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OPERATION SOPHIA

EUNAVFOR MED



[STRENGTHEN THE NATION]

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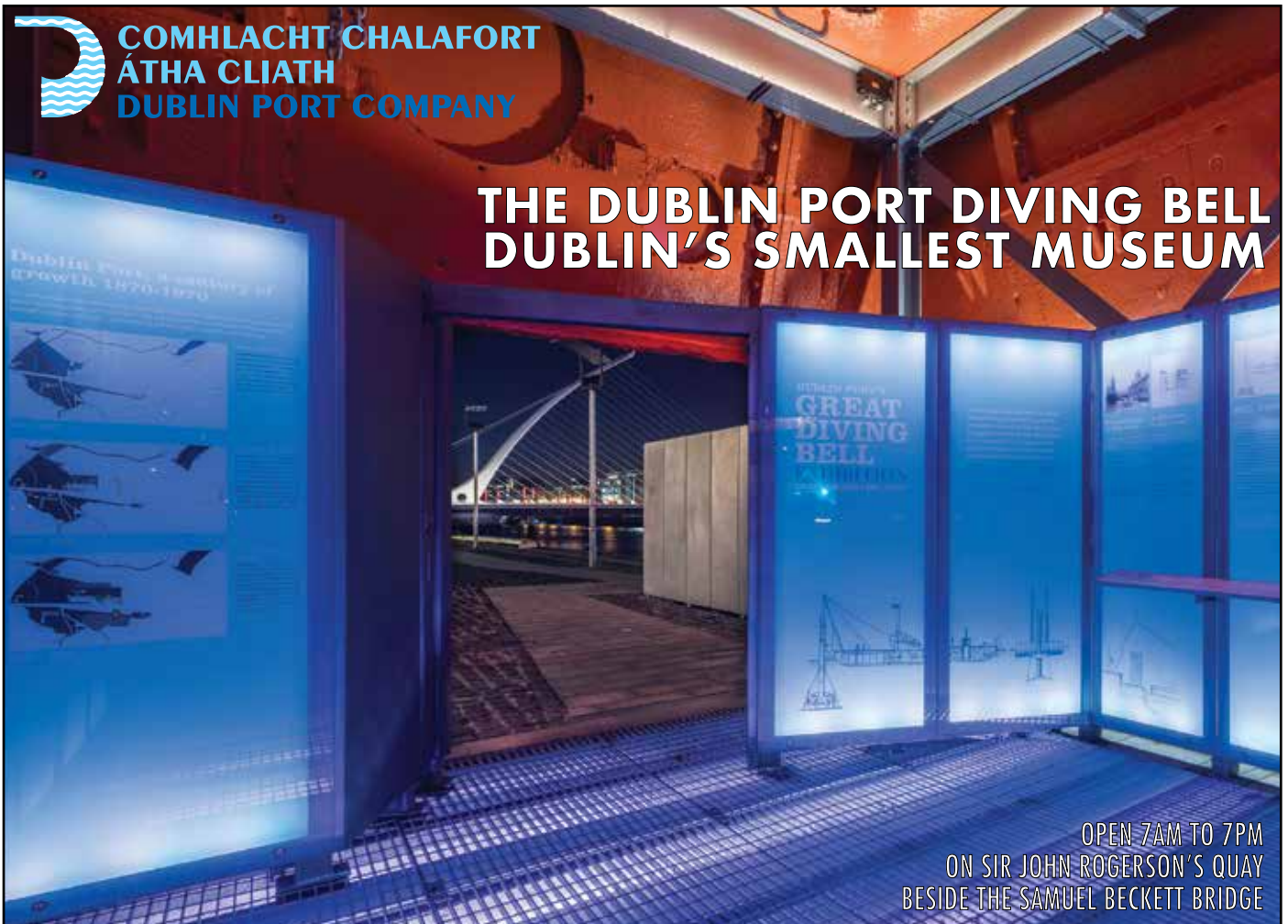
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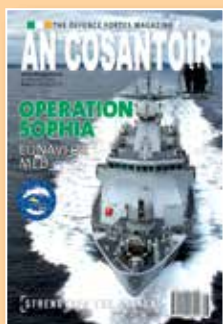
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Front Cover

P63 L.E. William Butler Yeats -
Photo by A/S Davey Jones

For more Defence Forces photographs, checkout:
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Editorial

Hello, and welcome to our second issue of 2020, continuing with our 80th volume – in the historic milestone the An Cosantóir magazine has reached. As ever we have a wide variety of articles this month, ranging from EUTM Mali to Poland and back to the Navy's operations in the Mediterranean.

Our *On Parade* section, as always has a wide variety of stories this month, please keep them coming in. Our *In Focus* pages was provided by Maebh Butler of the Irish Red Cross, focusing on the Defence Forces hosting the International Humanitarian law competition, which will take place in late March at Cathal Brugha Bks.

Page 10 has a report on the visit of 22 students from Foyle College Grammar School, Derry City. The students aim of their visit was to broaden their understanding of a period of time that Ireland was under British Rule, we hope the visit provided them with the knowledge they'll need to succeed with the A Level history exams.

We move forward then to our first main feature article, brought to us from Comdt Gavin Egerton, who is currently serving overseas in EUTM Mali with *Irish Involvement in EUTM Mali*. Gavin gives us an insiders view the history behind the mission and the positions our troops hold within the mission itself.

In *Operation Sophia*, our second main feature, Cdr Caoimhin MacUnfraidh takes a look at the situation of the Mediterranean and Ireland's naval involvement, as he also looks back on his time as Director of the Operational Headquarters of Operation Sophia.

Our third main feature *Israel, Lebanon and UNIFIL: A view from the South*,

Comdt James O'Hara, the Defence Forces Press Officer, interviews Mr Amos Harel who is a leading Military & Defence correspondent for the

Israeli daily Newspaper *Haaretz*. An intriguing look from an Israeli Journalist, at the situation that consistently comes up news reports.

Last shot, takes us into 7 INF BN's C & D companies range practices and in particular Coy Sgt (AR) Dave Tyrrell's last range practice, as he will be retiring with over 40 yrs service, good luck to Dave in his future endeavours.

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald talked to Patryk Kieltyka of the Polish Armed Forces. In *Soldiering for Poland*, Patryk tells us how he grew up in Ireland but returned to his home country to join the Polish Armed Forces. He is now in his 4th year studying in the Military Land Forces Academy in Wroclaw, Poland.

CQMS Anthony Connolly DSM is honoured by his daughter Cpl Tracey Connolly Ret'd, Tracey tells us the story of how her father was awarded a DSM for his brave actions during an incident in the Congo in 1960.

Our history articles feature a piece from Pat Boland in the *Heroic Ryans of Cashel* and then a piece from James Scannell, *Attacks Against the DMP, 1919*.

Of course we have our regulars with *Sport, Tac-aide, Gear up, Noticeboard* and not to forget our 2 competitions.



Sgt Karl Byrne – (Stand-in) Editor

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▲ AIR CORPS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

Pictured is No 5 Support Wing who were crowned Air Corps basketball champions on 12 Feb 20. All units in the Air Corps were represented with 6 teams playing 18 matches with over 3 hours of competitive game time to be crowned champions.

Photo: Provided by Capt Sinead Doyle



▲ HEALTH AND WELLNESS UNIT HILL WALK

On Thursday last the 06th February the Engineer Group DFTC conducted the first of its Organised Recreational Training (ORT) Health and Wellness Unit Hill Walk's in the Slieve Blooms Mountains, completing the Glenbarrow Waterfall loop walk. This is the first of this Unit's planned monthly events, which is hoped will improve Unit fitness levels while also ensuring good E'sprit de Corps with in the Unit *Photo: Provided by Sgt Maj Tom Mahon*



▲ MASSED BANDS

Pictured at the Massed Bands Launch 2020 Reception in Officers' Mess, Collins Bks are, centre L/R Capt B Prendergast, OIC Band 1 Bde, Mr. P Draper, Sales Manager Fords, Mr. J Manning, Sales Director Fords, Brig Gen P Flynn, GOC 1 Bde, Mr. D Pimlott, Director Fords, Lt Col M. O'Connor, G4 1 Bde HQ and Comdt D. Burke, PIO 1 Bde HQ accompanied by members of the Band of 1 Brigade.

The concert was sponsored Fords Ireland and took place on Friday 28th February at 8pm in Cork City Hall.

Photo: Cpl Eoin Curtin, 1 BAR



▲ CAN YOU HELP IDENTIFY ENGINEERS IN 1940?

Continuing on from last months appeal, pictured are members of the Engineers Corps in the Curragh around 1940. The person third from the right in the front row is Sgt Major William Bishop, Sgt Nick Mc Donnell or 'Maxi' as he was known, who is on the extreme left, back row as you look at photo. Any other information would be greatly appreciated. *Photo: Dessie O'Hara*



RSM PHIL HAYDEN RETIREMENT

Roman Rudis:
"Upon completion of his time served, the Emperor would present the gladiator with a wooden sword called a Rudis, thus symbolising the gladiators retirement."

D Inf and School Comdt Inf Sch Col Mark Brownen presents RSM Phil Hayden with his Roman Rudis. Congratulations to RSM Hayden who will soon commence his PDL. Throughout his distinguished career, RSM Hayden has embodied each of the DF Values, devoting his career to the development and growth of our leaders.

Photo: Capt Diarmuid O'Flynn



▲ 22ND ORDNANCE YO COURSE

In the February 2020 edition of An Cosantóir, this photo was incorrectly credited and commented on. It is the 22nd Ordnance YO Course conducting CBRN incident containment drills and not the Cadet School as stated in last month edition.

Photo: Ord Sch



▲ TEMPLE STREET DONATION

Pte Anthony O'Flaherty and Flight Sgt Stephen Byrne (formerly DFHQ CIS) had the pleasure of presenting a cheque for €3,000 to Temple Street Hospital on behalf of The Equitation School and Mc Kee Bks Units. Pictured also Cpl Neary's family who inspired the selection of this year's beneficiary. Well done to all who helped achieve this target. *Photo: CQMS Casey Mc Quillan*



▲ PARADE FOR DECEASED MEMBERS OF 86 INF BN UNIFIL 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

A parade for the deceased members of the 86 INF BN UNIFIL's 20 year anniversary was held on the 14th Feb. Pte's Declan Deere, Brendan Fitzpatrick, Matthew Lawlor and Jonathon Murphy, who were honoured, lost their lives while serving with the UN on the 86 INF BN, all members of the 3rd INF BN, DFTC. 20 years on, the anniversary of their sad deaths was celebrated on the grounds of the 1MIC, DFTC. A parade, wreath laying and the planting of a tree was held in their honour with GOC DFTC Brig Gen David Dignum assisting in the planting of the tree. *Photo: Armn Sam Gibney*



▲ SUICIDE ALERTNESS TRAINING CARRIED OUT IN THE AIRCORPS

SafeTALK is a 'suicide alertness training' course. It prepares anyone over the age of 18 to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. The course took place on Tuesday 18th Feb 2pm – 5.30pm with 23 personnel (3star Cse). Location: Military Training School, AirCorps College. The training was conducted by A/M Billy Doyle. *Photo: Provided by A/M Billy Doyle*



▲ DF BOXING

Irish Defence Forces Boxers had the pleasure of sparring with one of Ireland's greatest ever Amateurs Joe Ward in preparation for the All Armies on the 11/12/13th of March in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Rathmines. Good luck to all the athletes taking part, hoping to take lessons learned from Joe's instruction onto a title.

Photo: Comdt Adrian Watson



▲ DF LADIES PREPERATIONS FOR CISM

The DF Ladies Team are currently in preparations to travel to the Netherlands on the 22nd March until 28th March to compete in the European Championships (CISM). they will play the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany during the competition.

Picture is of the Team last Thursday 13th Feb playing WIT at the WIT Sports Campus where they drew 1-1. *Photo: LT Comdr Grace Fanning*



▲ DF PHOTO SECTION PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE 2020

Photographed above is of the Initial photography course that is being held in No 1 Operations Wing 105 Sqn. The course is 4 months long the course consists of studio photography, aerial photography, maritime photography and military photography. There is also a RPAS element of this course as well so they will be trained in operating our heavy lift drones. I/C of course Sgt B Doherty (Not in photo) From left to right - Cpl J Martin (Instructor) Cpl P Kelly A/M D. Hogarty Cpl J Doyle A/M L Metcalfe A/M D Long Cpl N Coughlan (Instructor)

Photo: Photography Course members

CORN ADOMNÁIN 2020

DEFENCE FORCES TO HOST INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMPETITION

BY MAEBH BUTLER, IRISH RED CROSS

On 28th March 2020, the Irish Red Cross, in collaboration with the Defence Forces, will hold the *Corn Adomnáin* at Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin. The competition has previously been held at Griffith College, Dublin; Queen's University Belfast; University College Dublin; and the Criminal Courts of Justice.

Now in its sixth year, the *Corn Adomnáin* is an annual international humanitarian law (IHL) competition organised by the Irish Red Cross. The competition will see a number of students from legal backgrounds represent their university or institution in a series of challenging scenarios, including role play, a moot court, and video simulations, that will require the competitors to make decisions under pressure while keeping within the confinements of IHL.

Simply put, IHL is the law of war, and stems largely from the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, as well as customary international law and treaties.

Last year's commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions included an Irish Red Cross event at the Mansion House, Dublin, in October, at which an invigorating panel discussion was opened by President Michael D Higgins, who gave a thought-provoking analysis of the current state of affairs.

The panel, comprising Michiel Hofman of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Col Jerry Lane (Director of the Defence Forces Legal Service), and Dr Helen Durham of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), spoke at length about the challenges facing the international community in ensuring respect for IHL in a world where conflict is rapidly changing. Issues highlighted included new technology used in conflict, the increase in urban and protracted conflicts, and the impact of 'anti-terrorist' legislation on the humanitarian sector.

On the back of this discussion, the theme of *Corn Adomnáin* 2020 will be modern warfare. As the international community confronts such challenges, the *Corn Adomnáin* acts as an important space for students to explore IHL and to understand how the law works in reality, and its constant need to adapt with society.

While one may not immediately associate Ireland with IHL, it is worth noting that the Irish people have a long and proud history regarding the promotion of law in conflict. The *Corn Adomnáin* derives its name from the *Cáin Adomnáin*, also known as the Law of Innocents, a treaty promulgated in Birr, Co Offaly, in 697AD. The aim of the *Cáin Adomnáin* was to protect church property and those deemed to be 'innocent', namely women, children and clerics, during conflict. The law was one of the first to seek protection for non-combatants in war and is evidence of the Irish people's longstanding humanitarian efforts.

The 2018 edition of the *Corn Adomnáin* took place in Queen's University Belfast, which added another layer of relevance to the competition as it allowed students from both sides of the border to engage with IHL in a city that represents a significant part of Ireland's relationship with conflict.

This year's location, Cathal Brugha Bks, will add another interesting thread to the competition as participants will be engaging with IHL issues within a military environment - no doubt bringing IHL out of the classroom and into reality.

The unique nature of the *Corn Adomnáin* not only allows for students to test and hone their skills but also allows the Irish Red Cross the opportunity to promote the work of the movement.

One of the aims of the competition is to promote and encourage respect for IHL and to show the challenges associated with this. In this respect, the location of this year's competition is another nod to the importance of ensuring respect for IHL within armed forces, as it gives competitors an opportunity to really



envision themselves in a military setting.

The ICRC's study, *The Roots of Restraint in War*, provides an excellent analysis of how respect can be furthered amongst participants in a conflict. In the study, the researchers found that socialisation, the way in which rules and norms becomes socially accepted and then acted upon, is essential to the promotion of respect for IHL.

The study showed that the ICRC's previous focus on the formal chain of command as a way of garnering respect for IHL is insufficient, particularly due to the increase of non-international armed conflicts and the number of decentralised armed groups involved. Instead, the researchers found that to ensure respect for IHL reaches all members of an armed group, and all kinds of armed groups, it is better to view armed groups on a spectrum and, depending on their position on the spectrum, use the approach most suited to that particular context. Another finding highlighted that the majority of present and future fighters are

everything I can to promote its principles in my future career."

In *Corn Adomnáin* 2020, the Irish Red Cross hopes to build on the successes and experiences of past editions. To achieve as exciting a competition as possible, it is hoped that teams will come from all over the country, with a range of backgrounds and experiences.

While the competition requires a certain level of legal knowledge, it is not necessary for participants to have studied IHL as the format allows for teams to prepare in advance with the assistance of reading materials and allows the use of the Geneva Conventions on the day. This will test the ability of the participants in their application and sourcing of the correct law while under pressure – a crucial legal skill. This is something which 2019 winners, Gráinne Hussey and Aneta Szczurek from the Law Society, demonstrated, despite having one teammate less than other participants.

The competition is a challenging and enjoyable way for stu-



young people, which brings its own challenges.

How do you approach members of an informal armed group versus a formal armed group? How much of a role will digital media play? What is the best method of ensuring respect for IHL in young combatants? These are all questions that must be asked by those with the responsibility of ensuring and promoting respect for IHL and the *Corn Adomnáin* highlights to its participants the many challenges that face armed groups, state actors, NGOs and the ICRC, and national societies in this respect.

One past competitor said of the competition: *"(It) helped me understand the issues the Red Cross is facing every day. (It) made me understand the importance of humanitarian law and I will do*

dents to hone and test their legal expertise, and from an Irish Red Cross perspective it is an important part of our responsibility to promote and encourage respect for IHL.

The impact of fulfilling this responsibility is reflected in another 2019 participant's feedback:

"Remember the importance of this competition. Because of my attendance everyone in my firm are now aware of the humanitarian law principles and we spent lots of time discussing the role-play scenarios afterwards."

The Irish Red Cross is very much looking forward to see what will arise out of *Corn Adomnáin* 2020, and the collaboration with the Defence Forces is testament to the benefits of ensuring a warm relationship is maintained between the two organisations in our promotion of IHL.



The ICRC study *The Roots of Restraint in War* can be downloaded for free on ICRC.org. For more information on the

Corn Adomnáin or IHL activities please contact Maeabh Butler at mbutler@redcross.ie. To find out more about how you can help the Irish Red Cross, visit www.redcross.ie. ■

VISIT FROM FOYLE COLLEGE GRAMMAR SCHOOL TO THE MILITARY ARCHIVES

BY COMDT DANIEL AYIOTIS, OFFICER-IN-CHARGE THE MILITARY ARCHIVES

On 5 February the Military Archives hosted a group of students from Foyle College Grammar School, Derry City. The 22 pupils, accompanied by 2 teachers, were visiting several locations as part of their study of *Ireland under the Union 1800-1900* and the *Partition of Ireland 1900-1925* for their A Level history exams. The purpose of their visit to Dublin was to broaden their understanding of this time period.

Departing at eight in the morning they had a busy schedule. Before arriving at the Military Archives in the afternoon the group had already visited the National War Memorial Gardens at Islandbridge, the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks, Arbour Hill, Glasnevin Cemetery and Dublin Castle. They had also undertaken their own walking tour of key sites relating to their studies including College Green, the Garden of Remembrance, the GPO, O'Connell Street and the Parnell and O'Connell monuments.

Following some very welcome refreshments and an introduction to the Military Archives in our lecture room, the class was divided into four groups and brought to the Commandant Peter Young Reading Room. Here Archivist Lisa Dolan, assisted by Military Archives' volunteer and visit coordinator Mr Tony Kinsella, had arranged a workshop using a broad selection of primary sources from the 1916-1921 period.

The workshop was aimed at introducing the young historians to identifying and understanding primary source records and, equally important, how to do so critically. During the workshop the pupils had to consider the values or attitudes reflected by the content of the documents presented to them, the intended audience, the reliability and limitations of the sources and the importance of cross referencing for corroborating or contradictory information.

The first activity station invited students to examine a selection of documents and artefacts originating from the British Army in Ireland during the revolutionary period. These included: original documents signed by Major Bernard Law Montgomery (Monty) while stationed at Bere Island, Cork, (later Field Marshal Montgomery, legendary WW2 commander and great rival of Erwin Rommel); the tunic of Lieutenant Edward Gerrard of the Royal Artillery, still bearing the bullet hole from when he was shot (non-fatally) during the 1916 Easter Rising, his photo album containing an image of him recovering in the Portobello Barracks hospital (now the Military Archives), and his statement to the Bureau of Military History; and an instruction from the General Officer Commanding the 6th Division in Cork prohibiting Officers from hunting at the height of War of Independence hostilities.

The second and third stations covered internment. One focused on the War of Independence and Ballykinlar internment camp in particular, using the beautifully hand-illustrated prisoner autograph book known as the *Book of Ballykinlar*

and a witness statement to the Bureau of Military History made by one of the internees, Francis O'Duffy. The other station focused on internment during the Civil War and introduced the students to archival assets such as the Civil War internment ledgers, again focusing on prisoners from the Derry area.

The fourth station covered online resources available on the Military Archives' website. Here the students were introduced to using online assets to research IRA activity in their own locality, particularly the Military Service Pensions' applications, IRA nominal rolls, Brigade Activity Reports and Bureau of Military History witness statements.

Afterwards the groups reconvened in the lecture room with a nominated representative from each presenting their findings to the rest of the class. The students unanimously expressed that they had found the visit extremely interesting – not just the subject matter but also learning about the work of archivists, particularly those students applying for courses in History and Museum Studies next year. They also found it very beneficial getting to find out about the personal stories and roles of Derry people during the War of Independence through contemporary primary source material. The visit ended with a tour of the Cathal Brugha Barracks Museum with CQMS Noel Montgomery (retired), introducing them to some of the wider history of the barracks and the Irish Defence Forces.

The mission of the Military Archives is to acquire, preserve and make available Ireland's documentary military heritage. That final part, to *make available*, is something we consider to be a broad imperative. It is not enough for a national archival institution to just make available records in the reading room. Within the academic world, and the humanities in particular, Archivistics is an increasingly interdisciplinary pursuit. It fulfils a role in informing many fields central to human experience, especially indi-

vidual and collective identity and memory. Howard Zinn described archiving as "an inevitably political craft" but by acknowledging our subjectivity we humanise it. For this reason outreach activities are one of our core roles. Doing this in a collaborative and open spirit means that the Military Archives is in a position to share the history of Ireland's revolutionary past and find common ground with visitors from all traditions on the island. Hopefully the visit from Foyle College achieved this and will become an annual event. ■

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IRISH INVOLVEMENT IN EUTM MALI

BY COMDT GAVIN EGERTON,
DEPUTY CHIEF INSTRUCTOR, EUTM MALI

In early 2012 the West African country, and former French colony, Mali was plunged into an existential crisis when Tuareg rebels and the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) came together to demand the creation of an independent Azawad state in the north and east of the country.

After the regions of Kidal, Timbuktu, and Gao had fallen into rebel hands, a bloodless coup led by Malian junior officers and NCOs overthrew the government. Meanwhile, the Tuareg revolt was commandeered by Salafi-jihadists. Soon afterwards, the MNLA unilaterally declared independence of the Azawad region, and the subsequent introduction of Sharia law throughout Azawad resulted in a significant displacement of the civilian population as tens of thousands moved south or into neighbouring countries.

In January 2013 a collective jihadist effort, primarily consisting of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine, and some affiliates launched an offensive from their northern strongholds, with Bamako, the capital, as their ultimate objective. In response, the French government intervened, launching Operation Serval to evict the terrorist armed groups from the north. Quite quickly, French troops, in co-operation with Malian and Chadian counterparts, recaptured most of the northern regions. Within a few weeks the jihadists were overwhelmed, retreating and disappearing into the civilian population or fleeing to neighbouring countries.

The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) was established in April 2013 with a force of 12,000 peacekeepers, and tasked with aiding the transitional authorities in Mali and supporting the political and peace processes.

Prior to that, in December 2012, recognising the need to rebuild and develop his country's military, Mali's president had requested the EU to establish and deploy a military training mission to Mali.

In February 2013 EUTM Mali was established, with an initial mandate to regenerate critical operational capacity in the Malian Armed Forces



Capt Adam Doyle, course leader, on the range with the Combat Shooting Instructor Course

Sgt Vaughan Callan teaching firing from cover to MaAF students.

(MaAF). The initial training and advice contributed to restoring self-confidence within the MaAF and facilitated the enhancement of the authority of the state over areas of the country that had been lost.

Over successive mandates the mission has evolved to emphasise leadership and train-the-trainers courses. In 2016, decentralised training was introduced, seeing mission personnel temporarily deployed to Malian bases throughout a number of military regions on combined mobile advisory training teams (CMATTs) comprised of trainers, advisors, force protection 'guardian angels', and medical assets. Typically, a CMATT delivers a bespoke training package based on the needs of the regional commander.

EUTM Mali constitutes the military pillar of a comprehensive EU strategy in the country, which includes fields such as political and humanitarian development. Since its inception, EUTM Mali has been a non-executive mission, meaning its personnel do not participate with, or accompany, the MaAF on operations. The objectives of the mission, as per the current (4th) mandate are: to contribute to the improvement of the capabilities of the MaAF under the control of the political authorities, and support G5 Sahel through the consolidation and improvement of the operational capabilities of its joint force and through strengthening regional co-operation to address common security threats, especially terrorism and human trafficking.

In order to achieve these objectives, EUTM Mali bases its activities on four pillars: training the MaAF; advising the MaAF at all levels; contributing to the improvement of the military education system, from schools to ministerial level; advising and training G5 Sahel Joint Force HQ.

In 2013, a taskforce of British and Irish army personnel deployed to EUTM Mali as a combined training team, responsible for providing specialist training to the MaAF in Koulikoro Training Centre (KTC). The goal was to provide basic training to multiple GTIA/BGs (groupement tactique interarme/battle groups), including conducting train-the-trainer courses and specialist weapons courses.

The Defence Forces currently fills 20 positions in EUTM Mali, deployed in Bamako and Koulikoro. The current deployment, IRCON 14, has nine personnel based in the multinational Mission Force Headquarters (MFHQ) in Bamako, alongside personnel from 27 different nations. There are three personnel deployed in key staff officer and NCO appointments, including Chief J4 (logistics), which is occupied by the Senior Irish Officer (SIO). The other six personnel,

fills the appointment of deputy chief instructor, and the executive officer of ETTF is an Irish lieutenant colonel. Four other Irish NCOs are deployed in important supporting roles in the S4 and S6 cells.

It is important to note that the Irish personnel in KTC and MFHQ plug into existing teams in a multinational structure, rather than operating as an organic stand-alone national team or in direct partnership with another nation, such as was the case earlier in the mission's history. This means that the vast corporate knowledge and experience the Irish Defence Forces has gained, in the multinational peace support operations domain, is of huge significance even from a cultural awareness perspective alone.

The two Irish infantry training officers in KTC plan, prepare and conduct courses for the MaAF, while the three NCOs instruct on conventional tactics, techniques, and procedures, using standardised Malian doctrinal manuals. Experience in infantry skills such as combat shooting, FIBUA, patrolling, recce, sniping, etc, adds significant value to the training delivered.

Additionally, Irish trainers often conduct classes in specialist subjects such as counter-IED, ground-sign awareness, mechanised-infantry tactics, leadership, and methods of instruction, to name but a few. Irish trainers also routinely participate in CMATTs in remote military regions.

It is through the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) that the EU deals with collective defence and crisis management operations. Ireland has been a contributor to the CSDP since its inception in 1999 and Irish personnel have served under the EU flag with Operation Artemis (DR Congo), EUTM Somalia (with Brig Gen Ger Aherne and Maj Gen Michael Beary as mission commanders), Operation Althea (Bosnia), and EUFOR Chad/CAR (with Lt Gen Pat Nash as operation commander). Irish participation in EUTM Mali builds on this tradition and further establishes Ireland as an active contributor to European security and defence.

In 2015 the EU established the EU Naval Force Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED), now known as Operation Sophia, to address the migrant crisis. The Naval Service contributed ships and personnel the operation from its inception, and the DF continues to fill a number of staff appointments in the operational headquarters in Rome.

Ireland's participation in EUTM Mali contributes to the stability of the country and of the greater Sahel region. Indeed, the EUTM Mali force commander and his staff engage regularly with the G5

Sahel coalition to ensure that the region is united in its efforts to combat human trafficking, improve security for the region's inhabitants, and stem the tide of northward migration. EUTM Mali

contributes to this process by developing the capability of the MaAF with the ultimate goal of leaving behind a self-sufficient force that is capable of securing its own borders and defending its own territory.

The nature of EUTM Mali training is constantly evolving. The next mission mandate is likely to focus on pre-deployment training for infantry companies who are scheduled to conduct counter-insurgency operations. Whatever shape the mission takes in the future, the Defence Forces is likely to continue to make a significant contribution to its ongoing success. ■



Sgt Danny Smyth on the range with National Guard Groupement d'Intervention.



Cpl Fran Fitzhenrey working with international colleagues from Estonia and Lithuania.

a lieutenant and five NCOs comprise the Joint Transit Team, which effectively functions as MOVCON for the mission.

The remaining 11 DF personnel are deployed to Koulikoro Training Centre (KTC), approximately 60km north of Bamako, home of EUTM's main effort, the Education and Training Task Force (ETTF), which currently has 82 trainers from 18 EU and four non-EU states. These trainers constitute the primary interface between EUTM and the Malian trainees who attend courses at KTC. Five of the infantry training appointments are held by Irish Army personnel, two officers and three NCOs. Additionally, an Army commandant

Operation Sophia

EUNAVFOR Med

BY CDR CAOIMHÍN
MACUNFRAIDH, OC LÉ EITHNE



In November 2019, on my final day as Director of the Operational Headquarters (OHQ) of Operation Sophia, at the Joint Operations Centre (JOC), I conducted the commander's morning update brief (MUB) to the usual daily audience of about 60 multinational personnel from all functional sections of the HQ.

After welcoming the attendees, calling the room to attention when the admiral arrived, and listening to the detailed meteorological briefing (crucial when dealing with a sea/air area of operations),

I called for the CJ2 (Intelligence) contribution, which was delivered by another Defence Forces officer, Capt Paul McDermott (Air Corps). The detailed brief covered the activities of General Haftar's Libyan National Army forces in their siege of the Government of National Accord in Tripoli, and intelligence aspects in the area of operations of concern to the navigation and situational awareness of our aircraft. The brief descended into technical matters where necessary and then lifted back up to the geo-strategic level that is the daily

reality for this complex mission.

I then delivered the operations brief, using the Recognised Maritime Picture on a large screen as the basis to discuss the major actors in the Central Mediterranean area, including the dispositions of Italian Navy ships and merchant vessels of interest (VOIs), which are potentially engaged in running the Libyan arms embargo or the UN Resolution on oil smuggling.

The brief included known Libyan maritime militia activity and how it might affect human smuggling for the next 24 hrs. I described the locations and projected activities of non-governmental and third-party vessels and the concurrent air operations of other agencies and organisations whose area of operations overlaps our own.

Finally, I detailed the last 24 hrs and outlined the next 24hrs of activity of the hard working maritime patrol aircraft fleet dedicated to Op Sophia.

After taking several questions from the Deputy Operation Commander, a French admiral, I handed over to the representative of CJ1 (Personnel), CPO James Bartley (NS), who gave an overview of the strength and critical shortfalls of the mission staff.

My newly-arrived relief as JOC director, Cdr Kenneth Minehane (NS), the fourth Defence Forces contributor to the brief, then stepped up to the podium to address the assembled staff.

Cdr Minehane spoke about his previous experience in the Mediterranean theatre, having been with each of our ships during Ireland's missions with Operation Pontus in 2015 and 2016, before serving with Op Sophia as Force Protection Officer in 2018 for two tours of duty. This is, therefore, his third tour in Op Sophia OHQ.



I was then given the opportunity to address my colleagues personally, and expressed my gratitude for the camaraderie that I had experienced with these European military personnel from all three services, in the busy Joint Operational HQ.

I also described the sense of the importance of this mission to European security that I had gained as JOC Director. From the heart of the mission's information flow I had had an overview of the full spectrum of Op Sophia's efforts, and the extent and seriousness of the activities that we have observed, and against which our force, fragile as it may currently be, is the front line for Europe.

The brutal, human smuggling engaged in by criminals on a well-documented scale raises the possibility that certain actors may, directly or by proxy, gain control of that trade and of the oil trade in Libya, allowing the exertion of terrible pressure on the EU. This combination of human rights, economic risk, and geopolitical manoeuvring on the EU's southern border has produced a febrile and dangerous situation.

I reminded my colleagues that from 2015 to 2018 Ireland had gone from being a military non-contributor to being one of the top

five EU contributors, with three ships, each with 57 crew, plus two OHQ appointments and two Force HQ appointments. Although all EU naval ships, including ours, had been withdrawn from Op Sophia in March 2019, evidence of the effectiveness of the Irish contribution was to be found in this very MUB, which was almost entirely delivered by Irish personnel in key positions.

I pointed out that most EU militaries were relatively small, like ours, but that the EU allows small nations like us to make a meaningful and effective contribution. This gives an important leavening by smaller countries of the military approach, which might otherwise be taken by the larger countries. It allows a place on the international stage for an Irish military contribution, which spares nothing in its robustness but is conscious of the deep traditions that this country brings to bear in its foreign and security policy choices.

I departed the OHQ with that sense, familiar to all military personnel, of having been part of something special that was now over, and of having made real friends among a disparate and talented group of like-minded, motivated professionals from all over the EU.

I returned home to a Naval Service that is frankly under pressure, but I had the space and detachment brought about by six months in an overseas environment to keep our challenges in perspective and in context. The Defence Forces, and in particular the Naval Service and its people, are every bit as capable as any other nation, and in the case of Op Sophia we bring our unique experience of air and sea operations from an unaligned but militarily competent island nation to the mission.



My tour in Op Sophia reaffirmed for me the quality of our Defence Forces and the importance of protecting it in the national interest and the EU's interest.

Ireland currently contributes three personnel to the Op Sophia's OHQ in Rome. (EU missions' OHQs are located in member states, usually maintained by the national military of those states.)

OHQ Rome was activated to deliver EUNAVFOR MED, later named Op Sophia, on foot of EU Council Decision 2015/972 on 22 June 2015.

The Irish contingent consists of one commander and one chief petty officer from the Naval Service and one captain from the Air Corps. Currently, the captain is in the intelligence section (CJ2), the CPO is in the personnel section (CJ1) and the commander is in the operations section as Director of the Joint Operations Centre.

Op Sophia is the military part of the broader EU comprehensive response to the migration issue, which seeks to address not only its physical component, but also its root causes, including conflict, poverty, climate change and persecution.

The mission's core mandate is to undertake systematic efforts to

identify, capture and dispose of vessels and enabling assets used, or suspected of being used, by migrant smugglers or traffickers, to contribute to wider EU efforts to disrupt the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks in the southern Central Mediterranean and prevent the further loss of life at sea.

At its height the mission FHQ was located at sea on an Italian aircraft carrier (ITS Cavour). Since its inception over 58 naval units have participated in Op Sophia, including three Irish ships, *LÉ Niamh*, *LÉ Samuel Beckett* and *LÉ James Joyce*. The Defence Forces commitment at that time also included a Lt Cdr and PO in the FHQ.

In March 2019 a decision was taken to withdraw naval surface assets from Op Sophia, which meant that the mission was left with only its air assets. Several countries, including Ireland, withdrew from the FHQ on the basis that as the force had reduced the rationale for maintaining full staffing had also diminished. This is a state of affairs that has left the mission under pressure. The product of such headquarters, especially the volume of military staff work and the requirements to manage force protection, security and logistics, means that the work of the HQ is not directly proportional to the number of assets deployed.

Nevertheless, since that date Op Sophia has had an extremely

and transmits these reports, in addition to daily sitreps and updates from all sections.

The JOC is also the interface with other organisations at the operational and strategic level. It is the point of intersection with Op Sophia for the Italian Navy, the Italian Coast Guard, NATO, Brussels, other EU missions, such as Op Atlanta and EUBAM, FRONTEX, the UN. Therefore, the JOC's mission within the OHQ may be defined as the management and distribution of all of the mission's information.

The other major function of the JOC is to maintain the Recognised Maritime Picture (RMP). In practice, this means that CJ3 and the JOC must ensure that the operation commander (Admiral Credendino) and his command group have an up-to-date, filtered, accurate real-time picture of all activity at sea and in the air in the Central Mediterranean, in order to support strategic and operational decision making. To this end, the JOC staff is divided into two sec-



hardworking fleet of maritime patrol aircraft, tactically controlled by the FHQ and given direction and guidance by the OHQ, which interfaces on their behalf with the EU Military Staff in Brussels and with the numerous other agencies and stakeholders involved in this Mediterranean drama.

The JOC is a busy work station manned by a multinational staff 24-7-365. Information flows from the patrolling air assets through the FHQ to the JOC, where it is distributed throughout the OHQ to the functional section requiring it (for example to Intelligence, Logistics, Operations, Personnel). The OHQ contains special staff sections such as Political Advisor and Legal Advisor, all of which receive the information transmitted from the FHQ for analysis. The Battle Rhythm in the OHQ then draws the conclusions and observations of each of these sections into the

production of orders to the FHQ (the DOWN-REP) and reports to the EUMS (the ASSESSREP), which briefs member states and ensures that the most recent, accurate information from the highly complex AO is available to the EU's Political and Security Committee.

The JOC compiles

tions: the 'front row' of real-time data managers, centred on the JOC watchkeeper (usually an OF3 from any of the three services), and a 'back row' of information managers, centred on the JOC Director (usually an OF4).

There is much discussion about the nature of the EU response to the crisis in Libya and, in particular, the nature of the interaction between the military mission and the numerous NGOs involved in migrant rescue operations, but an article of this nature cannot address the full spectrum of arguments. It is not a typical naval mission; the AO is packed with national, international and non-state actors, and there are layers and layers of agendas.

The military task is delicately balanced. By its nature, a military mission must be tightly controlled, responsive to civilian authority, and observant of the law. It must also be robust, with the ability to defend itself and those it is charged to protect. It must also be capable of deterring certain types of behaviour. The maintenance of these capabilities, the necessary potential for the use of force, and the restrictions on communication and public relations necessitated by subordination to the political, will mean Op Sophia, like many missions, can be portrayed at times as unsympathetic or ineffective by other actors who have more freedom but perhaps less overall responsibility in the same theatre.

I am proud of Operation Sophia, of the medal I earned for my service there and of the performance there of my Defence Forces colleagues, and I hope the mission receives the necessary attention and resources it requires into the future. ■



ISRAEL, LEBANON AND UNIFIL: *A view from the South*

BY COMDT JAMES O'HARA, DEFENCE FORCES PRESS OFFICER



The recent death of Iranian General Qassem Suleimani in a US missile strike has once again heightened tensions across the Middle East. Recently, we interviewed Mr Amos Harel, leading Military & Defence correspondent for the Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz, where we discussed the security situation along the Israel - Lebanon border and the UNIFIL Area of Operations.

WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SECURITY SITUATION ALONG ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDER WITH LEBANON?

"If there is a defining moment in the relations between Israel and Hezbollah, it was 2006, what is now called the Second Lebanon War. In my view, in retrospect, this more or less ended in a miserable draw: Neither side won but both managed to inflict quite a lot of damage on the other.

What we have had since then, the strategic balance between Israel and Hezbollah, in essence, is a type of mutually assured deterrence. Both sides are aware of what the other side can do and therefore are deterred from going too far ahead of themselves.

I'm not talking directly about the State of Lebanon, because as strange as it may seem, it is a relatively minor actor in the military balance here.

So what we have now, time after time, are incidents where we see a dangerous escalation, with lots of talking from both sides, but when it comes to the actual shooting we see both sides stepping on the brakes at the last moment.

The best example I can think of was in 2015 when Jihad Mughniyeh (Hezbollah Military Commander) was assassinated alongside an Iranian General, which was widely attributed to Israel. Hezbollah responded 10 days later with an ambush on an Israeli army convoy in the Shebaa Farms area, where two Israeli soldiers were killed by anti-tank rocket attack.

Immediately after this attack, public expectation was that Israel would react because our soldiers had been killed. I

remember calling an IDF Officer that day and he said, 'look, we've hit them once, they hit us back. If we go to step number three, nobody knows where this will end'. So Israel stepped on the brakes and you can see that pattern time after time, which means that neither side is willing to risk so much and get entangled into a war.

Another example was when Israel discovered and destroyed six tunnels that Hezbollah dug into Israeli territory. The IDF

Right now, as with the tunnels, we see all sides treading very lightly, in order not to cause any unnecessary escalation. But there are tensions. And there are tensions between Israel and UNIFIL, which have to do with the searching of private premises. I interviewed General Michael Beary at that time and this was our discussion. There was quite a lot of frustration from the Israeli side, expecting UNIFIL to do more because from their point of view, it was very clear that it is Hezbollah behind the



took care not to cross the border one inch when destroying the tunnels and Hezbollah pulled away from the area to avoid any direct confrontation.

I think this tells us quite a lot about the situation. Having said that, there is always the possibility of a series of miscalculations where we misread the other side and they misinterpret what we're about to do and then you can easily slide into a war. This is what happened in 2006. Nasrallah himself later admitted that he did not intend for a war to start when he ordered the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers and he did not expect Israel to react as it did. So I think this remains the situation today."

WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE UNIFIL AO AND WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD OF CONFLICT IN THE UNIFIL AREA OF OPERATIONS?

"If conflict escalates, if it erupts, this will probably mean a full scale war and this would include the UNIFIL area. This would be the battlefield, southern Lebanon, more or less the area where UNIFIL has a mandate. Let's be very clear, if something happens it will erupt on the border and the initial part of the war will be fought in Southern Lebanon, in the exact specific areas where your soldiers are serving. For your soldiers, this would mostly involve withdrawing or staying away to avoid becoming caught between the two sides.

scenes, it is Hezbollah calling the shots, it is Hezbollah disguising as private citizens, while everybody knows and perhaps UNIFIL as well is turning a blind eye to Hezbollah's presence and their weapons depots and military action. This is the current reality there and its quite frustrating from the Israeli side.

This is one of the reasons why Israel keeps raising this matter. Every now and then you see Israel publishing information and giving briefings to the foreign media about specific towns or villages where Hezbollah has secret compounds. This is fighting the propaganda war but it doesn't mean that its untrue. I think most of the information Israel is presenting is actually accurate."

DOES SOME OF THIS FRUSTRATION RESULT FROM THE CURRENT MANDATE FOR UNIFIL?

"While I'm not an expert on the mandate, I think that Israelis would like UNIFIL to be physically more assertive and initiating more searches, perhaps having the mandate changed in order for UNIFIL to have more power to restrict Hezbollah action along the border. It is very clear that Hezbollah are active. We receive briefings where they show us films of Hezbollah men in plain clothes, Hezbollah men walking almost hand in hand with LAF patrols and this is both frustrating and potentially dangerous from the Israeli point of view." ■

LAST SHOT

REPORT & PHOTOS BY CQMS (AR) MICHAEL BARRETT, 7 INF BN RDF

The weekend of 24th - 26th January saw Reserves Defence Forces (RDF) units of the Dublin based 7 Inf Bn fire their Annual Personal Weapons Tests (APWT) on Carna Range outside Athlone Town. The Battalions C and D Companies fired almost 60 reservist soldiers on what was weather wise, an ideal day for range practices.

Both Companies were based in Custume Bks, Athlone for duration of the long weekend - this location was a pleasant change from our regular rifle range haunts of either Kilbride or Gormanston Camps.

As an infantry battalion, rifle skills are paramount, the Steyr rifle is our personal weapon, every single soldier in the battalion must be both confident and proficient in its use. Firing and achieving a pass grade is essential for almost any course of training which an RDF soldier aspires to be offered, not to mention, it keeps us operational in the sense of our military weapons handling skills.

This operational mode means we can support the PDF elements of the Battalion, if ever required to do so, for example during an exercise, a regimental duty or any other allocated task.

This particular weekend was also busy for other elements of the 7 Inf Bn RDF. Our comrades in E Coy were conducting potential RDF recruit's fitness tests in our home base of Cathal Brugha Bks, in Dublin. We also have students in the DFTC on the current RDF Potential Officers' Course. Other 7 Inf Bn reservists were also in the DFTC attending briefings for other courses.

This weekend in Athlone also had another special occasion for the 7 Inf Bn, for a reservist with well over 40-years' service was

firing the rifle for the last time.

Coy Sgt (AR) Dave Tyrrell, D Coy, 7 Inf Bn who retired on the 5th February 2020, and this weekend away on the range practices was his last away trip with the RDF.

Dave originally joined the FCÁ's 20 Inf Bn in 1975, at a time when the standard weapon there was the .303 number 4 rifle, other weapons in service with FCÁ back then included the excellent Bren Light Machine Gun and even the legendary Vickers Machine Gun was still to be found in FCÁ unit stores.

Coy Sgt (AR) Dave Tyrrell, who enlisted in 1975, is almost certainly one of the longest ever serving members of the Defence Forces in any branch or service. He enlisted at a time of great turmoil in the Northern Troubles, these troubles are difficult to comprehend now, but at the time they had a very real danger of spilling over into the South of Ireland on a massive scale. Dave, along with reserve soldiers like him, was there, if ever that need came.

For this his last rifle shoot, Coy Sgt (AR) Dave Tyrrell fired his personal issued Steyr rifle for the last time. For this long serving reserve soldier, it was his last shot in the service of the State. ■



7 Last Shoot.jpg - Comdt Gary Skinner, OC D Coy, with CS Dave Tyrrell and CQMS Donncha MacFhionnlaioich, both D Coy 7 Inf Bn.



na hÓglaigh Chúltaca

The Making of an Army Reserve

BY PTE (2*) LUKASZ GANCARZ, D COY, 7 INF BN

THE HISTORY

Reserve Army is a concept known from as far as late Roman Empire, however it was really taking shape from the 18th Century England, where a force of part time/reserve officers were kept on pay, ready to be drafted into full time service in case of conflict. The Militia Act of 1757 gave Britain a legislative backing to create trained and somewhat professional reserve military formation. Across the globe, reserves were used in all roles of army functions, from providing logistics support to their fighting colleagues or taking an



active part in battles, either alongside of a permanent army or on their own. Nowadays almost all countries have their own Army Reserves, which in some cases work not only as a support to full time armed forces but as a reliable fighting formation, including active combat engagements on deployments abroad.

The history of Irish Army Reserve dates to 1929, when the Volunteer Reserve Force was established. Its roles were changing through the years; from being an auxiliary to Police and Army to becoming an armed formation on its own as An Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil (FCA) in 1947. From then on FCA was supporting the Permanent Defence Forces (PDF) and the First Line Reserve. The FCA had played a very important role during the Troubles working alongside the PDF. Despite having its own issues with equipment and training standards, it was apparent that it is a viable project, which adds significant benefits not only to the Army but also and most importantly to the local communities. In 2005 the FCA was stood down and Reserve Defence Forces were established. From 2013, following the Single Force Concept, RDF became a part of the full-time units. Now there are over 1,800 Army Reserve personnel in active service. With a very effective media recruitment campaign the service should see a significant rise.

MAKING OF POTENTIAL RECRUIT

The first step in becoming a Reservist is an online registration. This process is very similar to the Permanent Defence Forces recruitment competition. Soon after, potential recruits are invited

to an interview stage in one of the Unit HQ's to which they applied. Met by usually two Officers and an NCO, recruits are asked very basic questions regarding their motivation, background and a few "curve balls" on how they would react to a stressful situation within the AR. Once successful, the time comes to test the fitness levels of candidates. Entry level physical examination is very basic and does not present significant challenge to anyone who stays fit at a minimum level. To pass the test, candidate must do 20 push ups and sit ups – each exercise has a limit of 60 seconds for both male and female. This is followed by an aerobic capacity test where a 2.4km distance must be covered. When successful, the next step takes place in an army medical centre with a full and complex examination, which covers complex spectrum of tests from hearing to complete blood checks. With all tests passed, potential recruit is assigned to his Platoon where on the first training evening, all personnel are met by the Senior Officer and their new NCO's. In the background, potential recruits are checked by An Garda Vetting Bureau, which is the final step before they can be sworn in.

The first and very important step in becoming a soldier, whether in permanent or reserve service is transitioning into army discipline. Every NCO puts much attention on preparing recruits for their training. As a first part, recruits are being accustomed to the basics of foot drill and Army Regulations in classrooms. The importance of uniform and soldier like presentation of the whole Platoon is highlighted, as well as personal grooming and hygiene standards. Usually training is carried out over one evening a week with an occasional weekend classes when required. After the recruits are sworn, they can receive their army numbers and uniforms. It is without a doubt one of the most significant moments, when a newly sworn recruit receives their kit for the first time. During the next few weeks, NCOs will ensure that every single platoon member knows and wears their uniform properly and with pride. Foot drill, AUG and FTT...

Uniform care and presentation are a vital part of soldier's routines and so is his/her rifle. The Steyr AUG is a unique weapon system. With time and training, recruit learns to appreciate its simplicity in design, great ergonomics and a superb accuracy. Then comes a massive curveball. Foot drill with weapons. Preparation for marching with arms is another important drill for the young Army Reserve as they will quite often cover many official Ceremonial events, where they will have to display perfect skill and coordination in front of members of the public. With an increasing pressure and expectations, recruits are getting ready for their first firing range, where they will have a chance to test their knowledge.

Then comes the most anticipated moment of each recruit's career. Full Time Training. For a vast majority, this will be the first time where they are introduced to a military routine 24/7 for two weeks straight. For many, this time determines whether the Army Reserve is for them. For some this is the time during which they will discover that the army career is something that they want to do as a full-time soldier. One thing is certain: FTT forges friendships for life. This is the time where young soldiers are formed under a watchful eye of their NCOs and Officers. During this precious time, they will get the opportunity to learn some basic skills such as maintaining cleanliness of their quarters, how to pack their equipment for

patrols. They will experience their first “hands-on” time with patrol formations, section and platoon battle drills and how to operate from and within a patrol harbour. Everyone will appreciate how vital it is to support each other within their section and platoon. FTT is truly a lifechanging experience – only one of many which the Defence Forces has to offer.

TOET'S AND IMMEDIATE ACTION...

After stripping the rifle time and time again, going through “immediate actions” when a stoppage occurs, identifying issues with the weapon and some basic handling skills soon come under the examination and the Test of the Elementary Training (TOET). The first time is yet another steppingstone for each young troop. After weeks of studying and training with the AUG, the time has come to face the TOET examining Officer. Every aspect of safety with the weapon is examined as part of the TOET. From preparation to firing, everything that is being done is being judged and scored – not only for an individual recruit but for the whole platoon. Once again uniformity is the key to success. “*Slow is smooth. Smooth is fast*”. Each part of the weapon is expected to be in the same position for each recruit when the Officer approaches each individual and checks their knowledge on a weapon groups and elements of the rifle. With this passed, weapons are being reassembled and a quick check of magazine loading is carried out, followed by the final test – range orders and IA's. It is imperative that every recruit knows how to recognize, diagnose and fix any weapon stoppage he might encounter. From empty magazine, obstruction, misfire up to gas system issues, each scenario is being checked to ensure that each person knows exactly what to do. There is a very special sense of accomplishment to the first TOET. It is also a very valuable insight before soldiers will be TOET'd from more advanced weapon systems.

AT THE TARGET IN FRONT IN YOUR OWN TIME...

During the first firing range, marksmanship principles come to the light as the most important part of the day. Every shot is taken under a direct supervision of an NCO or Officer, who can correct recruit's position and aim errors and ensure safety is paramount. Every shooter gets to see the effects of wind and bullet drop with the distance. Only now, basic knowledge about ballistics and trajectory are beginning to come together, when recruits can see the real difference between the aim off at 200 and 300m. Finally comes last part of the day on the range: all the weapons must be cleaned and accepted into the armoury.

Having the AUG completed opens the way for the first 24-hour exercise where all the discipline, tactical and physical training will be put to the test. After packing their main kit, recruits are being transported to their drop off point when they will take their main battle packs and weapon. At this stage exercise begins with each NCO briefing their section on the battle scenario. This usually falls to an “*enemy force*” made out of two and three start privates “*taking over*” an Army training facility. The Platoon's task is to approach the camp, set up a patrol harbour, deploy reconnaissance detail and then close up and destroy the enemy. Troops have no idea about few surprises along the way or how the enemy party plans on interacting with them. A 10km march, mostly up the hill with full gear on is the first task which will test their physical fitness levels. With arrival to the operating area, a safety and blank ammunition and pyrotechnics brief is carried out by the Officer in charge and whole platoon heads out to set up the patrol harbour. This is one of the most vital parts of the training as it introduces recruits to some very army specific activities such as setting up stag duty roster, recce patrols, patrol practices and eventually – fire contacts and reaction to an effective enemy fire. Whole platoon will be given multiple chances to be dispatched to attack known enemy positions as well as will be abruptly waken up by a sudden hostile engagement within their patrol harbour. At the very next morn-

ing, whole platoon is being introduced to an organized section and platoon attacks. Nearing close to 24 hours in the field, recruits are tasked with last and final task of short, fully loaded march back to the pickup area. At the “*end ex*” pride and sense of accomplishment are shared emotions within the whole platoon. Teamwork and resilience brought them to the end of the exercise, which now opens their way to more advanced training and most importantly – the passing out parade.

PASSING OUT PARADE

The most important moment for every recruit, without a shadow of doubt is the Passing Out Parade. This is the very moment they have worked for so hard. This is the time where they can invite their family, to the same square where they rehearsed marching drills for all those evenings. On this very day they are not recruits anymore. For many, this is the most important parade of their career. They get a chance to show a perfect, uniform and soldier like marching in front of their loved ones, with their NCOs and Officers who guided them during their training and most importantly in front of the Battalion Commanding Officer. This is also the very



moment where two important awards are given: The Best Recruit and the Best Shot. At this stage everyone has probably made their mind about what does he or she want to achieve in the Army Reserve. Some will move to PDF, some will decide that this is not for them all, however the connections made during the initial training will stay with them for life.

The final stage of the training, before becoming a fully qualified 3 star Private is mastering the GPMG, navigation, more advanced tactical training and a range of other military skills. During that time, 2-star soldiers will take part in various Army Reserve activities. From public events such as the St Patricks Day parades, to community support in the form of the Light Up a Light in Our Lady's Hospice in Dublin, PR events such as open and recruitment days and will assist during vital and crucial PDF and AR training courses. This is also a very good practice before they will enlist on the courses after receiving 3 stars. Physical fitness will become a part of their civilian lives as yearly tests might rule them out or grant them right to attend various courses. An Cosantoir 10k run brings a fantastic opportunity to attend it together as a block.

The main strength of today's Army Reservists are their integrity, training, dedication and commitment. With this, today's AR can fulfil all the tasks assigned to them and assist their colleagues from the Permanent Force at any stage. Being a Reservist is not only an adventure but truly a life changing experience, where an army discipline and skills can be introduced to a civilian life. Truly a life less ordinary. ■

SOLDIERING FOR POLAND

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS COURTESY OF CADET PATRYK KIELTYKA AND THE POLISH ARMED FORCES

Recently *An Cosantóir* had the opportunity to interview and hear how Patryk had arrived in Ireland in mid 2000s, and has in the last few years returned to Poland to serve in the Polish Armed Forces. Cadet Patryk Kieltyka is currently into his 4th year of studying to be a Platoon/Company Commander, specialising in the Armoured Corps and studying in the Military Land Forces Academy in Wrocław (348 km south west of Warsaw).



WHERE DID YOU GROW UP, SCHOOL, COLLEGE IN POLAND?

I grew up in Ireland, I've lived in New Ross Co. Wexford for well over 11 years after my family moved there in 2005 due to economic issues we were experiencing at the time. When it comes to education I've finished all of my schooling in Ireland, starting from when I arrived in Ireland and was placed into 2nd class of CBS Primary School New Ross all the way up to finishing engineering in Waterford Institute of Technology back in 2016.

DO YOU PLAY ANY SPORTS, WHAT LEVEL, ANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

I play a wide variety of sports but it's nothing on a competitive level it's all recreational level stuff to get outside or to spend some fun time with friends from my platoon.

DO YOU HAVE ANY HOBBIES OR OTHER PASTIMES?

My biggest hobby and pastime at the same time has to be tinkering around with my car, it's amazing actually how infuriating and relaxing something can be both at once but it's one of those kinds of past times that at the end of the Day has a nice pay off and you feel that you accomplished something.

DID YOU MOVE TO IRELAND TO LIVE? IF SO, WHAT WAS THAT LIKE?

Yes, we moved with the intention of living in Ireland and to be fair I quite enjoyed my time spent living there, at this point it's actually quite amazing how well the two cultures Polish and Irish integrated together and managed to bond over time.

One thing that particularly stands out in my memory was my first day in school when I stood on the yard's steps and saw a swarm of kids coming my way speaking in a language that was beyond my comprehension as all that I understood and could say at that point and time was, "yes, no, I don't speak English and sorry," - but I received a warm welcome and even though I didn't understand anyone and no one understood me through the international language of waving your arms and making gestures we managed to get through the day somehow and before the end of the school day I also began understanding the concept of 'Craic'.

WHY DID YOU GO BACK TO POLAND FOR MILITARY SERVICE?

One thing that I wish to mention from the start is that Poland no longer has mandatory military service or conscription as some folks call it. It was suspended in 2009 and ever since then the military is composed of people who signed up of their own will. When it comes to me I went back and signed up with the military as it was a long time ambition of mine, it's something that I felt I wanted to do and I went for it, as much as I enjoy Ireland and the Irish people the concept of signing up with a different country than mine clashed with me and I couldn't convince myself to do it as I'd always have it in the back of my head that I'm doing something that doesn't sit right with me on a moral level so I went back to Poland,

I've nothing but respect for them, they did what they felt was right and joining any countries military force is a major life commitment in itself.

HAS YOUR FAMILY STAYED IN IRELAND OR MOVED BACK TO POLAND?

My family still lives in Ireland, it was my idea and my idea alone to move back to Poland, I visit them as often as I can, be it Christmas, Easter or just for a holiday.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE ON YOUR MILITARY JOURNEY SO FAR?

Honestly, signing up is probably the best decision I took in my life, I love the career path I took and wouldn't consider changing it, obviously there are better and worse times like in any field of employment yet the friends you make during the course of your service, and being able to command a 49 ton beast driving through open fields, forests, swamps and everything in between more than makes up for any issues you may have encountered along the way.

WHAT COURSES HAVE YOU COMPLETED?

So far, I've completed a Combat Life Saver (CLS) course, PT-91 and Leopard 2 tank commander and gunner courses, Team and Platoon leader methodical courses as well as a tank crewman underwater training.

WHAT SKILLS DO YOU THINK WILL STAND TO YOU OVER TIME?

Leadership and interpersonal skills, for me those two are the most important ones I can think of as no matter where I get assigned and to what function they will help you out more than anything else as every soldier wants a commander who understands them and cares about their issues and once you have the trust and respect of your soldiers coming into your army unit each morning is a joyful experience.

WHAT DO YOU PLAN/HOPE FOR YOUR OWN FUTURE?

At this point in time it's hard to say as we all live in a rapidly developing world and with each year there's new issues and possibilities, but I can say I hope for a calm future and an enjoyable military service.

HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN/CONTRACTED TO SERVE IN THE POLISH ARMED FORCES?

After I finish the Academy in 2021 and I become an officer I plan to stay as long as I'm of any use to the Armed Forces, as Polish military officers do not have term limits like a few other countries do.

WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO AFTER YOUR MILITARY SERVICE?

At this point retiring from active service is such a distant concept that I haven't given it a proper thought and again, we live in such



got all of my paperwork sorted and was ready to enlist. Also, just to clarify, I don't judge or look down on any foreign folk who signed up with the Irish Defence Forces as it might sound, but in reality,

erratic times that even if I made any plans right now I'd wager that if even 5 per cent of them came to pass it'd be a success. ■

CONGO HERO REMEMBERED: CQMS Anthony Connolly DSM

BY CPL TRACY CONNOLLY, RET'D



Anthony's DSM Citation

CQMS Anthony Connolly DSM, was born in Cork in 1938, he enlisted in the Defence Forces in April 1954. He served with the 1 Fld Sig Coy, 3 Grn S&T and the 4 Inf Bn. He served overseas on four occasions. He retired from the Defence Forces in April 1998. Sadly, he passed away on 3rd December 2017. Here his daughter, recently retired Cpl Tracey Connolly tells the story of how he was awarded his DSM in 1960.

'For distinguished service with the United Nations Force in the Republic of Congo on the 14th of September 1960, at Manona. He chose to remain in an exposed position isolated from his unit in order to maintain wireless contact with Battalion Headquarters. Fighting was in progress between Katangese forces and Baluba tribesmen around his position, but Private Connolly remained at his post and provided communications for approximately 24 hours until the situation eased. His conduct was most meritorious and beyond that required by the call of duty.'

Citation for Distinguished Service Medal with Distinction (DSM) awarded to 801763 Pte Anthony Connolly, 33 Inf Bn

Conversations my father and myself shared were always interesting as we were both served in the Defence Forces. But there was that one story that he found a difficult subject to speak about - which was his time in the Congo in 1960. Nine of his comrades died on an ambush with the United Nations and one can only recall their trip as true cannibalism. I managed to get the story over time of what actually happened for him while on duty that day - he was most heroic on the battlefield. Here is as follows:

The UN Secretary General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld agreed to send in the military as a backup. The Irish Defence Forces Battalions 32nd and 33rd touched down in July 1960 at Kamina Air Base north of Katanga and were spread out across the region. The situation was very tense in the town. Their duty was to prevent clashes between the Baluba of North Katanga who favoured the Congo Premier Mr. Lumumba, and President of the State of Katanga Mr. Tshombe's Belgian officered gendarmerie. Even though the troops were there to keep the peace they would always have to be ready to fire, as they didn't know if they were going to be turned upon and at times this did happen. The Irish troops always went in first with their greetings *"Jambo...we greet you in peace"*.

So, on 14th September 1960 at Manono, my father said the situation was very uneasy in camp as the Baluba tribesmen

Jimmy Connolly (Anthony's father), his brother Raymond Connolly congratulating Anthony on his promotion to Corporal



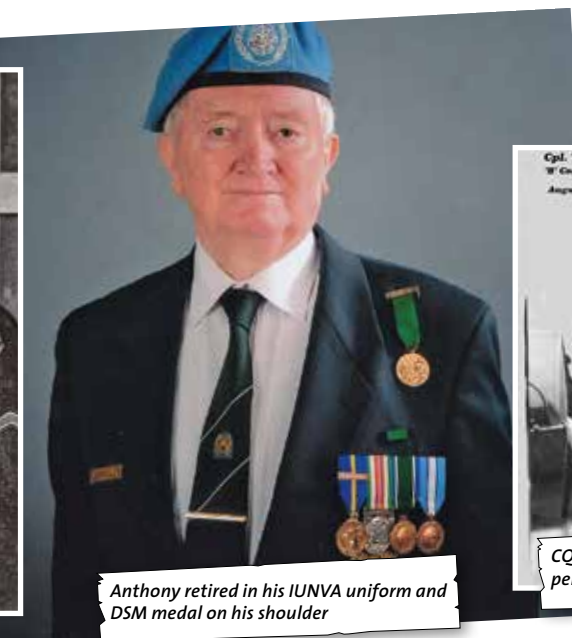
and Katangese forces were slaughtering each other. Men were arriving in town in larger numbers than usual, which wasn't normal, women were leaving town. Attempts were made to calm the situation by the UN but to no avail. The Irish UN presence was much resented by the Baluba leaders. Fighting was in progress in around his position between Katangese forces and Baluba tribesmen. The building where my father was with troops men women and children could be attacked at any minute they needed to call for help from the other Company's. To give some idea of the robust nature of these women a pregnant woman just went around the corner of a building accompanied by another woman. In fifteen minutes, they were back with a newly born baby. My father felt he had to do something fast and with team tactics his senior officer Lt Col Pierce Barry and himself came up with a plan of action as communications in camp had gone down and he needed to get the antenna to a higher place to get word back to Battalion Headquarters for assistance. So, my father left the building to try to get comms elsewhere and went out to face the bloody slaughter on the battlefield. He had his rifle, ammunition, cable and radio set. He climbed a tree to its highest point all the while bows and arrows flying at him, people were being slaughtered below him. He was a communications expert through Morse code and his training came from 1st Field Signals in Collins Bks, Cork. He set up his antenna on the top of the tree and got communication back to Battalion Headquarters for help in the first 24 hours, and they sent 'A' Coy to his position. He climbed back down from his tree and took his position in his trench all the while taking up position and using the Morse code. 'A' Company came in tight and were a huge help in not letting the tribesmen take over the camp. Lt Col Barry and his B Coy men joined in the

fight for peace on the battlefield as they took up positions. They remained a further three days on the ground with my father in the sweltering heat trying to calm the situation. If they had got to take over the camp it would have been a great massacre.

All the while my father sent Morse code under his great leader Lt Col Pierce Barry. They had set up a plan of execution for when they could send in the planes. His amazing plan of execution was sent through in as gaeilge as he was

the devastation of the Niemba ambush. This was another devastating blow for everyone who served on that mission. But again, as my father would say at the time, Lt Col Patrick Pierce Barry led this operation along with Comdt Beckett who was able to monitor and report on the casualties in the hospital - so the plan was hatched, Operation Shamrock for the injured Balubas who found their way to a hospital in nearby Manono after their attack on our Irish peacekeepers.

It came apparent once discharged they would have no remorse and be free to roam the bush and kill again. They were behind enemy lines so they needed to lead this operation with military precision in order to get them sentenced



Anthony retired in his IUNVA uniform and DSM medal on his shoulder



CQMS Anthony Connolly DSM performing morse code



CQMS Anthony Connolly DSM being honoured in a commemoration in the North Monastery Secondary School with the EO 1 Bde

fluent in the Irish language. He had to get the planes in to rescue the men, women and children. The planes couldn't use their headlights so they had to land in the dark. His Morse code was sent over the airwaves and his execution was again in Irish, which was genius. The Balubas and Katangese were very good themselves at Morse code so they could intercept his messages so this was why the plan was to include his native tongue. He would send "one flew over the cuckoo's nest" in Irish ("eiril duine amháin thar nead na cuach") each time he needed a plane to come in and land and get them out. The troops from 'B' Company would turn on the headlights of the patrol cars on the runway for when the planes landed so that each plane didn't crash. This all had to be done with strategic military planning. His timings on this had to be perfect.

On that morning at 10:00 hours he sent the message to Battalion Headquarters reporting on the situation and requesting any available aircraft from Albertville to fly out the Belgians and the police and families including 60-70 Belgians in protective custody at Geomines Club. He then contacted Kamina and Elizabethville for aircraft. A total of five aircraft including three Sabena DC3 commercial type landed during that day and took away all those who desired to leave. There were over 200 in all. The last plane landed and took off in darkness with the aid of headlights from a number of cars channelled down the airstrip. One plane evacuated the police. This would let you see the uncertainty in the area and the pace of which things were moving. One plane a 28-seater DC3, took out 83 women and children. All those evacuated on that day were so glad to be on their way from Manono.

Later on, in their trip on the 8th November 1960 there was

accordingly. Lt Col Barry's party had to come up with a great plan so these injured Balubas would not be aroused by suspicion if they entered to see their own. They sent in Capt Condon as a casualty with bandages around his head in fake blood. I can recall my father chuckle when told this bit of the story because he knew it was a master plan and everyone wanted a piece of it.

So large tracts of Comdt Beckett's correspondence were done by my father in Irish back to headquarters about what the way the situation was on a daily basis in the hospital. On the day these Balubas were being supposedly discharged Comdt Beckett sent a message through my father via Morse code in Irish stating "Ta na hein ulliamh an nead a fhagaint", which reads "the birds are ready to leave the nest". For this reason, none of the Balubas could intercept what was happening.

On the morning of 2nd December Congo's radio *Brazzaville* broadcasts a recording of the funeral of the Niemba funeral from Dublin and as they listened. This it spurred everyone on to make sure these murderers not were leaving that hospital and getting away with it. As the Irish convoy approached the hospital the gates were unarmed to their surprise so the operation was carried out successfully and they got to leave with seven of the Balubas. These men were escorted back and handed over to the authorities for sentencing.

I am at the very least proud of my father who they now call a hero. He along with so many others were hero's, those who set foot on the Congo soil.

I felt compelled to write after he was placed on the walls of the Museum in Collins Barracks called the 'Hall of Hero's' because he isn't just my hero but many peoples hero... ■



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SPORTS SUPPLEMENTS & ANTI-DOPING

Defence Forces Supplementation Awareness Campaign

A DF Supplementation Awareness Campaign has recently been launched by DF Fitness & Sports Policy (DFF&SP) Section. Posters have been distributed to all Bde/Fmn Physical Education Officers and will soon be on display in public locations in your Barracks/Post. For any queries please contact your Physical Education Officer.

SPORTS SUPPLEMENTS

Sports supplements are commonly used by athletes in the hope of maximizing recovery and boosting performance. Supplement companies are unregulated, and this lack of oversight means that you never know what you are taking. Understandably this can lead to confusion surrounding sports supplementation. With this in mind the information below is aimed at informing the reader on the subject matter.

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

The Irish Sports Council recommends against the use of sports supplements for the following reasons:

- Correct dietary & nutritional regimes will provide all the potential benefits of sports supplementation.
- There are no guarantees that any dietary supplements are safe.
- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) principle of strict liability means athletes are responsible for any substances taken.

Before taking dietary supplements, you should assess the Need, Risk and Consequences.

To aid your decision making, visit www.informedsport.com for info on products that have been batched tested.

WHAT IS DOPING?

'Doping' refers to an athlete's use of prohibited drugs or methods to improve training and sporting results.



WHAT ABOUT MEDICATION?

Unless you are prescribed medication by a doctor, WADA prohibit the use of such medication for performance enhancement by healthy people.

DRUG TESTING WITHIN THE DEFENCE FORCES

Drug testing within the Defence Forces is governed by Defence Forces Administrative Instruction A7 Chapter 3 (CRDT & Targeted drugs testing). It is recommended you make yourself aware of the sanctions for positive tests.

For more information and resources go to Fitness and Sports Documents/Resource Library on Defence Forces Fitness and Sports Policy section's IKON site. Or there are a number of links below which can be accessed online.

www.sportireland.ie
www.instituteofsport.ie
www.informedsport.com

'WE BAND OF BROTHERS'

THE HEROIC RYANS OF CASHEL, COUNTY TIPPERARY

BY PAT POLAND

Readers of a certain vintage will recall the classic black and white movie, *The Fighting Sullivans*, originally released in 1944. It tells of the five Irish-American Catholic Sullivan brothers – George, Frank, Joe, Matt and Albert – from Waterloo, Iowa, US, who were all lost after their warship, the USS Juneau, was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine during the Battle of Guadalcanal in the Pacific in November 1942.

Their father, Tom Sullivan, was played by the great character actor, Thomas Mitchell, reprising his role as a *pater familias* in the 1939 blockbuster, *Gone With The Wind*. Selena Royle was cast in the part of their mother, Mrs Alleta Sullivan.

Of more recent vintage is the acclaimed 1998 movie, *Saving Private Ryan*, part of which was filmed at Ballinesker Beach, Curracloe, Co. Wexford. It recounts the (semi-fictional) tale of a squad of US Army Rangers as they search for an American paratrooper, 'Private James Francis Ryan', lost behind enemy lines in Normandy in 1944. He is the last surviving brother of four servicemen. The picture is loosely based on the true story of the Niland brothers who all served in the US Army during WWII.

As a direct result of these events, particularly the Sullivan family calamity, the US War Department adopted the 'Sole Survivor Policy'. These regulations were designed to protect members of a family from the draft or from combat duty if they had already lost members in military service.

Nearer to home, the poignant story of the four Shea brothers from Co. Kilkenny – John, Richard, Patrick, and Joseph – all of whom perished in the First World War, has, with the centenary of the end of the war book-ended, been belatedly, but deservedly, remembered on RTE's *Nationwide*. And, even more recently, we learned of the sad fate of the three Sheehan brothers – Harry (24), Frank (26)

and Edward (29) – from Fermoy, Co. Cork, who, while members of the Royal



Canadian Air Force, gave their lives when shot down over Germany during WWII.

It goes without saying that the loss of their sons was an unspeakable personal tragedy for the Sullivan, Niland, Shea, and Sheehan families. This short article considers the no-less heart-rending narrative of the three Ryan brothers (all commissioned officers in the Irish Defence Forces) of Cashel, Co. Tipperary, who, although not falling in combat, nonetheless made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country.

The officers who died, 2nd Lt Michael J. Ryan (19) (Air Corps), Lt Thomas A. Ryan (22) (Army), and Capt. William J. Ryan (36) (Air Corps) were sons of Mr and Mrs W. P. Ryan, owners of Ryan's Central Hotel, Cashel.

Sadly, in two incidents, (those involving Michael Ryan and Thomas Ryan), a comrade also perished.

2nd Lt Michael J. Ryan and Pte Patrick Power died following air accident at Laytown, Co. Meath, Saturday 27 July 1940.

The *Saturday Herald* for 27 July 1940 reported that:

Three Army 'planes were on tactical exercises in North Co. Dublin this morning and one of them, a Hawker Hind, crashed at 11.40 a.m. at Laytown, Co. Meath. The pilot, Lieut Michael Ryan (19) a native of Cashel, Co. Tipperary, and the gunner, Pte Patrick Power (20) Traamore, Co. Waterford, were killed.

The aircraft, a Hawker Hind I (No.70) approached the popular seaside resort of Laytown from the direction of the Irish Air Corps station at Gormanston and flew over the strand. The pilot seemed to be in difficulties (some observers reported that the engine was 'missing') and looking for a place to land, but he could not find one due to the number of people on the beach. He was seen to wave his hand, apparently as a signal to the crowd to clear a space but turned and flew inland, but then changed course





Kilbride, about two miles from Tramore, Co. Waterford, had twelve months' service.

Lt Thomas A. Ryan and Sgt J. McElligott drowned at Fermoy, Co. Cork, during Army manoeuvres, Sunday, 6 September 1942.

While hundreds of spectators were witnessing the engagement of the 'Blue' and 'Red' Armies in the biggest manoeuvres yet held in the country, in the vicinity of Fermoy Bridge at midday on Sunday last, a grim tragedy was being enacted in the River Blackwater beneath, two soldiers, Lieut Thos. A. Ryan, Cashel, Co. Tipperary, and Sgt J. McElligott, Rathea, Listowel, Co. Kerry, losing their lives.

(The Kerryman, 12 September 1942).

The army authorities decided that the time was ripe, in September 1942, to put the forces to the test by holding the biggest wargames, involving some 20,000 personnel that the country had ever seen. Starting on 6 September, the second exercise, the attack on the line of the Blackwater from the northern bank, was sched-

again. The people now began to realize that something was wrong and scattered in all directions. The pilot attempted to land, but the aircraft nose-dived, briefly rose again and appeared to break in two before landing with a terrific crash. The pilot was found dead under the machine and the gunner/observer died soon afterwards.

Lt M. J. Ryan and his brother Lt T. A. Ryan (see below), were both graduates of the 12th Cadet Class (1938 – 1939). Lt Michael Ryan graduated as a pilot with the Air Corps, receiving his 'wings' as a member of the Short Service Class of 1939.

The press reports noted that he had four siblings – Philip, William, Richard, and Thomas – all serving with the Defence Forces. Pte Patrick Power, from

uled to be held. The assumption was that Fermoy Bridge (which was heavily mined during the Emergency to deny it to a potential enemy) had been destroyed. The troops would have to cross the deep, swiftly flowing river with its treacherous currents, by line.

Shortly after noon on Sunday, 6 September, watched by hundreds of townspeople, a detachment of soldiers entered the water on the south bank near Fermoy Rowing Club boathouse, holding onto a line that had been stretched across the river. Sgt McElligott (30), a married man, was seen to get into difficulties, and a local man, James Coleman immediately dived in and went to his aid. The rescuer however, got into difficulties himself and, sadly, had to release his hold on the soldier, who disappeared from view. Lt Ryan (22) had nearly reached the northern bank when he also went under. In the initial confusion over the first drowning it was not realized that Lt Ryan was also in trouble.

Sadly, in all, the river claimed four lives during the 'Crossing of the Blackwater' manoeuvres. On the previous Tuesday evening, Cpl Charles O'Donoghue and Pte Peter McGovern were drowned while bathing, some twenty miles apart.

Capt William J. Ryan (36), Irish Air Corps, killed when his Supermarine Seafire aircraft crashed in the Wicklow mountains, Monday, 28 May 1951.

The Irish Press for Tuesday, 29 May 1951 carried the unhappy news that:

An Army Air Corps fighter-plane is missing. Piloted on a patrol flight by Capt W. J. (Billy) Ryan from Gormanston over the Wicklow coast area at noon yesterday, and due to return to camp at 3 p.m., it has been posted as overdue. Gormanston reported to GHQ and 'planes from Gormanston and Baldonnel flew out in relays all yesterday evening searching the sea off Dublin and Wicklow, and flying low over the Wicklow mountains. The search is being resumed today.

Vickers Supermarine Seafire LFIII (No. 154) was being piloted by Capt Ryan during a 'finger four' formation out of Gormanston when, owing to extremely poor visibility encountered just north of Poulaphouca Lake, the pilots lost sight of one another. In accordance with procedure he ordered the flight to break formation. The other three aircraft returned individually to Gormanston where they learned of the non-return of the flight commander.

During the descent, Capt Ryan broke cloud too late to avoid crashing into the mountains above Kilbride, Co. Wicklow, near the military firing ranges. More than 1,200 troops, under the command of Major General Hugo MacNeill, and a USAF American Grumman air-sea rescue aircraft, which flew from Wiesbaden in Germany, joined in the search for the missing aircraft.

The Minister for Defence Gen Seán MacEoin and the CoS, Major General Liam Archer visited the search area.

The burned-out wreckage, and the pilot's body, were discovered about 6 p.m. on Tuesday 29 May by a ground search party.

Capt Ryan, a graduate of the 8th Cadet Class (1934 – 1936), resided in Skerries, Co. Dublin and left a widow and six children. He was described as 'an experienced military pilot, a most popular and competent officer, and a great loss to the squadron'.

All three Ryan brothers were laid to rest, with full military honours, in the Rock Cemetery, Cashel, Co. Tipperary. *Dormit in Pace.* ■

ATTACKS AGAINST THE DMP, 1919

BY JAMES SCANNELL

When Michael Collins returned to Ireland in 1917 with the other 1916 internees, he realised that the police were the eyes and ears of Dublin Castle and posed the greatest threat at local level to the activities of the Volunteers and Sinn Féin.

The Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) undertook national policing apart from Dublin City, Pembroke, Rathmines, Blackrock, Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire), and Dalkey, where policing was carried out by the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP).

In January 1919 Collins met with Ned Broy, one of his three covert intelligence gatherers/informants in G (Detective) Division of the DMP, in 5 Cabra Road, Dublin. At this meeting it was decided that no action would be taken against uniformed DMP members who did not take part in anti-Sinn Féin activities, as the majority of the force were anti-British in outlook. It was also agreed that no member of G Division would be at-

48-year-old Detective Sergeant Patrick Smyth. Despite a number of warnings, Smyth refused to drop charges against Piaras Beasláí, a prominent Sinn Féin member that he had arrested for making a seditious speech and for several incriminating documents found on his person. Warned by both Collins and Harry Boland not to produce these documents in court, Smyth did just that, resulting in Beasláí receiving a two-year prison sentence instead of the usual two months.

Smyth was shot and wounded as he was returning to his home in Drumcondra on the evening of Wednesday 30 July 1919 by a squad consisting of Jim Slattery, Tom



Det.-Sgt Barton Shooting report



Det.-Sgt Barton report



tacked provided they took no action against the Volunteers. Those G-men who persisted in acting against the Volunteers and Sinn Féin would first receive a warning, prior to any action being taken against them.

On 5 April 1919 Broy covertly let Collins into the Central Police Station (present day Pearse Street Garda Station) where he carried out an overnight examination of G Division files. This provided Collins with a great amount of information about who posed the greatest threat to him. Two days later, several G Division detectives received warning letters about their intelligence-gathering activities, others received personal visits from Volunteers and were warned about their excessive zeal; not all heeded the warning.

The first DMP member selected for attack by Collins was

Keogh, Joe Ennis, and Mick Kennedy (who knew Smyth by sight). Brought by ambulance to the Mater Hospital, on admission he was found to have sustained three gunshot wounds. One bullet, which entered his back, passed through one of his lungs and lodged in his chest above the heart, had caused the most serious wound. Smyth died on Monday 8 September 1919 as the result of complications arising from an abscess of the lung caused by his wounds.

Post-operation analysis carried out by Collins's men indicated that the .38 rounds used lacked stopping power and enabled the victim to fight back, so in future operations it was decided to use

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

the larger and more powerful .45/.455 round due to its stopping power and ability to knock a victim to the ground. A new tactic was also developed whereby squads would operate as two-man units: one to shoot the victim in the body to knock him to the ground, after which the other would shoot him in the head.

Detective Daniel Hoey from Co Offaly joined the DMP in 1910. In 1919, the 32-year-old policeman posed a particular threat to the Volunteers as he had been the driving force behind DMP raids on Sinn Féin and Volunteer premises and knew too much about Collins. It was also believed that in Richmond Barracks following the Rising, Hoey had identified Seán MacDiarmada as one of the leaders.

On Friday 12 September 1919, Hoey led a raid on Sinn Féin HQ in Harcourt Street. Although Collins escaped, Ernest Blythe and Pádraig O'Keeffe were arrested, and the decision was taken to eliminate Hoey.

That night, as he passed the back entrance to the Central Police Station, Hoey was shot dead by Mick McDonnell, Joe Ennis, and Jim Slattery, who made good their escape. A number of women brought Hoey to the steps of the detective office to await the arrival of an ambulance to bring him to Mercer's Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Constable Thomas Wharton had been part of a raiding party on 76 Harcourt Street on Saturday 8 November 1919, from which Collins escaped into the nearby Standard Hotel, from which he then coolly exited into the

actions of his other colleague's line of fire so they could not fire at the fleeing assassins.

(Remarkably, the bullet that struck Wharton passed through him and struck a bystander, Miss Gertrude O'Hanlon, who sustained a slight head wound. In a dazed condition Miss O'Hanlon continued walking towards St Stephen's Green from where a man brought her to Mercer's Hospital where her head wound was dressed and stitched, after which she was discharged.) Wharton was brought to St Stephen's Green to the residence of Surgeon Hamilton, who stopped the bleeding from Wharton's wounds and had him conveyed to the nearby St Vincent's Hospital, where he was attended to by Surgeon Meade. Wharton subsequently recovered from his injuries and was pensioned off in June 1920.

(In an unfortunate postscript to this incident, an innocent newspaper seller, James Hurley, who had no connection with the operation, was arrested several days later by Detective Sergeant John Barton. Hurley was subsequently convicted by a military court on the basis of faulty eyewitness identification and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. Released after the Truce, Hurley was killed in 1922 during the Civil War while helping a wounded soldier into Jervis Street Hospital.)

Detective Sergeant John Barton was considered one of the shrewdest and best detectives in the country. He had an extensive network of informants, through which he had uncovered an IRA arms dump in Dublin. It was also believed that he had given evidence at the court martial of Joseph Plunkett in 1916, as he had been keeping him under observation for some time prior to the Rising.

Wharton also boasted that he was not afraid of Michael Collins or republicans. Such an attitude ran contrary to Collins's attempts to undermine police morale, and for this reason, along with his previous conduct, he was marked down for elimination.



Det. Sgt Smyth

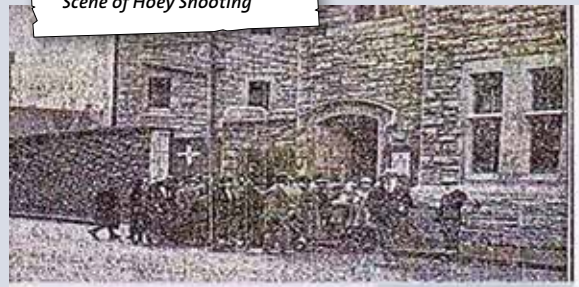


Det. Sgt Smyth facing camera

street and boarded a tram which passed No 76 while the raid was still in progress.

On the night of 10 November Wharton, in company with two other detectives, was approached by Paddy O'Daly and Joe Leonard at the corner of Cuffe Street and Harcourt Street. O'Daly drew his gun, a Luger Po8, 9mm, semi-automatic pistol, and fired one shot into Wharton's back, knocking him to the ground. O'Daly's pistol then jammed and he was unable to get off a second shot. As Collins's men then ran westwards along Cuffe Street to escape, one of Wharton's accompanying colleagues, who O'Daly and Leonard had been ordered not to harm, covertly impeded the

Scene of Hoey Shooting



This photo shows the spot (marked by a cross) where Detective Hoey was shot as he was about entering the offices of the Detective Division.

On the evening of 28 November, three groups, each operating unknown to the other, followed Barton undetected through the streets of Dublin as he made his way back to the Central Police Station. He was shot four times by one of these groups in front of the Crampton Memorial (removed in 1959). The three groups escaped from the area unhindered while Barton was rushed by ambulance to Mercer's Hospital where he died from his wounds shortly after admission. ■

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION *on our Mental Health*

BY COMDT MURT BRENNAN OC DFPES BSC PHYSICAL ED & MA SPORTS MANAGEMENT

The human being/soldier has never been more exposed to more life stresses than s/he is today. Indeed rates of depression and anxiety are at their highest recorded levels with 38% of Irish students reporting extreme anxiety and 30% reporting symptoms of depression (Price et al., 2019). From personal life to professional performance, these stresses are constant and damaging. They are often exhibited through physical symptoms such as sleeping problems, loss of temper or irrational behaviour, and can lead to debilitating illnesses such as heart disease, and to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression (Mental Health Ireland, 2017). While it could be argued that the link between physical activity and exercise is hindered due to western medicines insistence on treating mind and body separately, there is growing evidence to suggest that physical activity can have a direct effect on one's mental health (Gingell, 2018).

There is anecdotal evidence, particularly within the DF, from personnel who can testify to the positive effect that a daily exercise routine can have on their mental state. Be it to break the monotony of an overseas deployment, to escape the constant interaction with people, or to clear your head from hours of email/mobile phone interaction, we are, in the immediate aftermath of a physical activity sharper, happier and healthier. Dr Michael Otto professor of Psychology Boston University eludes to this in when he observed that usually within five minutes after moderate exercise, you can get a mood enhancement effect (2006).

EXERCISE IN REHABILITATION

Dr Jennifer Carter discourses that clinical and counselling psychologists could do a better job of incorporating exercise into treatment. She further admits that she recommends exercise for her psychotherapy clients, particularly for those who are anxious or depressed (Weir, 2011). This proposal was further enhanced by Otto et al., when in 2006 they reviewed 11 studies investigating the effects of exercise on mental health. They determined that exercise could be a powerful intervention for clinical depression (Otto et al., 2006). Based on these findings, they concluded, clinicians should consider adding exercise to the treatment plans for their depressed patients (Weir, 2011).

Herring et al. (2013) studied the effects of exercise training on anxiety levels among healthy adults, adults with chronic illness, and individuals diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. They found that on average, after chronic exercise both state and trait anxiety were reduced significantly. With patients with chronic illnesses Herring argues that it is plausible that exercise training could be especially beneficial for individuals at increased risk for experiencing anxiety symptoms because they must cope with health-related threats of a chronic illness. (Herring et al., 2013).

Herring et al. also makes the connection between the increases in physical activity with increased physical self-esteem. He argues that impaired self-esteem has been associated with elevated symptoms of anxiety. It is possible that exercise training could improve anxiety through increases in physical self-esteem or self-concept. (Herring et al., 2013).



There is also strong evidence to suggest that integrating physical exercise with a rehabilitation programme can play a major role in assisting in the recovery from addictions and illnesses. Three studies by Motta and colleagues have reported reduced PTSD symptoms severity, as well as anxiety and depression following modest exercise training intervention. (Herring et al., 2013).

Experimental studies have also shown that exercise in conjunction with inpatient alcohol rehabilitation treatment is associated with significantly lower alcohol cravings as well as lower levels of anxiety and depression. It was also discovered in this study that the follow up abstinence rates were significantly higher in alcoholics who participated in a fitness program in conjunction with their treatment program as opposed to recovering alcoholics attending recovery programs which didn't include physical activity. (Otto et al., 2006).

SCIENTIFIC SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The question remains where is the science to back this theory? The answer lies in the hippocampus (the area of the brain involved in memory, emotional and learning) which is of critical importance for mental health. Gingell (2018) adds that evidence is accumulating that many mental health conditions are associated with reduced neurogenesis in the hippocampus. She goes on to state that recent studies have produced convincing evidence that exercise leads to the creation of new hippocampal neurons (2018).

PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT

Georgia Stathopoulou opines that the effect of exercise on mental health falls into two broad categories: physiological and psychological factors. From a physiological perspective she argues that the mood and anxiety altering effects of physical activity may be accounted for by a modification of serotonin which contributes to feelings of well-being and happiness. She goes on to highlight how studies on animals have showed how physical activity leads to increased turnover of serotonin in the body. (Otto et al., 2006).

From a psychological perspective academics have argued that physical activity causes a release of endogenous opioids (endorphins that are produced in the brain) (Morgan, 1985). In

this study it has been hypothesized that the inhibitory effects of beta-endorphins on the central nervous system are in part responsible for antidepressant and anxiolytic effects of exercise (Thoren et al., 1990).

Additionally, convincing arguments have been made for the benefits of physical education in improving our sleep cycles. Georgia Stathopoulou argues that physical activity has a positive effect on physiological disturbances associated with poor sleep cycles, which are commonly observed in depression and anxiety.

Collectively these findings suggest that the observed improvements in quality of sleep following exercise may, in part, account for the positive mental health effect of exercise. A study conducted by Hassmen et al. 2000 in Finland suggested that individuals who exercised at least twice to three times a week experienced significantly less depression, anger, stress and cynical distrust than those who exercised less frequently or not at all (Otto et al., 2006).

CONCLUSION

In the final analysis the message is clear, there is empirical and scientific data to demonstrate that physical activity has a positive impact on your mental health. It should be noted however that while being physically active promotes positive mental health and assists in the treatment of some mental health illnesses, it is not a stand alone treatment to offset against any mental health illnesses but used rather in conjunction with other medical treatments. As an organisation we need to take heed of this information and ensure that both time and facilities are made available to all members of the DF to participate in physical activity. Individual units need to publicise all scheduled activities to ensure maximum attendance. Sports events need to be prioritised and a greater effort made to promote, encourage and allow unhindered access to these sports events. While DF annual fitness tests are required to ensure that each soldier is operationally ready, they should also represent an opportunity for units to assess the physical condition of their own troops and address if necessary these physical shortcomings. Our mental health is fundamentally vital to our personal and professional performance and as such needs to be acknowledged, valued, and protected at all times. ■

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COLLECTED MEMORIES & WEAPONS OF THE IRISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Double Barrelled Book Launch & Lectures from US based authors 'Collected Memories' by Conor Dullaghan and 'Weapons of the Irish War of Independence' by Kieran McMullen. The Irish book launch takes place on Saturday 21st March 2020 (7-9pm) in the Michael Collins Club, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Military Road, Rathmines, Dublin 6. Conor will discuss how some of the biggest names from 1916 to 1921 factor into his private medal collection

and are featured in his new book. Kieran will discuss the weapons used by both sides, their capabilities, shortfalls and impact on tactics during Ireland's War of Independence. Tickets are FREE on Eventbrite but are required for entry. RSVP Required. Security requires a complete list of names of those wishing to attend. Event is in no way sponsored by Óglaigh na h-Éireann/Defence Forces of Ireland <https://lnkd.in/gae-iZ2>

OTHER DATES AND LOCATIONS INCLUDE:

March 19th - Blackpool Community Center, Cork 7:30pm-9:30pm
March 20th - Co. Cork (Organisers are waiting to announce)
March 24th - Griffith College (MSOI) 8pm

Saturday 7th March - The Celts. An Ancient European Civilisation at the root of Irish culture.

Discover their ways and society; how they ruled, the importance of the warrior, the druid and the feminine, their vision of the cosmos and the basis of their mythology. Location - New Acropolis Ireland, 43 Rathmines Road Lower, Dublin 8.

Monday 9th March - Women and Bloody Sunday 1920: Participants, Witnesses, and Victims.

What role did women play in the events of Bloody Sunday 1920? Historian Liz Gillis will discuss the role and impact of women on that day. Location - Ballyroan Library, 54 Orchardstown Avenue, D14 XY75 Rathfarnham.

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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Robert Taylor, Dublin 15. Closing date is 19th March 2020.

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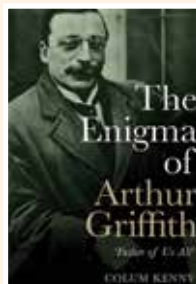
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THE ENIGMA OF ARTHUR GRIFFITH 'FATHER OF US ALL'

Author: Colum Kenny
Publisher: Merrion Press
ISBN: 978-1-5107-1655-1
Ebook ISBN: 9781785373145
Pages: 300
Price: €19.95

This eighteen chapter exploration and in depth study, research of Arthur Griffith by Colm Kenny is both welcome and significant for our country and its people. Who have just find themselves after the most unusual result, from an General Election. Within each chapter one discovers the many unknown known facets of this shy, hard working nationalist. Having started his working life in the printing trade.



As the author states in his book, he takes a fresh look at Griffith's life from its humble beginnings, to its sudden end. Relating his many relations with; Maud Gonne, Eamonn de Vaera, W.B.Yeats and James Joyce among others.

His presidency of Dail Eireann his leadership of the treaty negotiations in London and his creation of Sinn Fein. A future President if Ireland, Sean T.O'Kelly, survived the civil war but found himself on the opposite side to Griffith. When Griffith dropped-dead, O'Kelly was in Kilmainham Jail as a prisoner of the Pro-Treaty government.

He generously predicted of Griffith that "Future generations of Irish men and women shall draw inspiration, from a man, whose political philosophy so eloquently taught, and whose long years of sacrifice and toil brought the present generation of Irishmen from their knees to their feet, and rekindled in their hearts the almost extinct flame of Liberty. The image of Griffith as a staid even reactionary figure, in this book we see him at the heart of culture and political renaissance which saw a departure from British control from most of the Island of Ireland.

This book has to be one of the most important, on this period. A must for all serious history readers. **SS**

DAYS OF THE BLACKTHORN: FACTION FIGHTERS OF KERRY

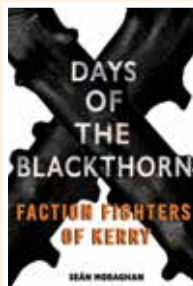
Author: Seán Moraghn
Publisher: Mercier Press
ISBN: 9781781177501
Pages: 320
Price: €15.29

"Fighting between various clans, in a more explicitly war-like manner, had been an ancient Irish practice".

With the use of oral and eye witness accounts

This book is an account on the meetings and clashes between Irish gangs in the 19th and 20th century in Co. Kerry. A proper account on this over two hundred years was needed as it has received very little attention. Fairs and markets seemed to be a common setting for these faction's fights, with fairs such as Molahiffe and Castleisland being typical venues. There are accounts to show that these quarrels were not only bound to men, one account tells of how the *"prowess of a woman vanquished"* an adversary using her apron and a stone as an catapult, a great account on the kind of ferocity that would have been on display and quite common.

With fantastic illustrations and stories to match, this book is a fantastic account of a relatively unknown time in our past, Kerry's in particular. Seán Moraghan is a historian and folklore researcher with a particular interest in Irish social and political history from 1798 to the Great Famine. He has lived in Co. Kerry for over thirty years. **SG**



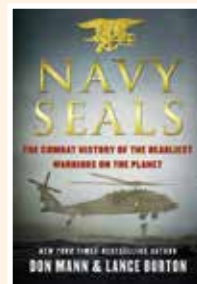
NAVY SEALS: THE COMBAT HISTORY OF THE DEADLIEST WARRIORS ON THE PLANET

Author: Don Mann & Lance Burton
Publisher: SkyHorse Publishing
ISBN: 978-1-5107-1655-1
Ebook ISBN: 978-1-5107-1656-8
Pages: 344
Price: €12.99 – Apple Books

Written by an ex Navy Seal in Don Man and Co Authored by an ex FBI Counter-Terrorism Agent, it gives you a direct look at the elite special forces unit that the Navy Seals is from the eyes of someone who lived that life. The book feels like it has three areas of focus, the evolution of the unit, the stories of the missions they carried out and the personal sacrifices that were made by the Navy Seals members.

Looking back on the units history and its evolution from its start to how it is now, the authors give you a very good insight into how the unit evolved and the skills they trained in over the years. Moving into the bulk of the book takes you into the action, and gives detailed accounts of the missions the unit carried out all over the globe. The last section of the book looks at how six of its members were awarded the Medal of Honour. It gives a more detailed look at each operator, which makes it an even more inspiring read

The book is a very good read and if you have any interest in other military beyond our own Defence Forces its well worth the read. **KB**



NAME

STEVEN CANAVAN

RANK

TPR

UNIT

DFTC HQ SUPPORT

PHOTOS BY
SGT KARL BYRNE

Steven started in the Defence Forces in August of 2007, training in the 1st Air Defence Regiment (1 ADR), Plunkett Bks, DFTC. He continued on to do his 3rd cse in the 1 ADR, and to then serve with the ADR for a number of years. He is currently working in Ceannt NCO's in the DFTC. Steven is 1 of 7 children, 6 of which were adopted by his parents into the family. Steven himself was born in Romania and was adopted, along with another child, by his parents when he was 3 years old. He grew up in Garryhill, Bagnesltown, Co. Carlow. He has one young daughter who is 4 years old.

While serving in 1 ADR, Steven did a number of courses, namely an EL 70 gunner's course in 2008, a HMG Course in the ADR role in the same year and an RBS 70 aimers course in 2009. He also served overseas in 2008/09 with the 98 INF BN EUFOR TCHAD. During the rest of his time in the 1 ADR Steven would have spent a lot of his early career, in between courses and overseas, doing cash/prisoner escorts, barrack duties and being used as part of the exercise troops for career courses in the NCO TW.

Steven moved on from the 1 ADR and moved into the Environmental section on detachment from the 1 ADR in 2011. His job in the Environmental section was essentially maintaining the Camp, clearly fallen trees from storms, clearing leaf litter, emptying bins, general maintenance of bushes and shrubs, fixing fences. He also did a level 1 chainsaw course with Coillte, essential for the kind of work he needed to carry out on a daily basis, "it was an extremely busy job, especially during the winter months when storms were more prominent".

After the reorg in 2012 and disbandment of 1 ADR, Steven was initially posted to what was the 3BN B Coy, now 1 Mechanised Infantry Company (1 MIC), for a brief period of around 3 weeks before being permanently posted to 1 Armoured Cavalry Squadron (1 ACS). In the 1 ACS Steven completed a number of courses including a basic Recce course, a number of driving courses including Nissan Pajero, transit minibus, truck, Mowag and LTAV courses and also a dispatch riders course. He also completed a gunner course on the Mowag, the HMG and 40mm grenade launcher as part of it. "Of all the course I did in the 1 ACS the basic recce was the hardest, but thoroughly satisfying to pass, it was a very proud thing for me to complete".

In 2017 Steven went to Syria with the 56 INF GP UNDOF, he really enjoyed that trip, his appointment as a mowag driver gave him the opportunity to be the car commander of the mowag ambulance on occasion. Almost a year after that trip Steven was afforded the opportunity in November 2018 to apply for the current position he is in at the moment within

DFTC HQ Support as Ceannt NCO's mess staff. Stevens job in the mess is extremely varied, his main job Monday to Friday in general maintenance of the Mess. This includes cleaning and preparing the mess for the coffee breaks for the mess members ensuring its at a high standard of cleanliness, including toilets and the other facilities such as the snooker room and T.V. room. As well as that he need to ensure the mess grounds are taken care of, this includes maintaining the garden, bushes and grass areas, speaking of this Steven said "because of the amount of sheep that make their way into the camp, I'll often have to fix the fences as they manage to push their way into them, damaging them". Another part of Stevens job would be assisting the main barman when they have functions, pulling pints and serving drinks, taking in cash, clearing tables etc., either during the week but mainly at the weekends, this might mean on the Monday after a weekend of functions that the mess would need extra attention. On top of all these responsibilities sometimes Stevens job would consist of signing in orders that are being delivered to the Mess during the week, checking them off and reporting to his superiors of the situation with the orders.

Speaking of the Army Steven said that it had really matured him and made him grow up, it gave him independence from his family. Of his current job he said "I really like it, it's a relaxed environment, but can also be very demanding with the amount of work that needs to be done". He says his current job he feels has opened up opportunities that could lead him into a job after his Defence Forces career ends, as he says "I now have experience of bar work, serving drinks, taking in cash, taking in big orders from deliveries, everything you'd need to move on from the Defence Forces". ■





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