six-step method recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). Two main concepts were identified from the literature with further relevant subthemes. These were: (1) Psychological impacts of service: PTSD, Anxiety and Depression (1A) Social Connectedness (1B) Unconventional Interventions (1C) Building Resilience, (2) Life after service (2A) Education (2B) Meaningful Activity (2C) Military Families Environment was considered as important yet inseparable and was woven amongst all themes.

Conclusion

The findings generated from the results led to the creation of a new model that conceptualises a positive military to civilian transition and the role that occupational therapy practitioners have at this time (see figure 1). This model proposes that therapists must seek to explore three questions to understand the impact of transition on each individual: PAST: What has made you who you are?; PRESENT: Who are you now? ; FUTURE: Who do you wish to become?

Concurrent: Workforce

Dr Stephen Dalzell

The Military Manpower Crisis as a Collective Challenge: Time for Drastic Measures?

KEYWORDS: Military personnel, demographics, conscription, reserves

Purpose

Reports and news articles about individual countries facing challenges in manning their military force structure has become commonplace in Europe, North America, and East Asia. This has almost exclusively been discussed at the national level, which poses several related questions: 1) How serious a threat does this pose to collective defense? 2) If it is a serious threat, what can alliances do to address this problem collectively? 3) What radical changes to the liberal-democratic model of military organization should be studied now and developed as policy options in order to address the systemic problems underlying today's headlines? The first two questions are being covered in a separate paper.

Methodology/Approach

Our overall research agenda begins with a quantitative analysis of the demographic and military-personnel data regarding the manpower challenge across the NATO alliance and other U.S. allies and key partners. We then attempt to evaluate, at an unclassified level, the risk these trends pose to collective defense within these alliances. Finally, in the portion discussed in this paper, we are using qualitative historical and public-policy approaches to identify key attributes of the current manpower systems that states might choose to change significantly in order to mitigate negative social and demographic trends. While all three lines of research are continuing, we are sharing its current state of development in hopes of receiving feedback from a range of others who see the issues from different national and academic perspectives.

Findings

- Our parallel research effort has found considerable evidence that the current military manpower shortages are both systemic and likely to significantly degrade collective security and deterrence.
- We began our search for possible solutions identifying pillars of what Moskos and colleagues labeled the postmodern military. Some of these pillars were also identified in their groundbreaking research in the 1990s, while others are so fundamental that few academics and even fewer policymakers of that era saw the need to study them. Because we believe all potential changes should at least be considered, our list includes areas that countries are already addressing and others that even we believe would not be good candidates for change.

Dr Sarah Dixon Smith

‘The Blighty Tweed Company’: Rehabilitation and Employment for Scottish Veterans, 1916-1928

KEYWORDS: Military History, Rehabilitation, Employment, First World War

Purpose

This paper will explore the story of the Blighty Tweed Company, a Scottish rehabilitation and employment scheme established for wounded and amputee veterans in 1916. Over the course of the First World War, more than 500,000 men were medically discharged from the military, including over 41,000 veterans with major limb amputations. Employment opportunities were low and government response minimal (Britain was the only European country without a government-sanctioned employment scheme for ex-servicemen), forcing charities and small businesses to step in. In 1916, the director of an Edinburgh weaving company, in collaboration with a veteran of the Boer War, discovered traditional handlooms could be adapted for use by lower limb amputees, becoming ‘the first in Scotland to try to solve the problem of finding suitable work for disabled men’, and providing employment for some of the thousands of disabled and unemployed veterans in the city.

This paper is a narrative history of the Blighty Tweed Company, using this example as a case to explore the provision of rehabilitation and employment for disabled veterans in inter-war Scotland. It uses papers from the National Records of Scotland, the National Archives at Kew, newspaper reports, and British and Australian Hansard to explore the company’s development, the social context in which it was established, marketing strategies that contributed to its success, and its downfall. It will argue as one of the most successful schemes of its type, with a business model that was exported around the world and given the recent attention to the aftermath of the First World War, it is a story worth exploring in detail and one which deserves more attention.

Findings

By 1916, tweed had been popular across Britain for almost a century. Once the provision of aristocracy, by the First World War it was popular with the middle classes as both rural and urban wear. Its association with land-owning classes made it an aspirational purchase, and the ease with which it could be tailored and rapidly follow the latest fashions, were factors exploited by the Blighty Company’s marketing. Despite, or perhaps due to, the company’s quick success, the scheme was unpopular with competitors in the Scottish wool trade, with Edinburgh newspapers showing discussion over its long-term viability and warnings that the scheme would not be able to compete in the post-war world. In correspondence printed in *The Scotsman* over several months in 1918, the company’s directors revealed the strategy that helped to make the company so successful: their association with exclusive fashion retailers. This correspondence ended with a public show of support from the Director of Harrods and an exclusive decade-long contract with Burberry.

The first adverts for Blighty Tweeds as a Burberry product appeared from 1918 and intended to appeal to the post-war middle class, using a consistent three-point message: product, price and patriotism. Whilst the first two aspects of this campaign were not unique to either company, what was unique were its concepts of a ‘patriotic debt’ and ‘sympathetic contact’ between employee and consumer. Each piece of Blighty Tweed was ‘marked with the name

of the wounded man who has woven it', allowing the customer a more personal, if not entirely pseudosocial, connection to the manufacturer, with reminders the fabric was woven by disabled veterans in a scheme that was 'entirely self-supporting and owes nothing to State aid or charity', giving it a key advantage over its competitors:

Those who favour Burberry clothing now have an opportunity of assisting to solve the problem of what to do with our discharged soldiers and sailors... every member of the public who purchases [tweeds] experiences the satisfaction of feeling that he is making some practical return for the self-devotion of our soldiers and sailors. Adverts aimed at women highlighted the versatility of Blighty Tweeds and a reminder of their patriotic debt to those who had created it. Many of the women in the social classes targeted by these adverts would have been amongst those who visited the injured servicemen in hospitals during the war, and adverts made clear purchasing from this company offered an opportunity to continue that support at the end of the conflict, with the livelihood of amputee veterans dependent upon those purchasing choices:

The larger the number of Ladies who decide on coats and costumes... from Burberry's "Blighty" tweeds this spring, the larger the number of "Blighty" looms kept going, and steadier the development of what we trust will grow into one of the most flourishing, even as it is already, one of the most notable and praiseworthy of Britain's handicrafts.

In February 1920, the company took this 'sympathetic contact' to a new level by putting a 'Blighty' loom and worker on display in public view at Robert Maule's department store in central Edinburgh, manipulating the public's sense of responsibility for those injured and furthering the pseudosocial connection between customers and employees.

This marketing strategy was not only successful in Britain but can be seen in the newspapers of British colonies around the world, from Christchurch to Vancouver. However, it was not only the product of the Blighty Company that was successfully exported, but the business model and manufacturing techniques as well. Hansard for the Australian Parliament shows the company was specifically raised as a possible model for the Australian wool trade and rehabilitation of wounded ANZAC soldiers.

Within five years, the Blighty Tweed Company employed over 80 disabled veterans at three sites across Scotland, along with smaller outlets and travelling salesmen (also amputee veterans). It was also able to engineer a close relationship to the royal family, with Queen Mary making regular visits to the workshops, before its appointment as 'homespun manufacturers to His Majesty the King' in 1924.

Sadly, this success was not enough to keep the scheme running long-term. By the mid-1920s the wool trade had begun to slump with sales decreasing and prices rising across the industry. The company was also facing legal issues, with a competitor attempting to trade under the name 'Blighty'; demonstrating the value of the trademark and the extent it had become associated with the cause of disabled veterans, to both manufacturers and the public. Although Blighty won its case, it marked the beginning of the end for the company. With the market slump, lack of funds and diminishing interest from the public, by the end of 1928 the company sold by auction. The business that was once outfitted the Queen and supplied furnishing for Balmoral Castle did not receive a single bid above its reserve.

By this time, the war been over by a decade and, although many veterans would face lifelong physical or mental effects, the majority of the public wished to look forward. By the mid-1920s, a nationwide compassion fatigue had settled across much of British society, and ‘as people tried to heal from emotional wounds, resentment grew against men who embodied war memories in their disfigurements’. As Bourke noted in her work on masculinity in First World War soldiers, ‘as time progressed, the status of wounded war veterans deteriorated as the general population began to feel “increased callousness and neglect towards the weak in general- even the heralded heroes back from the battlefield”. For the veterans’ charities who depended on this sentiment for survival, this turn of public feeling was disastrous. This is evident in the story of Blighty Tweeds, whose marketing strategy was dependent on the patriotism and sentiment of its customers, calling them to ‘do their bit’ for the disabled servicemen injured serving their country.

Janet Harkness

Identity, Purpose and Belonging – setting up an Occupational Therapy Service for Veterans living in Supported Accommodation.

KEYWORDS: Occupational Therapy, Veterans, Homelessness, Supported Living.

Purpose

The aim and purpose of this paper is to share our experiences of setting up a new occupational therapy (OT) service for Scottish Veterans Residences (SVR) which provides veterans with supported living arrangements in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee.

Methodology/Approach

Contextual chronological description

Findings

- Occupational Therapy and Veterans (Perryman-Fox et al 2020, RCOT 2019)
- Emerging Role Occupational Therapy Student Placements at SVR
- Service Design and literature review (Lawson et al 2023, Parton et al 2024).
- Service Delivery
- Service Demographics
- Impact Evaluation
- Next steps

Theoretical Implications - This innovative service should spark further discussion and investigation and may be of interest to other organisations.

Practical Implications - Improved health and well-being outcomes through occupational therapy will help improve veterans’ life chances and facilitate community integration and social inclusion.

Originality/value - The authors are not aware of any occupational therapist working with homeless veterans in Scotland in a supported accommodation context.

References

- Lawson J Guy K (2023) Creating a safe therapeutic environment for veterans OT News, Royal College of Occupational Therapists April 23:17-18
- Parton K, Wilkes C (2024) A new approach to rehabilitation services in mental health, OT News, Royal College of Occupational Therapists June 24:19-21
- Perryman-Fox M, Cox D 2020 Occupational Therapy in the United Kingdom: Past, Present, and Future *Annals of International Occupational Therapy*, 2020;3(3):144–151 <https://doi.org/10.3928/24761222-20200309-03>
- Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), (2019) Occupational Therapy and Homelessness Evidence Note

Natalie Merryman

Cultural camouflage and constructing gendered identity: experiences of women veterans of the Australian Defence Force - initial findings.

KEYWORDS: women; veterans; culture; gender; identity.

Summary

The gendered experience of women veterans within military institutions is underexplored in Australian research. Participation of Australian women in the military has grown, particularly over the last decade and female veterans, like their male counterparts, describe great value from service and loyalty to the institution. Despite this, the experience can also be challenging for women as they navigate identity and successful assimilation into a male dominated organisation. There is an expectation that the corporeal body of the soldier will perform a gendered role that reflects the hyper-masculine warrior ideal. Understanding of the lived experience of women within this environment is poor, rendering them silenced and invisible. This invisibility has recently been linked to gender-based barriers to supports through military-civil transition, for physical and mental health issues, social connection and access to Veterans' Affairs entitlements. In a current sociological study of Australian women veteran experiences of service, emerging data reveals strategies of 'camouflage' used by military women to present a masculinised identity in order to be accepted. This paper explores how the corporeal nature of biological functions of the female soldier can then disrupt and expose the gender difference women may have sought to disguise. Camouflaging their gendered identity and their responses to institutional discrimination, harassment and abuse and also sustaining dual identities during service has longer term implications for women veterans. Those impacts include to their identity during and after transition, their ongoing wellbeing and general visibility in the civil and veteran support space, as well as to each other.

Colloquium Four: Ex-service personnel in the Criminal Justice System

Improving Outcomes for Justice Involved Veterans

While precise figures of ex-military personnel in the Scottish justice system are unknown, existing studies have highlighted the challenges they experience which may ultimately lead to their imprisonment. Factors such as exposure to violence and trauma, military transitions, alcohol and substance use, mental health, and military identities have all been identified as possible contributory factors to offending (Howard League, 2011; Murray, 2013; Wainwright, et al. 2016). The current strategic focus on 'Veterans and the Law' (Scottish Veterans Commissioner, 2023) presents a timely opportunity to explore how the diverse needs of justice involved veterans can be addressed in policy and practice. This session will begin with an overview of the veteran population in Scottish prisons, sharing insights from qualitative studies of their transitions between civilian, military and justice domains. Subsequently, several international studies in this field will be presented, providing perspectives on the needs of justice-involved veterans and strategies for their support. The session will conclude with a roundtable discussion to explore key questions and identify new approaches for policy and practice in this area.

Adrian Kirk & Dr Jane Jones – Care after Combat will present a short paper on the criminal justice system in England in comparison to those services offered in Scotland. This will be followed by a short presentation from Professor Gerri Matthews-Smith & Dr Christine Haddow on Scottish research studies.

Mallika Singh

Ex-service personnel in the criminal justice system: Barriers to identification and uptake of support

KEYWORDS: Armed forces, veterans, criminal justice, identification, support

Ex-service personnel form the largest occupational group in prisons, although exact estimates of the population of ex-service personnel within the CJS in England, Wales and Scotland vary. Figures provided by the Ministry of Defence suggest around 3.5% of individuals in prison in England and Wales have served in the military (DASA, 2010). The DASA statistics estimated that approximately 3.5% - 4% of individuals in custody and on community orders in England and Wales were ex-service personnel, whilst other estimates suggested that the proportion in the prison population ranges from 3.5% to 16.75% (The Royal British Legion, 2011). Research regarding offending characteristics is largely representative of the people who have been identified as ex-service personnel in prison. The DASA report (2010) and the Howard League for Penal Reform (2011) also highlighted that ex-service personnel are less likely than the general population to offend, but that the crimes they are sentenced for are more likely to be violent and/ or sexual.

This research was commissioned by the Forces in Mind Trust to determine the barriers to identification of ex-service personnel in the criminal justice system (CJS), as well as the barriers to uptake of available support for ex-service personnel and their families.

In addition to contributing to knowledge in this field, the aims of the research included proposing solutions to improve identification of ex-service personnel in the CJS, as well recommendations to improve uptake of support for ex-service personnel and their families impacted by the CJS. The research was conducted in two phases across England, Scotland and Wales: Phase 1, from August 2021 to April 2022, consisted of substantive interviews with 29 key national stakeholders who work with or are involved in policymaking related to ex-service personnel in the CJS. Phase 2 of the research consisted of in-depth primary research across eight local sites which included interviews with 104 ex-service personnel in prison and in the community under supervision, as well as 71 professionals working in different parts of the justice system and other local stakeholders.

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim to enable a rich and reliable interpretation of the data. The interviews were then entered into the qualitative data analysis package, QSR Nvivo to enable a thematic analysis of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2019; 2020). The research team took a data-driven inductive approach so as not to apply pre-existing conceptions of what barriers and enablers there might be within each stage to identify themes. There were several findings pertinent to each stage of an individual's criminal justice journey as well as corresponding agencies and we also identified the following cross-cutting themes which emerged across the course of the research:

- › **A reluctance to seek help amongst ex-service personnel:** Pride and a sense of self-reliance were often cited as reasons why ex-service personnel were reluctant to ask for help.
- › **A lack of understanding amongst ex-service personnel about why they were being asked to identify as having served in the Armed Forces:** Those interviewed often stated that the purpose of identification at different stages of the justice process was not clear. This influences the decision to identify as having served in the Armed Forces, as ex-service personnel were not sure why the question was asked, and what implications it may have on their journey through the justice system.
- › **A complex landscape and lack of awareness of available support in the community:** The current support landscape is complex, with a considerable number of support options in prison and particularly in the community. However, many of the ex-service personnel who participated in this research and stakeholders were not aware of available support. In addition, many ex-service personnel often stated that they were only aware of ex-service personnel specific services after they had contact with the justice system.
- › **Limits to the capacity and knowledge of professionals:** Capacity issues were raised by prison staff in England, Scotland, and Wales, and probation staff in England and Wales, impacting their ability to routinely identify and support ex-service personnel. This was exacerbated by limited knowledge of the most appropriate services for ex-service personnel in the justice system.
- › **Use of language when asking about service history and interpretation of the term 'veteran':** It emerged that the term 'veteran' was not commonly understood to include ex-service personnel with shorter services and/or no combat experience. Many ex-service personnel were not aware that their service history made them eligible to identify as a 'veteran' and seek ex-service personnel specific support services.

› **Belief amongst stakeholders that shame influences decisions to identify/take up support, although few ex-service personnel expressed this.**

We also learnt that there were limited opportunities to identify ex-service personnel before custody, with limited diversion pathways at the point of arrest in Wales and Scotland. Davies and Davies (2018) highlighted that ex-service personnel can be identified within custody suites at police stations, which may present an opportunity to provide or signpost to appropriate support services, thereby providing early intervention in their journey through the CJS. In this project, the findings show a reluctance by many to identify as ex-service personnel influenced by uncertainty about the rationale or implications of disclosure. In prisons, identification was driven predominantly through Veterans-in-Custody Support Officers (ViCSOs), most of whom conduct this role on a voluntary basis. Many ex-service personnel cited mental health as an unmet support need, compounded by their reluctance to ask for help. For some within this subset, PTSD was highlighted as an important mental health concern, although many reported that the origin of their PTSD was not combat or Armed Forces-related. Reluctance to seek support was also exacerbated by limited trust in professionals who did not share an Armed Forces' background or were not aware of the unique experiences of ex-service personnel. This supports Iverson and Greenberg's (2009) research which found that ex-service personnel expressed a preference for receiving mental health support from professionals who are also ex-service personnel.

This research was the first of its type to learn about identification processes of ex-service personnel after the implementation of the ViCSO programme across prisons in England, Wales, and Scotland. We discovered that whilst the ViCSO programme is successful, due to the voluntary nature of the ViCSO role, time pressures on ViCSOs prevent them from delivering seamless support. Our findings have also corroborated previous research concerning the attitudes of ex-service personnel in the CJS, chiefly their reluctance to seek support. In the course of our research, it emerged that the reluctance to seek help was exacerbated by ex-service personnel being supported by staff (especially in the community) who often did not have sufficient familiarity with Armed Forces' culture. This research has also identified numerous opportunities to identify ex-service personnel before they arrive in prison custody. Identifying and supporting ex-service personnel through each stage of the justice system can equip them with the tools they need to move away from criminal behaviour and live fulfilling lives not only as someone who has been in contact with the justice system, but also as former members of the Armed Forces.

Colloquium Five: Education and Lifelong Learning

Professor Suzette Brémault-Phillips

Leveraging post-secondary education for Military members, Veterans, and their Families: Evolving Military, Veteran, and Family Connected Campus Consortia (MVF3Cs)

Postsecondary education (PSE) can be a transforming force for those who may serve, serve, have served and their families. The Canadian Military, Veteran, and Family Connected Campus Consortium (CMVF3C) – a coalition of representatives from post-secondary institutions, Veterans

Affairs Canada, Canadian Armed Forces and associated partner – is an example of national initiative aimed at aligning efforts to leverage PSE in support of both operational readiness and transition to civilian life post-service. This presentation will introduce the CMVF3C, best-practices and key components of Military, Veteran and Family Connected Campuses (MVFCCs), and regional and national collaborations among CMVF3C members. This will set the context for considering ways to evolve a broader network of MVFCCs beyond geographical borders.

Participants will:

1. Identify ways PSE can support military members, veterans and their families
2. Explore application of MVFCC best practices to local, regional and national contexts
3. Consider strategies to grow regional, national and international MVF3C collaborations

Stephen Graham

Military Education: The Prussian Model, and the Present-Day Experiences of Military Cadets and Service Personnel

KEYWORDS: Military Education, Military Theory, History, Command.

Summary

In 1832, Carl von Clausewitz outlined his recommendation that in order to successfully adapt to changes in the character of warfare, officers must be possessed with, “sensitive and discriminating judgement... a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth”. In so doing, he helped to establish a culture of learning which contributed more than any other factor to German military success, influencing civilian education to this day in Germany, and military education across the world.

To what extent, however, can the British model of military education be compared to the Prussian model? Unfortunately, British observers of Prussian methods in the eighteenth century took conclusions based only on the superficial: ‘Young officers,’ noted one chronicler, ‘attended the reviews at Potsdam and thought all the secrets of Frederick’s success lay in Prussian drill, Prussian uniforms, and the shine and polish tradition. They were unable to distinguish the symbol from the substance.’

Britain’s culture of military learning, moreover, is a woefully under-studied area. How are cadets taught, and how do their experiences of higher education compare to those of civilian students? In what way does military training affect the process of learning, and how does this relate to education and professions once personnel have left service? This paper outlines the plan to establish a study into this phenomenon, utilising educational psychology alongside military theory to determine trends in development and identify areas in which successful models can be transferred into the civilian educational sphere.

Wednesday 28th August

Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Colloquium One: Mental Health

Professor Ben Wadam

Veteran Suicide: Investigating the Social and Historical Dimensions

Australian veterans and their families have been advocating for a Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide since around 2014. In 2021 a Royal Commission was authorised, and the Commission now has recently concluded its business. In 2023 I was awarded an Australian Research Council Discovery Project to ‘investigate the Social and Historical Dimensions of veteran suicide. In Australia the numbers appear to identify a serious and acute issue of veteran deaths by suicide, although it is also clear that the data in the UK and some other jurisdictions is not so certain. The data in Australia was very unreliable and inconsistent in Australia until the Royal Commission but now the results appear far more unequivocal. But there is continual work to do in this space. One key narrative that has shaped the general understanding of this issue is a focus on mental health and deployment trauma. This talk describes the focus we brought to the Royal Commission which has been described as changing the direction of the inquiry. We outline a social health and life course to veteran suicide that maps service and transition to self-harm and suicidality. We demonstrate through about 150 interviews with veterans who had been suicidal or had attempt to take their lives, or their families who have been left behind, that questions of identity, purpose and belonging are principal to veteran self-harm and suicidality and that PTSD is less (or as) imposing than institutional betrayal or moral injury. Our research focuses on service and transition, culture and systems and trauma and wellbeing. We found that interactions with a military culture that is ‘martial, fraternal, and exceptional’ generates challenges that lead to poor health and life outcomes. Our research has championed to include social health concerns which are complex requiring attempts by practitioners, service providers and the veteran community to improve veteran identity, purpose and belonging. This we argue, diminishes the ‘broken soldier’ narrative and pivots to look at veterans and their families as contributors and leaders in the civilian world they re enter after service.

Professor Thanos Karatzias

ICD-11 Complex PTSD in veterans: Advances in Treatment and Personalised Care

Complex PTSD (CPTSD) has been included as a new diagnosis in ICD-11 in 2019 and it is a more prevalent condition than PTSD in treatment seeking (1) and general population samples in the UK (2). Similarly, in a recently completed cohort study (n=178) of a veteran seeking population, it was found that 56% met diagnostic criteria for CPTSD versus 14% who met criteria for PTSD (3). Two recent meta-analytic reviews (4,5) suggest that existing interventions commonly used for PTSD, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), are not particularly useful for CPTSD. There is, therefore, an urgent need to develop and test interventions for CPTSD. Karatzias and Cloitre (6) have proposed modular

therapy (i.e. Enhanced Skills Training for Affective and Interpersonal Regulation – ESTAIR; (7)) as a new promising area of treatment enquiry for CPTSD and developed a new treatment protocol ready to be tested. Preliminary evidence suggests that ESTAIR is safe and potentially effective for veterans with CPTSD (RESTORE trial; 8). In this talk, advances in treatment and personalised care for veterans with CPTSD will be presented including findings from the RESTORE trial.

References

1. Karatzias, T., Shevlin, M., Fyvie, C., Hyland, P., Efthymiadou, E., Wilson, D., ... & Cloitre, M. (2017). Evidence of distinct profiles of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complex posttraumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) based on the new ICD-11 trauma questionnaire (ICD-TQ). *Journal of affective disorders*, 207, 181-187.
2. Karatzias, T., Hyland, P., Bradley, A., Cloitre, M., Roberts, N. P., Bisson, J. I., & Shevlin, M. (2019). Risk factors and comorbidity of ICD-11 PTSD and complex PTSD: Findings from a trauma-exposed population based sample of adults in the United Kingdom. *Depression and anxiety*, 36(9), 887-894.
3. Murphy, D., Shevlin, M., Pearson, E., Greenberg, N., Wessely, S., Busuttill, W., & Karatzias, T. (2020). A validation study of the International Trauma Questionnaire to assess post-traumatic stress disorder in treatment-seeking veterans. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 216(3), 132-137.
4. Karatzias, T.; Murphy, P.; Cloitre, M.; Bisson, J.; Roberts, N.; Shevlin, M.; Hyland, P.; Maercker, A.; Ben-Ezra, M.; Coventry, P.; Mason-Roberts, S.; Bradley, A.; Hutton P. (2019). Psychological interventions for ICD-11 Complex PTSD symptoms: Systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychological Medicine*, 49. 1761-1775.

Major General Tim Hodgetts CB CBE KHS OStJ DL HonDSc PhD MMed MBA

Resilience for Crisis, Conflict and War

This presentation will examine resilience from three aspects: organisational, team and individual. Objective lessons from the war in Ukraine are used to explain 'organisational' preparedness and resilience for expanding war on the European Continent. How policy and planning at the international (NATO, EU) and national (UK Defence and NHS) levels have rapidly evolved in the last three years provides reassurance of our increasing institutional resilience, accepting there are still risks for medical preparedness to support large scale conflict.

At the 'team' level, examples are given of how clinical teams have been prepared to maximise effectiveness and resilience to deliver care in the most challenging environments through collective clinical training; rapid development of new practices and guidelines; advanced discussion of likely ethical challenges; and inclusion in practice refinement through continuous near real-time audit.

At the 'individual' level, two aspects are highlighted. First is how the mental resilience of individual soldiers has been enhanced through the OPSMART programme starting in basic training; and how physical resilience of the vulnerable at entry is enhanced through screening and/or conditioning training. Tools to cope with stress management occurring on Operations are highlighted (TRiM, decompression, R3P), noting where these are transferable to the civilian setting.

The second 'individual' aspect is the personal coping mechanisms of a senior medical leader to be resilient to exposure to serial moral injury in progressive crises, disasters and conflicts over nearly forty years. Training; experience; acceptance of mortality; and post-traumatic growth through translating experience into shared learning and system improvement are all discussed. The use of war poetry to reflect, rationalise and record these experiences is offered as a golden thread of enduring personal resilience.

Dr Gerry Cox

Striving To Be The “Safest Healthcare System for All”: From Strategy to Action based on this abstract.

The landmark Institute of Medicine report “To Err is Human” galvanized public attention about the prevalence of medical error and preventable harm across healthcare systems, launching a patient safety movement that has grown over the last two decades. This movement includes deliberately transforming both the culture and system processes of healthcare to be more highly reliable and resilient. As the largest integrated healthcare system in the United States, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) embarked upon a Journey to High Reliability with a vision of becoming the safest healthcare for all. This journey represents a long-term commitment to veterans and their families, as well as the VHA workforce, to deliver safe and equitable care. In order to weave the mindset, principles and practices of high reliability into the fabric of operations and culture, VHA adheres to a “Tight-Loose-Tight” framework that integrates strategy across the organizational governance structure—from the bedside to the boardroom. The framework is first “tight” in setting expectations across the enterprise and embedding strategy and operational actions in both long-range and short-term plans, then “loose” in allowing organizational leaders at VHA organizations the freedom and autonomy to identify, evaluate and execute tailored local actions against the enterprise strategy and, finally, “tight” in establishing both local and enterprise-wide targets for measuring and sharing results. Presenters will share lessons learned in balancing local ownership and leadership of safety efforts with national sponsorship and governance of enterprise-wide support. They will discuss the business case for how the journey to high reliability not only advances patient safety but also enables advancement in patient and staff engagement, systems improvement, employee wellness and trust.

Colloquium Two: Wellbeing

Amy Hamilton

Beyond Talk: How the openness of Haiku and visual arts can facilitate 'expressing the inexpressible' for injured Australian Defence Force personal

Through artistic engagement, not only can individuals create images but also train their eyes to perceive their world more deeply. Drawing, for example, is not just about making marks on paper but also about observing and understanding the subject matter. Working with non-clinical creative-arts interventions for serving military personnel with health conditions relating to trauma and injury have become popular as adjuncts to more familiar programs of rehabilitation and reintegration. In this article we draw upon a workshop that the authors facilitated with Australian Defence Force (ADF) serving military personnel who had physical

injury and/or mental health concerns. We argue that by observing and learning to use metaphors through Haiku and visual art concepts, recovering ADF personnel can reconfigure and understand their experience of injury in new and empowering ways. Learning to see can also develop a deeper understanding of oneself, others and the world through observation, reflection, and interpretation. This has implications for recovery, as the arts can provide the opportunity for ADF personal to feel and experience complex emotional states related to current and past experiences, to improve communication skills, increase self-expression, and to assist with reintegration or transitioning into civilian life.

Dr Sarah Dixon Smith

Blast Injury, Rehabilitation & Veteran Welfare, 1914-2014: The Use of Applied History in Clinical Practice

KEYWORDS: Military history, mental health, conflict injury

This paper is based on a series of medical pensions files for medically discharged First World War veterans, PIN 26, held by The National Archives, Kew. Originally a series of over 700,000 files, just 22,829 survive today. These were searched through the archive's online catalogue, then hand-screened to find all records of veterans with a blast-related amputation. This approach revealed 100 relevant cases covering the period 1914 to 1985. The files include a range of sources including x-rays, medical board reports, statements and correspondence from patients, and notes from civil servants and clinicians managing the cases. Patient data were analysed using NVivo 12 and extracted data included patient demographics, mechanism of injury, interventions, and subsequent medical conditions.

To complement the patient data and explore differences between the professional conversation and recorded clinical practice, a systematic review of the British Medical Journal and The Lancet was also conducted for the same period. This analysis focused on reports of chronic postamputation pain, including case histories, research studies and correspondence. After screening, 202 texts were included in the final analysis.

Findings

Of the 100 patient cases included for analysis, 76% reported some form of chronic postamputation pain, as defined by Edwards et al (2014) and including residual limb pain, phantom limb pain and phantom limb sensation. This result is concurrent with current estimates of postamputation pain in military veterans at up to 85%. Taking an applied history approach with this dataset allowed the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data within these files: through this method ideas that may be familiar to current patients or clinicians can be highlighted. For example, the incidence of phantom limb pain in the veterans was far lower than expected or than current estimates. The systematic review of the journals reveals this was also a concern of the period and that clinicians believed patients were unwilling to seek treatment for symptoms that "appeared to them to be so unreal and fantastic as to suggest that they were the product of disordered imagination" or as "one very intelligent subject remarked, 'I did not report sick, because I did not expect a doctor to treat a ghost.'"

Analysis of the patient files and journal articles in combination also revealed the concept of an 'interval of comfort'. On average across all patients within the dataset, there was a gap of seven years between injury and first report of chronic pain. When focusing on phantom limb

pain, this 'interval of comfort' extended to 35.5 years. Current clinical guidelines report that whilst 25–50% of amputees will experience phantom pain immediately after surgery, this should decrease over time and just 10% of patients will experience phantom pain at twelve months. Using a historical dataset to reveal a longer-term view would suggest that there is a possibility chronic postamputation pain may be a longer-term condition than is currently realised.

Almost two-thirds of the included veterans had a long-term physical health condition believed by their clinicians to be directly related to their original injury, and fifty-one separate conditions were recorded across the cohort. In one third of cases, these conditions considered severe enough to warrant an increase in pension. The most common was osteoarthritis which affected 22% of the cohort. This condition was particularly common in lower limb amputees' hands and spines as a result of an altered centre of gravity over many years. Also particularly prevalent in lower limb amputees were potentially painful conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome or hernias, likely due to the long-term use of crutches and the strapping of the prosthetic limbs. Patients with chronic pain, whether resulting from amputation or other health conditions, were also more at risk of obesity (seven times higher in this cohort than in the general population) and insomnia: one in four patients reported their pain regularly prevented their sleep, with reports including the sensation of 'hot needles' to a persistent tickling in the phantom foot.

Analysis of the interventions for these conditions in both the patient files and the professional journals also reveals a learning cycle of approximately twenty years: a treatment would be introduced to clinical practice, recommended in the literature, later discovered to have negative effects on patients and then discarded, only to be reintroduced several years later. This pattern can be seen in several medical and surgical interventions across the period under study, in particular that of nerve shortening at time of amputation, which was introduced in the 1920s, 1940s and 1960s, and which has recently reemerged once again as an example of best practice in current clinical practice.

Whilst any of the 100 cases selected for this dataset could be used as a narrative case study to give context to the results, this paper will focus on two of the patients. One, Lt Francis Hopkinson, is one of the most complex cases in the dataset. As a lower limb amputee with six decades of untreated chronic pain and PTSD, Lt Hopkinson's case demonstrates the impact conflict wounding and untreated pain can have on every aspect of a veteran's life, from family to employment, and the potential struggle to have the subsequent disability recognised and appropriately treated. The second case, Pte Harry Key became a bilateral lower limb amputee at the age of 19 and demonstrates the potential issues and rewards of working with an historical dataset.

Originality/Value

To our knowledge, this project is the first lifelong injury effects survey for British veterans and the first to use narrative case histories to demonstrate lessons for clinical practice and welfare policy. Valuable lessons from past conflicts are often overlooked or forgotten, having to be relearned with every subsequent conflict. Applied history has a unique role to play within this gap, particularly in establishing policy – in this case, determining likely medical and societal needs of an aging cohort of wounded servicemen, with management and prevention of chronic pain and other long-term health conditions up to 70 years after injury, the subsequent implications for government policy and welfare services, and minimising the time spent repeating potentially harmful interventions.

Jilly Carrell

The 'lived experience'.

Jilly Carrell was an army spouse for 20 years and has been a military widow for three. Their daughters were 12 and 14 when her husband, Colonel Nick Carrell, died at the end of lockdown in 2021. Nick served with both the Lifeguards and the Adjutant General's Corps. Nick served in the Balkans, Northern Ireland and completed six tours of Afghanistan; his last tour lasting eight months without RnR. Before his death from a rapid and aggressive brain cancer, Nick was diagnosed with complex PTSD.

The subsequent fallout and 'lived experience' after Nick's death has been graphically expressed in a LinkedIn post by Jilly in March 2024. The loss of home, children moving schools, navigating the support systems, or lack of them, and the reality of life outside the Armed Forces family highlighted a system that struggles to provide the necessary resources and assistance needed to cope with the loss of a loved one. Regrettably, current policy does not always translate into a positive transition for the Armed Forces bereaved. Jilly's post managed to cut through and communicate with a cohort of families that had previously been unable to express their concerns. The post to date has received over a million views, with thousands of 'lived experience' testimonials coming forward. Since becoming a widow, Jilly has campaigned for greater awareness and better life pathways for bereaved armed forces families. Two months ago, with the support of experts from across the Armed Forces, NHS, government affairs, academia, corporate and charity sector, Jilly founded [BeyondtheWire.org.uk](https://www.beyondthewire.org.uk) - a not-for-profit CIC that will advocate and research for the military bereaved.

Jilly has a wealth of knowledge in the armed forces charity sector - 15 years working in policy, community development and funding. Prior to 'marrying into the army' she worked in public affairs for an investment bank in the city. Jilly is due to start her new role as Deputy Director of Fundraising at Royal Hospital Chelsea in September. Jilly lives in Winchester with her two daughters. In the very little spare time she has, she produces stories about the home front; last year she was shortlisted for four main literary prizes and her first work was published.

Dr Sharon McDonnell

The Development of an Evidence-Based Suicide Bereavement Pack for the Armed Forces Community

Background

When someone dies by suicide during or after their military service, there are particular challenges faced by the relatives, friends and colleagues left behind. In addition to the risk of further suicide of individuals bereaved by suicide and the complicated grief that can be experienced, research outside the UK indicates that people may struggle with stigma, losing a way of life and with the demands of military death inquiries/media interest. The Armed Forces Covenant aims to remove disadvantage and ensure that the Armed Forces community, including their families receive the same support as the civilian community. However, there is little understanding of the needs of Armed Forces relatives, friends and colleagues bereaved by suicide in the UK, including civilian next-of-kin – for example parents of serving/ex-service personnel who may have died by suicide. This study aimed to learn from and build on what is already in place (in the UK and overseas) in a civilian and Armed Forces environment by

identifying the experiences and needs of individuals bereaved by the suicide of a family member, colleague/ex-colleague, or friend during or after the person's military service and 2) co-producing an evidence-informed suicide bereavement pack to support bereaved individuals.

Methods

In Phase 1 we conducted in-depth interviews with relatives, friends and colleagues who had lost an important person by suicide during or after the person's military service to identify their experiences and needs. We also identified and collated existing sources of support available to anyone bereaved by the suicide of a family member, colleague/ex-colleague or friend during or after the person's service life. In Phase 2 we developed an Armed Forces suicide bereavement pack based on insights gathered from Phase 1, consisting of guides written for different groups.

Results

Participants were 30 relatives, friends and colleagues bereaved by suicide aged 19-63 years at time of their loss. Nineteen were male, 11 female. Thirteen were serving at the time of their loss and 6 were ex-service (they spanned a range of ranks). Eleven were family members (spouses, parents, siblings, adult children). We captured experiences related to the Army, Navy and RAF. The people who had died either during or after their military service ranged from the lowest ranks to senior commissioned officers. Interviews informed the content/development of the suicide bereavement pack, which consisted of three At Your Side guides tailored for specific groups: At Your Side Guide 1: veterans, At Your Side Guide 2: families, At Your Side Guide 3: serving personnel.

Professor Karl Hamner

Promoting Veteran Wellbeing to Prevent Suicide: What if the best way to prevent suicide is to not look at suicide?

Suicide remains an intractable, wicked problem. For the United States in particular, suicide has risen to become an enormous social and public health problem, one even worse for our Veterans. U.S. suicide rates have risen steadily for the past 50 years to the point where it is now one of the top causes of death and is second greatest cause of death for people ages 10-14 and 20-34, despite billions of research and treatment dollars spent on the problem. For Veterans, billions given to the VA over the past two decades to increase Veteran mental health care has had no appreciable impact on their rising rates of suicide. Recent research reviews have shown that 50 years of research on predicting and preventing suicide has yielded no meaningful way to predict who will die by suicide (Franklin et al., 2017). Our dominant response model of "prevention" relies on screening and referral to treatment, thus keeping intervention "on the edge of the ledge" (Cain, 2019). In not addressing social factors that contribute to premature mortality such as: identity, purpose, and belonging. We are falling short. Given this, we present the case for a shift in our Veteran suicide prevention paradigm by asking: *What if the best way to prevent Veteran suicide is to not look at suicide?*

Following calls from leaders in the public health and suicide prevention, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we present the case that to reduce early mortality among veterans and other military connected populations, we need to move upstream and focus on promoting Veteran wellbeing. This call is not new. Over the past 15 years, wellbeing has emerged as a key goal/indicator of progress for individuals and communities around the world,

both within civilian and military-connected populations (Adler and Gutierrez, 2023; Thompson, MacLean, Roach, Banman, Mabiior, & Pedlar, 2016). Wellbeing has also been put forward as an “as an integrative concept that helps us to develop linkages across different areas of theory, policy, and practice” (Thompson & Livingston, 2018) and a policy framework for health promotion and sustainable development (Corbin et al., 2021). Numerous countries have adopted Veteran wellbeing frameworks. Yet we have no shared understanding of what wellbeing is, let alone any evidence-based models on how to promote it. We present preliminary findings from an ongoing scoping review of Veteran wellbeing research, showing most published wellbeing research remains bio-psycho in focus, although social wellbeing is an emerging contender. We discuss common domains of wellbeing and share a pilot process for empowering Veterans to develop their own wellbeing. We need to empower Veterans and others on their own journey to a life well lived.

Colloquium Three: Resilience

Dr Karen Bird

The Historical Contingency of Veteran Suicide: WWI veterans and their post-war experiences in Australia, 1919–45

Abstract

Investigating the long history of veteran suicide is critical in identifying the construction of the problem and how it has been approached and understood in the past. Focusing on select case studies from the Queensland archives, this paper analyses the post-war experiences of veterans as they navigated civilian life after returning from war. It explores how veterans’ pre-war circumstances, wartime service, transition from the military, access to support after separation and social networks, fundamentally shaped their post-war experiences. In doing so, the paper highlights that veteran suicide has been a persistent and significant problem in Australia for over a century and argues that an understanding of its historical dimensions is crucial if we are to address and prevent this problem into the future.

LT COL Samantha Hodges

Understanding and enhancing suicidality surveillance in the Australian Army; a mixed methods analysis.

KEYWORDS: Suicidality; Surveillance; Military personnel

Purpose

This presentation describes the author’s efforts to address critical gaps in the surveillance of suicidality in the Australian Army through a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) research project (currently in progress). The project is the current recipient of the Australian Chief of Army Scholarship 2024-2025.

Death by suicide and suicidality, defined for this research as ideation, non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI), and suicide attempts, is recognised as a serious health problem and challenge for military organisations around the world (WHO, 2014). Military personnel, defined as those uniformed service members employed by their nation’s military, are exposed to many factors

inherent in military service that may increase the risk of suicidality, including exposure to combat, traumatic injury, witnessing the injury or death of others, long periods away from support networks, and the transition from military to civilian life (Schafer et al, 2022).

In response to growing concerns about suicidality in the military and veteran community, the Australian Government convened the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS, 2021). A key finding from the Commission's Interim Report is the lack of comprehensive, co-ordinated surveillance of suicidality in the ADF, which has hindered the RCDVS's ability to systematically analyse the risk factors and systemic issues that may be of relevance to prevention efforts (RCDVS, 2022).

Methodology

Investigating the entire ADF was considered beyond the scope of a PhD; as such the Australian Army (Army) was chosen due to having the largest population of ADF members, the availability of a large data sample related to suicidality events, and the author's own lived experience as a commissioned officer in the Army. The PhD is a mixed methods project integrating a scoping review, retrospective data analysis, and lived experience interviews.

Findings

Study 1: Results demonstrate the heterogeneity of military suicidality surveillance and the need for further research to identify best practice models. The most common surveillance systems were variations of military mortality databases that primarily focused on death by suicide. Ideation, NSSI and suicide attempts were under-surveilled and it may be that this limits the power of surveillance systems to contribute to the prevention of future suicidality. Common barriers to accurate and meaningful data collection are discussed, along with highlighting the lack of lived experience perspectives in the design or evaluation of surveillance systems. The scoping review concludes with suggestions on how to enhance current systems and research directions for the future.

Study 2: A number of key findings of interest are highlighted including: seasonality patterns in events; differences in the location of non-lethal vs attempted/lethal events; gender differences in method of harm; pathway to care routes, and career outcomes.

Study 3: Findings will not be available at the time of the conference.

Dr LT COL Geoff Grey

The impact of mentored creative engagement on the wellbeing of Australian Defence Force wounded, injured and ill personnel

Abstract

Since 2015, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has delivered the 'Arts for Recovery, Resilience, Teamwork and Skills Program' (ADF ARRTS), a four-week long residential program for serving ADF wounded, injured and ill personnel, to explore artist/educator led non-clinical creative engagement opportunities in creative writing, music & rhythm, and visual arts. Through applying a creative lens to everyday life, the program imbues empathic and egalitarian principles in a no-rank and no-uniform environment.

The Defence Science and Technology Group assessed early programs for any improvements in the psychological wellbeing and recovery with service-related injuries, finding that, compared to baseline levels, there were significant improvements in self-reported self-esteem, social functioning, physical functioning and positive affect, and significant reductions in psychological distress, insomnia, and post-traumatic levels. There was no significant change in negative affect levels.

Qualitative research was recently completed into the longer-term impact of program attendance, focussing on the ways in which creative engagement modalities may act to offer improved wellbeing outcomes for uniformed personnel and veterans. Whether remaining in service or career transitioned, 85% of researched personnel continue to engage with creativity years after program attendance, with a heightened understanding of self-identity strongly present. Many realise – for the first time – they can have multiple identities beyond the uniform and are allowed to do so.

Aligned research is currently assessing whether creative engagement could achieve similar effectiveness for deployed forces – who aren't categorised as wounded, injured and ill – to better assist the wellbeing of our combat-fit resources with challenges arising from their service.



Funded by
 **VETERANS'
FOUNDATION**