



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

EST. 1940

AN COSANTÓIR



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IN 50 WEEKS**

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GROUP**

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AN COSANTOIR – COMDT
PADDY MURPHY (RETD)





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FRONT COVER

Irish Troops in the Congo
in 1961
Photographer unknown

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to our Eighth and final issue of 2020, continuing with our 80th volume – the historic milestone the An Cosantóir magazine has reached.



As we come to the end of what has been a very hard year for everyone with Covid-19 starting and stopping the country, the magazine has come to its final issue of 2020. In keeping with the magazine's traditions throughout the years, we look back at a major incident in Irish military history: The Niemba Ambush. We have a 4-page feature on the massacre, which took place 60 years ago this year.

Our first piece on the set list is about the previous editor of An Cosantóir, Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald on page 10. With Wayne moving back to the Air Corps, we decided to take this opportunity in the final issue of 2020 to thank him for his service and dedication to An Cosantóir and PR Branch for nearly a decade.

The 58th Cadets Class Naval Cadets Commissioning dominates pages 12 - 15, the 4 Cadets were commissioned in Haulbowline Naval Base back on the 10 September 2020, congratulations to the newly promoted officers of the Irish Naval Service.

Sgt David Graham (AR) of the UNTSI School, gives us an insight into the advantages using interpreters on overseas missions, in particular where engaging with the local population is a necessary part of your mission. To read more on the use of Language Assistants go straight to pages 16 & 17 to read «Making Your Words Hit the Mark».

Finishing off the first half of the magazine, our new and now resident journalist, Tony O'Brien, spoke Lt Col Kieran Carey on his deployment as unit Commander to UNDOF. This is an interesting look at how the form up for the mission went and the restrictions that Covid 19 imposed on the mission leading up to its deployment.

Our front cover article, Niemba Ambush – 60 Years on by Tony O'Brien, looks back on one of the most tragic losses of life in the Irish Republic's military history. If you have never heard the story of the Niemba Ambush, then you may not understand the sacrifice that soldiers travelling to Congo faced. 60 years on from Ireland's first deployment of troops with a UN force overseas, we salute the fallen of 33 Bn ONUC.

In 25 Years of Females in the Navy, Tony O'Brien spoke with Lt Commander Orlaith Gallagher about her time in the Naval Service, from when she first joined back in 1995 to the present day, incorporating the induction of the first female recruits and all the firsts for females in the Navy over the past 25 years.

In our very own Cpl Martin Bennett's first article for An Cosantóir, Choose your suffering, he spoke to Capt Gearoid O'Brien of the Air Corps, who has travelled the world competing in adventure sports and races.

Irish Times journalist and author Ronan McGreevy kindly gave us permission to republish his article about Irishman John Hemmingway, who is now the last survivor of the Second World War 'Few'. In which he speaks to John about his life and his battles in the sky with the German Luftwaffe.

Our other features include articles about Comdt Paddy Murphy who originally set up the An Cosantóir 10k road race. Dermot Behan speaks of his charitable endeavour for the Laura Lynn charity by climbing Ireland's 50 highest peaks in 50 weeks. SCPO Ruairí De Barra informs us of the Naval Service's Fleet Support group. And finally in our newly adapted feature from the What I Do we have Cpl Martin Bennett's interview with PTI Sgt Michael Lennon.

Our Curragh Pens competition continues this month which is running for a limited time and could see you win 1 of 5 unique handcrafted pens, kindly provided to us by Bill Dooley of Curragh Pens - see page 4 for further details.

Many thanks to all our contributors and we hope to continue producing the magazine into 2021 we know you've enjoyed through the years.

«When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it.»

– Henry Ford

NOTICEBOARD

2021 NCO PROMOTION COMPETITION



The 2019 NCO Promotion Competition will conclude on 11 JUN 2021. It is anticipated the 2021 NCO Promotion Competition will commence on dates to be confirmed and agreed with the Department of Defence, Representative Associations and Military Management shortly after the 2019 NCO Promotion Competition.

Following the interest shown by submissions

to the Enlisted Personnel Management Office (J1) it is proposed to conduct focus groups across the Defence Forces.

In light of COVID 19 restrictions it is necessary to conduct focus groups with numbers in line with public health guidelines. With that in mind it was proposed to conduct focus groups in various locations with each formation nominating ten (10) representatives for their formation and directorates nominating two (2) representatives. Representatives included a selection across all NCO ranks and it was recommended that unit focus groups were conducted in order to represent the consolidated views of their units members.

Information provided by the office of Enlisted Personnel Management, Human Resource Branch (J1). Dates for the competition may change, this publication is by no means responsible for the competitions commencement/concluding dates.

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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Eugene O'Gorman, Co. Waterford. Closing date is 18th Feb 2021.

Niamba Ambush Wreath Laying On Saturday 7th November, GOC 2 Bde, Brigadier General Tony Cudmore will lay a wreath for the 60th anniversary of the Niamba Ambush in Cathal Brugha Bks at 1130hrs.
At 1200hrs on the same day Brig Gen Colm Campbell (ret'd), Chairman O.N.E., will lay a wreath and then at 1215hrs Ret'd CQMS Mick Colton will lay a wreath on behalf of IUNVA.

Niamba Ambush Exhibition Military Archives will launch a Niamba Ambush exhibition on their website on Friday 6th November, with previously unseen content this exhibition is not something you will want to miss. To view it keep an eye out on www.militaryarchives.ie.

ON PARADE

November
December

2020

Clay Pigeon Shooting

Photos by Mark Pollock



Members of the Irish Air Corps partook in a Clay pigeon shooting competition back in August of this year. The event, run by the Clay Pigeon Shooting Club saw participants of all ranks partake in the competition. Well done to all participants.



117th Inf Bn MRE

Photos by A/M Sam Gibney

Troops of the 117th Inf Bn UNIFIL, in preparation for their upcoming mission to Lebanon carried out their MRE (Mission Readiness Exercise). As well as patrolling drills, some of the troops fired the Browning HMG (.5), the 84mm Anti-Tank Gun and 1 round from the Javelin Portable Anti-Armour weapon as part of the preparation for their overseas deployment to UNIFIL.



Naval Service Divers Helicasting

Photos by A/B Davey Jones



Members of the Naval Service Divers Group took part in a Heli-casting exercise back in September of this Year. In conjunction with the Air Corps flying a EC135 P2 Helicopter, the participants boarded the heli, which then flew out over the bay where the divers, one by one proceeded to 'cast' themselves into the water below.



1 BTC FIBUA

Photos by A/M Sam Gibney



The 1 BTC (Brigade Training Centre) ran a FIBUA (Fighting In Built Up Areas) exercise back in August of this year. Troops boarded the Lé George Bernard Shaw at Cobh harbour, sailing out towards Fort Davis before stopping short in the waters not far from the Fort. Disembarking the Warship onto Naval Service RHIB's the troops then embarked towards the Fort. landing onto the pier the troops then strategically cleared the Fort from the bottom levels right up to the top levels of the Fort.





SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

EDITOR OF AN COSANTÓIR MAY 2011 TO MAY 2020

Everything we take on in life must have a start point and unfortunately it must also come to an end. For Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald, previous Editor of An Cosantóir magazine, his time in the role started way back in May 2011 and ended in May 2020. Wayne first joined the army in 1990, starting his career in 5 Inf Bn, Collins Bks, which is now the National Museum of Ireland. Staying with the 5 Inf Bn for a short period in Mckee Bks after the unit had moved there, Wayne then moved on to 2 Eastern Bde HQ, in Cathal Brugha Bks, where he served up until 2005. In 2005 he transferred to Air Corps HQ up until 2011, where he then was attached to PR Branch, spending the majority of his time with PR Branch as Editor of 'An Cosantóir'.

Wayne prospered in the appointment, overseeing the magazine's new design in his very first magazine as Editor, executed by JM Publishing. Over his 9 years in Public Relations Branch, whilst doing the Editor's job and all that comes with it, Wayne managed to also write over 300 articles in the 80 plus issues of the magazine. As staff in the office came and went, Wayne was the one constant that sailed the ship for nearly a decade. Not only was this a career achievement it was also a personal sacrifice. He often gave up so much of his own personal time, outside of the normal working hours of a soldier, to continue the long-standing publication that is 'An Cosantóir'. In many ways Wayne was 'An Cosantóir', he immersed himself in its traditions and still made it into his own publication, month after month producing a top quality publication for the magazine's subscribers to enjoy.

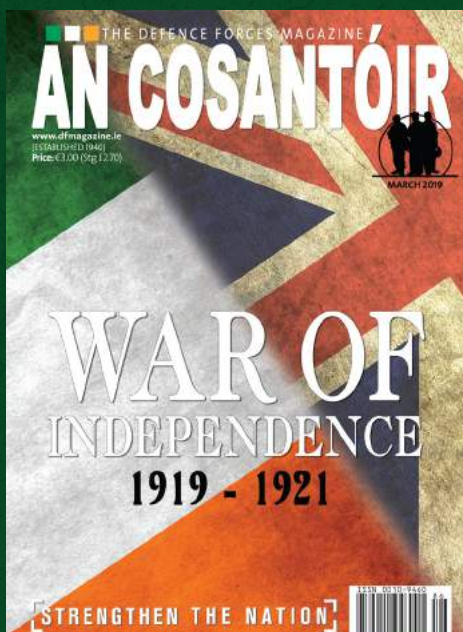
SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD



In the first year of his tenure Wayne also managed to negotiate the sale of the magazine by Tesco Ireland, in 38 of its stores nationwide. Within his first 3 years as Editor he put the magazine forward for The Pioneer Media Awards in April 2013, in which the magazine was shortlisted alongside big names like Lego, Barbie and Football Weekly. In the



The 1916 2016 front cover of the Special Edition magazine in which Wayne spent months preparing specifically designed articles for the issue



The front cover from The War of Independence Special in which Wayne was Editor for

same year Wayne put some of the magazine's articles forward into the EMPA (European Military Publication Association) Awards, An Cosantóir won Best Article 2013 with 'At The Gates of Hell (Mali)' - written by Irish Author & Military Historian, Paul O'Brien MA; a great



Wayne's article relating to his book Shadow Warriors



Above is Wayne's first published article as Editor of An Cosantóir magazine back in June 2011



Above is one of Wayne's last articles as Editor of An Cosantóir in the Feb 2020 Issue

achievement for the magazine, Paul and Wayne.

As well as redesigning the magazine and winning awards, Wayne took on other projects with regards to An Cosantóir, such as overseeing the scanning of older issues into downloadable PDF format files, which will ensure that the history of the magazine will continue on into the digital age. On top of that he oversaw the searchable database of the An Cosantóir which made researching through the older issues of the magazine, for the authors or the article titles, a breeze. If you've been an avid reader of An Cosantóir you'd know that Wayne - alongside his good friend Irish Author & Military Historian Paul O'Brien - has now become an author himself, co-authoring the highly coveted book 'Shadow Warriors'.

Wayne has now moved on from the An Cosantóir office and PR Branch, he is now back serving in his beloved Air Corps. We here in the An Cosantóir office would like to wish Wayne all the best in his future endeavours not only in the Air Corps and Irish Defence Forces but any other future projects and jobs he takes on.

Go raibh mile maith agat agus go n-éirí leat.

An Cosantóir team



THE 58TH CADET CLASS A NAVY DELIVERING SERVICES

58th Cadet Class salutes for the first time with their newly issued swords

By A/M Sam Gibney
& A/B David Jones

Report taken from the 58th
Cadet Class Booklet & Gov.ie

The Naval Service is the state's principal sea going agency and an integral part of Óglaigh na hÉireann; it operates jointly with the Army and Air Corps. To exercise and uphold our State's sovereignty and obligations, the Naval Service patrols Ireland's 220 million maritime acres, which is an area 12 times larger than the island of Ireland.

The Naval Service keeps Ireland open for business, as 99% of trade on to and off our island nation is transported by sea. Naval ships carry a unique status under international law as an expression of state sovereignty and political will at sea and are critical enablers for furthering policy objectives at home and in the international maritime domain. The Government's requirement for a flexible force with an appropriate level of retained capability means in effect that the Naval Service, in addition to meeting defence requirements, can deliver a wide range of services at and from the sea.

The enduring characteristics of naval vessels - such as sovereign status, poise, political utility, versatility, self-sustainability, long reach and rapid response - facilitate a variety of roles including inter alia:

- Maritime Presence
- Crisis response
- Fishery Protection
- Drug Interdiction
- Diving Operations
- Search and Rescue/Recovery
- Maritime Interdiction Operation
- Support to Trade and Diplomacy

- Humanitarian Support & assistance
- Non-combatant operations
- Weather Reporting
- Fire Fighting
- Pollution Control/Towing
- General Maritime Support



Cadet Biggar adjusts his tie for the last time before the Commissioning Ceremony

The 58th Cadet Class

It was on the 10th September 2018 when the 58th Cadet Class were inducted into the Irish Naval Service and began their training in the Officer Training School. In the first two weeks, the 58th Cadet Class were introduced to the Naval

Service by spending time on board the LÉ William Butler Yeats before moving to the Cadet School in the Military College in the DFTC, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare.

Here, the Cadets were trained as infantry soldiers, focusing on drill, marksmanship, military discipline, fitness and land navigation. At Christmas 2018, the 58th Cadet Class moved back to Haulbowline to begin Phase 2 of their training, which commenced in January 2019 with a busy schedule ahead. This 'Marinisation' phase ran from January to May with the



The Cadets assist each other, making the final adjustments to their swords

Cadets studying navigation while also completing a range of courses such as:

- Engineering
- Communications
- Fisheries
- Gunnery

This phase also saw the 58th Cadet Class take part in the

LÉ James Joyce's 2-week patrol to London as part of the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Royal Navy also hosted the 58th Cadet Class on their P2000 class vessel for a week of Navigation Training in Dublin Bay. Phase 2 concluded with exams in General Navigation, Chartwork, Rules of the Road, Leadership and Communications.

The 58th Cadet Class then travelled to Lourdes for the annual tradition of the International Military Pilgrimage. On returning from Lourdes, Phase 3 saw them prepare to go to sea. After a patrol on the LÉ George Bernard Shaw, including fisheries boardings and fleet exercises, the Cadets took part in Sea Week 2019 in Cork City.

Phase 3 continued with the Cadets being split among the LÉ James Joyce for an additional 4 week patrol and to the US Naval Academy for a 4-week navigation course and patrol.

Phase 4 commenced in September with the class studying in the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) in Ringaskiddy. Alongside civilian students, the Cadets learned various maritime subjects such as astro-navigation, seamanship, maths, science and stability. Even though the Cadets were studying in NMCI, their duties as Naval Cadets were not forgotten, especially during PLX (Personal Leadership Exercise), a four day ground exercise in all things leadership and robustness.

Every day in college, the Cadets also trained and practised their pilotage skills with their Class Officer LT Paul Kavanagh in the simulators, with the target of becoming competent enough to navigate a ship for the first time.

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the day to day routine as the class were required to do a number of their lectures and exams in a remote location. The Cadets navigated the LÉ Eithne to Cork City in support of the HSE in the fight against COVID-19. After 22 months of training, on 3rd July 2020, the 58th Cadet Class took the next step in their careers by becoming commissioned officers of the Irish Naval Service.

The Commissioning Ceremony 58th Cadet Class

The Commissioning Ceremony is the formal presentation to the Cadet Class of their Commissions from An tUachtarán upon completion of their training as Cadets, marking their graduation to the officer body of the Service. The Commission is the direction from the President and Commander in Chief to exercise and train in arms and maintain in good order and discipline the men and women serving under them. The Commissioning scroll, presented by the Minister appointing each new officer, is signed by An tUachtarán on behalf of the state and also by An Taoiseach on behalf of the Government.

The ceremony began with the marching on Parade of the



Lt Commander Alan O'Regan salutes the colour party as they make their way on parade



The class prepare to give Form of Oath by removing their right-hand gloves

National and Naval Service Colours. The colour party took up its position facing the Cadet to be commissioned. The officer administering the oath called each Cadet by name to march forward to the colours where the oath was administered. They were then invested with their rank markings and received



The 58th Cadet Class pose for a socially-distanced group photo with 2 of their instructors from the Cadet College

marched forward to the Minister for Defence, where they were presented with their commission as an officer in the Naval Service. The newly commissioned officers then handed their commission to the Master at Arms, the highest ranking Non-commissioned officer of the Service, from whom they in return received their first salute as an officer of the Naval Service.

On completion of the presentations, the National and Naval Service colours were marched off parade. The officer guard of honour then exchanged compliments with the newly commissioned officers. This represents the formal welcome from the officer body of the Naval Service to their new comrades. The Minister for Defence then addressed the parade. Minister Coveney thanked the newly commissioned officers for their commitment and service and recognised the contribution of the Naval Service and their support to the HSE during the Covid 19 emergency, he said "In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the professionalism and capacity of the Naval Service and a justifiable pride in their service. We have all seen the pictures of members of the Naval Service rescuing migrants in the Mediterranean and more recently, we have witnessed the contribution of the Naval Service and the broader Defence Forces at home in supporting the HSE response to the Covid 19 emergency." Minister Coveney highlighted the rewarding nature of a career in the Defence Forces and his hope that people would consider a career in the Defence Forces, saying "I would encourage all those seeking a career to consider serving in the Defence Forces. It is a career which offers unique experiences and significant opportunities for personal development. Recruitment is ongoing across a range of disciplines and details can be found on the Defence Forces website military.ie"

The National Anthem was then played, after which the Minister for Defence was escorted off the parade ground. The Parade Commander dismissed the parade and the ceremony ended.



Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD addresses the parade

their swords from serving officers. Individually, each Cadet



The parade turns to the flag pole and salutes during the National Anthem

Cadets of the 58th Cadet Class



Brian Barrins

Brian is the youngest in his family, born and raised in Galway by parents, Patrick and Sandra. Mark, the middle brother in the family is also a Naval Officer. Having studied Business Information Systems in NUIG, Brian went on to work as a Cyber Security Analyst with Accenture before joining the Navy. In his spare time, Brian competed in hockey and triathlon while also being an avid outdoorsman. Brian most enjoyed his trip to the US Naval Academy and a patrol of the east coast of the US with their Navy.



Patrick Biggar

Patrick is the eldest in his family, born and raised in Blackrock, Co. Dublin by his parents Kathleen and Stuart. Patrick graduated from Maynooth University with a Business Degree in 2016. Subsequently he worked in the start-up world, working with the high-end custom bike manufacturer FiftyOne Bikes in Dublin and Enterprise Ireland prior to that. He worked briefly in accounting before finally pursuing his dream career as a Naval Officer. Patrick is an avid cyclist and skier, having competed around the country in cycling and spent time in France skiing and learning the language. Patrick's favourite moment of the Cadetship was taking part in navigation training with the Royal Navy P2000's in Dublin.



Christopher Newman

Christopher is the eldest of three sons to Ciarán and Hilary, and was raised in Malahide Co. Dublin. Christopher initially studied history and archaeology in UCD before pursuing a Professional Masters in Education and subsequently a career in post-primary as a history and geography teacher. He's keen on water sports, notably rowing, in which he competed at a national level, and kayaking, which he did for many years as a volunteer instructor for Malahide Sea Scouts. This, coupled with an interest in military history, led him to seek a career in the Navy. Christopher's favourite moments of the Cadetship were PLX and sailing LÉ Eithne into Cork City during the recent COVID-19 support effort.



Stephen Smyth

Stephen is the eldest in his family, born in Co Mayo to his parents Gary and Breda, he attended St Gerald's College Castlebar. Growing up on the family's adventure centre, he spent most of his summers on the water. This led to his love for the sea and further led him to become a beach lifeguard with Mayo County Council and an instructor with Water Safety Ireland where he volunteered to teach water safety. Stephen's other interests include athletics where he has competed in cross country and track events throughout Ireland. He decided to pursue a career in the Naval Service because of the family tradition in the military with his father serving as a Commandant in the Army Reserve and his love for the sea. Stephen's favourite part of the Cadetship was the annual Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes and being part of the St Patrick's Day parade in London.

MAKING YOUR WORDS HIT THEIR MARK

- The effective use of interpreters on Peace Support Operations



Students on a CIMIC Cse in 2017 debating on their course subjects in a relaxed environment

Whether deployed with UNIFIL, UNDOF, EUTM, MINUSMA, MINURSO, MONUSCO, KFOR or elsewhere, our personnel invariably face a language barrier when working overseas. Language Assistants (LAs) can help, but dependence on local linguists for intercultural communication brings its own challenges.

Defence Forces missions bring our personnel to places where they do not speak the local language. They must interoperate seamlessly with personnel from multiple troop-contributing nations while also encountering civilians from many different International Organisations (IOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In these environments, understanding others while also being understood yourself can be difficult.

Located in the Military College, the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI) is the focal point of the Defence Forces' effort to standardise all preparation for overseas Peace Support Operations. In recent years, UNTSI has included specific instruction on the effective use of interpreters both in our pre-deployment training and on our International Civil-Military Relations Courses. To prepare students for the kinds of Key Leader Engagements (KLEs) they are likely to encounter overseas, we run practical role-play exercises using foreign nationals and trained interpreters.

Translation between two languages is fraught with risk. Even subtle misunderstandings can have serious consequences, harming relations with the local population and potentially threatening the safety of our own troops. Being able to establish whether a recent reported explosion was caused by a legacy munition such as a mine, or a recently-placed Improvised Explosive Device (IED), for example, could have significant implications for force protection. You may understand the difference, but does your LA? And even if the LA is familiar with the different vocabulary, are they actually making a distinction in their translation or are they using a generic term that loses vital information?

Translation errors, or "mistranslations", as they are known, have caused marketing headaches, diplomatic incidents, and worse. In one oft-cited case from 1980, an 18-year-old Hispanic baseball player was taken to a South Florida hospital in a coma. When his family suggested that he might be "intoxicado", medical staff incorrectly translated this as

"intoxicated" and treated him accordingly. By the time the correct diagnosis was made two days later, the young man was left quadriplegic.

The translation of written documents (which is performed by translators) and of spoken language (performed by interpreters) is a skilled task requiring years of training, even for people who are already functionally bilingual. The standard expected of a professional interpreter is correspondingly high. The interpreter's job is to facilitate communication between people of different languages and cultures by accurately translating what is said without adding, omitting or modifying anything and with due regard for context and emotion.

By way of example, let us imagine that you are using an LA to question a French-speaking driver at a vehicle checkpoint. You ask him:



Students from around the world attend a lecture in the UNTSI School back in 2014



Students on a CIMIC Cse in 2017 deal with a live situation on an exercise organised specifically for the course

"Do you have any firearms or ammunition in your vehicle?"

Now consider the following three translations:

1. « Avez-vous des armes à feu ou des munitions dans votre véhicule ? Et c'est qui votre passager, là ? »

"Are you carrying any firearms or ammunition in your vehicle? And who's that sitting beside you?"

2. « Avez-vous une arme à feu ? »

"Are you carrying a firearm?"

3. « Qu'est-ce que vous avez dans le coffre ? »
"What do you have in the boot?"

In each case your LA has fallen short of the required standard, namely by adding something to what you said, leaving out something you said, and changing what you said, respectively. It is therefore vital that LAs know exactly what is required of them, even if they have received limited formal training.

As military personnel, there are also lots of practical things we can do to use our LAs effectively, make their job easier and reduce the risk of our words being lost in translation:

DO

- ✓ Get to know your LA, paying particular attention to any tribal or religious affiliations
- ✓ Keep your LA informed - as operational security allows - and prepare him or her for the situations and vocabulary they are likely to encounter
- ✓ Look after your LA's safety and welfare by letting them know when they will be fed, making sure they have the personal protective equipment that they need, and explaining any 'actions on'
- ✓ Look at the person you're speaking to, not the LA
- ✓ Listen to the person you're speaking to, even if you don't understand anything
- ✓ Learn a few basic words of the local language
- ✓ Be patient - your conversation will take longer
- ✓ Seek/provide clarification if something has not been understood
- ✓ Speak clearly and not too quickly
- ✓ Be concise - try to use short sentences and simple words
- ✓ Avoid humour or irony
- ✓ Pause frequently to allow the LA time to translate
- ✓ Think about body language and remember that most communication is non-verbal
- ✓ Conclude your meeting with a brief summary to confirm that you have understood each other
- ✓ Debrief the LA after your meeting. The LA has valuable cultural knowledge and might have picked up on something you have not

DON'T

- ✗ Don't say "ask him x" or "tell her y". Instead, speak directly to the person as you would normally
 - ✗ Don't interrupt or talk over each other
 - ✗ Avoid having private/whispered conversations
 - ✗ Don't let the LA take over the discussion
 - ✗ Avoid giving your LA non-essential information - 'need to know'
 - ✗ Try to avoid military acronyms, slang, idioms or other jargon such as "APC", "UXO", "SOPs", "groundhog", "get on like a house on fire"
 - ✗ Don't openly criticise your LA. Debrief them in private instead (after-action review)
- Just because someone can speak English, don't assume they necessarily want to. They may prefer to speak in their native language, either because it is easier or perhaps even for political reasons
- ✗ Don't forget that you are the one speaking the foreign language!

Note:

The International Federation of Translators (FIT) has an excellent Conflict Zone Field Guide for Translators/Interpreters and Users of Their Services: <https://www.fit-ift.org/guide-pour-zones-de-conflit/>.



Students going over their course subjects in a relaxed environment on a CIMIC Cse in 2019

LAs may be used in many different scenarios overseas including for CIMIC operations, vehicle checkpoints and searches, KLEs, delivering training to local forces, or even when addressing a crowd.

Clear communication in these situations is vital. By thinking before we speak and being deliberate and economical in our language, we can avoid some of the most common pitfalls and make our words hit their mark.



About the author

Sgt David Graham (AR) is an instructor in UNTSI in the Military College. He holds a BA in Applied Languages with German and French and an MA in Translation Studies. Trading as Graham Language Services (www.grahamlanguage.com), in civilian life he provides English translations of German-language documents for the private and public sector.



Group photo of No. 2 Platoon, A Company, 33 Inf Bn

NIEMBA AMBUSH

60 YEARS ON

By Tony O'Brien

Photos from Military Archives & DF Flickr

It may have been 60 years since the biggest loss of life of Irish soldiers in any single overseas incident, in the history of the Irish Defence Forces, but the memory of the Niemba Ambush tragedy will never be forgotten.

Niemba is a name that has not only gone down in military history, but remains in the Irish public's memory as well. The massive turnout at the funerals of the men who were killed in 1960 ensured that. The nine who lost their lives in that terrible event were 'ambassadors' for Ireland's early involvement as UN peacekeepers. A role the Defence Forces would so proudly and honourably carry on over the following decades. It was the first time the Irish Army was embroiled in battle since the founding of the Irish state in 1922.

Even now, 60 years later it is right to recall the event and to again honour and pay tribute to the gallant men who served and died for their country, but also for the world in the form of the United Nations.

It all began in July 1960, when the Irish government received an urgent request from the United Nations to supply troops for peacekeeping deployment in the newly created Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The only other European country asked was Sweden. The DRC, previously the Belgian Congo, had gained independence in June 1960 and almost immediately the President of the mineral



Members of the 1st Inf Gp erecting the monument to the victims of the Niemba ambush back in 1961

rich province of Katanga in the east of the country, Moïse Tshombe, began a process of secession, covertly supported by powerful European mining and political interests.

Patrice Lumumba, the DRC's Prime Minister sought international help from the United Nations to prevent this attempted breakup of his country. The Irish government responded positively to the request; a decision with far-reaching consequences for the Defence Forces. It was the



An Irish soldier patrolling through the dense foliage of the Congo

beginning of unit-level deployments in strife-torn areas across the world, which continues to this day. They would serve as UN peacekeepers with 33 Inf Bn as part of the Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC).

Prior to their departure for the Congo in late July, the 650-strong 32 Infantry Battalion, under the command of Lt Col Murt Buckley, paraded along O'Connell Street before thousands of enthusiastic well-wishers. Later, the troops flew out from Baldonnell on huge United States Air Force (USAF) Globemaster and Hercules aircraft. A hint of what awaited them in equatorial Africa greeted the troops as they landed for refuelling at Wheelus USAF base in Tripoli and paraded to the food halls in their heavy "bulls wool" uniforms and leather boots. The battalion then continued its flight, via an RAF base in Nigeria, to its deployment area in Kivu, close to Katanga.



Irish Defence Forces personnel preparing to board the plane in Baldonnell which would take them to the Congo

In early August, 33 Infantry Battalion - under the command of Lt Col Dick Bunworth - also arrived in the DRC and deployed to Albertville, in Katanga, where they would bear the brunt of the problems caused by the warring factions: forces loyal to Lumumba's central government and Tshombe's secessionist forces, led by white mercenaries. The battalion's companies deployed to smaller towns and tasked their platoons with carrying out patrols to keep roads open and liaising with the

local pro-government Baluba population.

On 8th November 1960, an 11-man Irish patrol - led by Lt Kevin Gleeson and Sgt Hugh Gaynor - travelling in clearly marked white UN vehicles, stopped to inspect a destroyed bridge over the Luweyeye. They were immediately ambushed by a large force of Baluba tribesmen armed with spears,



A close up from the group shot of A Pln of Cpl Duggan, who later died in the ambush

poisoned arrows and guns. Lt Gleeson ordered his men to defend themselves. After a courageous fight, against overwhelming numbers in a short space of time, eight of the patrol were overwhelmed and killed. Another managed to get away but died later in the bush from his wounds. That was 20-year-old Tpr Anthony Browne from Rialto, Dublin. His body was not found until November 1962.

Tpr Browne was also posthumously awarded the first ever Bonn Míleata Calmachta (Military Medal for Gallantry), the Defence Force's highest military honour, for his conduct during the ambush. He was the first recipient of the award. His citation reads: "He endeavoured to create an opportunity to allow an injured comrade to escape by firing his Gustaf, thereby drawing attention to his own position, which he must have been aware would endanger his life. He had a reasonable opportunity to escape because he was not wounded but chose to remain with an injured comrade."

Those that lost their lives were: Lt Kevin Gleeson (30), Sgt Hugh Gaynor (29), Cpl Peter Kelly (25), Cpl Liam Dougan (34), Pte Matthew Farrell (22), Tpr Thomas Fennell (18), Tpr Anthony Browne MMG (20), Pte Michael McGuinn (21) and Pte Gerard Killeen (27). Miraculously, two were found alive after the ambush. These were Pte Joseph Fitzpatrick (21) and Pte Thomas Kenny (24). Despite the overwhelming odds faced by the patrol in the ambush, 28 attackers also died.

Recalling the horrors of the ambush 25 years after it

happened, survivor Tom Kenny told an RTE reporter in 1985: “I suffered a fractured skull, two arrows in my head, dislocated legs and a dislocated arm. About five o’clock in the morning I got up off the ground and decided to walk back to camp - now that’s a hard thing to do with blood streaming out of your head. I got muck and I plastered my head with it and I plastered my arm with muck to stop the bleeding and away I went. It took me about 48 hours. I got halfway back but I doubt if I would have been able to make the other half of it.



Irish Defence Forces personnel boarding a US Globemaster transport aircraft for the Congo, armed with the Lee Enfield No. 4 Mk 2 rifles, Bren light machine guns and Swedish Carl Gustaf m45 submachine guns

Fortunately for me there was a UN patrol in the district. They picked me up and I am here today thank God, 25 years after, to be able to talk about it.”



A Cpl at a radio station in the Congo taking notes from an incoming message

The bodies of the Irish dead were flown home to Casement Aerodrome in Baldonnell where they lay in state. Lt. Kevin Gleeson’s coffin was placed on a gun carriage while those of the rest were placed on army trucks. On 22nd November hundreds of thousands of citizens again lined the streets of Dublin, but in contrast to the excitement of the send-off this time in silent homage, as the huge cortege made its way slowly to Glasnevin Cemetery.



Irish Defence Forces personnel manning a bridge armed with a Vickers .303 British made heavy machine gun in the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of Congo the conflict continued unabated into 1961. Lumumba was assassinated in January at Elizabethville Airport and in September Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General of the United Nations, was killed in an unexplained air crash in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) while en route to secret negotiations with Tshombe. Also that month, the siege of Jadotville – where brave Irish troops were again involved - made international headlines.

From 1960 to 1964, 12 Defence Forces units with almost 6,200 troops served with ONUC. In those four years, 26 Irish troops paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of peace. Even though most of these trailblazing peacekeepers have now retired or passed away, their memories of the Congo and places such as Elizabethville, Jadotville and Niemba, are still very strong within the Defence Forces as we continue to remember and honour them.

On 3rd February 2018, Sgt Hugh Gaynor and his Niemba comrades were commemorated with the unveiling of a



A photo taken from a truck overlooking the ambush site



A mass and parade for one of the victims of the ambush before their removal home to Ireland

plaque by the Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Mary McCamley, in Blanchardstown village, near the Gaynor family home. Amongst those in attendance were Sgt Gaynor's daughter, Mrs Sarah Tallon; Lt Gleeson's niece, Aoife Gleeson; and Niemba Ambush survivor Pte Thomas Kenny. A large number of representatives from ONE and IUNVA also attended the unveiling of the plaque that will help to ensure that a local hero's ultimate sacrifice will not be forgotten. A stone commemorating Lt Gleeson can be found in his hometown of Carlow.

Those who died in the Niemba ambush are honoured annually at Cathal Brugha Barracks each November with a commemoration ceremony by the Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women (ONE).

John Joyce interview

John Joyce has no problem remembering the Niemba Ambush – he was on the scene of the tragedy just days after it happened. "It was terrible to be there, to think that this is where our comrades had died", he recalls. But one immediate impact of the ambush which claimed so many Irish lives was: "It made us all the more alert. We were watching all the time."

Joe (80) from Crumlin in Dublin served with the 35th and 37th battalions and was serving in the Congo during that fateful time. "We spent about a month in Niemba and we were at the bridge where it happened a few days later. It made it very real for us", he said, adding: "We were thinking of our fallen comrades."

Joe remembered how things had been so different when Irish troops first arrived in the Congo as part of the UN peacekeeping force. "At the start the people were all over us. They were really friendly and welcoming, so what happened

at Niemba came totally out of the blue", said Joe. He believes that because of this relaxed, friendly atmosphere, the patrol which arrived at the bridge on that fateful day in November 1960 would not have been expecting any trouble. "I think they might have been caught a little off-guard because of the friendly welcome they had received up to then. The furthest of their thoughts would have been that they were going to be ambushed," he said.

The ambush had an immediate impact. "It certainly had an effect on us and on the Army generally. We always had our weapons with us after that and the training we got was changed." He mentioned how things have improved vastly for the troops on UN duty nowadays in terms of better training and better equipment, including uniforms. "Much better than the Bulls Wool uniform and heavy boots we wore under the Africa sun."

Joe believes that Ireland becoming involved in United Nations overseas services was "the best thing that ever happened to the Irish Army. It gave us great experience and we were very proud to be representing our country on service with the UN."

Joe recalls that the funeral of those who died was "the biggest Dublin had ever seen" and talked about the annual commemoration ceremony in Cathal Brugha Barracks.

"They will never be forgotten", he said.

Those who died

Those who died in the Niemba Ambush:

Lt Kevin Gleeson (30), Terenure, Dublin
 Sgt Hugh Gaynor (29), Lexlip, Co Kildare
 Cpl Peter Kelly (25), Templeogue, Dublin
 Cpl Liam Duggan (34), Cabra, Dublin
 Pte Matthew Farrel (22), Jamestown, Dublin
 Tpr Thomas Fennel (18), Donnycarney, Dublin
 Tpr Anthony Browne (20), Rialto, Dublin
 Pte Michael McGuinn (21), Staplestown Road, Co Carlow
 Pte Gerard Killeen (27), Rathmines, Dublin

RIP



UNDOF REPORT

With EOD team on standby, troops of the 62nd In Gp carry out minesweeping drills

By Tony O'Brien
Photos by A/M Sam Gibney

Ireland's proud history of United Nations service continues with the deployment of the 62nd Infantry Group to the UNDOF mission in the Golan Heights area of Syria. Led by Lt Col Kieran Carey, the 130 strong deployment arrived in Camp Faouar at the start of October and will serve there for six months, not returning home until April 2021.

"It's an important mission and all of us are both proud and excited to be serving our country and the United Nations in a key role like this, explained Lt Col Carey to An Cosantóir. But it was a long road before they stepped on the plane at Dublin Airport on Wednesday, October 7th, heading to Damascus and then on to their camp where they relieved the 61st Infantry Group. "We started training back in July, it was fairly intensive and even before that the Ordnance Corps, Engineers and others had already completed their own specialised preparations," said Lt Col Carey. "We all came together for two weeks of Mission Readiness Exercise in the Glen of Immal and it was then we all realised what was to come when we got to our base in the Golan Heights", he added.

But even after that there were further preparations which had to be gone through. The troops had to undergo 14 days of quarantine before leaving Ireland and then a further 14 days quarantining at their base on arrival. However, those 14 days in Camp Faouar were not wasted. "We used that time and there was further training which involved playing out scenarios which UNDOF had already experienced in the area. We are very well prepared in terms of what we will face here."

UNDOF, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, was established as a result of the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 when the first UN mission arrived a year later to oversee a buffer zone between the warring parties. UNDOF is a force reserve to be deployed as the UN Commander sees fit. Troops from countries such as Uruguay, Nepal and elsewhere make up the main UN 1,200 strong force in the area which UNDOF works in support of.

The Irish troops constitute a Quick Reaction Force which is a small, highly mobile and flexible force that can respond to any request made by the Force Commander within 15 minutes. The requests can range from the evacuation of UN personnel from UN positions for various emergency situations to routine patrols. "The other troops are holding the ground throughout the area and our job is to support them. We are highly mobile and can deploy very quickly to any situation or area when called upon by the UN Commander", said Lt Col Carey.

The Irish mission goes back to 2013 and this is the 15th iteration. In 2013 the United Nations asked Ireland to send peacekeepers as part of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan region of Syria. "This is different to other missions as we are a reserve force", explained Lt Col Carey, adding that, as a result, "it was easier to get volunteers." Also, serving in a foreign country in a different situation is a welcome change for troops: "It is something different from the normal routine for the troops to be engaged with."

Of the 130 deployed nearly 40 are first-timers so it is all new to them and there is a level of excitement. But the rest are highly experienced who have served on missions abroad on



Members of an attached EOD team carry out mine sweeping drills on Cemetery Hill



Troops from the 62nd Inf Gp carry out a minesweeping exercise in the Glen of Imaal on the MRE



A Soldier travelling to UNDOF Syria receives orders during the MRE



A soldier of the 62nd Inf Gp carries out his marking drills during the MRE in the Glen of Imaal

other occasions in places such as Chad, Liberia etc. “There is pride in serving your country, and the UN, in this way”, he said, “Plus, Irish troops are held in very high regard, especially in UNDOF where their skill set – engineers, ordnance etc, are really acknowledged and appreciated.”

Yet while the work they have to do there is vital to the overall success of the UN remit, it is a six-month tour of duty without leave which won’t see them returning home to Ireland until



Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD addresses the 62nd Inf Gp on their March Past day back in September 2020

April 2021. “That is a big difference from previous missions, there will be no leave,” he said adding this was a tough ask for them. “It is a long time to be away and particularly hard on those with young families at home, especially at Christmas, and it is because of COVID-19 that there will be no leave in that period. But everyone knew this from the start,” said Lt Col Carey. He added that COVID-19 has had impacts in all sorts of ways, not least in the quarantine restrictions before departure from Dublin and on arrival in the camp.

Yet it’s good news for the 61st Infantry Group who could come home when they had been relieved. “Before we left Ireland you could hear the excitement in their voices on the phone, they were really looking forward to getting home after being away for so long,” even though they faced 14 days quarantine on arrival back in Ireland.

As for Lt Col Carey himself, he is really looking forward to the mission. The highlight of his Army career up to now, he recalls, was serving as Battalion Commander of the 27th Infantry Battalion based in Aiken Barracks in Dundalk, Co Louth, for two and a half years. “Joining the Army and attaining officer rank you always want to lead troops. To be a Battalion Commander was the pinnacle but to lead troops overseas is another highlight”, he said adding that this was his first mission abroad. “It is something I am looking forward to, something I have always wanted to do”, he added. A native of Bangor Erris in Co. Mayo, Lt Col Carey began his Army career in 1986 – completing 34 years of exemplary service which is even now reaching new heights.

UNDOF was established by UNSCR350 in 1974 following the agreed disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights after the ending of the Yom Kippur War. The Force deployed in and around an area of separation, which is 80km long and varying from 10km to 1km in width.

UNDOF is the only military presence allowed in the area of separation, and it has 44 manned positions and 11 observation posts.

The Defence Forces’ first contribution to this mission consisted of providing one force commander, Brigadier General Dave Stapleton (RIP) (subsequently Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces). In September 2013 the Defence Forces was asked to participate and supply a larger group of troops to the Mission.

They will be primarily tasked as the Force Mobile Reserve to undertake reinforcement, reaction, escort and other operations throughout UNDOF’s area of responsibility.



25 YEARS OF FEMALES IN THE NAVY

Interview with LT Cmdr Orlaith Gallagher

When Órlaith Gallagher joined the Navy as a raw recruit in 1995, things were a lot different for women in the Naval Service. Twenty five years later, at the rank of LT Commander, things have changed significantly for her and her female comrades in the Navy and in the Defence Forces generally.

"When I joined at 18/19, I was a bit innocent. At that age you think you can change the world", she recalls.

Actually in many ways, Órlaith and Roberta O'Brien, who joined at the same time, did help to change the world of the Navy and how it looked on women. "The difference between men and women in the Navy never really occurred to me. There was a lot to learn and a job to be done. That's the way I looked at it." But she did notice two distinct attitudes amongst her male colleagues: "The older men were quite paternalistic; they wanted to look after you. Younger men thought you should be treated the same as a man". "If there was tough training then everyone faced it in the same way", she explains, "No quarter was given because you were a woman, and I wouldn't have wanted that anyway. I wanted to be treated exactly the same."

Certainly, the training was tough in the early days. "It was very hard but Cadetship is hard for everyone at the start. They are moulding you and training you, to ensure that you will be able to do the job." She added: "They are pushing you and doing so when you are at your most tired to test your resilience and your ability to do the job. But in fairness, it was the same for everyone." However, a telling fact is that of the five Cadets (three male and herself and Roberta O'Brien), she and

Roberta came through the two years of rigorous training and testing, but only one of the three males joined them in being commissioned.

Overall, Órlaith believes things have improved considerably for women in the Navy and in the Defence Forces generally. "Just as society has changed, so has the Navy." "As regards our roles on board the ship, they are exactly the same as the men. Women can do the job just as well and that's what the Navy wants", she says. Still, the numbers remain low. Women make up only 6/7 per cent of Defence Forces personnel and she believes this needs to rise considerably.

"Ideally, I would like to see that number up to at least 20 percent. I know the Chief of Staff wants it to go to 12 per cent and then 20 per cent. The more that women are seen to be doing the job, the more it will become the norm."

She points out also that her old colleague, Roberta O'Brien, was recently promoted to the rank of Commander, the first female Commander in the Navy. At the same time, Tahalia Britton became the first female member of the Naval Service Diving Section.

Plus Órlaith makes the case that a career in the Navy can be a very good one for a young woman. "It is very rewarding and fulfilling and I would certainly recommend it to any young woman out there who is wondering what to do with her life."

The realities of life, however, have to be taken into account also. "It is more challenging as you get older and have a family and new responsibilities. But, in many ways, that is the same for a man as well", she adds.



A female member of the Navy on the Easter Parade back in 2016



Lt Comdr's Downing (right) & Gleeson (Left) pictured back in 2013 during the first handover between 2 female Capt's of the Navy on the now de-commissioned Lé Aoife

There is also the issue of time away at sea. "Six weeks is the longest I spent at sea when the LE Aisling was deployed on a resupply mission in 1998. This was before I had kids, so it wasn't an issue from a family perspective."

Órlaith, a mother of four, is a native of Portmarnock, Co. Dublin and has been lucky enough to be able to return to her home area to live with her family while in her current role as Staff Officer Maritime Current Ops in the office of the Director of Operations and Plans in Defence Forces HQ in McKee Barracks.

Even though there was no military or naval background in her family (not even a sailing one!), she opted to join the Navy because as she says "I was keen on adventure, I was always independent and thrived on challenging myself so I felt the Navy could offer me an adventurous career."

Reflecting on her 25 year career, she recalls a highlight being when she was Captain of the 'Le Roisin' when they were involved with other services in one of the biggest drug busts in the history of the State off Mizen Head when a haul with an estimated value of €670m was seized. "I oversaw the operation, working with 'LE Niamh' and under the direction of Naval Operations", she recalled.



A/SBA Sandra Daly poses for a photo with her family, Minister with responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe TD and COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM after she was awarded the International Operational Service Medal

A presentation Lt Cdr Orlaith Gallagher gave to J3/5 on International Women's day 2020

In 1990 the General Staff published 'Policy on the deployment of females in the Defence Forces'. The policy outlined specific roles that women in the DF could engage – it excluded them from direct combat roles. Interestingly it also excluded them from Intelligence roles – something that the IRA had actively encouraged 70 years earlier!

A board of enquiry was established in 1993 to examine the question of female roles in the Naval Service. The board examined the integration of male and female personnel in other forces in order to gain an international perspective - specifically the Royal Navy.

The board consisted of three male naval officers and one female Army officer - Capt Mary Jo O'Sullivan. Mary was embarked on LE Eithne and was involved in all the ship's operations.

In their conclusions, the board accepted that military organisations are essentially social institutions and that the ideas and attitudes of the community at large will permeate the Naval Service and that the employment of women in other Navies is indicative of the trend towards a fuller integration of female personnel into all roles.



A female member of Cúltaca on parade holding the International Operational Service medals before they were awarded to members of the Navy at a ceremony held in Dún Laoghaire Harbour in 2016

The Naval Service board report contained no restrictive provisions on the deployment of female personnel and explicitly states the NS aspiration for equality of opportunity and full integration for women within the Naval Service. This was at a time in the NS that the Admin Branch was being disbanded and the NS was moving towards all personnel engaging in sea going duties.

Following on from this board report in 1993, 2 female Cadets joined the NS in 1995. 3 of the 5 cadets were commissioned in 1997 including the 2 women. To the best of my knowledge this is the first and only majority female Cadet Class ever commissioned in the DF.

Since 1995 there have been a number of additional firsts for women in the NS:

- 1st Female Recruits - 1997 - Paula Staunton (Rtd), Joan McCabe (Rtd), Shirley McConnon (RIP)
- 1st Female NCOs - 2002 - Martina Plante and Joan McCabe
- 1st Female Tradeswoman - 2003 - Aisling Chapman
- 1st Female Senior Officers - 2008 - Orlaith Gallagher and Roberta O'Brien
- 1st Female Qualified Engineers - 2008 - Elaine Moloney & Niamh Ni Fhatharta
- 1st Female Captain - 2008 - Roberta O'Brien (posted LE Aisling Nov 2008) and Orlaith Gallagher (attached to LE Roisin as Relief OC Nov 2008 – Dances with Waves drug interdiction operation)
- 1st Female Senior NCO - 2012 - Honor Murphy

By Tony O'Brien

FLEET SUPPORT GROUP PART 1



Naval Service Fisheries Inspection Team on board an AVON Sea-Rider

There is a trick question often asked, “What is the difference between a ship and a boat?” The answer, which you can file away for your next table quiz, is that “a ship can carry a boat, but a boat cannot carry a ship.”

The warships of the Irish Naval Service carry boats which enable the undertaking of the wide range of taskings and duties required of them by the state. In fact, without their small boats, their performance of this huge variety of tasks would be impossible. Another fact of a working life at sea, in some of the world’s roughest oceans, is that anything which sails out on it will need repair and maintenance. Given the complexity of the modern small boat fleet of the service, it is only possible to carry out relatively routine maintenance on these fast and agile craft while at sea. Larger repairs, more in-depth maintenance and periodic upgrades of these boats are done ashore on Haulbowline in the Fleet Support Group (FSG). FSG is one half of the Mechanical Engineering and Naval Dockyard (MENDY) unit.

Fleet Support Group

FSG has been in existence since 1992 as a Support Maintenance Unit within Naval Dockyard under the command of Naval Dockyard Superintendent. Since 2000, the Superintendent is the Officer Commanding (OC) MENDY. The facility moved from the main naval base, where it was located on the West of the island housed in Block 4, to its current location which is commonly known as the Mast House beside the southern end of the naval basin. When FSG was located on the naval base proper, it was titled as Ship Support Group (SSG). Block 4 itself had undergone extensive refurbishment for other uses in 2008, when it suffered a devastating fire mere weeks before it was to come back into regular usage. In the time since the move from SSG, boat maintenance and the technology employed in the boats has changed dramatically in scale, size and scope.

The Naval Service small boat operations from the 1970s, were carried out in Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) boarding

boats or timber hulled liberty launches, as well as from inflatable Gemini 4.5m boats. From the late 1980s these boats were replaced on all sea-going units with AVON 5.4m Sea-Riders. These Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) were propelled by twin 40hp Yamaha outboard engines. The establishment for such boats increased from twenty units to about forty in 2009, when this fleet was rationalised and updated, pending the launch of new class Patrol Vessels within large capacity, large inboard engine RHIBs. Currently the Naval Service operates a wide variety of RHIBs, in excess of 50 craft, including many remaining Avon Sea-Riders. The AVONs are now only used by the two peacock class patrol vessels, LÉ Orla, and LÉ Ciara, as well as the Naval Reserve. The rest of the small boat fleet includes MST 800, 750, and 680 RHIBs, in varying lengths of 8, 7.5 and 6 metres. There are also Delta RHIBs, with both inboard and outboard engines in the two models, which are varying in length between 7.2, 7

¹ Warship: The definition of a warship under international law is that of a vessel belonging to the armed forces and bearing the external markings distinguishing the character and nationality of such ships, under the command of an officer duly commissioned by the government of that nation, and is manned by a crew that is under regular armed forces discipline.

and 6.5 metres. There are also some Polarcirkel 560 boats.

The service, maintenance and repair of all these boats is carried out by the engineering staff of FSG. With the multitude of engine types, drive systems, hydraulics, electronics and



Haulbowline Island

hull types the skill, knowledge and experience required to keep them all running is a vital core skill of today's Engine Room Artificers (ERAs) and Hull Artificers (HAs). When the NS is on patrols in the depths of winter off the Irish coast during Maritime Defence and Security Operations (MDSO), or in the height of summer off the coast of Northern Libya during Operations PONTUS or SOPHIA, there is no place to turn if there is a breakdown with these work-horses. While each ship will carry three RHIBs while on patrol, it is the skills of the artificers, honed by service in FSG over the course of their careers, which is often the difference between remaining in an area of operations (AO) and completing an operational tasks or having to sail for possibly hundreds of miles to safe anchorage or a berth alongside to effect repairs.

Artificers

Another good question for a quiz, however it is doubtful to ever be asked, is what is an Artificer?

An artificer is a military craft person. There are three artificers in the sea-going Naval Service: Engine Room,



MST RHIBs returning to ship

Hull and Electrical Artificers (EA). Each ship in the flotilla would normally have one Chief ERA, three Petty Officer

(PO) ERAs, one PO HA, one PO EA and often ships would have a few Leading and Able rates on-board. There may also be a few Technical Trainees (TTs) who would be undertaking their training in their respective trades. Within the ranks of the Artificers, there are a dizzying array of trades and qualifications. Currently wearing the three stripes which mark a Petty Officer in the service, there are Fitter/Turners, Mechanical Automation and Maintenance Fitters, Refrigeration Technicians, Marine Engineers, Mechanical Engineers, Motor Mechanics, Heavy Diesel Mechanics, Carpenter Joiners, Cabinetmakers, Electricians, Electrical Instrumentation Technicians and Electronics Engineers. All these skills combine in various teams across the flotilla. This feeds into having a diverse and unique team on each ship. There is strength in such diversity; however they all share a few important core aspects. They are sailors, NCOs and artificers.



MST 1 in for a service

These NCOs are far more than 'just' their trades. They are the key NCOs in the engineering department, keeping everything running smoothly. They are the watchkeepers whose knowledge of the ship's systems is encyclopaedic - to be able to keep the ship seaworthy and fit to fight. They are the key leaders in the Damage Control and Firefighting teams. They are the team leaders in the Maritime Interdiction Teams, and in common with all NS NCOs, they are all Fishery Inspections Officers. All artificers hold at least a minimum of a level 6 National Craft Certificate, or a level 7 Ordinary Degree. Lots hold two or more qualifications. Some are direct entries, who have entered the service on an accelerated programme to become POs. Others are home grown, selected by tough internal competitions for a limited number of apprenticeships through the TT scheme each year. All will be trained to the exacting standards of the Naval College across all branches, as they progress from Able Rates and novices in their chosen technical field, until they emerge on the far side of up to seven years technical and military training as Petty Officers and Leading Hands, ready to fulfil their duties on operational naval units.

Continued next issue...

By SCPO Ruairi de Barra



John Hemingway showing us a picture of himself from the war

LAST OF THE FEW

By Ronan McGreevy

Irishman John Hemingway is now the last survivor of the Second World War "Few" who fought in the Battle of Britain. It follows the death in a Yorkshire care home of Flight Lieutenant Terry Clark (101) on the eve of the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

The "Few" were so called by Britain's wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill in reference to the 3,000 men from the Royal Air Force (RAF) who repulsed the German Luftwaffe during the summer and autumn of 1940 and prevented a Nazi invasion of Britain. Mr Churchill paid tribute to them in his much-quoted speech in August 1940 in which he stated: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few". The RAF Benevolent Fund controller Air Vice-Marshal Chris Elliot confirmed to the BBC that Mr Hemingway is now the last surviving member of the Few. Mr Hemingway (100) lives in a nursing home in Foxrock, Co Dublin. He was informed yesterday of the death of Mr Clark and that he is now the last of the Few. He expressed his condolences to Mr Clark's family.

Born in St Kevin's Gardens in Dartry on July 17th, 1919,

Mr Hemingway attended St Patrick's Cathedral Choir School where he was "an unsuccessful choirboy". He later attended St Andrew's College, then located on St Stephen's Green. After being accepted into the RAF, he began training in Brough, Yorkshire, in January 1939. Having completed flight training school, Pilot Officer Mr Hemingway was posted to No. 85 Squadron in Debden, flying Hurricanes. Mr Hemingway was on the frontline during the Battle of Britain, a campaign which decimated No. 85 Squadron. He was shot down twice in August 1940. The first instance was while intercepting Junkers Ju 88s about 32km off Clacton-on-Sea in Essex. He was in the water for almost two hours before a rowing boat rescued him. Over Eastchurch in Kent during an attack on Dornier bombers, his aircraft was damaged by tail gunners and he bailed over Pitsea marshes. His Hurricane P3966 plummeted from 5,000m and was buried in the soft, boggy soil of the marshes.

By September 1940, No. 85 Squadron had lost 11 pilots in action and had to be withdrawn. Mr Hemingway was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in July 1941, but the battle



John posing for a photo in his RAF uniform



Mr Hemingway stands in front of a Hurricane fighter jet with his RAF pals

had taken its toll on the young pilot. His commanding officer Peter Townsend, famed for his later romance with Britain's Princess Margaret and described by Hemingway as a "first-class wartime leader in a fighter squadron", was also good at recognising the signs of battle fatigue. Mr Hemingway was rested, with light duties, for two years. He served as a Flight Controller during Operation Overlord, the allied invasion of Normandy, in 1944. He was later restored to active duties as a Spitfire combat pilot and fought in the 1944-45 campaign in Northern Italy.

After the war he served as a staff officer in the Middle East, he spent two years at the Air Ministry in London and as a senior staff officer at NATO headquarters in France. He then returned to England as station commander at RAF Leconfield in Yorkshire. He retired from the RAF in 1969. He was one of 36 Irish pilots who fought in the Battle of Britain including Wing Commander Brendan 'Paddy' Finucane, who was one of the RAF's most successful fighter aces in the war, and Victor Beamish, a scion of the brewing industry. Both were killed in the war. Last year he gave an interview to The Irish Times on the occasion of his 100th birthday. He told military historian Joseph Quinn: "I can't say don't drink. I can't say don't fool about with people. I can't say don't fly aeroplanes. I can't say don't shoot and get shot at – I've done everything, and I'm an Irishman. The only advice I can give to people is be Irish!"



Mr Hemingway looks up to the sky before jumping into his RAF fighter plane in WWII

He currently lives in Dublin in a nursing home community. Mr Hemingway's wife Bridget died in 1998, the pair had three children. After several years in Canada with his daughter, he returned to Ireland in 2011. His decision to return was "one of my absolute correct decisions. I was always going to come back". His son, Brian, regards his father as "the lucky Irishman". Speaking to The Irish Times, Brian felt that, at the age of 100, his father's luck had yet to run out. "He feels lucky because he is well cared for in his nursing home, he is loved and not forgotten," he said. "At a personal level and at a Royal Air Force level that gives him a certain comfort. He is very mindful of the thousands of other pilots who are not with us anymore."

Regarding his father's Irish identity as the last survivor of the Battle of Britain, Brian added: "If people feel proud to be British because of the part he played in the Battle for Britain, then he is proud."

This article previously appeared in The Irish Times online edition on 22nd Sept 2020.



Pilots scramble to their Hurricane fighters at an RAF station

The Battle of Britain

80 years ago, The Battle of Britain raged over the skies of Britain. The RAF furiously defended the skies from Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe Air Force. 2945 RAF air crew faced down the Luftwaffe from July to October 1940. Millions of Britons played vital roles in the defence of their country including Air Raid Wardens, Firefighters and members of the Home Guard. Thousands also worked in aircraft factories and between June and October in 1940; around 2000 Hurricanes and Spitfires were built during that period, in addition to the 'Chain Home' system, which was the construction of dozens of radar stations along the British coastline. This gave the RAF an early warning of attacks, detecting German aircraft from up to 80 miles away. Information gathered by radar and the Observer Corps was relayed to RAF Fighter Command Headquarters in Bentley Priory in North London. After confirmation of the information RAF aircraft, anti-aircraft guns, searchlights and barrage balloons were deployed in the area the attack was believed to be taking place. It took the Luftwaffe aircraft just 20 minutes to reach possible targets from the point of the detection. The RAF took just 16 minutes to scramble and intercept a Luftwaffe raid, giving themselves only 4 minutes to decide on how to respond. The RAF had only 749 fighter aircraft at the peak of the fighting during the Battle of Britain compared to the Luftwaffe's 2550 aircraft. The average age of an RAF pilot was just 20 years old, their training was a mere 2 weeks during August 1940. During the Battle of Britain 544 of those pilots lost their lives. The Battle of Britain was the first major military defeat for Nazi Germany in WWII.

50 PEAKS IN 50 WEEKS

By Dermot Behan

Photos from Dermot Behan

I joined the army in 2001, almost 20 years ago. I had just turned 20 and I had no idea what I was going to do with my life. Despite growing up in the Curragh, joining the army was never an ambition of mine. In fact, I had never even conceived myself in the military, until a conversation I had one day with one of my best friends, Rob Doyle (aka Badger). He told me he had just had his fitness test for the army and that a few of our friends from the Curragh had applied too. So, I said to him "I might apply for that, for the craic". I did, I got in, and then I entered into one of the most life-changing few months I've ever experienced.

The comradery, the craic, the slugging, the laughs we had, still to this day some of the best times of my life. I still smile and laugh to myself from time to time when a memory from recruit training pops into my head. Also I often reminisce of a day in September when we sat in the back of an army truck, getting ready to go for grub. One of our corporals, Pauric Murray, jumped up on the back of the truck and told us that 2 airplanes had just flown into the twin towers. A surreal moment and one I won't ever forget.

Then we come to the life-changing part. There was an extreme level of physical and mental strain that we were under for those few months. It's a cliché, but it will either make you or break you. For me it was the former. During long runs, gruelling route marches, intense mountain hikes and the infamous "scratch", I learned that my mind wanted to give up a long long time before my body reached the level it was capable of. This realisation gave me a robust mental strength which endures to this day. From recruit training onwards I knew that my mind would always try to find the easy way out when it felt some pain or struggle, but my body was designed to endure and could literally 'soldier on'.

For some reason, when it comes to jobs, I tend to get restless and fed up easily and want to move on to something else. So, I bought myself out of the army after around 2 years. I spent the next few years doing some travelling and working in various different jobs. Then in

2006 I decided to make a return to the Defence Forces, this time the air corps. I had to slog it through recruit training all over again, for my sins. It was unbelievable craic once again, but not as intense physically and mentally this time round. I trained with my younger cousin Adrian Dunne. He was very young at the time, but it was immediately evident to me that he would go on to become the great soldier and great man he is today.

During my 4 years in the air corps, I served overseas in Chad in 2008/09. This was an incredible experience; for 4 months we lived in tents in the middle of the Chadian desert. The patrols were some of the most eye-opening experiences of my life. Coming from my pampered Western way of living in a highly developed country, to seeing how people live in a third-world country, one of the poorest on the planet was sometimes overwhelming. It sometimes felt like I had stepped into a time machine when I saw people living in villages of mud huts and travelling around on the back of donkeys. Experiences like this are incredibly enriching as a human being. I'd encourage everyone in the military to serve overseas and experience other cultures. Travelling is the best thing anyone can do, in my opinion, to acquire an accurate untainted understanding of other cultures, races, religions and nationalities.

Fast forward to present day. A week ago, I hiked the highest mountain in Ireland, Carrauntoohil. It was the 50th mountain out of the 50 highest mountains in Ireland that I have hiked this year. I called this challenge '50 peaks

in 50 weeks'. Let me tell you why I did this... Near the end of 2019 I was trying to think of something to do to raise money for LauraLynn Children's Hospice. I wanted to do something that was a bit crazy and extremely difficult. Something that would grab people's attention and make them want to donate because of the extremity of the challenge. I had been thinking a lot about getting into hiking as a hobby at the time, so both things just kind of merged in my mind and the idea formed from there. I also wanted the challenge to span most of the year in 2020, as to hopefully accumulate a lot of donations that way. 52 weeks in a year sort of led to the idea of doing 50 mountains, 1 per week. Then 50 peaks in 50 weeks popped into my head and I thought it had a nice ring to it.

I first came across LauraLynn when I was looking for a charity for which to run the 2017 Dublin Marathon. I was browsing through charities online and came across this one that said 'children's hospice'. I had been familiar with hospices, as some of the older members of my family have passed away in them. But the children part really threw me for a loop. I had never considered the thought of a children's hospice before and never actually knew LauraLynn existed up to that point. So I started researching more about the place. I had tears in my eyes looking at their website when the heartbreaking reality of a hospice for little kids and their families really started to dawn on me.

I contacted them at the time and asked if I could visit. This was in part because I was fascinated about the type of place it was and in part because I knew that when I went there and saw some of the kids, there was no way I wouldn't finish the marathon (I am a terrible long-distance runner). I went there and got a tour of the place. During the tour I encountered some of the kids, their families, the inspiring quote at the entrance, the cute pictures on the walls, the toys. I was overwhelmed. Then when they informed me that they don't get any substantial direct government funding and have to



On the peak of my 50th mountain, Carrauntoohil, Kerry, 19th Sept 2020



On a patrol in Chad heading to N'Djamena, 2008/09, with the 98th Infantry Battalion



On the peak of Mount Leinster, Wexford / Carlow, 20th July, with my Nephew Oisín and nieces Ailbhe and Laoise



Looking out over the beautiful Connemara landscape while hiking Bencorr and Benbaun, Jan 19th 2020



Map reading exercise in the Glen during recruit training in the air corps in 2006. In the picture from left to right - Gary Corcoran, Neville Coughlin, Alan Kearns, Me, Rob Keane, Jonny Cahill



On the peak of Blackstairs Mountain, Wexford / Carlow, March 15th 2020

raise over 4 million euro every year themselves, through fundraisers and donations, just to keep the place operational, I was completely in shock - fairly disgusted too, to be honest. I thanked the

LauraLynn staff for the tour and went to my car, sat in it and cried. I made a vow to myself in my car that day that I would spend the rest of my life finding ways to raise money for this place. I really don't think there is a more worthy charity in Ireland for people to donate to. They are literally the only place in our country who provide a comfortable caring facility for little children who are terminally ill, and their families. In my opinion everybody should be doing something to help them.

I started on 5th January. My initial plan was to do 1 hike every Sunday. Some mountains on the list could be hiked together, so I estimated that I would probably finish up around September. When Covid-19 hit, and the subsequent lockdown, I had hiked 16 mountains. During lockdown I couldn't hike any of the other mountains, as I live in probably the flattest part of Ireland, the Curragh, so no mountains near me. I just had to bide my time and hope for an end to lockdown.

I realised that I could get back hiking again on 29th June, when the restrictions eased. I wanted to get the remaining 34 mountains completed before winter and in case another lockdown happened. Therefore, I devised a much more intense schedule than the previous one hike per week routine. I set out to hike 3 times per week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. I had lost my job through Covid-19, so, luckily, I had the time to commit to this schedule. With this new plan I was scheduled to hike my final mountain, Carrauntoohil, on 27th August, my birthday, which would have been a cool way to finish. Unfortunately, Kildare had 2 subsequent lockdowns and I was forced to sit and wait once again.

I eventually got the 50 mountains completed on Saturday, September 19th. What an incredible experience it has been. Discounting lockdowns, I managed to get the 50 mountains hiked in 17 weeks. Most importantly I managed to raise over 17 thousand euro for LauraLynn. My initial target was 2 thousand. I possibly underestimated the interest the challenge would generate and I definitely underestimated people's generosity. This was one of the greatest experiences of my life. Definitely the best thing, morally, I've ever done in my life. You learn a lot about yourself when you're over 800 metres high, in thick cloud, on a narrow ridge, alone. I'm not sure if I have been more humbled by people's kindness to me, or how utterly formidable some of Ireland's mountains are.

My most difficult hike mentally was the day I climbed Mweelrea and Ben Lugmore, in Mayo, on the 28th July. I had read a lot about both of them prior to the hike, as I always researched my upcoming mountains, but what stood out were all the warnings people were giving about how dangerous

these mountains were. I also came across several articles about people falling to their death up there. So, I was fairly scared before I even began the hike, to be honest. Then being up there was even worse than I feared. The weather was terrible, really strong winds and zero visibility, so that didn't help. There were terrifying cliffs, really narrow ledges we had to walk along, a steeply sloping area with loose stones we had to walk along with a cliff right below it (that my guide told me a woman had died on not so long ago by slipping on the loose stones and falling to her death). I was genuinely terrified for most of the hike. My guide Liam Gavin and his friend Amanda Conlon, both members of the RDF, weren't one-bit scared. Mayo people are a different breed it seems, ha ha.

Physically, one of the most difficult I did was Slieve Carr in Mayo. Known as 'Ireland's most remote mountain', it certainly lives up to its name. My great friend, a military policeman (we can forgive him for that), Stephen 'Browners' Browne, was with me on that hike. I told Browners 4 things before that hike. It would be long, it would be tough, but the weather is meant to be good and the views are supposed to be spectacular. Well, it was long, it was tough, but it literally rained non-stop from start to finish, and we could only see around 10 feet in front of us with thick mist throughout the hike, so the jury is still out on those views. The weather, the terrain, the visibility, the physical severity of the hike, all cumulated in making it an extremely arduous challenge. It took us 6 and half hours, 2 mountains, and a lot of misery, just to get to the foot of Slieve Carr, before even beginning to climb it. Then, after we scaled it, began the monumental trek back to the car. I think a part of Browners' soul died on that mountain, but he has since recovered and I think he has forgiven me.

The hiking highlight of this crazy journey was hiking Mount



On the peak of Purple Mountain, Kerry, August 2nd 2020



Having a breather while looking out over the beautiful Coumshingaun Lough, just after reaching the peak of Kilclooney, in Waterford, July 19th 2020

Leinster on 20th July with lots of my friends, their kids, my dog Dougal, my brother, my sister, my sister's husband and my 2 nieces Ailbhe and Laoise and my nephew Oisín. I'm very close with my nephew and 2 nieces, so having them share this experience with me was really incredible. We had brilliant weather, a great day out and got a beautiful picture together on the top of the mountain.... a day I'll never forget.

So, I'm Beano and this has been my story. I never would have completed, or in fact even attempted, this incredible challenge if I hadn't spent those years in the Irish Defence Forces. That mental strength I developed during my initial experience of recruit training is something I never knew I possessed prior to signing up for the army. It's something I think a large portion of our population has, but maybe never find a means to realise it - I thank the army for that. Now over to you. If you're reading this, maybe you've always wanted to do something like I did, for a charity close to your heart or that has touched your life. My advice: just go for it. It'll be the best thing you'll ever do.



matter of days we mobilised a service that saw us moving something like 60 tankers in 15 days in the eastern region.”

This particular experience had a formative impact on Paddy: “The strike and what we had to do may have sown the seeds in my mind that I was capable of doing other things. I realised that we as soldiers were actually capable - and had the training - to do much more than we realised.”

Fast forward to 1987 and retirement from the Army... But you can't keep a man like Paddy down. An advertisement for a Director with the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF) soon caught his eye. “I was always interested in the work of the Foundation but the advert said they were looking for someone between the ages of 35 and 50 – something they couldn't do now – and I was 49 so I applied but I didn't really think I had much of a chance. It was actually the first time I had ever applied for a job, as I had gone straight in to the Army. But I was called for interview and got it! There's no doubt my Army background and training was a big help.”

At the IHF Paddy used all the organisational skills that the Army had taught him, plus he had plenty of his own ideas about how the Foundation's work could be improved. “I enjoyed this new part of my life and I was given the scope to do what I wanted. It was another aspect of health and physical wellbeing.” Paddy oversaw the Foundation and its important work for 14 years, finally retiring in 1987. But not before he had been nominated by the European Heart Foundation to be Vice President of the World Heart Federation, an acknowledgement of his valuable work over the years.

But even then, Paddy was not content to lie back and enjoy retirement. Still pursuing in interest in physical fitness and good health, he developed a concept called Sli na Slainte (Path to Health) in 1996. This motivational physical activity programme, which won widespread support, was implemented by Councils across the country and has even been adopted internationally.

Paddy believes it can be developed even further still, with the obvious benefits to public health, and is actively pursuing Government Ministers and State agencies to give their backing. “The aim is to encourage personal fitness. I wanted to highlight the importance of physical activity for a person's overall health and wellbeing. I wanted something for the man and woman in the street who didn't have to buy expensive tracksuits or runners but could just walk out of their door and take part.”

And no doubt, with Paddy's determination and unique skills, Sli na Slainte will continue to be another outstanding success. This remarkable man's race is not run yet!

Ends

Paddy Murphy: Some Career Details

Career

Army: Retired from Defence Forces (DF) as Commandant in 1987 after 30 years' service, mostly in S&T Corps. Served with 7th Infantry Group UNFICYP in Cyprus in 1966/67 and 53rd Infantry Battalion UNIFIL Lebanon in 1983.

* Petrol Drivers' Strike: He was Officer Commanding 2nd Garrison S&T Coy in 1983 when unit was made the designated operational unit (Eastern Command) in petrol drivers dispute from Oct 1-15. Army took over oil depots and oil distribution.

* Cosantoir 10km: Paddy organised the first event on Oct 15th, 1980 - 81, 82 and in the Lebanon while serving with UNIFIL in 1983.

* ABF Annual DF Concert in NCH: Produced and compered the first concert in 1984 – and 85, 86.

Irish Heart Foundation: Retired from DF in 1987 to take up appointment as CEO of IHF. He retired from IHF in 2000. Initiated Sli na Slainte (Path to Health) in 1996. This motivational physical activity programme was implemented nationwide and in 10 other countries.

World Heart Federation (WHF): Board Member of WHF from 1996-2002 (Past Vice President). WHF is umbrella organisation for all heart foundations and cardiac societies in the world. As WHF representative in Africa he played a key role in establishing the African Heart Network and African Twinning Project.

Interests

Sport: Played Hurling & Football at senior level in Dublin and Kildare - represented Dublin at county level in both codes (minor H & F, senior H).

Music: Performed with his wife Marie O'Shea on RTE TV and Radio in the 70s – including National Song Contest 1972. With Marie presented own 4-week radio series annually of Mo Cheol Thu for 10 years. Polydor Record Company produced an Album (Romantic Ireland) of Paddy and Marie in 1973.

Family: Paddy and Marie have four married daughters and 9 grandchildren – all living nearby in Dublin's north side.



AN COSANTÓIR 2020 10KM VIRTUAL ROAD RACE RESULTS

With Covid-19 making its mark on what seems like every event possible during 2020, the An Cosantóir 2020 10km Virtual Road race took place this year under different circumstances. Not to be stopped the decision was made to make the race virtual. Competitors were able to choose their own route and complete the race within 7 days, making sure to upload their times between the 14th October and the 21st October. This year seen over 2000 competitors register for the race, a phenomenal number of runners and walkers in comparison to previous years. We would like to thank everyone who took part in this year's race, especially under the circumstances and we hope to move back to the physical in the Phoenix Park next year. Well done to everyone and congratulations to all the winners.

SENIOR MALE WINNERS



Kenny Rogers winner of the Male Senior An Cosantóir 2020 10km Virtual Road Race

1st Kenneth Rogers – 31mins 16s – 12th BN

2nd Noel Mulhall – 32mins 46s – 2 BAR

3rd Mark Conway – 34mins 06s – EUBG

SENIOR FEMALE WINNERS

1st Jackie Wykes – 40mins 52s – 2 Bde Arty Reg

2nd Aoibheann McColgan – 46mins 14s – 28th Inf Bn

3rd Sarah Hynan – 48mins 24s – DFHQ

FEMALE 0/40 WINNER

1st Karen Gibbons – 48mins 47s – SPB COS Div DFHQ

GUEST FEMALE WINNER

1st Natalija Fur – 47mins 35s

VETERAN FEMALE WINNER

1st Tara Kennedy – 38mins 47s

MALE 0/40 WINNERS

1st Gary Walsh – 36mins 54s – 1 BAR

2nd Kieran Crawford – 38mins 14s – 28 Inf Bn

3rd Mark Ecock – 38mins 23s – CMU

MALE 0/45 WINNERS

1st Brendan McCarthy – 41mins 11s – 2 Bde Cav Sqn

2nd David Reilly – 41mins 50s – 28 Inf Bn

MALE 0/50 WINNERS

1st John Boothman – 38mins 47s – AC CIS

2nd Tom Thompson – 41mins 55s – 28 Inf Bn

MALE 0/55 WINNERS

1st Mark Bullman – 42mins 28s – 1 Bde Tpt Coy

GUEST MALE WINNERS

1st Colin Payne – 35mins 24s

2nd Ray Kenny – 38mins 30s

VETERAN MALE WINNER

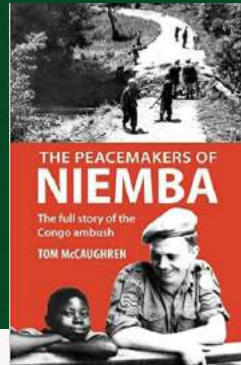
1st Owen Connolly – 39mins 10s



BOOKS



Author: Tom Moore
Publisher: Michael Joseph
ISBN: 9780241486108
Pages: 320
Price: €28.00



Author: Tom McCaughren
Publisher: Somerville Press
ISBN: 9780957346116
Pages: 144
Price: £7.99

Tomorrow will be a good day

Tomorrow Will Be a Good Day and embark on an enchanting journey into Britain's past hundred years through the remarkable life of Captain Sir Tom Moore. From his humble Yorkshire childhood, via the battlefields of Burma and the peaks of the Himalayas, to becoming the NHS and the nation's hero during Lockdown, this is a journey for all of us. Who is Captain Sir Tom Moore? You've seen him on the television walking the length of his garden. A frail elderly man, doing his bit at a time of crisis. But he wasn't always like this. Where did he come from? Where was he made? From a childhood in the foothills of the Yorkshire Dales, Tom Moore grew up in a loving family, which wasn't without its share of tragedy. It was a time of plenty and of want. When the storm clouds of the Second World War threatened, he raised his hand and, like many of his generation, joined up to fight. His war would take him from a country he had never left to a place which would steal his heart, India, and the Far East, to which he would return many years later to view the sight he had missed first time around: the distant peak of Everest. Captain Tom's story is our story. It is the story of the past hundred years in Britain. It's a time which has seen so much change, yet when so much has stayed the same: the national spirit, the can-do attitude, the belief in doing your best for others. In this rich, happy life packed with incident you will encounter time and again the curiosity, courage and generosity that saw Captain Tom look around him during our current crisis and decide that something had to be done . . .

Taken from www.amazon.com

The Peacemakers of Niemba

In 1960 the Irish people were devastated by news that nine of the soldiers that they had sent to the Congo as part of a U.N. peace mission had been killed by warriors. As the funeral cortege passed through Dublin, it was watched by thousands of people in one of the biggest shows of emotion ever seen in the capital. They knew that the soldiers had been killed in an ambush, but precious little else. Soon afterwards journalist Tom McCaughren began a two-year search to find out what had happened. The story that emerged was of a small group of soldiers deployed in hostile bush country, their fear that warriors called 'the Cats' were closing in, 'magic water' rituals, an ambush, a daring raid on a tribal stronghold to snatch some of the perpetrators, a dramatic trial and a secret mission to find a gallant soldier missing in action.



Taken from www.easons.com



DJOUCE MOUNTAIN FROM CRONE WOOD CAR PARK VIA MAULIN, TONDUFF SOUTH AND WAR HILL

By FQMS Fran Whelan
DFAM Training Officer
CTI 3 (confidence training instructor level 3)
ML (Mountain Leader)
RCI/SPA (Rock Climbing Instructor)

Start at Crone Wood car park in Glenree, which can be easily accessed from the N11 heading south using Google Maps. It is not far from the OPW Powerscourt waterfall entrance. The first stage of the walk follows the Wicklow Way track which winds its way up through the woods towards the impressive waterfall at Powerscourt. Follow the track along the side of the steep glen until it leaves the woodlands behind and you find yourself at a T-junction - at point A on the map.

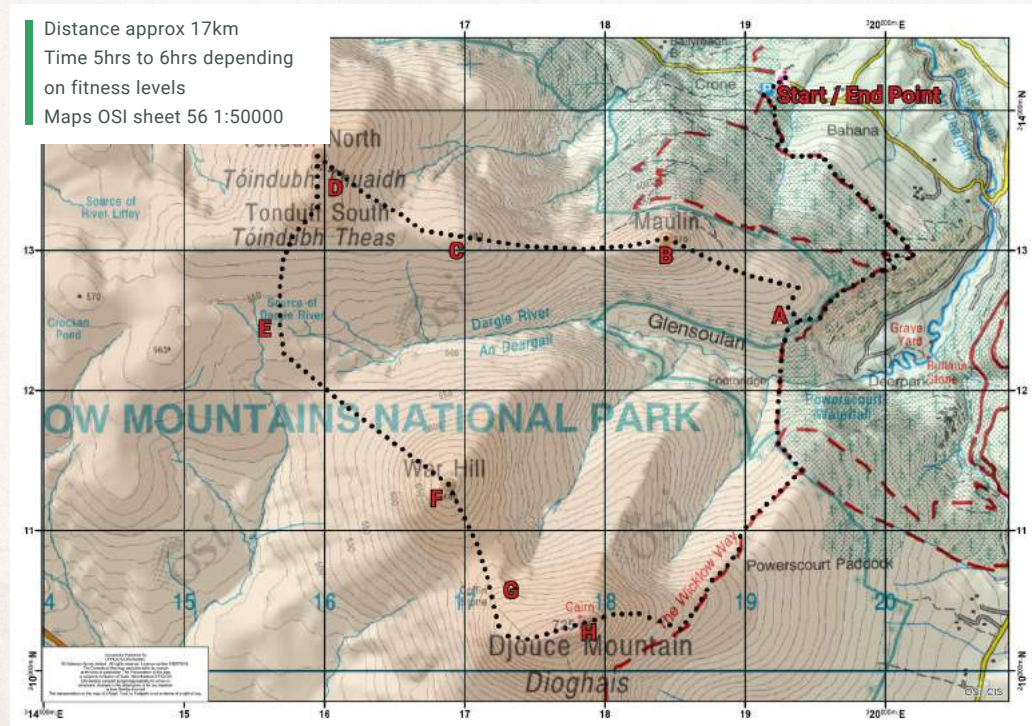
At this junction turn right and head steeply up to the shoulder of Maulin. As you progress upwards along the track, upon reaching the shoulder the contours ease out and you begin a flat, slightly uphill ascent towards the summit. The ground steepens for approx the last 70m of ascent and you will be on the summit (SH570) - at point B on the map.

As you look west along the mountain ridge you will

notice a saddle or col between Maulin and spot height 593 - at point C on the map. Follow the track to the col and up towards SH 593. This spot height is a shoulder of Tonduff Mountain. The track is less distinguishable and boggy from here on with some bog ditches to negotiate between here and the south summit. Tonduff Mountain has a flat top with a north summit at 642mtrs and a south summit slightly lower. The south summit can be recognised by a cluster of large raised boulders - near point D on the map. From here, head in a southerly direction. It is best to take a compass bearing down towards the source of the River Dargle, which is located at the col between War Hill and Tonduff - at point E on the map. This area is the most remote part of the walk and there are no tracks to follow. The ground here is quite marshy and wet under foot at most times of the year.

In this area you will most likely come across Sika deer which populate the Wicklow Mountains. Cross over the long flat col towards War Hill in a south easterly direction. Again, you could take a compass bearing for the summit of War Hill in case of a low cloud base that might cause visibility problems.

As you begin to ascend War Hill you will pick up a track





The Coffin Stone, speculated as being the collapsed remains of a megalithic portal tomb or possibly a glacial erratic stone

that leads to the summit - at point F on the map (SH 686). Descend War Hill, on the opposite side, down to a col between the summit and the shoulder of Djouce Mountain. On the opposite side of the col there is a standing stone or megalithic site marked on the map (Coffin Stone). From the summit of War Hill you will notice the remains of steel fence posts every so often heading in the same direction.

Upon reaching the far side of the col or stopping at the coffin stone, the ground ascends up towards a shoulder, following a track with the occasional remains of the old steel fence posts. Continue



Hybrid red/sika deer

along this until you reach the top. The vague track veers left, follow along the summit Ridge of Djouce Mountain (SH 725) this is the highest point of the walk and begins the final descent - at point H on the map.

Follow the track east from the summit and descend on steep rocky scree until you reach a T-junction where the ground becomes easier -at point I on the map. From here, turn left and follow the Wicklow Way back down the mountain towards the bridge over the River Dargle - at point J on the map. Ascend the steep hill after crossing the bridge and you will arrive back at point A. Retrace your steps back to Crone Wood car park from here.

Relevant Bearings

(which include magnetic variation of approx 3 degrees for 2020)

Point D Tonduff South to Point E Source of River Dargle - 192 degrees

Point E to Point F summit of War Hill - 140 degrees

Point F to Point G standing/coffin stone - 161 degrees

Mountain names and meaning

Djouce

Dioghais - meaning fortified height

War Hill

Cnoc an Bhairr - war hill is probably an English name turned into Gaelic referring to a battle that took place some 300yrs ago between the O Toole Clan and English Troops.

Maulin

Malainn - the meaning is obscure probably referring to a high or sloping ground or the site of a battle

Tonduff

Toin Dubh - black bottom. Tonduff has two summits according to OSI sheet 56. The north being marked as spot height 642. The south end of the peak, which is a long flat summit rather than a peak, is less distinguishable but there are a group of raised boulders which is assumed to be the south summit.

PEOPLE OF THE DEFENCE FORCES



Rank - Sgt
Name - Michael Lennon
Unit - 1 CN Cois

Give me a brief outline of your career to date?

I joined in February 2000. I did my training in Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa and I have been in 1 Cn Cois ever since. My first tour overseas was to Lebanon in 2001 and I then served in Liberia in 03/04 and Chad in 2009. I completed my NCOs (Non-Commissioned Officer) course in 4 BTC in 2006 then I got promoted two weeks later and stayed there to train two consecutive recruit platoons followed by 3* course back in Galway. I've been an ILSW (Infantry Light Support Weapons) instructor since 2011 and a PTI (Physical Training Instructor) since completing the course in 2015. I also completed basic recce in 2013. I completed my All Arms and Infantry Platoon Sergeants Course in 2012 but I wasn't promoted for another three years, almost to the day. I spent eleven months in the Cadet School in 2017/18. I am currently based in 1 Cn Cois gymnasium when not required for other tasks.

What does an average year consist of in the unit for you?

I'll go with this year as it has been a busy, unpredictable year. I started off the year in the gym, day to day running of it and running two to three circuits a week along with fitness testing etc. I commenced training a 3* course as Platoon Sergeant with sixty five students in February but only managed to complete four weeks before training was halted due to Covid-19. We eventually recommenced training, with only twenty two students approximately four months later and completed a very satisfactory final six weeks. During lock down I mainly did duties and Platoon Sgt for our standby platoon which was deployed throughout at a Covid-19 testing centre in Galway Airport. Following the 3* course, after taking some time off, I returned to the barracks gym once it re-opened and I am currently

switching between that and swab testing for Covid-19 at various test centres, along with any other Covid related tasks. Quite a strange year to say the least. Also, the 3* course included some epic route marches in Connemara and our MOUT (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) exercise in Fort Davis was probably the most enjoyable and well-planned exercise I've ever been involved in.



On a route march back into barracks after a 96-hour patrolling exercise as Platoon Sgt with a 3* course

What is your favourite thing about your job?

The training environment, particularly the physical element. I love being involved with a large group, recruits, cadets, etc. as a PTI and planning and implementing their PT over a number of weeks/months. It's great to watch them progress from day one and see what works really well or what may not work with such a big group and so on. I also love the feeling when we have completed something really challenging and you think 'Jesus that was a nightmare, but I'm glad we did it'.



What's your favourite quote?

I'd say it's a poem rather than a quote, the last few lines of it in particular, it's from 'IF' by Rudyard Kipling. The last few lines are: 'If you can fill the unforgiving minute, with sixty seconds worth of distance run, yours is the earth and everything that's in it. And which is more, you'll be a man my son.' Basically, a man giving fatherly advice to his son, that time doesn't care what you do with it, it won't hang around waiting for you, it'll just keep on passing by regardless.

What's the toughest thing you done in your career to date?

It's probably the Infantry Platoon Sergeants course. It was five consecutive weeks on the ground carrying 35lbs weight, or more, with you pretty much everywhere you went and without much sleep each week. Particularly patrol week and finishing a week of platoon in attacks by marching 30km back to the Curragh carrying 55lbs of gear and weapons.

What has been your proudest moment in the job so far?

There have been quite a few.... but probably finally getting promoted to Sergeant. When we came in as recruits and we were standing looking at our Platoon Sgt, it seemed like such a long haul to get to that point. And it was. I had to wait 3 years after completing the Infantry Platoon Sgt course to finally get promoted.

What is your favourite book?

'An Unsung hero - Tom Crean - Antarctic survivor' by Michael Smith.

What is your favourite TV series?

'Black Sails'. It combines real pirates, from the golden age of piracy in the Caribbean, with characters from Treasure Island like Flint and Long John Silver - class.



An outdoor circuit as Platoon Sgt with a recruit platoon



On top of Devil's Mother, Leenane. On a navigation tutorial as Platoon Sgt on a 3* course

What is your favourite podcast?

I never really got into podcasts. I have listened to a couple on 'Life on the line', Australian military veterans from WW2-Vietnam-Afghanistan telling their stories. I've watched/ listened to a lot of excellent webinars on Strength Coach Network also.

Finally, can you give some advice to someone about to embark on a career in the military?

In physical terms, you're going to need a decent level of muscular and cardiovascular endurance if you want to literally hit the ground running. So, get into running and circuit training (bodyweight is ideal) for a few weeks beforehand to get your body ready. It will be physically and mentally tough at times so come in with a positive attitude (want to be there), be a team player (everyone there is in the same boat and you will become lifelong friends with people you train with) and give it your all. If instructors can see that you are trying your best, even if you're struggling, it will make training more enjoyable (relatively) in the long run.

Follow @military_pti on Instagram for quality information and fitness training advice with a military spin.



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