



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

# AN COSANTÓIR

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MARCH 2013

Operation  
Neptune  
Spear

IRISH/FINNISH  
BATTALION UNIFIL

MILITARY  
DETENTION  
BARRACKS

RDF ON  
CAMP

FIBUA  
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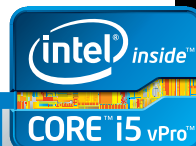
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**Front Cover**

A member of the 34 Res Inf Bn on Bere Island. Photo By: Armn Neville Coughlan

For more Defence Forces photographs, checkout: [www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine](http://www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine)

## Editorial

Welcome to our March issue, we hope you will enjoy this month's features. The latest batch of recruits from up and down the country and the latest commissioning class are *On Parade*. In *Focus* this month looks at the *Military Detention Barracks* in the Curragh Camp, plus our staff recently travelled to *Carlow Military Museum* to check it out. We continue with our Lebanon articles from our recent visit with; *Irish/Finnish Battalion UNIFIL, Camp 2-45* and *Our Finnish Colleagues* by Wesley Bourke. Col Anthony Bracken brings us a full report on *Military Skills Accreditation* with Carlow IT. Our Def-Tec centre spread features the latest Air Corps Potential NCOs course conducting *FIBUA Training* by Cpl Paul Millar. In *Strategic Review* Paul O'Brien MA gives us an overview of Operation 'Neptune Spear', the US Navy SEALs mission to capture Osama bin Laden. For our *In Reserve* feature we visited 34 Res Inf Bn's Training Camp in Bere Island. In *History*, Sgt Colin Stone researches and reports his findings on the *3.7 Inch Gun*. Our *Sport* pages feature a sports round-up and also an introduction to Adventure Racing by Lt Lisa McMahon. Plus our other regular features – *World Strategic Picture*, *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews* and *What I Do*.

*Wayne Fitzgerald*

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor



**NOTICE:** If anyone would like to donate any older copies of An Cosantóir we would be very grateful, as we are putting together a new archival set and scanning the last 10yrs of magazines, which we will make available to our readers on our website [dfmagazine.ie](http://dfmagazine.ie).

## Writing articles and letters

**Ideally we would like articles and letters submitted in by email or disc (CD/DVD).**

**Hardcopy articles are also accepted.**

As a general rule, we look for 2-3 page articles with 600 to 700 words per A4 page. Larger articles are considered, though they may be spread over two issues or submitted to the 'Defence Forces Review' publication with the author's approval.

All material submitted should have a military related topic or be interesting to our readers.

**Sending in a photograph**

When sending photographs in, especially by email, please consider the following:

- Save as jpeg format
- File size: No less than 1.5Mb and no bigger than 3Mb (as jpegs)

- Resolution: 300 DPI
- Dimension: 150x100mm (6x4in) minimum

Naturally, if you are sending in a number of digital photographs, burn them to disc and post in! Clearly mark envelope 'CD with Photographs'.

Also submit a short note with details like:

- Who took the photograph
- What was the occasion
- Where did it happen
- Who is in the photograph (left to right, back to front, rank, first and surnames)

If sending in photographic prints, avoid writing on the back of them.

**If you can't do this, please send them in as big (size) as you can, unchanged or unedited.**





## CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR AWARDS

Pictured are members of the Naval Service at a conferring ceremony in the National Maritime College of Ireland ([www.nmci.ie](http://www.nmci.ie)). They are a Potential NCO class who received their Higher Certificate in Arts in Leadership, Management and Naval Studies (HETAC Level 6).



Also picture are two Naval Engineering Officers, Lt John Minehane and Lt David O'Flynn who received Diplomas in Mechanical Engineering Systems (a special purpose award at HETAC level 8).



And finally pictured at the conferring ceremony, was Mr Gary Delaney from NAVSTAR presenting the NavStar Trophy to Ensign Dubheasa Ni Cionnach for excellence in Electronic Navigation subjects in Nautical Science in the NMCI.

Air Corps personnel (l/r): Cpl Anthony O'Donoghue (recently promoted) & Cpl Pius Devine are pictured graduating from the University of Limerick. Anthony was awarded a Bsc. in Exercise & Health Fitness (Level 8) and Pius Certificate in Exercise & Health Fitness (Level 6).  
*Photo courtesy: Eamon Andrews Photography*



Pictured at the 2012 conferring ceremony of National University of Ireland (NUI) awards of students of the Institute of Public Administration (IPA): Dr Denis O'Brien (Assistant Registrar, IPA), Dr Brian Cawley (Director General, IPA), CQMS John McPhillips (Diploma in Public Procurement), Dr Frank Murray (Chairman, IPA Education Committee) and Dr Tom Considine (President, IPA). *Photo: CQMS John McPhillips (Dir Engr, DFHQ)*

Comdt Thomas Craven is pictured receiving his award for Student of the year 2012 in MSc Emergency Management from Dr Caroline McMullan (Associate Dean for Strategic Projects, Dublin City University Business School) and Brig Gen Paul Fry (GOC Air Corps). The M.Sc. in Emergency Management is the first programme of its kind in Ireland.  
*Photo by: A/M Jason Byrne (105 Sqn)*





## NEW ONE CHAIRMEN ▼

Pictured are members of the Fr James Gilmore Br of ONE at their AGM. Outgoing chairman Conor Swords handed over to newly elected chairman Desmond B O'Hara. *Photo: Sean Shinnors*



## ONE DINNER DANCE ▲

Pictured at the ONE dinner dance are (l/r) John Gilligan (Deputy Mayor of Limerick), Denis Carroll (Chairman Royal British Legion, Limerick Br), Joe O'Mahony (Chairman, Patrick Sarsfield BR, ONE) and Leo Walsh (Vice Chairman, Limerick Co. Council). *Photo: Joe O'Mahony*



## WORLD SHOW

Pictured is Cpl Tom O'Regan (Fd Ord Gp, Collins Bks, Cork) who represented Team Ireland at the recent world bird show with one of his gold medal winning Irish fancy canaries at the show which was held in Hasselt Belgium in late Jan. The show consisted of 23,300 exhibits, in all Tom won 2 gold&1 silver individual medal, Team Ireland won a total of twelve medals at this show. *Photo: Sgt Barry McCarthy (1 Bde HQ)*

## PASSING OUT PARADES & COMMISSIONING



127 Rec Pln, 3 Inf Bn, Kilkenny (*Photo by Cpl Noel Coss*) ▲

47 Rec Pl, Aiken Bks, Dundalk  
(*Photo by Sgt Damian Faulkner*)  
Sgt Stephen Daly (Pln Sgt)



88 Cadet Class, Mil Col, Curragh Camp  
(*Photo by Cpl Colum Lawlor*)



Patrick Keohane Recruit Class, Naval Service  
Haulbowline Naval Base (*Photo by A/Sea David Jones*)







Co.  
Carlow  
Military  
Museum



BY CPL PAUL MILLAR  
PHOTOS BY SGT  
WAYNE FITZGERALD



**The Carlow Military Museum punches well above its weight and its story is as interesting as the stories of the 7,500 items it currently holds.**

The museum began life in 1995 as a memorial to Chief Warrant Officer Donal Cunningham, a Carlow native who served with 10 Inf Bn FCA before moving to America, after several combat tours abroad as a helicopter pilot, was killed in a training accident in Cyprus.

To remember Donal, some of his former comrades in the Reserve put together a collection of his kit in their drill shed. As word grew, donations came in and it became apparent that a larger building was needed.

After a long search, the group was allocated St Dymphna's Church, in Carlow Hospital grounds, by the Health Board. The church is ideal for the museum as it is an historic building in its own right: the stained glass window over the altar, worth over €1.2 million, has proven to be an attraction all of its own.

The move to the church in 2001 was only the beginning of many years work and dedication on behalf of the volunteers.

Today the military museum covers all aspects of Carlow's warrior history, from medieval times to the 21st century. Most displays are interactive. For example, the medieval exhibits give a real sense of the weight of chain mail armour and weapons, and an appreciation of the time it took to get suited up for battle. There's also a small area on the 1798 rebellion with a restored 'Brown Bess' musket holding centre stage.

The most extensive exhibits in the museum cover the period from 1900 to 1950, with a selection of uniforms, ordnance, bayonets, kit, and an atmospheric reconstruction of a three-man observation trench overlooking no-man's land in Ypres.

All the exhibits have a Carlow connection and were donated by people who served in various armies, or by family members.

All donations are cared for by a dedicated team of volunteers and together they highlight the personal sacrifices made by the people and families of Carlow during various wars. The museum has just received a donation of Black-and-Tan medals and even during our visit donations of various medals were made.

Taking main stage in the medal collection is the Military Star awarded to Lt Kevin Gleeson, who lost his life in the Niamba Ambush, a significant event in Defence Forces' history.

All services are represented, with an Air Corps presentation and a display for PO TJ Doyle, who died in service with LÉ Róisín.

Members of 10 Inf Bn were key in advertising and collecting for the museum and the unit is now honoured with an area that celebrates its life and times.

Many older serving or retired members of the DF would remember the various uniforms, kit, bicycles and comms equipment on display. A lot of the ordnance and kit was sourced with the help of Comdt Gerry Shinnors (Retd) and is reason enough for a visit. There's even a collection of DF pottery complete with chamber pot!

The work of the museum is ongoing and the staff are doing a fantastic job cataloguing current stories from today's Carlow natives serving with a range of armies. This will become the history of the future. Whereas Carlow used to be a gateway to the Pale, now it's a gateway to the past. A visit here would be part of an ideal day out for people interested in the best of what a small volunteer museum can offer. **For more information ring 087-6904242, or visit [www.countycarlowmuseum.org](http://www.countycarlowmuseum.org), or checkout their Facebook page.** ■





# DO THE CRIME Serve the time

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY CPL NOEL COSS

Rules, Regulations, Defence Acts and Civil Law, we must abide by them all and at all times. This is what makes a well disciplined armed force. But cross the line... and you may get to visit the Military Detention Barracks or otherwise known as 'The Glass House', so called because of its distinctive glass roof.



Recently the An Cosantóir staff visited the Military Detention Barracks (MDB) under the watchful eye of its current 'Governor' and Assistant Provost Marshal (APM) Lt Thomas Caulfield. Luckily for us it was only a visit and not from the wrong side of the bars.

The MDB was a purpose built prison constructed in 1863. It operates as a detention barracks for military detainees going on nearly 130 years. In 1972, the MDB had an intake of civilian prisoners, initially subversives but later problem prisoners with no subversive connections were detained there, but now they were in Military Custody under the MP Corps. The then Depot Military Police Corps unit relocated its HQ to the old internment camp a hundred metres away. Both civilian and military prisoners were treated equally within the prison system but security and discipline was tighter than in a civil prison. In 1995, the MDB was handed over in its entirety to the Irish Prison Service where it was used as a civil prison with no military involvement. In 2008 it was taken back over by the military and under the control of the now renamed Military Police Company, Defence Forces Training Centre or MP Coy, DFTC for short and they are housed within the MDB.

The strict prisoner regime and I mean for all prisoners as there is no rank held while in detention, is the real power in the MDB. Early morning discipline starts off with a whistle blast! Step out from your 6x6" cell and stand to attention, on the next blast left or right turn depending on which side of the block house you are on. Another whistle blast and this is to march into line for breakfast, I think you start to get the picture about the strict prisoner regime. The next item on the programme is military discipline again this time in the form of 'Foot Drill'. Conducted in the exercise yard with its high dull grey walls and its daunting confined presence, where sometimes even sunlight would need a lift to shine in. Foot Drill not being a favourite pastime for many a soldier I'm sure, then the allotted 3 hours per day of it would wear the best of us down.

When you finally get to your evening or night quiet time, it may be your only time for a temporary reprieve from the strict military regime. But trying to read a book under a constant blue light that shines in your small cell room all night isn't easy, and you are always under the watchful eye of your MP custodian. This strict military discipline continues throughout day and every day for the duration of one's stay in the 'Glass House'. One can only conclude there is probably no Sky+ with little or no treats to be gained or lost. When one comes to the MDB to serve time your wages stop on conviction and it's counted as non-reckonable service for pension purposes.

*Most prisoners don't book in for another stay, one long vacation away from family and loved ones in the 'Glass House' is enough to tame us all.* ■



# Officers Ball

## Vienna, Austria

**REPORT BY:** LT CHRISTOPHER BONUS (1 MIC, DFTC)

**PHOTOS:** 1ST BY AUTHOR, REMAINDER COURTESY OF BDO: FOTO: ©JOSEF HARTL

**O**n the 17th of January 2012 the Austrian Armed Forces (AAF) held its annual Officers Ball (Ball der Offiziere) in the magnificent Hofburg in Vienna. I was invited to attend by the Language Institute of the AAF (Sprachinstitut des Bundesheeres, Landesverteidigungsakademie, Wien) where I am currently studying German. The entire event brims with class and elegance, with an almost unfathomable size and scale. The ball is organised each year by graduates from the Theresian Military Academy which was founded in 1751 and started its classes in 1752, which makes it the oldest military academy in the world. The event could easily see over 1,500 people, all clad in their finest of dress, ranging from tuxedos, ball dresses to probably one of the most elaborate collection of uniforms that is possible to be seen in one night.

The large hall plays host to the opening ceremony, which consists of a number of professional dancing displays, the introduction of the VIP guests and invited guests, a marching and musical display from the Austrian Military Guards, a number of short speeches and then the ball's main opening dance. The opening dance is made up of Cadets from the Military Academy in Wiener Neustadt who dance with civilian partners and also invited guests from other militaries around the world. The cadets and guests open with a dazzling Vienna Waltz that simply does

nothing less than captivate, with perfectly straight and narrow rows that suddenly burst out into life and energy and intricately intertwine through each other. The dancers progress onto other famous and popular dances to great applause from the onlookers. The Austrian Chief of Staff, General Edmund Entacher then officially opens the ball to the delight of the guests who at this stage are plump with the desire to dance and waltz.

After the opening ceremony there is still much more to be seen, the first floor of the Hofburg consists of more than 20 rooms, all with their own particular feel, atmosphere, drink and food selection and music. An exploration of this chasm of elegance is a must; many people instantly fall in love with a certain room and atmosphere while others continue to wander in order to fully experience the amazing grandeur of the ball. The sensation of this night is truly remarkable, and entirely unimaginable until lived, something that is difficult to find outside of Austria, where the people truly know how to inject a real sense of grace and sophistication to a social gathering.

*Professional dancers performing in the main hall.*



*Pictured at the da  
U.S. Army Capt an*



*The AAF Guards B  
the main hall.*



*General Edmund  
the Austrian Arme  
speech. Onlookin  
Defence and Spor  
side sitting.*





...nce (l/r) are: German 2/Lt, Austrian 2/Lt,  
...d myself. Personal photo.



...and (die Garde) performing in



Cadets and invited guests (including two cadets from  
Sandhurst who can be seen in the second row) prepare to  
perform the opening dance.



...Entacher, Chief of Staff of  
...ed Forces giving his opening  
...ing is Minister for National  
...t, Norbert Darabos, left hand







## EUROPE

The EU Parliament voted for reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. The reforms would include protecting stocks that are at risk and stopping the 'discard' policy of dumping dead fish into the sea.

*Tensions between Russia and Georgia have started to ease after Russia agreed in principle to end its ban on imports of wine and mineral water from Georgia.*



Pope Benedict XVI announced that he would step down on February 28th. The announcement stunned the Catholic church as he is the first Pontiff to resign in 600 years.

*Kosovo marked its fifth year of independence from Serbia on 17 Feb. Serbia meanwhile wants to become an EU member, and the prime ministers of both countries have been holding regular meetings in recent months.*

The former head of Italy's intelligence agency was sentenced to ten years in prison for his part in the 2003 rendition, under the auspices of the CIA, to Egypt of a Muslim cleric who claims he was tortured. The Italian courts have sentence 22 CIA agents in absentia.

*Bulgaria concluded that Hezbollah, the Lebanese party/militia was behind last July's bombing of a bus near Burgas last July at a resort on the Black Sea.*

## THE AMERICAS

Barrack Obama was inaugurated in Washington for a second presidential term. In his annual presidential state-of-the-union message to Congress, he announced that the USA and the EU would begin talks to create a transatlantic free-trade zone.

The Pentagon reversed the long-standing policy of banning women from frontline service. It does not however intend for women to take on a large fighting role.

A fibre-optic cable connecting Cuba to the internet seems to have been finally activated after the cable was completed in 2011.



General John Allen was nominated by the White House as NATO's commander in Europe. It's claimed he has applied to retire from the military due to family health issues.

*Speaking in London, Argentina's foreign minister predicted that the Malvinas (the Falklands) would be under Argentinean control within 20 years. The islanders are voting in a referendum in March whether or not to remain as a British overseas territory. The Argentinean minister warned that his country would respect the 'interests' of the islanders but not their 'wishes'.*

## Africa

France said its troops, along with Mali government forces, have chased jihadist and ethnic Tuareg rebels out of most of the north and will be withdrawing by March as it hands over to the UN led African peacekeepers.



Nigerian militant group Ansaru says it kidnapped seven foreign workers in a raid that saw a security guard killed. Italian, British, Greek and Lebanese workers are thought to be among those being held after the attack in the northern state of Bauchi. The kidnapping of foreigners is common in the oil-rich Niger Delta region, in the south of the country.

## ASIA

In Delhi the trial began of five of the suspects accused of January's rape and murder of a 23-year-old woman. The attack caused massive out cry for the lack of concern by the government over women's safety.

North Korea carried out its third test of a nuclear bomb. The test brought condemnation from around the world. Pyongyang said the test was in

response to America's 'reckless hostility'.



*In an attempt to redeem its reputation, the Pakistani town of Abbotabad, the town in which Osama bin Laden was in hiding for several years, has decided to build an amusement park.*

The separatist campaign continues in Thailand. The Thailand army killed 16 militants who stormed a base near the border with Malaysia. Over 5,000 have been killed since Muslim majority south launched the separatist campaign in 2004.

Tensions between Japan and China increased after a Chinese destroyer locked its weapons radar onto a Japanese frigate about 100km from the disputed islands of Senkaku/Diaoyu.

## The Middle East



The UN and Arab League envoy to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, told the UN

Security Council that Syria is being destroyed 'bit by bit'. The UN refugee agency estimates that over 700,000 refugees have fled from Syria, while a further two million have been displaced.

Reports claim that the Israeli Airforce attacked an arms shipment in Syria bound for Hezbollah in Lebanon. State

media in Syria said a scientific research facility had been hit.

*In Egypt clashes occurred between opponents of the Islamist government and the security forces. Some 50 people were killed. Egypt's president, Muhammad Morsi invited the opposition to engage in a 'national dialogue'.*

Qatar as one of the first governments to recognise the Syrian National Coalition as the legitimate government of Syria, and have now handed over control of the Syrian embassy in Doha to the Coalition.



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# IRISH/FINNISH BATTALION UNIFIL

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR

The combined Irish/Finnish battalion serving with UNIFIL in South Lebanon comprises four companies, HQ Coy, A Coy, B Coy and Recce Coy, and the Battalion Support Group (BSG). In this series of articles Wesley Bourke will be taking a closer look at many aspects of the battalion, starting with Battalion HQ.

"Our battalion is the second combined Irish/Finnish unit to serve with UNIFIL in South Lebanon," we were told by Lt Col Dave Dignam, OC 107 Inf Bn. "We have just over 500 personnel, with B Coy, Recce Coy, and the BSG being fully Irish, A Coy is entirely Finnish while the HQ is staffed by personnel from both nations. It is working extremely well, which is not surprising as it isn't the first time we have worked closely with the Finnish Defence Forces: I myself had the pleasure of being the deputy commanding officer with 99 Inf Bn in Chad where our Finnish friends also joined us on that mission.

"While there are differences on how we operate and in our culture, we work together extremely well. My deputy here is a Lt Col Petteri Kurkinen and we work closely together, discussing matters of mutual concern and working out solutions to any problems that may arise, of which there have been very few.

"Irish/Finn Batt currently operates in a very sensitive part of the UNIFIL AO. Our own battalion AO, which is centred on the town of Bint Jubayl, stretches from Tibnine in the north to the Blue Line in the south, and incorporates many towns and villages that are enshrined in Irish Defence Forces' history and folklore such as At Tiri, Haddathah and Rshaf. We are bordered on our west by Ghana Batt and to the east by Nepal Batt.

"Our mandate originates from UN Security Council Resolution 1701 and our primary role here is ultimately to support the Lebanese government and Lebanese Armed Forces in restoring their authority in this part of the country. We will have succeeded in that mission when the Lebanese can operate in this area without UN assistance. Hopefully that will happen in the not-so-distant future.

"In carrying out our mandate the battalion conducts framework patrols and counter-rocket-launch operations with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) where we go to areas that may be used as launch sites, demonstrate a presence and monitor what is going on in those areas. Our companies also carry out area domination patrols, flying the UN flag and showing a presence, maintaining situational awareness within our AO, and connecting with the local population. We carry out between 15 and 18 such patrols a day and they are working very successfully.

"Operating in this region of South Lebanon we have to be conscious of the needs and requirements of the population. There are genuine sensitivities that exist in the area as it has been a warzone on more than one occasion. The area in which we are deployed was very badly hit during the 2006 war, so we have to be attuned to the security needs and the perceptions of the local people. Being sensitive, however, does not inhibit us from carrying out our tasks and we are out there day and night doing our job."



## TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTRE (TOC)

While most of us would be familiar with many of the sub-sections within a battalion HQ, such as Intelligence-, Operations-, and Press and Information Cells, one that we may be less acquainted with is the Tactical Operations Centre, or TOC.

While much of what the TOC does is classified and we are not allowed to take pictures or reveal too much information, Capt Fergal Joyce was able to give us a brief run down.

"The TOC is essentially the battalion's control hub. It is staffed by both Irish and Finnish personnel and is integrated with the ComCen. It is a tool that ensures that every bit of information that should get to specific people gets to those people. This sounds simple but when you are dealing with over 500 personnel, two nations, and 20+ patrols a day things can get lost in translation and it is our job to make sure that doesn't happen."

TOC has six main functions; to receive information; distribute information; analysis information; submit recommendations to the Bn Cmdr; integrate resources; and synchronise resources.

All movement outside of camp is controlled via the TOC. "We know where everyone is at anytime. The idea being is that if anything happens we immediately know where that patrol is, how to get to it, and respond accordingly. Also if a patrol loses its comms we know when they should report in and if they don't report we can react quickly and deal with that situation."

As well as reporting to Bn Ops the TOC also reports to UNIFIL Sector West TOC, this is so they have an operational perspective throughout the AO. "If anything happens within our AO no matter what we send it on to Sector West TOC. In doing so they can be aware of any incidents that may occur and can be prepared to react if needed."



# CIMIC

## (Civilian Military Co-operation)

CIMIC is an essential part of any overseas operations. The CIMIC cell is quite small, consisting of 2 Finnish and 2 Irish, but it is able to draw in battalion assets if needed; such as plant machinery to help dig a well for example.

Essentially CIMIC cells liaise with the local civilian authorities and population such as; the mayors and deputy mayors, the Mukhtar's, and religious leaders, all of whom can provide vital on the ground information about what is happening on the ground. For example do the local population need any assistance? Are there any problems with the UN?

"We try to establish a relationship with all aspects of the community," explained CIMIC officer SNR LT Vesa Helama, "some are more forthcoming than others. For example the Christian religious leaders have no problem talking to us, however the Muslims Sheikh's prefer to stay neutral they see no reason to have any dialogue with UNIFIL. This is however something which we are working on as the religious leaders have a very good understanding of what is happening on the ground and the feeling towards UNIFIL."

A big job for the CIMIC team during the tour of 106 Inf Bn was the move from Camp 65 to Camp 245. SNR LT Helama continued, "We had to meet with all the mayors of all the villages and towns in the former AO. We explained to them that we are moving but not to worry UNIFIL are committed to keeping their homes and people safe and secure."

On every mission CIMIC runs several projects for the local population both within the battalion AO and beyond. In South Lebanon there are two types; one is UNIFIL funded, and the other is national funded. Some of the projects that Irish/Finn Batt have provided are water filtration for a school in Tibnine, constructing a water corral for agriculture, donating building material for the local Red Cross/Red Crescent, the Chinese engineers helped fix several roads, a water pump system in At-Tiri is currently being fixed, in Yarun a generator is being provided for the Christian church, and special equipment for a school for disabled and special needs children in Tyre, and refurbishing a basketball court in Bint Jubayl. "We also conduct many sports projects. We constructed a soccer pitch and ran a soccer tournament. However this only attracted the boys," said SNR LT Helama, "So we now have to come up with something that will attract the girls so everyone is included."



# The Chaplaincy

15

Accompanying every mission overseas is a Defence Forces Padre. The Chaplaincy provides more than just religious guidance and a place to worship. They are also providing a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, and provide a nice quiet place to chill-out. As Fr Pat Mernagh CF remarked, "Our job is constantly evolving. A little problem at home can become a huge problem overseas. To manage those problems correctly you need a space, someone who has the time to talk, and most importantly you need to make them feel welcome no matter whom or what rank they are." Welcome to the soul zone.



Like everyone else on the 106 Inf Bn tour Fr Pat was flat out. Operating out of two camps for any period of time was not easy. "The guys were great. They worked 24/7 to get 245 up and running," said Fr Pat, "Thanks to the guys the battalion now has a great place to worship but also a safe secure room for counselling and to chill-out." It doesn't take you long to realise that the walls along the accommodation lines are very thin. Fr Pat told us the importance of a chill-out room. "Having a chill-out room is very important. Someone comes in and says 'I'm having a bad day Fr,' I'll put on the kettle lock the door and tell him to go in and chill. I'll let his CO know that he's with me. He may want to talk he may not. A place like this becomes very important when news has to be broken to someone that has come in from home. It can be broken in a safe and controlled environment."

A first timer to Lebanon is Fr David Tyndall CF, 107 Inf Bn, he will be continuing on the good work of Fr Pat. "I've been looking forward to this trip for the last year," said Fr Tyndall, "My first time to work with units from the West. Before we got on the plane guys came up to me and asked could they sing at mass."

The Chaplaincy is also heavily involved in CIMIC work. One of Fr Tyndall's first jobs was to travel around the AO meeting the village and religious leaders. "We help out with many CIMIC projects. Getting to know the local leaders is very important. They will be able to tell us very quickly what their priority is." There is also another side to having a good relationship with local leaders. In Liberia the Christian leaders were able to warn the Padre's of any issues that were arising. Both Fr's remarked, "Overseas it can be about getting the right information to the right people. An incident can be knocked on the head before it even occurs. It's about working together so we are all safe."



# CAMP 2-45

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR

In Lebanon last summer and autumn the Irish/Finnish 106 Inf Bn moved from Camp Shamrock (6-5) outside Tibnine to a new location, Camp 2-45, close to the village of At Tiri. While previously occupied by the French, the area is well known to the Irish as it was part of the AO of the old Irishbatt for many years and was the scene of one of the major incidents in the history of Irish involvement with UNIFIL, the Battle of At Tiri in 1980.

In addition to the Irish/Finnish battalion, Camp 2-45, which can accommodate up to 900 personnel, is also home to 40 Belgian combat engineers and several officers from Observation Group Lebanon (OGL).

The new HQ is well equipped to meet the needs of the Irish/Finnish battalion as it is furnished with transport yards and workshops, a helicopter pad, a medical aid post, and dining complex. On the defensive side the camp has all-round perimeter defence including bunkers, watch towers, and an overwatch.

Keeping fit is essential to personnel serving overseas and from that aspect Camp 2-45 is also well kitted out with a weights tent, an aerobics tent, an indoor soccer pitch, and literally kilometres of track and road for the troops to utilise.

Of course this is South Lebanon so the camp also benefits from some unofficial guards in the shape of several 'wadi dogs'. While these animals' occasional howling, particularly at night can be annoying, they are certainly on our side. Anyone arriving at the camp wearing a blue helmet or driving a white vehicle is met with a wagging tail but anyone else approaching the gate is greeted with loud barking guaranteed to alert the guard commander.





# OUR FINNISH COLLEAGUES

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR

For decades now Irish and Finnish troops have worked together in different degrees of closeness, ranging from serving as separate contingents on the same mission to forming combined units. Like Ireland, Finland is neutral and is not a member of NATO.

Finland has a formidable military capability, with equipment including roughly 150 main battle tanks (including the Leopard 2A4), nearly 1,500 APCs/AFVs, and 128 fighter aircraft (including F-18 Hornets), and spending on average 1.5% of its GDP on defence. With a long continuous history of invasions and conquest by its neighbours this posture is hardly surprising.

The Finnish Defence Forces (comprising army, air force, and navy) is a cadre force with a core of 8,700 professional officers, NCOs and specialists, augmented by conscripts and reservists. At any one time its strength is around 16,500 with standard readiness strength of 34,700 personnel (27,300 army, 3,000 navy, and 4,400 air force). With a military doctrine based on the concept of total defence the Finnish Defence Forces estimate that they would mobilise over 500,000 personnel in the event of war.

The Finnish Defence Forces also has a similar history to our own when it comes to overseas missions, having seen service, or is still serving, in the Congo, Lebanon, Liberia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, EUFOR Operation Atalanta, EUFOR Chad/CAR, EUTM Somalia, the EU Nordic Battlegroup, and ISAF, among others.

In addition to the current UNIFIL mission, Irish and Finnish military personnel have operated as part of the same unit in Kosovo, Chad, and the Arctic Circle. Currently in South Lebanon 180 Finnish personnel are operating with Irish/Finb Batt, where they make up A Coy and provide personnel for Battalion HQ.

"Our system is somewhat different to yours," explained Sgt Ismo Kokora. "I am a full-time professional. Back home I am in the Air Force and I work in air surveillance and air traffic control. Of the 180 personnel of A Coy about 50 are professionals, the rest are reservists - you become a reservist after you do your one-year mandatory conscription. Our system allows us to mobilise quickly if needed."

Overseas service is voluntary and is open to cadre and reservist personnel alike. Nearly all the Finns speak fluent English so sparking up a friendly conversation is not a problem. Talking to them you will quickly find that many of them have served on the same missions as our own personnel. Staff Sgt Jussi Niemi is a reservist and a metal worker by trade. "I have served both in Kosovo and Chad," he told me. "As a reservist you have the best of both worlds. In Finland when we are called up for routine training or exercises our regular jobs are safe, and if we want to serve overseas we can volunteer."

The Irish and Finnish members of Irish/Finb Batt carry out their duties exactly the same, with the only noticeable difference being the uniforms and equipment. The Finnish troops are armed with the Finnish Sako 7.62 RK 95 TP and its variants, and their transport is provided by the Daimler Mercedes-Benz G300 and Mercedes-Benz Geländewagen 270 GDI armoured jeeps, with the Sisu E13TP and E11T making up their 8x8 and 6x6 fleets respectfully.

A familiar sight to the 'old sweats' among the Irish personnel in Camp 2-45 is the Patria Pasi (previously known as the Sisu Pasi) APC. The Finnish Defence Forces operate several variants of these vehicles, from the earlier 425 XA-180 series to the 148 XA-200 series.

Some of their vehicles are equipped with a TOW turret and most are armed with the 12.7mm NSV HMG.





# Military Skills Acknowledged



Picture are (l/r): Mr David Denieffe (Registrar IT Carlow), Mr Dorel Picovici, Mr Eugene Carbery (Head of Electronic, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering (EMA) Dept.), Col Peter O'Halloran (D CIS), Mr Brian McQuaid (Head of School Electronic, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering), Sgmn Cian Young (1 CIS), Pte William Nugent (Ord Corps), Sgmn Keith Houlihan (2 CIS), Pte Ryan Talbot (Ord Corps), Sgmn Colin McKenna (CIS Gp DFTC), Mr Keith Smyth, Mr Frank Fennelly, Lt Paul Shorte (TTS Course Coordinator/ Lecturer) & Comdt Michael Moore (Chief Technical Instructor CIS School). Front row (l/r): President of IT Carlow Dr Patricia Mulcahy, Col William Dwyer (EO DFTC), Chairman of ITC Governing Body Mr John Moore & Col Anthony Bracken (DF Registrar).

In September 2012, after some five years in development and following painstaking research and examination, programmes for the validation of enlisted career courses in the Army and Air Corps were approved by the Higher Education Training and Awards Council (HETAC) for awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

It has long been a strategic goal of the Defence Forces to achieve this milestone and all associated with its delivery deserve the highest praise.

This initiative can be traced to the White Paper on Defence 2000 which stated that the organisation seeks '...to ensure that members of the Permanent Defence Force have qualifications which will enhance their job prospects on leaving the Defence Forces' and that 'All personnel will be provided with the opportunity for personal development and associated professional experience in order to realise their full potential during their service in the Defence Forces.'

These sentiments were further developed by the Working Group on Accreditation, Training and Education in the Defence Forces 2007, when it stated: 'External accreditation and verification of capabilities will ensure that the educational and training outputs of the Defence Forces are in line with best international practice... it will further integrate the Defence Forces within the wider community...it will provide quality assurance and reward members for their participation in lifelong learning and on continuous development programmes.'

The Naval Service must be credited with developing the process in the first instance. As their collaboration with IT Cork and their partnership with the National Maritime College of Ireland blossomed, so did their determination to gain validation for the excellent learning that was being achieved by their personnel.

The volume and complexity of the work undertaken by Army and Air Corps staffs was rendered less daunt-

ing by the sage advice of Cdr Brian Fitzgerald, Office of the FOCNS. His article in *An Cosantóir* (February 2011), 'Making the Grade', articulates the process that the Naval Service has gone through.

The main vehicles approved by HETAC for European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits towards the awards are the potential NCO course (120 credits towards the certificate in Leadership Management and Defence Studies); all-arms standard course (150 credits towards the diploma in LMDS); and the senior NCO and logistics accountancy courses (180 credits each towards the BA degree in LMDS).

While these courses carry the bulk of the ECTS credits, some 60 other DF courses also contribute credits as modules on the academic programmes. These include skills courses and associated specialist modules such as the various corps standard NCO courses.

In the five years of hard work that have gone into developing this proj-



ect, a new lexicon had to be learned and a large number of military syllabi had to be rewritten. In this the DF had a doughty and steadfast ally in IT Carlow (ITC), which was already involved in running programmes for CIS and the Ordnance Corps and was no stranger to the DF. A number of key staff at ITC are also former members of the DF, a factor that greatly assisted the process.

In early May 2012 the final validation of the programmes for approval took place at the DFTC. The validation panel, established by ITC on behalf of HETAC, included eminent members of the Irish academic community, and was chaired by Ms Marion Coy (president emeritus of GMIT) and two serving Austrian army colonels.

Taking place over two days in the Curragh Camp, some 30 members of the DF and ITC engaged with the panel, ensuring that a positive outcome would ensue, which it did as the panel approved all four programmes with a number of conditions and recommendations.

Work commenced immediately to achieve final compliance and the revised panel report and documentation were sent for approval to HETAC. Programme approval and certification was indicated in September.

As the programmes are rolled out in the coming years, enlisted personnel will be given the option to undertake academic content appropriate to each programme, which upon successful completion will earn an award for the individual on the NFQ.

That this process is voluntary for each student is most

important from the outset as the academic effort associated with the course is additional and complementary to the existing military subject matter. While every encouragement and support will be given to students, it is a journey they must navigate and manage as individuals.

New entrants to the DF and serving privates and NCOs

with career courses to complete now have the opportunity to opt for an accredited award as part of their major career courses. New members of the DF will make use of a work-based learning portfolio (WBLP) as they accumulate the experiential learning that will qualify them for a potential NCO course.

The WBLP is similar to the 'Task Book' of the past in that it records the learning accumulated by the private soldier as he, or she, progresses through their first years of service. Entries are required from every link in the chain of command that interacts with our young soldiers, sailors and airmen and women. It is anticipated that WBLPs will be held at company-level and will be included on the checklists for both DDFT and Office of the Registrar visits to units and formations.

Those more senior NCOs who have completed their career modules before the launch of the LMDS programme may submit a 'recognition of prior learning portfolio' (RPLP) to ITC. In the case of a successful submission ITC may offer the individual an appropriate placement on a level 8 degree in a cognate discipline. Specifically they may undertake a higher diploma in Business (Management) or a higher diploma in Supply Chain Management as offered by the Life-Long Learning Centre at ITC.

The current senior NCO course was the first to avail of the BA LMDS programme. (A number of PNCO courses across the formations have now also started on their academic journey.) All the students on the senior course opted for the academic content and are now paired with DF supervisors and working with the ITC team as they each work towards the submission of a 4,000-word dissertation at the end of the first quarter of 2013.

While the gains for the Defence Forces as a result of these validation initiatives are self-evident, the programmes require significant commitment on the part of units and formations; the type of support that DF units continually give to the training, education and learning of their personnel, whatever the rank.

As the BA LMDS programmes are rolled out and as those who undertake the challenge step beyond what they are familiar with in terms of education, all elements involved (unit, formation, branch and corps) are exhorted to wholeheartedly support their personnel. Yes, it must be a matter of individual choice and personal effort by students, but the traditional comradeship and solidarity associated with service in the DF will ensure continued success both for our personnel and our organisation as it carries out its many tasks at home and abroad.

"Not having soldiers who can think will result in your wars being fought by fools and your thinking done by cowards." This pithy truth is attributed to General William Francis Butler of the British army at the end of the 19th century. Butler was born in Co Tipperary and had a distinguished military career spanning over four decades. That he came to such an opinion over 100 years ago is instructive. A successor of his, General AJN Graham, wrote recently on the importance of military education during a period of austerity. He stated '...so it is our people who can and must become our strategic edge, and we must invest in them to restore the balance. This is a matter of selection, training and education.'

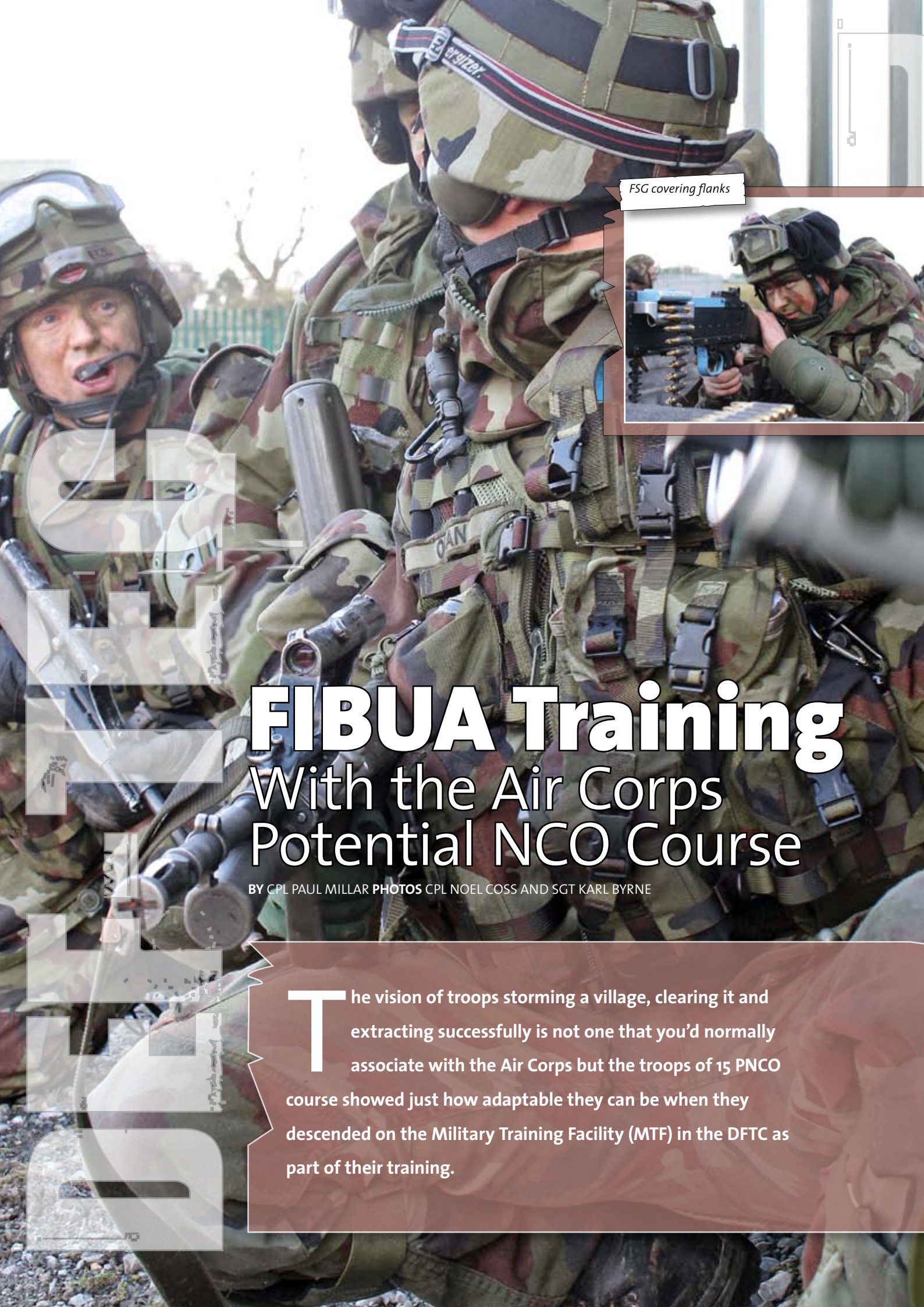
With recognition of career courses now in place throughout its rank structure, all levels of leadership in the DF can look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead with renewed vigour and confidence.



*Pictured (l/r) are: Sgmn Cian Young, Sgmn Keith Houlihan, Pte William Nugent, Pte Ryan Talbot & Sgmn Colin McKenna.*

**About the author and the office of DF Registrar:** Colonel Anthony Bracken BMC established the Office of DF Registrar over the period from May 2011 to December 2012. He is now Director of Combat Support & ISTAR. Lt Col David Cowhig has assumed the post of DF Registrar. Capt Peter Ott and Sgt Gary Condren currently serve in the office, which is located at the Old Girl's School, O'Higgins Road West, Curragh Camp. Phone ext 5080, 5082 and 5084. ■





FSG covering flanks

# FIBUA Training

## With the Air Corps Potential NCO Course

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR PHOTOS CPL NOEL COSS AND SGT KARL BYRNE

**T**he vision of troops storming a village, clearing it and extracting successfully is not one that you'd normally associate with the Air Corps but the troops of 15 PNCO course showed just how adaptable they can be when they descended on the Military Training Facility (MTF) in the DFTC as part of their training.



Top level entry drill



Sprinting to cover



Getting ready to move forward



Planning the next move



Students on this course face 19 long weeks of instruction and constant testing. The course is broken down into five separate blocks, each focusing on a different aspect of what an NCO is expected to achieve.

Course commander, Lt Emmet Duffy from the Military Training School, said: "From this course, we'll get 17 corporals for the Air Corps. We also have 20 students from 2 Brigade, which is a testament to the standard of instruction that the School here provides."

The fighting-in-built-up-areas (FIBUA) element of the course is part of the larger tactical block on the syllabus. It takes the potential candidates, many of whom would have a limited experience of FIBUA, up to section commander level.

Exercises test the students in offensive and defensive operations;

urban camouflage; entering, clearing and moving through buildings; and the all important combat service support (CSS) aspect of FIBUA.

The CSS element is the unglamorous other-side-of-the-coin to kicking in doors and clearing buildings. It includes casualty evacuation, ammunition resupply and POW extraction, all in the claustrophobic environs of the MTF's modular buildings.

All this adds up to an intense series of exercises that push bodies and minds to the limit, and generate, as you can imagine from the accompanying photos, sweat, stress and more than a few bruises.

While it's unlikely that the students will ever be engaged in full-on FIBUA warfare, the system of thinking, the estimation process and the lessons learned are all transferable to many of their future jobs. ■



Advancing to a new position



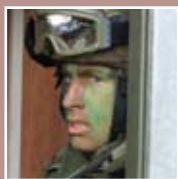
Remains of battle

### Tpr Noel Brennan, 2 Cav



"The MTF was a great area for training and exercising our FIBUA skills."

### Armyn Kieran Byrne, 403 Squadron



"It's a tough, challenging course that's testing my abilities, but I'm finding the more I put into it the more I get out of it."

### Armyn Neville Coughlan, 105 Squadron



"The FIBUA element developed what I had already been taught but it's a completely different experience to the normal section attack."

Vox Pops



# OPERATION 'Neptune Spear'

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE  
US NAVY SEALS WEBSITE WWW.SEALSWCC.COM

On September 11th 2001, two hijacked airplanes crashed into the World Trade Centre's twin towers in New York, another hit the Pentagon in Washington, and a fourth crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. More than 3,000 people, including the 17 hijackers, were killed in the attack, the first on American soil since Pearl Harbour in 1941. This triggered one of the largest manhunts the world has ever seen. However, the target, Osama Bin Laden (AKA 'Abu Hamza'), leader of the Islamist militant group al-Qaeda, would evade capture for more than a decade, until the culmination of Operation 'Neptune Spear' on May 2nd 2011.

In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the United States' intelligence community identified Afghanistan as a possible safe haven for al-Qaeda operatives and a coalition force led by the US invaded the country.

Intelligence reports stated that Bin Laden was using a fortified maze of tunnels and caves in Tora Bora as his headquarters. However, in spite of a prolonged assault of the tunnel complex by land and air forces, no trace of Bin Laden was discovered. While some believed that he had been killed in the battle, others were convinced that he had managed to evade capture. The latter assessment was vindicated in 2002 when an audio recording of Bin Laden was released by al-Qaeda.

The CIA now concentrated on trying to discover al-Qaeda's command structure and in 2002 unearthed 'intel' that it was based on Bin Laden using a number of couriers to relay orders to his cells around the world. It was through the eventual identification of one such courier that in 2010 the CIA identified a possible location for their target, a compound 4kms (2.5 miles) northeast of the centre of Abbottabad, a city in Pakistan located 160kms (100 miles) from the border with Afghanistan and only about 32kms (20 miles) from India.

The safe house was identified through satellite imagery as a one-acre compound on Kakul Road, in Bilal Town, a middle class neighbourhood of Abbottabad. Bilal is a popular vacation spot and also home to a Pakistani military academy that was 1.3kms (0.8 miles) from the target compound.

A 12ft to 18ft concrete wall topped with barbed wire surrounded the compound, with two security gates providing access. The compound comprised a number of buildings, the largest of which was a three-storey house that had a balcony and a 7ft, purpose built, screen wall.

Intelligence reports stated that there were no internet or landline connections and that the occupants burned their refuse instead of leaving it out for collection. Those housed within this compound had no interaction with locals.

Using a number of informants and other techniques, the CIA continued to gather intelligence on the compound and its inhabitants. Although it wasn't possible to confirm that the buildings housed Bin Laden, the US government decided to mount a 'kill or capture' mission.

The planners submitted a number of ideas that included a bombing mission and a drone attack. However, these were dismissed due to the estimated high casualty rates they could inflict on the local population. Secondly, there would be insufficient evidence remaining after such an operation to prove that Bin Laden had been killed.

A combined operation with Pakistani forces was also ruled out after it was decided that the Pakistani government and military could not be trusted to maintain operational security.

After much deliberation a commando raid was chosen and Operation 'Neptune Spear' was born.

The plan consisted of two modified (stealth) Black Hawk helicopters ferrying 22 Navy SEALs, an EOD tech, and a CIA interpreter, from a base in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, to the target. These would be supported by two CH-47 Chinook helicopters carrying extra fuel and a quick-reaction force of additional SEALs that would set up a support base 15 minutes from the target.

The SEALs, designated Team 6, were part of the US Navy's Special Warfare Development Group. These highly trained individuals were assigned to the CIA for the duration of the operation.

The mission plan stated that the first Black Hawk would hover over the compound while its SEALs fast-rope into the compound. The second helicopter would deploy part of its SEAL group on the northeast side of the compound to secure the perimeter. The rest of the group would then fly back to the main building and fast-rope onto the roof. One group would enter from above and the other from the ground up, clearing rooms as they went. The total time on the ground would be 40 minutes. The SEALs were equipped with Heckler & Koch 416 carbines, Heckler & Koch MP7s with attached suppressors, night-vision goggles and body armour.

In preparation for their mission Team 6 commenced a rigorous training regime in a mock-up of the target compound.

On April 29th 2011, President Barak Obama gave the go-ahead for the operation and Team 6 flew out to Jalalabad in Afghanistan.

On May 1st four helicopters, the two Black Hawks and two Chinooks left Bagram air base in Afghanistan and headed





towards Abbottabad. There was little moonlight and the helicopters flew low, using the hilly terrain in order to avoid radar detection. Within 90 minutes, the two Black Hawks were circling the target as President Obama and his cabinet watched a live feed of the operation in the White House Situation Room.

As the SEALs on the first helicopter prepared to fast-rope into the courtyard, the helicopter experienced a hazardous condition known as 'vortex ring state'. A higher than expected air temperature and the high compound walls contributed to stopping the rotor downwash from diffusing. As a result the tail of the helicopter hit the compound wall, damaging the tail rotor. The pilot managed to keep the nose of the machine from tipping over and ditched the helicopter into the courtyard. No one was injured and the SEALs immediately began their assault on the building. The second helicopter landed and secured the perimeter, but its assault team had to scale the walls in order to gain access to the compound.

Advancing into the house, which was in darkness as CIA operatives had cut the power in the area, the SEALs breached the walls and doors with explosives. As the assault team approached the guesthouse, Al Kuwaiti (Bin Laden's courier) opened fire from behind a closed door with an AK47 assault rifle. A brief fire-fight ensued in which Al Kuwaiti was shot dead. The second SEAL assault team engaged Abrar (the courier's brother) and his wife Bushra on the second floor of the target building: both were shot and killed.

Moving carefully through the compound room by room and floor by floor the SEALs encountered numerous women and children whom they secured and ushered out of the firing line. As interior barricades were removed a number of weapon stashes were secured.

Moving upwards, the assault team engaged and killed Bin Laden's adult son Khalid on the staircase.

As the SEALs reached the third floor, Bin Laden himself peered over the ledge of the staircase and turned to make his way back into the room. A burst of gunfire was discharged at the retreating figure and as the assault team entered the room they found Bin Laden lying on the floor with a gunshot wound to the head.

Two of Bin Laden's wives were in the room and as one tried to shield her dead husband, the other, who was preparing to rush the assault team, was shot and wounded. The SEALs pulled the other woman from her husband and fired a number of shots into Bin Laden's torso.

The SEAL team leader then radioed: 'For God and country – Geronimo, Geronimo, Geronimo...Geronimo EKIA.' (Geronimo was the code-name for Bin Laden and EKIA stands for 'enemy killed-in-action').

While one group of SEALs photographed the body and took DNA evidence before bagging the corpse and removing it for exfiltration, the others moved rapidly through the buildings collecting intelligence in the form of documents, computer hard-drives, USB sticks and electronic equipment.

The wives, children and the dead bodies were left for the Pakistani authorities to deal with. The assault teams left the compound 38 minutes after they went in, two minutes ahead of the projected 40 minutes they had planned for.

The helicopter that had made the emergency landing was unable to fly out and was destroyed to safeguard its classified equipment. One of the reserve Chinook helicopters was called in instead to fly out the SEAL team with Bin Laden's body.

After the body was flown back to Afghanistan and was officially identified as that of Osama Bin Laden, word spread rapidly throughout the world that the leading figure in al-Qaeda had been killed by American special forces. While many people breathed a sigh of relief and others celebrated what they saw as a vast reduction in the threat posed by al-Qaeda, there were those who believed that the death of Bin Laden was just a setback for al-Qaeda and that in time the organisation would regroup with a new leader. Only time will tell which view was the right one. ■





# IN RESERVE

## On Camp

With 34

Res Inf Bn

BY WESLEY BOURKE  
PHOTOS BY ARMN  
NEVILLE COUGHLIN, PTE  
DEBBIE KEATING, A/SEA  
DAVE JONES

Reservist make up roughly half the strength of the Defence Forces and like their permanent counterparts are volunteers. However, they are part-time and only have a limited amount of man days in the year. To get an idea of life with a typical Reserve unit we recently spent some time with 34 Res Inf Bn, whose summer activities included a training camp on Bere Island, a presidential guard of honour in Bantry, and involvement with 1 Bde's tactical assessment in the Glen of Imaal.





# Vox Pops

34 Res Inf Bn was formed from an amalgamation of the 11, 13 and 23 Inf Bns in the reorganisation of the FCÁ into the Reserve Defence Forces in 2005. The unit covers the full length and breadth of Co Cork, with Bn HQ based in Fermoy; HQ Coy in Collins Bks Cork; A Coy covering Fermoy, Middleton, Youghal, and Mitchelstown; B Coy in the north of the county around the Mallow area; C Coy in the south covering Kinsale and Clonakilty; and Sp Coy in west covering Castletownbere, Skibbereen, and Macroom.

OC 34 Res Inf Bn (and Kilworth Camp) Comdt Jim Murphy told us "34 Res Inf Bn is a unit that epitomises the volunteer ethos that exists in the RDF. We have personnel who are farmers, school leavers, engineers, university students, to name but a few, and they all volunteer to come together for training throughout the month, conducting ceremonial duties and exercises, all on top of their regular jobs and lives."

On his last camp on Bere Island before retirement was Comdt Tom O'Neil, OC HQ Coy. He originally joined up in 1974 with the then 23 Inf Bn FCÁ. After the amalgamation Comdt O'Neil, served as battalion adjutant, battalion 2/1c, and OC B Coy before taking up his current position.

"The battalion is very active and involved in many areas," Comdt O'Neil explained to us. "Ceremonies we have been involved in

include the St Patrick's Day parade, the annual Eucharistic guard of honour for the bishop of Cork, and numerous presidential guards of honour for both President McAleese and President Michael D. Higgins. We also participate in competitions, tactical exercises, as well as conducting annual recruit and training camps."

The battalion has certainly been active in competitions and they were very proud to show us their collection of trophies. This year alone the battalion team won the RDF rifle, GPMG, and falling plates' competitions as well as winning the male senior, male intermediate, and male novice titles in the RDF orienteering competition.

"Not only that but three years ago we came second in the Defence Forces orienteering competition, competing against our PDF counterparts," Comdt O'Neil remarked full of pride.

The OC, Comdt Murphy will also be leaving the unit shortly, to travel overseas. On saying goodbye to his former command he remarked "It has been a privilege and a honour to command such a wonderful unit."

Of course we mustn't forget that members of the RDF are part-time and have lives outside the military. For example in his regular daily life Comdt O'Neil is the manager of the Spike Island heritage centre.

**Here is a sample of a few other reservists serving with 34 Res Inf Bn.**



## Cpl Daniel Hosford

"I'm in CIT studying software development. I joined the reserves 11 years ago with friends. We thought it would be an exciting thing to do; and it is. The training and exercises are exciting. Great unit with great people."



## Pte John Desmond

"I've just finished my leaving cert and I'm actually applying for the PDF at the moment. If I don't get in I'm going to go on to college to study social care. I was always interested in the Defence Forces, especially the army, so I joined the 34 Res Inf Bn. It's a great unit and it has given me a good idea of what army life would be like."



## Coy Sgt Richard Yeats

"I have 26 years in the reserve and the skills, training, and experience I have gained are fantastic. I find that many of those skills can transfer into civilian life. This is especially true of the confidence you gain from serving with the reserve. I am an electrician by trade working with Cork local authorities. I love it."



## Pte Brian Doyle

"Most of my family are in the reserve, including my three brothers in this unit and my father who is a lieutenant in Cork. This is a great unit and it really is 'a life less ordinary'. Where else would you get to do what we do? I am currently studying accounting in UCC."



## Pte Tomas O'Brien

"I joined after my sister. It's a great way to gain military skills and training on a part-time basis. The people I've met and friends I've made are great. In civilian life I'm a truck driver."



## Sgt Patrick Lawton, Pte Eimear Lawton (daughter) and Pte Katie Twohig (niece)

"We are with C Coy in Clonakilty" says Sgt Lawton. "I'm a store man in civilian life and chairman of the Barryroe GAA club. When I originally joined 11 Inf Bn in 1981 it was a great way to meet people. Over the years there has been a lot of emphasis put on military training so we can actually work alongside PDF units."

"I am hygiene, health & safety officer in my day job," Pte Lawton told us. "With my father and sister in this unit and my brother in 3 Inf Bn it's not surprising I followed in their footsteps and signed up. It's great but I'm going to Brazil soon with my work for 2 years so I'll miss it."

Pte Twohig told us: "My uncle on my dad's side was originally in the army; he served in the Congo. Then with my uncle Patrick and cousins in the reserve it sounded amazing so I joined up a few years ago. I love it. I'm a farmer."



## Lt Adrian O'Donovan

"I'm with B Coy in Mallow and I'm a civil engineer for Cork County Council. My father was originally in the army and I always wanted to serve. I joined the reserve in 1991 and was commissioned in 2000. After all these years I still enjoy my service. Some of my best friends are in the reserve."

"Seeing a batch of recruits or NCOs passing out after you've trained them gives great satisfaction but I would like to see us getting a more defined role. I think the reserve provide an excellent service. When you think of it everyone here is a volunteer. We parade on average 40 times a year, and that doesn't include camps and training exercises, or ceremonial duties. It's a fantastic organisation."

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# SURVIVAL

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR

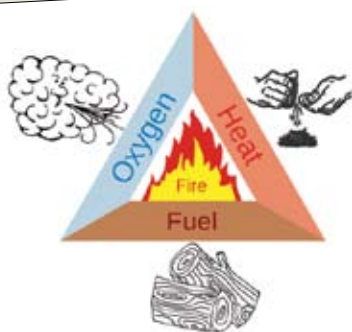
*This is the first of a three part series looking at a small selection of survival skills. All the skills presented here are linked to the basic survival principles; Protection, Location, Water and Food*



## Fire Construction

Fires can be used for cooking, warmth, purifying water, signalling and making tools and equipment.




To make and maintain a fire you must first understand the fire triangle:



If any of these are gone, you won't have a fire.

## Preparation:

- Find a suitable spot: dry (or on a platform), protected from wind, close to your shelter.
- Collect your material, preparation is key here, or your fire will just burn out when the night is at its coldest:

Material	Tinder	Kindling	Fuel
Purpose	Catches the spark.	Takes the flame to help burn the fuel.	This is what burns and gives out the heat.
Examples	Birch bark, feathers, wool, dry dead leaves/grass	Small twigs, twisted grass.	Dry standing wood, dead branches, dried dung. Hardwood is best, but takes more heat/fuel to get burning!
			

- Construct a fire wall to reflect heat towards you. It's also a great way to dry out damp fuel.
- Clear a space around your fire; it stops it from spreading to your shelter!
- Some people (incl. me), place their fire on non-porous rocks, as these can be used later for a variety of tasks, from cooking to keeping warm. It also protects the ground from damage and is essential in protecting our environment.

## Construction:

This depends on the purpose and location of your fire. Here are a few of the many possibilities:

### Teepee



### Lean-to



### Pyramid



## Ignition (covered in-depth next issue):

Once the tinder and kindling is lit, start with fuel around the width of your little finger, and then gradually increase the size.

**EVERYTHING SHOWN HERE IS NOT TO BE PRACTISED WITHOUT INSTRUCTION.**



## A close-up photograph of a tire tread, showing significant wear and a pattern of small, raised bumps. The tire is mounted on a metal rim, and the background is dark and textured.

**PICTURES BY SGT COLIN STONE (EXCEPT THE LAST ONE COURTESY OF MARK SMITH MA, CURATOR, THE ROYAL ARTILLERY MUSEUM)**

(91kg) and was overcome by constructing the barrel in two sections that could be transported separately and screwed together when assembling the gun.

This new weapon was kept top secret until 1883, but the British, with their mountainous colonies, were also looking for a similar solution. In 1879 a Colonel Le Mesurier RA came up with a similar idea and 12 rifled, muzzle-loaded guns were produced by the Elswick Ordnance Company for the Afghanistan Expedition. The principle behind these weapons led to the development of the 3.7-inch mountain howitzer as we know it.

British forces in India had used the 10-pdr jointed gun but with the advances in artillery they sought an improved weapon. They approached the Woolwich Arsenal in London, who were too busy but suggested



**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

Calibre (inches)	3.7
Weight in action (lbs)	1,856
Elevation Limits (degrees)	-5 +40
Traverse (degrees)	20 left and right
Total length (inches)	46.8
Muzzle velocity (ft/sec)	973
Maximum range (yards)	6,000



that Vickers, Sons & Maxim would have spare capacity. That company duly designed and trialled the 3.7-inch howitzer in 1910 but funds were not made available by the Indian Office to put the gun in production. With the Indian Army fighting in France at the start of World War I funds were quickly made available and production was commenced in 1915. (Official approval only arrived in 1917, by which time the gun was already in service on the front line.)

One of the things that made the 3.7-inch so useful was its split trail, which was still a novel idea at the time. Pole trails tended to limit the elevation and therefore the range of a weapon, whereas a split trail allowed much higher rates of elevation without the carriage fouling the gun tube. It also allowed large switches without having to shift the carriage, which necessitated relaying by the survey troop.

A hydro-pneumatic recoil system was also fitted that allowed smoother recoil and better accuracy. The barrel consisted of two parts, a breech and a chase, which were joined by a junction nut inside an enveloping sleeve. It was easy for the junction nut to become loose and it was not unknown for a No 1's order to "Fire!" to be followed by the chase flying up the range after the projectile in a spectacular but relatively harmless fashion.

And so the most important bit, the ammunition. The 3.7-inch fired a 20lb (9 kg) HE shell to 4,500 yards (4,130m) or a shrapnel shell to a maximum of 6,000 yards (5,500m). There were five charges and the HE shell was restricted to charge 4.

Charge bags, which were colour coded, consisted of 9oz of cordite. Charge 5 came with an additional bag that made up 'star shell charge', which was an illum round.

Other options were for HEAT, shrapnel and smoke, of which there were two options, bursting and base ejection.

The cartridge case was rather small at 3.6 inches, and like the 25-pdr also made use of a beckett cup to produce a consistent burn on firing.

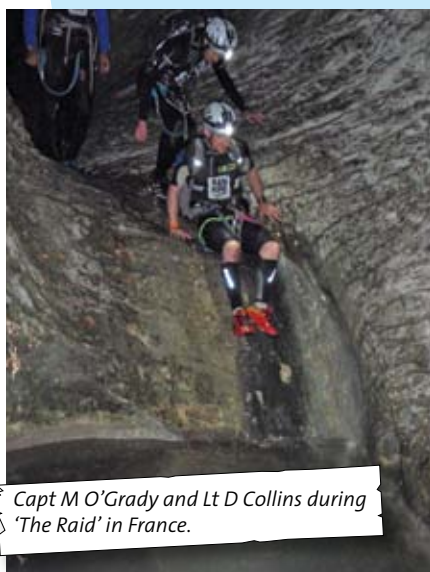
When delivered to the Artillery Corps the guns were on wooden, spoked wheels. They also came with shields that could be extended to the sides of the main shield: a throw back to its design for use in India. They were seen in some of the early photos of the guns in Magee Bks, but when the guns were updated to pneumatic tyres they seem to have fallen out of favour, probable as they added to the time taken to get the gun into action; storage would also have been a problem.

While the British detachment was nine-strong the Irish Army used six-man detachments as they didn't have mules to look after as well. A well-trained detachment could unpack and have the gun in action in four minutes, which is pretty amazing as it takes up to two minutes to get most towed artillery into action, and that's without the need to assemble their gun.

All four of the first guns that entered Irish service remain in existence. One is with the Cavan/Leitrim Railway in Dromad; another can be seen outside the Curragh Military Museum; and the remaining two are to be found in the gun park of 62 Res Arty Regt in McKee Bks, Dublin. While the first two were restored to represent the more modern 3.7-inch howitzer design, hopefully the Reserve's two guns will be restored to the earlier pre-mechanisation, wooden spoked-wheel pattern. ■

# Adventure Racing

BY LT LISA MCMAHON (BTC ATHLONE, 2 BDE)



Capt M O'Grady and Lt D Collins during 'The Raid' in France.



Capt D Flynn abseiling



Lt Diarmuid Collins, a regular event winner and top-three finisher in many races, competing in the Dingle Adventure Race



Capt M O'Grady mountain biking during 'The Raid' in France

**F**ast becoming popular in Ireland, adventure racing (AR) is seeing participant numbers matching those of triathlons and other well established racing events. AR is a combination of disciplines: biking, trail running, paddling, climbing, archery, shooting, and the odd mystery event. Depending on the type of event you enter you will participate in at least three of these disciplines.

There are typically five different categories of AR events held in Ireland on most weekends. These are: Urban AR (biking, running, abseiling); Off-road Triathlon (open water swim, mountain biking, trail running); Sprint (four- to eight-hour events with trail running, road biking and kayaking); 12- to 48-hour AR (orienteering, trail running, abseiling, kayaking, archery, shooting); and Expedition (team events lasting from three to ten days with at least one female team member).

The first three categories may be contested as an individual, a relay, or a team, and are usually held on a Saturday to allow for recovery on Sunday. This is the more recognisable form of adventure racing and includes the Gaelforce series, the Dingle Adventure Race, and WAR. They require little experience but they do require a good standard of fitness.

The last two categories consist of longer events that require experience, training, excellent navigation skills, strong physical and mental endurance, and dedication. The 12-hour events are usually done in pairs and the 24-, 36- and 48-hour events are done in teams of four. They are non-stop events where the team can take breaks throughout the race but generally do not sleep. The most popular of these events in Ireland is 'The Beast of Ballyhoura', a 36-hour adventure race held on the August Bank Holiday weekend, and which includes an inter-services competition. The Defence Forces enter at least one team into this event each year, have won it twice, and have ranked in the top five teams each year they have competed in. This year there will be two teams representing the Defence Forces competing head-to-head with inter-service teams from home and abroad and 20 other competitive teams.

Defence Forces adventure racers also took part in the 450km Expedition AR 'Raid' in France over five days in 2011 and will com-

pete in this year's 500km Adidas Terrex race in the UK this August. Both events require a four-person team with a minimum of one female member in order to be counted as a competitive team, which is generally the rule with these distance events. Same-sex teams may enter but they will not be included in the team rankings at the end of the race.

No matter what length event you do, you will challenge yourself beyond the limits of anything you have done before. To a 'newbie' adventure racing can seem very daunting but it is very achievable and enjoyable for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness. Over the past few years it has also become much more accessible in Ireland with events on most weekends in more locations. For many beginners the hardest part is making the decision to race and believing that they have the ability to complete the course. However, once the race starts people are generally amazed at their ability to keep going and at the end will enjoy an incredible sense of achievement.

There are many dedicated adventure racers in the Defence Forces who are always available to give advice to anyone who may be interested in completing their first epic adventure race or sprint multi-sport event. Advice on gear, food and training can be found on race websites and on the 'Get Mucked Club' Facebook page.

Race dates, times and descriptions can be found on [www.runireland.com](http://www.runireland.com), [www.race-dates.com](http://www.race-dates.com), [www.sleepmonsters.ie](http://www.sleepmonsters.ie), [www.imra.ie](http://www.imra.ie), and individual race websites. The 'Get Mucked' Facebook page offers a forum for people interested in getting together in groups to participate in adventure racing, mountain running and training: [www.facebook.com/GetMucked](http://www.facebook.com/GetMucked).

*The next event will be the BlackStairs Adventure Race, which takes place on Sunday 5 May 2013. This is an adventure race with a difference in that we also aim to cater for the athlete's family. We want to ensure all our competitors enjoy the challenge at an affordable price without all the hidden extras. So, if you're fed up of forking out for expensive entry fees then this is the race for you as we will provide a high-standard race, which should attract elite to beginner adventure racers, at a very affordable cost. See [www.blackstairsadventurerace.com](http://www.blackstairsadventurerace.com) for more info.*



# SPORT

## SPORTS ROUND-UP

### DF All-Ireland Stars Honoured

**F**ive members of the Defence Forces who won All-Ireland medals with their counties in 2012 were honoured at a special presentation in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny. Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán McCann made the presentations to Pte Eoin Larkin, captain of the victorious Kilkenny senior hurling team, and his teammates, Pte Paul Murphy and Recruit Colin Fennelly (who commenced his Defence Forces career a week before winning his second All-Ireland

hurling winners medal); Pte Gerry Walsh, who won an All-Ireland intermediate hurling winner's medal with Tipperary; and Pte Shelley Kehoe, who won her All-Ireland winner's medal with the Wexford senior camogie team.

*Pictured with Lt Gen Seán McCann are (l-r) Pte Larkin, Rec Fennelly, Pte Murphy, Pte Walsh, and Pte Kehoe.*



## National Amateur Elite Boxing Championships

Five Defence Forces boxers took their shots at the title in the IABA National Elite Boxing Championships. The tournament began in the National Stadium on 8th Feb and finished in the Citywest campus on 22nd Feb.

Of the five boxers, Roy Sheahan, Ross Hickey and Chris Phelan, made it through to the finals. They were up against world-class boxers, fighting European Champions and boxers that have trained abroad for years. Hickey won gold, defeating European Champion Ray Moylette in the light welter-weight final. Overall, it was one of our best boxing turnouts in recent years, and shows the sport is continually growing within the DF.

The group shot shows (l/r): Rec Roy Sheahan (RDF), Pte Brian Brosnan (1 Cn Cois), Cpl Tommy Sheahan (AC), Tpr Ross Hickey (1 ACS) and Rec Chris Phelan (1 ACS).

## DFHA V GS IN REPRESENTATIVE SERIES

**T**he Defence Forces handball team narrowly lost out on a win to their Gardaí counterparts in the annual challenge match. The teams faced each other in St Comans, Roscommon in February.

It was a closely fought game with the Gardaí clinching victory on point difference after both teams had four wins. But the perpetual shield will be up for grabs next year and the DF Handball team have their sights set on it.

The picture shows the two teams and the coveted shield.





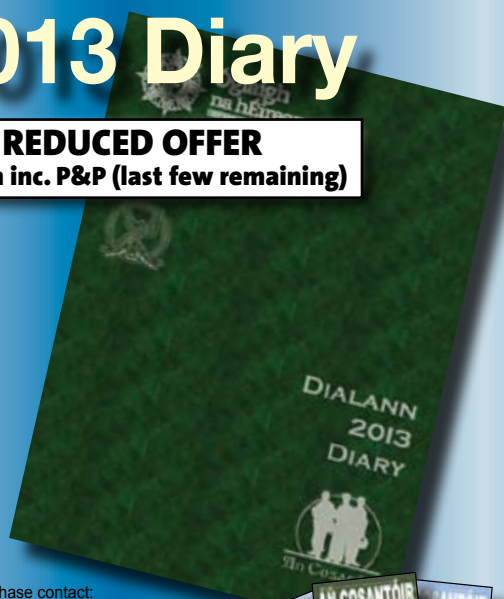
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# GEAR REVIEW



## HATCH XTAK™ ELBOW PADS

**RETAIL PRICE €12.00**

*The manufacturer says...*

Extremely light and flexible, yet this all-new design provides superior protection and shock absorption with the flexibility to move the way your body moves. XTAK is the lightest, strongest product of its kind ever created.

Characteristics: Unique X-shaped thermal plastic urethane (TPU) shell, EVA high-density foam for superior shock absorption, Lightweight TPU and Cordura® nylon construction, Forceful spring-back action that gives you the protection you need, Cool Max™ inner surface for wicking moisture away, Anti-skid inner surface to keep pad secured, Spandex adjustable straps with hatch rapid deployment clips and hook & loop closure for secure fit, Available colours: black, desert tan, digitized camo, olive drab and coyote tan and Sizes: One Size Fits All.

*Our reviewer Cpl David Greene (TACA, 1 Cn Cois) says...*

I was never a huge fan of elbow pads, most were too bulky for my use and the discomfort of wearing them all the time wasn't worth the hassle of having them on. I tested the Hatch XTAK Elbow Pads on Recce and Sniper training over the last month. They were as comfortable as an elbow pad is going to get (in the end you still know it is there) and they were not too big and bulky that they became a problem.

They are a newer design of the elbow pads already on issue to the DF pers. They are extremely light, flexible and the new design provides good protection and shock absorption with flexibility to move the way your body moves. There is Velcro strapping instead of the normal clips that is found on the older design, which makes it easier to customise the pads to your needs (depending on the amount of layers you are wearing). And a new rubber grip system on the inside of the pad prevents them from sliding off the elbow (which I found a setback with the older design). Overall I found the Hatch XTAK Elbow Pads a good reliable piece of kit.

**Fit 8 - Protection 9 - Durability 9 - Shock absorption 8 - Value 10**

## 5.11 TACTICAL MOLLE POUCHES

### LARGE DROP POUCH

**RETAIL PRICE €17.95**

*The manufacturer says...*

The aim of all 5.11 Pouches is to attach quickly to any web-compatible system, while keeping your accessories safe and secure. 5.11's Large Drop Pouch attaches quickly to any molle compatible system to hold critical gear. 5.11/ VTAC Drop pouches fold up into a small and compact format, yet open up to offer plenty of practical storage space. It features an elastic draw cord that can be pulled sung or released with one hand. This Large Drop Pouch is extremely durable and can be easily removed and relocated to other molle compatible systems using our Slidestick™ molle attachment system and can be worn on a standard belt.

Use 5.11's Slidestick™ system to attach the large drop pouch to any piece of gear featuring molle webbing, be it your backpack, mission or bailout bag, you can easily position the pouch alongside all your most important gear. 5.11's Large Drop Pouch is a great value and extremely durable nylon accessory.

*Our reviewer Cpl Anthony Cole (7 Inf Bn) says...*

I tested this piece of kit during the sniper intermediate course. The pouch is molle compatible so it can be used on the issued battle vest, however you're restricted as to where you can place it on the vest and this becomes a setback when using it as it covers your ammo pouches when it is opened. The pouch folds away to a small enough size when it's not in use so it doesn't get in the way during normal admin tasks. During contact drills the pouch easily held up to four 7.62 FN magazines without losing any. The pouch opening was ideal as it was large enough to place empty magazines into without any difficulty. Overall it was a good and useful piece of kit to have during the course.

**Durability 9 - Accessibility 9 - Practicality 8 - Attachment/Compatibility 10 - Capacity 9**



### 10.6 HORIZONTAL

**RETAIL PRICE €31.95**

*The manufacturer says...*

5.11's 10 by 6 inch horizontal pouch attaches quickly to any molle compatible system to hold critical gear. 5.11/ VTAC pouches fold up into a small and compact format, yet open up to offer practical extra storage space. This pouch is extremely durable and can be easily removed and relocated to other molle compatible systems using our Slickstick molle attachment system and can be worn on a standard belt.

Use 5.11's Slidestick™ system to attach the 10 by 6 inch horizontal pouch to any piece of gear featuring molle webbing, be it your backpack, mission or bailout bag, you can easily position the pouch alongside all your most important gear. 5.11's 10 by 6 inch horizontal pouch is a great value and extremely durable nylon accessory.



*Our reviewer Cpl Anthony Cole (7 Inf Bn) says...*

I tested this piece of kit during the sniper intermediate course. The Pouch is Molle compatible with four attachment straps. I find it to be too big to be used with the issued battlevest. The pouch is large enough to hold several items of kit such as a rifle cleaning kit, hearing protection, battle book, gloves and secateurs. I used it attached to a Molle system belt. This made admin on the range easier as I had all necessary items close to hand without having to carry and pack a day sack each time we moved from firing point to firing point. Overall I found the pouch useful during all range days.

**Durability 9 - Accessibility 8 - Practicality 7 - Attachment/Compatibility 10 - Capacity 10**

**This month Team-Alpha are offering a €100 Voucher to be used on their website [www.team-alpha.ie](http://www.team-alpha.ie). For a chance to win this month's prize answer the following question: How much is a 5.11 Single Pistol Mag Pouch Black 1038 on the team-alpha website?**

Answers on a postcard to An Cosantóir's regular address or by email to [subs@military.ie](mailto:subs@military.ie) by the 22nd

Mar 2013. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

**Last month's winner of a €100 voucher for Team-Alpha.ie was David Jones, Naval Base.**

## COMPETITION



# NOTICEBOARD

This page is designed to give our readers an easy-to-follow list of upcoming events or notices for our wider Defence Forces Family. Readers who want to submit notices that may be of interest to others should keep their notices to the point, include contact details and send by email to: [magazine@military.ie](mailto:magazine@military.ie) or by post to: Editor An Cosantóir, DFHQ, Block 5, Ceannt Bks, DFTC, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Ireland. PS. Our old noticeboard will still be made available on [www.dfmagazine.ie](http://www.dfmagazine.ie)

## Roscommon Military History Conference

A Military Conference will take place in Roscommon on 3rd May 2013. The theme is Irish foreign military service; titled 'For Flag and Country - The Emigrant Irish in Military Service', (For over 400 years Irish emigrants have served in the military forces of their adopted countries. As Ireland is recognised globally for its peacekeeping duties with the UN, this conference explores the history of "The Fighting Irish"). With some excellent topics and great speakers lined up.

Places are limited. Conference fee €60 (payment in advance) includes conference pack and light lunch (soup, sandwiches, tea/coffee). Full details online: <https://sites.google.com/site/edenvillehouse/roscommon-military-conference-2013>  
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/121810197/Roscommon-Military-Conference-2013-brochure>

## Uniform Services

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## 25th Year Reunion

The no. 7 Recruit Platoon, 3 Inf Bn will be holding their reunion on the 18 July 2013.

The event is open to all who trained with this platoon. If you are interested, or if you know anyone who would like to attend, please contact Cpl Frank Doheny @ ext 5861.

## Word Search

Cross off the words in the list as you find them.

Word searches are fun, they also bring benefits you may not realise and can play an important role in keeping you mentally fit.

## Uniform

O	P	W	J	X	H	A	M	E	L	T	T	A	B	F
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M	R	T	G	O	Q	P	P	D	T	A	R	X	B	Y
L	V	P	M	C	D	C	W	E	D	T	G	F	Z	D
G	X	K	P	P	U	T	P	R	M	L	Y	T	N	H

BATTLE  
BOOTS  
DPM  
FATIGUES  
GLOVES  
HELMET  
JACKET  
SCARF  
SHIRT  
SOCKS  
TROUSERS  
TSHIRT  
UNIFORM  
VEST

## MARCH Q&A

**1. What year was the Military Detention Barracks built (this issue)?**

Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email [subs@military.ie](mailto:subs@military.ie) for a chance to win two Osprey books: *Katana, The Samurai Sword* by Stephen Turnbull and *Medieval Handgonnes* by Sean McLachlan.

Last month's winner of the Osprey books: *Browning .50-Caliber Machine Guns & The Rocket Propelled Grenade* by Gordon L. Rottman was Kevin Byrne, Mil Col, DFTC.





## BOOK



### BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS

**Author:** Tom Clonan  
**Publisher:** Liberties Press (Jan, 2013)  
**www.libertiespress.com**  
**Pages:** 256  
**Price:** RRP €21.50 (Eason €14.99)  
**ISBN:** 978-1907593550

BLOOD SWEAT AND TEARS is a short, punchy account of a young Irish officer's experience in Lebanon. The author, Dr Tom Clonan, served as a self-confessed 'inexperienced' lieutenant in the Battalion Mobile Reserve (BMR) during 'Grapes of Wrath' in 1995/96. What started off as a fairly quiet tour exploded into a cycle of attack and retribution that UN personnel and Lebanese civilians were caught up in.

The book is set in a time of Irish Defence Forces' history that is still in living memory for a lot of serving soldiers. It's honest, funny and insightful in equal measure. Dr Clonan's writing style is concise and to the point and from his brutal honesty, it's clear that he is still exorcising some demons that remain from his tour. The characters he mentions would ring a bell for anybody used to hearing stories from older NCOs and privates and, as such, it is an enjoyable, thought-provoking read.

### DARK TIMES, DECENT MEN

**Author:** Neil Richardson  
**Publisher:** O'Brien Press **www.obrien.ie**  
**Price:** €19.99  
**Pages:** 368pp  
**ISBN:** 978-1847172976

FROM IRISH BOOK Award winner Neil Richardson, who writes about Irish men and women, who fought in WWII, this book brings the reader from the Battle for France to the Battle of Britain, from North Africa to the War against Japan. On the way Neil opens our eyes to the heavy involvement of the Irish in WWII. Not only does he bring us along their path through the war but his in-depth research also tells us about how they came to serve in the armed forces.

Each chapter gives an account of the battles and areas the soldiers fought in, and how they fared. Individual stories are very detailed, and sometimes graphic, like that of William 'John Pat' McCreedy who avoided being murdered in cold blood by a German officer on a beach in Dunkirk by 'playing possum'.

Many of the stories contain pictures, which are a great help in visualising the individual soldier's story. Neil also brings the reader into the 'dark times' with his accounts of Irish Jews involved in the fight against the Nazis who had inflicted almost incomprehensible horrors on their fellow Jews. These include the story of Belfast-born Chaim Herzog (later president of Israel) who identified Heinrich Himmler, the architect of 'the Final Solution', as he tried to escape detection by passing himself off as a regular soldier.

This great, easy-readable book should make the reader proud to be Irish after finding out about the exploits of so many ordinary Irish men and women who fought in WWII.



## DVD

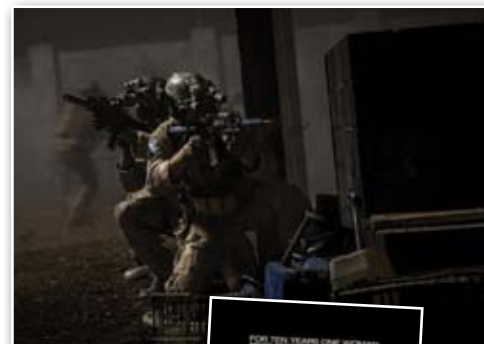
### ZERO DARK THIRTY

**Director:** Kathryn Bigelow  
**Writer:** Mark Boal (screenplay)  
**Starring:** Jessica Chastain, Joel Edgerton, Jason Clarke, Kyle Chandler, Jennifer Ehle and Chris Pratt  
**Runtime:** 2hr 37min  
**Cinema Release:** 25 January 2013

A FICTIONALISED ACCOUNT of the decade-long hunt for al-Qaeda terrorist leader Osama bin Laden after the September 2001 attacks, and his death at the hands of Navy SEAL Team 6 in May 2011.

CIA operative Maya's (Chastain) first experience in intelligence gathering involves participating in interrogations of prisoners following the al-Qaeda attacks against the US on 9/11. After several years trying to locate al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden, her work finally pays off in 2011, and a US Navy SEAL team is given the go-ahead by President Barack Obama to kill or capture Bin Laden.

Much of the film's tension comes from Maya trying to convince her doubting colleagues that Bin Laden is where she believes him to be. Bigelow's movie is also controversial in its portrayal of extreme interrogation techniques and the fact that Maya, albeit reluctantly, believes that these techniques are necessary for success. **www.zerodarkthirty-movie.com**



## GAME

### BIOSHOCK INFINITE



BIOSHOCK INFINITE IS a first-person shooter game that introduces an entirely new narrative experience, lifting players out of the familiar confines of Rapture and rocketing them to Columbia, an immense city in the sky.

What begins as a brand-new endeavour of hope turns drastically wrong as the city soon disappears into the clouds to 'whereabouts unknown'. The player assumes the role of former Pinkerton agent Booker DeWitt, sent to the lost city to rescue Elizabeth, a young woman imprisoned there since childhood. DeWitt must learn to fight foes in high-speed, skyline battles, engage in combat both indoors and among the clouds, and harness the power of dozens of new weapons and abilities. ([www.bioshockinfinite.com](http://www.bioshockinfinite.com))

**Genre:** FPS - **Platform:** Xbox 360, PS3 & PC - **PEGI:** 18+ - **Price:** €49.97 (PC €34.97) ([gamestop.ie](http://gamestop.ie)). **Released:** 26 Mar 2013. © 2012 Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. **Developed by** Irrational Games. All Rights Reserved.

**NAME** MARK CALLANAN **RANK** PRIVATE  
**UNIT** 54 RESERVE MEDICAL COMPANY



I joined 51 Res Tpt Coy in February 2007, travelling to Mullingar to do my recruit training with 54 Res Arty Regt. However, on completion of my initial training I applied for a transfer to 54 Res Med Coy because I had previous medical training - I was working as a first aid instructor in the security industry at the time I signed up - and wanted to pursue this interest in the RDF.

Because of the embargo on recruitment I changed my civilian career and trained as an emergency medical technician (EMT). As a result, in 2009 I was



awarded a Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council Practitioner's Licence (PHECC). Then in March 2012 I applied through the HSE for a position as a student paramedic on their two-year graduate diploma course, and after a successful recruitment process I went to St Mary's College in Phoenix Park to start my training in the National Services Ambulance College.

I have just finished the hospital phase of the course, which I did in University Hospital Galway, for familiarisation with procedures and patient contact.

Currently I am rostered as part of a three-man ambulance crew, under supervision. My last exams were in September 2012 but I will remain on the training roster for the National Ambulance Service. If all goes to plan I will qualify as a paramedic in February 2014.

I have always been heavily involved in medical training within my RDF unit and I feel my RDF colleagues and friends have benefited from my civilian medical skills and training. We ran a very successful 2\*/3\* first aid course in 2010, where I took a leading role, and I have also recently instructed on a cardiac first responders course conducted in my unit to upskill medics on new resuscitation and defibrillator standards.

I would personally like to keep instructing within the RDF and it is a career goal to find time to undergo a potential NCOs course sometime in the near future as this would greatly help me to better my instructor skills.

I have taken a lot from my RDF training and I'm really enjoying my time with the Defence Forces. It's something I would highly recommend to anybody, absolutely! ■



*"I'm really enjoying my time with the Defence Forces"*





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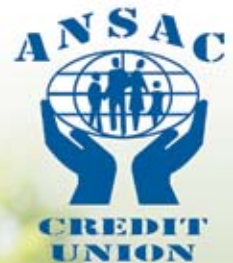


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