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1916

CENTENARY COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL

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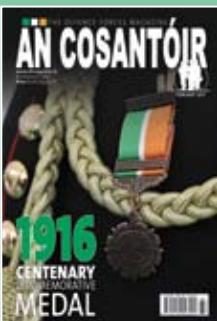
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Contents

VOLUME 77
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CONTENTS



History

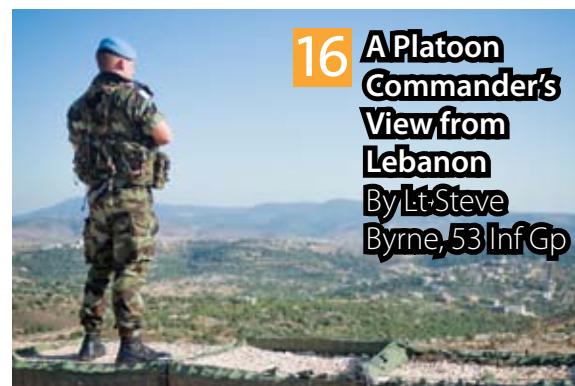


Sport

FEATURES



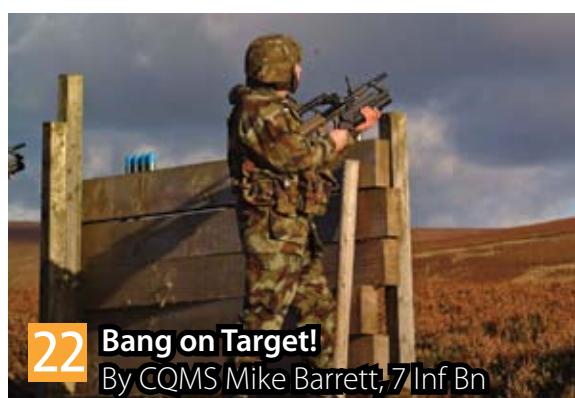
13 Stars and Medals
By Cpl Deer, 1 Mech Inf Gp



16 A Platoon Commander's View from Lebanon
By Lt Steve Byrne, 53 Inf Gp



20 Turmoil in Thailand
By Paul O'Brien MA



22 Bang on Target!
By CQMS Mike Barrett, 7 Inf Bn



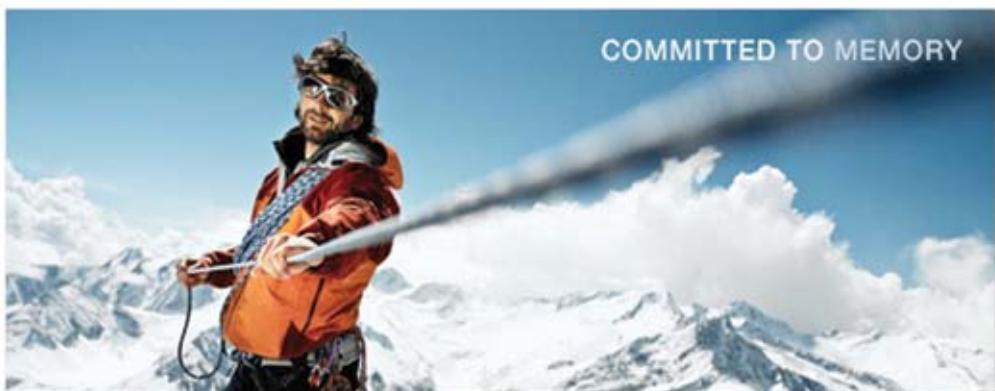
14 Timoney Technologies – An Irish Success Story
By Cpl Lee Coyle



18 Transfer of Authority UNIFIL
By Sgt Mick Burke

REGULARS

- 6** On Parade
- 8** In Focus
- 10** Veterans News
- 25** Tac Aide
- 28** History
- 32** Sport
- 35** Gear Up
- 36** Notice-Board
- 37** Reviews
- 38** What I Do ...



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Front Cover

Pictured is a member of the DF School of Music with the new 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal. Photo By Pte David Hogarty, 2 Bde HQ.

For more Defence Forces photographs, checkout: www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine

Editorial

Hello and welcome to our February issue; 40 pages with 18 individual stories covering all aspects of military life. We hope you are enjoying 2017 so far.

On Parade starts us off this month before *In Focus* looks at the recent Senior NCOs conference that took place in Casement Aerodrome, and the launch of the 2016 DF Review, which is available on request from this office. *Veterans News* covers the Presidents visit to Brú na bhFiann (Home of the Brave).

Next, our front cover article, we take a look at the qualifying criteria for *An Bonn Comórla Céad Bliain 1916 (The 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal)* and *Stars and Medals*, looks at the unusual medal parade held by the 1 Mech Inf Coy at the Wicklow Gap.

Mobility solutions are fast movers next, as we take a look at *Timoney Technology – An Irish Success Story*, who have previously designed military vehicles for the DF.

Next a pair of overseas features, the first *A Platoon Commanders View from Lebanon* and then our second covers the recent *Transfer of Authority in Lebanon*.

In our strategic review article, *Turmoil in Thailand*, Paul O'Brien looks at the coup d'état of May 2014, before CQMS Mike Barrett reports from Kilbride Military Camp for our Reserves feature on a recent M203 shoot in *Bang on Target*. Our next article, *European Awards*, written by Comdt Colin Lawlor, covers Óglaigh na hÉireann being presented with the prestigious European Movement Ireland, European of the Year 2016 award. Our first history feature by Caroline Carr, Donegal County Museum, looks at native-born *Pte James Duffy VC*, our second is *'One-Inch Group' in the Congo*, which is an unsigned contemporary report of the activities of the 1 Inf Gp. In *Sports* we interview a serving RDF Bodybuilder about her recent wins, and we also have our regular *Gear Up, Noticeboard, Reviews, and What I Do* features.

Finally, check out our competitions and results on pages 11, 34, 35 and 36.

Cpl Lee Coyle – Acting Editor

27 Inf Bn Annual Charity Challenge

On the 19th October 2016 the 27 Inf Bn held their fifth Annual Charity Challenge in aid of ONE and St. Joseph's National School. The long running event has always been a great success and this year rose €4,000 in total. O/C 27 Inf Bn presented the cheque to Michael McNeela Branch ONE.



Pictured: Jim Mc Eneaney, Chairman Michael McNeela Branch ONE, Pat Durnin, Paul Mc Gee, Ollie O'Connor CEO, Lt Col John Kilmartin, Benny Mc Ardle, BSM Mick Murtagh and Mick Reid.
Photo: Jim Mc Eneaney.



Pictured L/R: Benny Mc Ardle, Principal Marcella O'Conluain, Lt Col John Kilmartin OC 27 Inf Bn and Jim Mc Eneaney ONE. Photo: Doc Docherty.



Students from St. Joseph's National School at the finish line with members of the 27 Inf Bn.



MEMORIAL BENCH KILKENNY ▲

Members of the Irish/UN Living History Gp and Irish Military Vehicles Gp (IMVG) presented a memorial bench in the memory of Officers, NCOs and Ptes of the 30 Inf Bn. It was unveiled in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny by Maj Gen Kieran Brennan D COS Ops, by kind permission of OC 3 Inf Bn Lt Col Brownen. Pictured L/R: Finbar Rush IMVG, Kieran Flynn IMVG, Maj Gen Kieran Brennan, Kevin Mc Cormack Irish/UN Living History Gp. Photo: Pte James Darcy, 3 Inf Bn.



NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE WEXFORD ▲

Pictured at the National Opera House in Wexford, where members of the Defence Forces School of Music performed is Minister with responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe TD, DF Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM and members of the General Staff. Photo: Patrick Hogan



HAPPY RETIREMENT ▲

On 12 December 2016 a retirement presentation was made to BQMS Phil Denver, Tpt Gp, DFTC by Brig Gen Joe Mulligan GOC DFTC. Pictured L/R: RSM Neil Matthews, Brig Gen Mulligan, BQMS Phil Denver Retd, Coy Sgt Paul Hanley and Bty Sgt Eric Byrne all HQ DFTC. Photo: Pte Jason Thorpe

1916 MEDAL ▶ PARADE UNIFIL

The 109 Inf Bn, UNIFIL were awarded their 1916-2016 Commemorative Medals recently. Pictured on parade are the Battalion's Senior NCOS from all three Services. They are L/R: RQMS Derek Mc Guinness, RSM Mick Dillon and SCPO Brendan Madden. Photo: RQMS Derek Mc Guinness



TRANSPORT CORPS PUBLIC ▲ PROCUREMENT SEMINAR

The Director of Transport Col Sean O'Keeffe with Achilles Procurement Trainer Jeanne Copeland and the military and civilian participants attending the Transport Corps Public Procurement Seminar, which was held in the Tpt Sch, DFTC on 7th December 2016. Photo: Sgt Mick Burke, PR Branch



LUCAS LECTURE 2016 ▲

Pictured at the recent 2016 Lucas Lecture in Stephens Green Hibernian Club L/R: Lt Col Martin, US Military Attaché, Brig Gen Paul Fry, GOC Air Corps, Patrick Downes, Lucas Chairman, Lt Cdr Nessa Moloney, Naval Service, Dr Mathew McCawley, RDF. Photo: Patrick Downes



1916 CLOSING CEREMONY GALWAY ▲

Galway County Council hosted a closing ceremony of their 1916 Centenary events in County Hall, Galway City on the 14th December. Cathaoirleach of Co. Galway, Cllr Michael Connolly made a presentation to 1 Cn Cois for their participation in all events during the centenary year. Pictured is Capt Damien Kelleher, Adjt 1 Cn Cois, accepting the presentation from Cllr Michael Connolly on behalf of Lt Col Kevin Campion, Ceannasaí 1 Cn Cois. Photo: Cre Greene, 1 Cn Cois



RETIREMENT OF COMDT ▲ CANICE BRENNAN

Comdt Canice Brennan 3 Inf Bn received a presentation to mark his retirement from the Defence Forces from DCOS Ops Maj Gen Kieran Brennan. Photo: Martin Rowe



MEL GIBSON RECEIVES ▲ PHOTO PRESENTATION

Mel Gibson was presented with a framed photograph of himself on a 25 pounder gun in McKee Bks by OC McKee Bks, Comdt Andrew Shinnick. Photo: Cpl Colin Delany, 2 Bde HQ



PLAQUE TO HONOUR CONNAUGHT RANGERS ▶

A plaque was unveiled in the garrison Church, Dún Uí Mhaolíosa, Galway, on 11th November last, to honour members of the Connaught Rangers who served and died during The Great War. OC 1 Cn Cois Lt Col Kevin Campion unveiled the plaque, present were members of the Connaught Rangers Association, former and serving members of the Defence Forces and family members of former Connaught Rangers. L/R: Mr Gary Egan, Sgt P J Maloney, Mr Paul Malpas, Rev Robert McCabe and Mr William Beirne. Photo: Capt Damien Kelleher, 1 Cn Cois



MEDICAL DIPLOMAS UCD ▶

Pictured on their graduation in UCD receiving Diplomas in Emergency Medical Science – Paramedic Class and Graduate Diploma in Emergency Medical Advanced Paramedic, is CS David O'Connor, Lt Col Anthony Corcoran (Deputy Director), Pte Graham Whittaker, Sgt Joanne Doyle-Rooney, Sgt Darren Mc Carthy, Sgt Eddie Mc Inerney, A/B Michael O'Connor and Comdt Campbell. Photo: Cpl Lynn Ryan

SERGEANT MAJOR

& BQMS Conference 2016

BY SGT KARL BYRNE
PHOTOS BY CPL
NEVILLE COUGHLAN

RSM Noel O'Callaghan, 2 BAR.

The annual Sergeant Major and BQMS conference was held on the 29th November of last year in Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel. The GOC Air Corps Brigadier General Paul Fry gave the opening address. He welcomed all who attended and spoke of his delight and how honoured he was at hosting the conference for the first time in Baldonnel. Brig Gen Fry then spoke of how the Air Corps have assisted in over 2600 callouts for the Emergency Aeromedical Service (EAS) and also how they are replacing the two CASA CN235 and one PC9.

Col Sean Clancy, director of the strategic planning branch, then took to the floor and briefed the delegation on the plan for the day. He summarised the key aspects of the previous years conferences and how he seen the best ways to address this years issues. Col Clancy took a number of questions from the floor, some in relation to overseas and brigade formations.

Comdt Larkin from D1 A Admin was next to address the delegation and spoke of the performance appraisal working groups (AF667), the post 94-2013 contracts, the NCO promotion competition and the senior NCO's course. One of the questions raised was the ratio of officers to troops that are serving overseas which created a very heated debate and

due to time restraints

had to be cut short.

Next to speak on behalf of J4 logs branch was Col Buckley who stated "*Logs leads it does not follow*" and "*Planning without resources is dreaming*". Leading on from that he spoke of delivering affordability along with the best value logistics for the Defence Forces. He also talked of the use of fuel, ammunition, clothing and those types of logistics and how they are being used, saying that clothing is sometimes hoarded and unmarked and is also in some cases sold online.

After a short tea and coffee break the Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett arrived and briefed the delegation on the Defence Forces Strategic Vision. As part of this he stated that our mission is to 'provide the military with the capabilities to defend Ireland and assigned interests internationally. The 'COS also informed us of the Defence Forces vision moving forward which is 'Strengthen our nation by inspiring pride and leading excellence' by consolidating, enhancing and evolving. His address was greeted with a round of applause and he was happy to openly answer questions on any of the subjects talked about and any concerns that any of the senior NCO's had.

After a short period of Q&A with the COS, the delegation broke up into 4 groups, each table was separately chaired by the COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellet, DCOS Ops Major General Kieran Brennan, DCOS Support Maj General Kevin Cotter and ACOS Brigadier General Peter O'Halloran. The whole group then convened to the square for the annual group photo with some new faces as well as the old reliable(s). ■



Sgt Majors and BQMS Conference 2016.



Defences Forces Review 2016

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA
PHOTOS BY CPL LEE COYLE

Cáthal Brugha Bks, Rathmines, was a fitting location for the launch of the Defence Forces Review 2016 on Saturday 19th November. Now in its 13th edition, this year's Review comprised 23 articles written by military, academic and civilian contributors. The objectives of the Review were: to develop and demonstrate the intellectual capability within *Óglaigh na hÉireann* and encourage serving and former members to engage in critical thinking and debate; to provide for an accurate and deeper understanding of contemporary research, both within and outside *Óglaigh na hÉireann* on matters of national and military interest; and to contribute to the wider discourse and reflection on events of 1916 and the emergence of modern Ireland.

In keeping with tradition, the Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, launched the Review in the presence of the contributors, editorial team and invited guests.

The importance of Military Archives and its invaluable staff in cataloguing, making available important documentation and facilitating historians and researchers in their work, was mentioned by a number of speakers.

Extracts from 19 papers were delivered on the day by their respective authors and a Q&A session after each presentation provided lively debate on an array of subjects.

Papers varied from *Military Innovation in Ireland 1916-23* by Prof Tim Hoyt, and *History, Memory and Commemoration – an Archivist's Perspective* by Comdt Stephen Mac Eoin, to a very informative talk on garrison towns in Ireland by Dr Aoife Bhreatnach. Mr Mark Seaman presented his work '*The Troubles*' – *An Irish inspiration for SOE?* This excellent paper was a re-examination of a long standing theory concerning SOE's origins. It was interesting to consider that the Irish War of Independence may have laid the foundation stones for groups like SOE, the Commandos and the SAS.

Tours of Military Archives and the barracks museum were also provided on the day, which enabled people to see at firsthand the wonderful work carried out by *Óglaigh na hÉireann* in preserving our nation's heritage and history. ■



Editors Col David Dignam, Comdt Mil Col, Dr Ian Speller, Maynooth University, Prof Eunan O'Halpin, Trinity College Dublin with DF Chief of Staff Vice Admr Mark Mellett DSM.



Irish academics and historians pictured during presentations by respective authors.



Comdt Lar Joye RDF (Curator Soldiers and Chiefs Exhibition, National Museum of Ireland) and Brig Gen Paul Fry GOC Air Corps.



President Visits Brú na bhFiann



REPORT AND PHOTOS BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

On Wednesday 23rd November President Higgins visited Brú na bhFiann (Home of the Brave) to see the work being done in ONE's original home for former members of the Defence Forces who may have fallen on hard times and need somewhere to live. The president met several residents and staff from the home as well as

some residents and staff from ONE's other homes in Letterkenny and Athlone who were there for the occasion.

The current Brú na BhFiann (the original, smaller home was opened in 1994) is a six-storey, custom-built building that opened in 2003. It is managed by Sgt Major Dick Dillon (retd), assisted by Sinéad Black and a small dedicated staff. The home can cater for up to 30 residents in subsidised temporary accommodation.

The story of Brú na bhFiann began in the winter of 1988/89 during an earlier crisis in homelessness, when a number of former soldiers were among seven people who died from hypothermia while living rough on the streets of Dublin. So touched were they by the plight of some former colleagues that Pat Dunleavy and others within ONE decided to start a home for ex-soldiers down on their luck, even going as far as raising mortgages on their own houses to generate the necessary finance.

It was in this spirit that ONE's CEO, Ollie O'Connor, welcomed the president to the home, saying: "Brú na bhFiann is a home built on a dream of providing a safe haven for those who through their service in the Defence Forces brought honour to Ireland, and to ensure that never again would a soldier be found dead on our streets." In closing, he said: "In this historic year of 2016, homelessness is still very much a part of Ireland's story and we have yet to fully attain our goals."

Addressing those gathered, President Higgins said: "I am delighted as

Patron of the Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel to have this opportunity to visit this wonderful facility and it is appropriate to have these great services available to people who served Ireland at home and abroad. It is a basic right to have food and shelter and it's important to take steps to break the cycle of poverty; while a good health service and housing policy are very important, it is also important that people recover, as well as the economy."

To fund ONE's valiant homeless initiatives, which are acknowledged by the government and the Defence Forces/DoD, the organisation needs to raise €600,000 annually to continue running the homes and maintain them in a satisfactory condition.

As one small way of fundraising, a number of guest rooms are available in Brú na bhFiann for overnight stays for all serving and former members of the Defence Forces, priced at €30 for a single room, €55 for a double. To make a reservation, phone Brú Na BhFiann on 01-485 0600, Monday to Friday during business hours. By availing of this service you can also help to support the home's great work.

In addition to its other functions ONE has also assumed responsibility for representing DF pensioners, as the representative bodies PDFORRA and RACO can only represent serving personnel. ONE has also broadened its lobbying abilities to represent ex-service personnel in a wide range of ancillary areas. ■

For more information on ONE, visit www.oneconnect.ie.



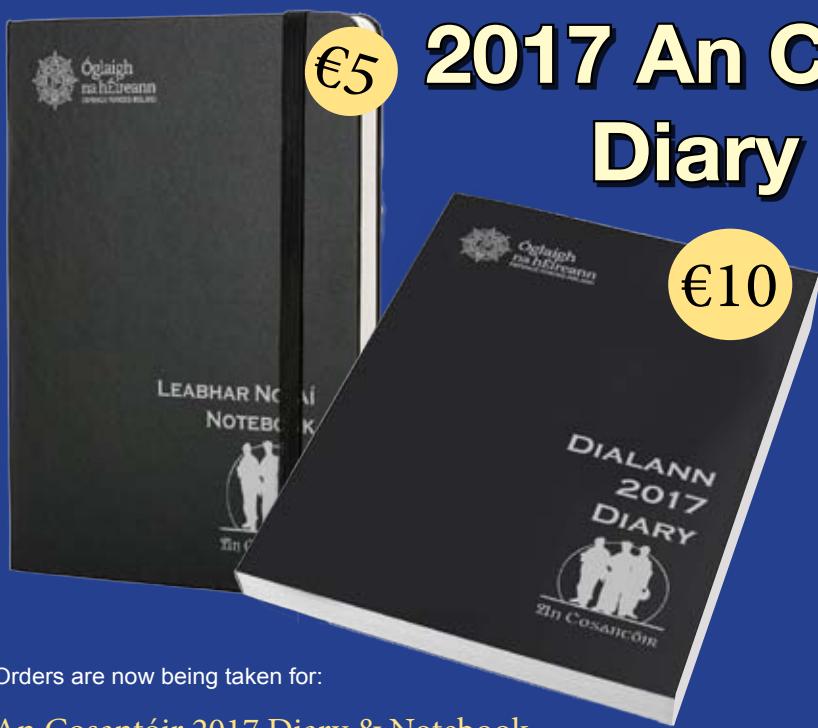
Brú Na BhFiann manager, Dick Dillon; asst manager, Sinéad Black; President Higgins; CQMS Michael Tynan (retd); and ONE CEO, Ollie O'Connor.



The president with managers of ONE's other homes and drop-in centres.



President Higgins with residents of Brú Na BhFiann.



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AN BONN COMÓRTHA CÉAD BLIAIN 1916

(The 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal)

Background and Context

In the programme for government it was decided to award: "...a 1916 medal to all members of the Permanent Defence Forces who are in service in 2016 and to serving members of the Reserve Defence Forces in 2016 as part of the single force concept."

Fittingly, the 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal is being awarded to members of Óglaigh na hÉireann who served in 2016 to celebrate and commemorate the Centenary year. The medal serves to honour the legacy of continuous service by Óglaigh na hÉireann to the State since its foundation and to acknowledge the central role of Óglaigh na hÉireann across all seven strands of the Centenary programme throughout 2016. Each medal is contained in a presentation case, with a message to each recipient from Government, as follows:



Photo by Arnn Adam Murphy



mairnéalaigh agus aerchriúnna Óglaigh na hÉireann, atá ag fónamh ar son na hÉireann agus mhuintir na hÉireann ó bunaíodh an Stát. Tríd an mbónn seo a bhronnadh ort, déanaimid comóradh ar chéad bliain ó Éirí Amach na Cásca 1916 agus aithnímid an ról tábhachtach a bhí ag Óglaigh na hÉireann i saol na hÉireann san am a caitheadh agus atá acu i mbliain seo an chomórtha.

Rialtas na hÉireann, Mí na Nollag 2016.

An Bonn Comórtha Céad Bliain 1916

The 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal

This medal is hereby awarded to you, a serving member of Óglaigh na hÉireann, in this centenary year of 2016. An Bonn

Comórtha Céad Bliain is a special token of our appreciation for the selfless service of the volunteer soldiers, sailors and aircrew of Óglaigh na hÉireann, who have served Ireland and the Irish people since the foundation of the State. In awarding you this medal, we commemorate the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising and we recognise the central role played by Óglaigh na hÉireann in the past and in this centenary year.

The Government of Ireland, December 2016.

General

The Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe, T.D. signed a Defence Force Regulation (DFR) in the Yearly Series - An Bonn Comórtha Céad Bliain 1916, The 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medal – on 01 December 2016, thereby given effect to the new medal.

Medal Design

The medal is a dark bronze alloy 35mm in diameter, fashioned (after the manner of the official Defence Forces crest) in the form of a circle of flame representing the sunburst on which eight points of a star are superimposed. The letters 'I' and 'V' are embossed on the left and right of centre of the sunburst, denoting Irish Volunteer. On the reverse side shall be inscribed the dates '1916 – 2016 Logo with the seven diamonds'.



Photo by Cpl Colm Lawlor, Air Corps



Photo by Sgt Barry McCarthy (Press Office
Collins Bks)



Stars and Medals

BY CPL LEON DEERE PHOTOS BY ARMN ADAM MURPHY

On 14th December 2016 the 106 Recruit Platoon from the 1 Mech Inf Coy, undertook a loaded march in the Wicklow area to mark the culmination of their twelve-week 3 star training. The gruelling 16Km march led the students over a series of spot heights, starting with Scar Mountain, down Paddock Hill, along the Wicklow Way, up Brockagh, Tonelagee and finally concluding on to the Wicklow Gap car park.

This task was undertaken alongside training staff, and the Commanding Officer Comdt Tom Fox, 1 Mech Inf Coy. Support was shown from several NCOs and Private soldiers from the unit at the finishing point.

Units from the Curragh Camp normally complete a loaded march from the Glen of Imaal back to their home units in the Curragh Camp as the last hurdle of their training. However making this journey by road, with traffic volumes increasing is no longer permitted for safety reasons. In place of this an alternative route had to be selected. The route that was chosen is one that has been used by the ARW during training and is also an easily accessible part of the Wicklow landscape in case of emergency.



Members of 1 Mech Inf Coy receive the 1916 Commemoration Medal alongside one another

The 2 stars were required to carry a 14Kg bag pack and the walk was to be completed over a four-hour duration.

Over the previous months the students had completed loaded marches with various weight, this being the most weight to date. They also learned map reading skills, with both day and night navigation skills in classroom-based lectures. They were given the chance to put these skills into practice in several locations, including the Curragh, the Glen of Imaal and the Wicklow Mountains.

The morale of all involved was not damped by the bleak weather conditions on the day. Strong wind and rain plagued the recruits up until the last kilometre where the sun shone through just in time for them to receive their three star rank markings from the Brig Gen Joe Mulligan GOC DFTC. This in itself was a unique event, as standard practice had involved receiving the award during a ceremonial parade in the Curragh Camp.

Another unique event that coincided was that all training staff and the students were awarded the 1916 Commemoration Medal alongside one another. It was a great honour to receive this medal while celebrating the achievements of the newest generation in the Defence Forces, whilst reminiscing and respectfully remembering those that had paved the way for us in the past. ■



Brig Gen Joe Mulligan GOC DFTC congratulates the new Pte's of the 1 Mech Inf Coy

Timoney Technology

An Irish Success Story

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS BY TIMONEY TECHNOLOGY

An Cosantóir magazine was recently invited to visit Timoney Technology and tour its facility in Navan, Co Meath.

Timoney Technology is a leading international designer and provider of mobility technology associated with suspension, axels, steering and drivelines for AFVs and big off-highway vehicles.

Seamus Timoney founded the company in 1967, at the time he was a professor of engineering at University College Dublin. Initially the company focused on research and development in the diesel engines market but fairly soon Professor Timoney saw a gap in the market for mobility solutions, and started research and development in this field.

A De Rooy Truck fitted with a Timoney suspension system took part successfully in the Dakar Rally.

Over the last 50 years the company has grown to be a world leader in mobility systems for heavy and specialist vehicles. Designing prototypes and producing drivelines (driveshaft's, gearboxes and transfer boxes) and independent suspension systems (wishbone, shock absorbers and springs). They were among the first to develop the double wishbone independent suspension system, which is now in wide spread use in both military and civil heavy off road vehicles.

In the early 70s Timoney became involved in designing and producing complete vehicles and one of their first was a 4x4 wheeled APC for the Irish DF. Belgian company Beherman De-



moen built a development of this vehicle, designated as the BDX, under license. They produced 120 vehicles for the Belgian Air Force and the Belgian Gendarmerie. Further license agreements and direct sales followed to the UK, Argentina, Middle East, Africa and the Far East.

In 1994 the company partnered with Singapore Technologies Kinetics (STK) to design the driveline and power pack for an articulated all terrain, tracked vehicle (ATTC) known as the Bronco. This went into production in 1999 for the Singapore Armed Forces. The UK MoD also procured a variant known as the Warthog in 2010 that saw service in Afghanistan. Over 1000 Broncos have been made in a variety of configurations.

In recent years the company has moved away from designing and manufacturing its own vehicles and instead does the designs, tests and builds prototypes, before licensing the design to a manufacturer.

One of its early deals was teaming with ADI, which subsequently became Thales Australia, to design and produce the Bushmaster Protective Mobility Vehicle used by the Australian, Netherlands and British Armies. This is a 4x4 wheeled vehicle that was innovative with the use of large windows giving great visibility, it was also the first military vehicle to pass all Australian Road Traffic Regulations. The company won the contract from a group of 21 other bids, and over 1000 have been built to date.

The Lockheed Martin Armoured Combat Vehicle was one of the contenders for the US Marine Corps amphibious AFV requirement, though not selected it is being proposed for other opportunities.



8x8 Fire truck used by Aer Rianta Fire, similar vehicles are in service in the US.



trucks as well as AFVs, producing the 6T driveline system for Rheinmetall MAN Military Vehicles, which holds a record for the fastest time on the German Army test track for all terrain vehicles. In the civil market similar success was achieved with Ginaf Trucks and the De Rooy Team for the Dakar Rally, with one of them completing four Dakar's on the same suspension system, which really shows its reliability.

In the civil market similar driveline systems are used on some of the world's largest mining vehicles produced by Terex, where reliability is critical to the success of the mining operation, as a vehicle off the road even for 24 hours can equate to many thousands of Euros lost production.

The technology used by the military has moved at a fast pace in recent years and Unmanned Vehicles is the next leap forward. The US DARPA Crusher Unmanned Vehicle uses a Timoney designed traction and suspension system that has an unprecedented 800+mm of wheel travel and represents the next generation of autonomous vehicles.

For many of the vehicles the company has designed and developed it is not just the suspension system and drivelines but the integration of these with the chosen power plants and complete under hull chassis system to ensure that the vehicle has the best mobility possible. During the developments it has worked with STK on Timoney has used Caterpillar Defence Products power packs. This pairing of reliability in both power plants and suspension systems with STK producing the armoured hull and capability module has proven to be a formidable force, with the two companies working together on 5 projects to date.

One of these programmes was a project for the Australian Army where the company designed and produced the complete 8x8 armoured vehicle chassis from paper to delivery in six months, a bit of a record for any vehicle company.

Timoney Technologies have a long history with 2017 marking their 50th anniversary in business and have shown how important it is to produce a vehicle from the wheels up. ■

**For more information on Timoney vehicles used in the DF, please see
Ralph A. Riccio publication AFVs in Irish Service Since 1922.**

Another example of the company's strategy to support manufacturers was an agreement with STK. Working together they developed the Terrex AFV family. The first version, Terrex 1, is an 8x8 wheeled armoured vehicle, currently being used by the Singapore Army. Production of the Terrex started in 2005, this utilized the more advanced hydro-pneumatic suspension system and latterly evolved into the Terrex 2 that forms the basis of the proposal submitted by STK, and fronted by SAIC, to the US Marine Corps for its requirement for a new amphibious armoured vehicle.

Other systems include drivelines and mobility solutions for many of the world's AFV manufacturers including the CM-32 or Clouded Leopard, (8x8) produced by the Republic of China Army in Taiwan, solutions for Korea, Egypt, Jugolimports of Serbia for the Lazar 8x8, and Kamas trucks in Russia.

One of the early adopters of Timoney driveline technology was the USAF who purchased 250 systems for use in their P23 fire trucks, many of which are still in service today. Amongst other users of Timoney technology is the fire service at Baldonnel where a Timoney variant fire truck has seen service for many years.

The company has successfully produced drivelines for military

The Thales Bushmaster Protective Mobility Vehicle is in service with Australian, Netherlands and UK armed forces.



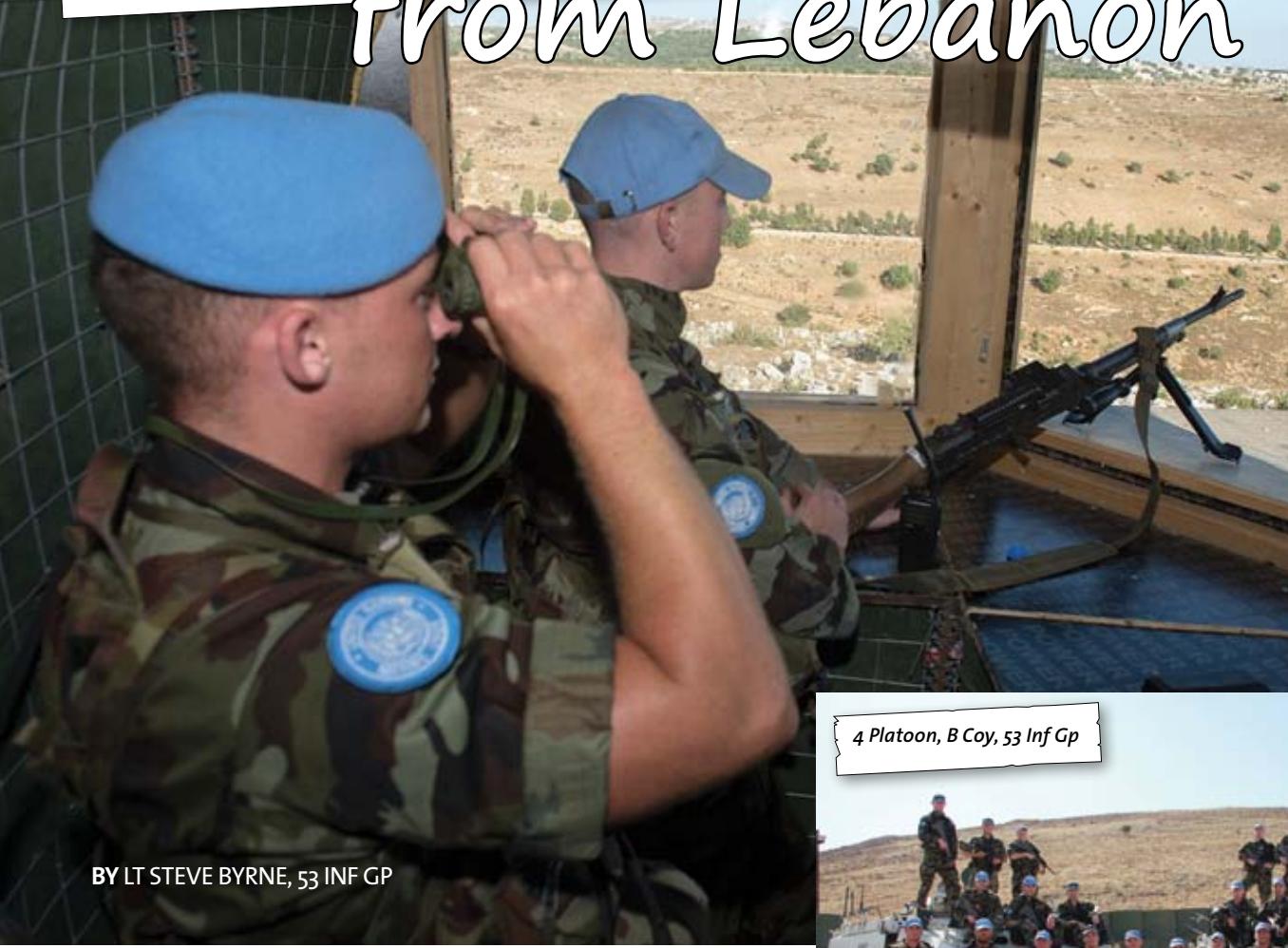
Timoney Technology facility Navan, Co Meath.



The 8x8 Lazar 3 developed by Jugolimports is being supplied to the Serbian Armed Forces.



A Platoon Commander's View from Lebanon



BY LT STEVE BYRNE, 53 INF GP

“Every day is very much a school day overseas and it has been an amazing experience so far. ”

Article written while on deployment with the 53 Inf Gp UNIFIL, May - November 2016.

I am currently serving as platoon commander with 4 Pl, B Coy, 53 Inf Gp. Prior to my deployment I was with 3 Inf Bn in James Stephens Bks, Kilkenny, where I had been a recruit platoon commander and ran infantry light support weapons courses.

I was delighted to be informed of my appointment with 53 Inf Gp and deploying overseas as a platoon commander, it has been the proudest time of my career to date.

I could not have been luckier with the platoon given to me as many of them are from my home unit, along with my platoon sergeant, Sgt Ian Martin. Personnel in the platoon were mainly from Kilkenny, but we also have soldiers from Cork, Tipperary, Waterford, and Carlow.

I have been amazed by how cohesive a

4 Platoon, B Coy, 53 Inf Gp



unit they have become and how quickly this was achieved. I have learned an incredible amount throughout the deployment to date from all ranks within my platoon and company. Every day is very much a school day overseas and it has been an amazing experience so far.

There are several key things that I have learned out here that will shape my decision-making and attitude in the future.

Firstly, it is refreshing to see how professional and competent Irish soldiers are at the international level. Having worked with many nations in Lebanon, I can state categorically that Defence Forces personnel are as capable and competent as any.



53 Inf Gp outside the GPO during the 1916 parade. Due to the involvement of his grandfather in the Rising, Lt Byrne had the privilege of carrying the flag of the Irish Republic on the parade.



Secondly, is the prime importance of the 'strategic corporal'. Acting as patrol commanders, corporals, once they leave post, are autonomous and solely responsible for the patrol team under their control. Witnessing this and the high standard of operational planning and execution of patrols led by corporals during this deployment, I have discovered a new found respect for the rank and my views regarding what to expect from the rank and in looking at potential NCOs have increased as a result.

Thirdly, the importance of the 'senior private' within the framework of the platoon cannot be overemphasised. Their presence, guidance and stoicism have been a great source of direction for everyone in the platoon, me included. Acting as another layer of leadership, very much at ground level, they have been very important to the success of the platoon to date.

I have learned just how accurate a statement it is that a true team is made when you put aside individual wants for the collective good.

The most important role for any platoon commander travelling to this mission is the time spent with your platoon on UNP 6-52. Here you become the sole leader and carer, with responsibility for up to 30 soldiers. For me this was the greatest learning experience and it moulded my platoon as a cohesive unit. Everyone helped each other through the toughest days and always had time to smile and have a joke with you when things did not go your way.

The post is set on the foothills of Hill 882 between the villages of Bint Jubayl and Aytarun. From 6-52 you can see into

“I have learned just how true a statement it is that a true team are made when you put aside individual wants for the collective good”

the Israeli town of Avivum across the Blue Line, which separates Lebanon and Israel. Life on the post is challenging in many different ways but an experience that will live with me forever as it was where we learned to work cohesively as a team.

Still going strong, our team continues to perform to an exceptionally high standard and I feel lucky to have been a member of a group with some of the finest soldiers I have encountered in my career to date. ■



Visit of Sector West Commander, General Nitti, to UNP 2-45. Pictured (l/r): Comdt D McCourt, Gen Nitti, Lt Col V Vainio, Lt Col S Ryan and Lt S Byrne.

Transfer of Authority



November 2016 would pass off like any other normal day in the units and barracks across the country. However, for the members of 109 Inf Bn, UNIFIL, at post 2-45 this was the day of change that they had spent three and a half months of vigorous preparation and training for; the transfer of authority from Finland to Ireland and beginning of life for IrishFinnBatt.

Early that morning a team from An Cosantóir was on hand to hear OC 109 Inf Bn, Lt Col Stephen Howard, brief the Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe, TD; the Irish Ambassador to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Mr Damien Cole; the Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM; and other dignitaries on how the change from an infantry group to a battalion would take shape and the responsibilities that would go with it.

Starting his brief Lt Col Howard stated the unit mission was “to deploy a capable and flexible force to gain and maintain control in our area of operations (AO) in order to maintain a safe and secure environment, increase UNIFIL’s acceptance among the local population and create the conditions consistent with the requirements set

out in UN SCR 1701”, adding that this would be achieved through “credible posture, conducting our operations with flexibility, unity of effort, civil-military co-operation and liaison”.

He stressed the importance of engagement with ‘key leaders’ in the communities, the ongoing relationship with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and civil-military co-operation (CIMIC).

The change from an infantry group to a battalion sees the unit increase in numbers from 181 to 336 personnel in the IrishFinnBatt. The Defence Forces also have personnel in HQ Sector West and UNIFIL HQ, bringing the total to 378 across the mission area. The statistics and figures for the Irish personnel in position 2-45 and its OPs are as follows: 2 Bde is the lead brigade and 28 Inf Bn, with 59 personnel, the lead unit. The next three largest contributing units are 7 Inf Bn (32), the Naval Service (21) and 6 Inf Bn (19), and 24 counties are represented.

There are 21 females - 10 officers, 5 NCOs and 6 privates. For 95 personnel this is their first trip overseas, while Sgt Decky Higgins, from 1 Cav Sqn, is on his 12th tour of duty. The youngest soldier is Pte Oisín Redican (21), from 28 Inf Bn.

There are five family-friendly appointments.

Three sets of brothers are serving in the unit; Ronan and Glen Matthews, and Ronan and Brian Corry, from 28 Inf Bn, and Robert

Sgt Maj Mick Dillon.



Sgt Deckie Higgins, who is currently on his 12th Overseas trip.



COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett Signs the visitors book with Ambassador Cole and Minister Paul Kehoe TD.



infrastructural and logistical support. The Irish transport fleet is increased to 30 vehicles, ten of these being armoured. Two Nicrosoft water treatment units and five 500 KVA generators have been installed in the camp and a new kitchen was constructed in October that produces 1,300 meals a day.

After the briefing, the troops of 2-45 paraded for the transfer of authority ceremony, which was attended by the aforementioned dignitaries and Mr Ciaran Murphy, Asst Sec, DoD; Ms Audrey O'Reilly, Private Secretary to the Minister; Mr John Coughlan, Special Advisor to the Minister; and Ms Margaret O'Leary, ISDP Branch, DoD; representatives from the Finnish Embassy; Maj General Jorma Ala-Sinkala, Chief of Staff, Army Command, Finland; unit commanders from Sector West; representatives of the LAF; and key leaders from the local communities.

Before Commander Sector West completed the official transfer of authority the parade was addressed by OC FinnIrishBatt, Lt Col Vasio Vainio, who welcomed the distinguished guests to the ceremony for the transfer of authority from Finland to Ireland and the transfer of command from himself to Lt Col Howard. He then spoke about Ireland and Finland's long history of peacekeeping, with Finland starting in 1956 and Ireland two years later in 1958. He recalled that it was 2006 when Irish and Finnish troops first

“It is an honour and a pleasure to command this IrishFinn battalion”

and Aidan Webster from 1 Bde Engr.

The battalion is marshalled by RSM Mick Dillon, who is on his final trip overseas as he retires next year.

The battalion consists of three manoeuvre companies, A Coy (111 Finnish and Estonian), B Coy (108 Irish troops), and Recce Coy (80 Irish troops), supported at HQ by the Battalion Support Group comprised of 133 medical, logistics, engineering, transport, catering, CIS, and MP personnel.

Not only is there an increase in Irish personnel in camp and on the OPs but there is also a significant increase in

served together as a unit, in UNIFIL, and mentioned many of the places they have served together since then, such as the EUBG, KFOR, and Lebanon.

In 2012 Finland and Ireland commenced service as a unit in Sector West and now the unit also has soldiers from Estonia, which, Lt Col Vainio said, put three countries with “highest peacekeeping standards”. He said that all of this would not be possible without the co-operation of the LAF and the key community leaders. He finished by thanking the LAF for their co-operation and the Commander Sector West, Brig Gen Ugo Cillo, for his support, and wished Lt Col Howard every success with his new command.

Brig Gen Cillo started his address to the parade by remembering the 47 Irish and 11 Finnish soldiers who gave their lives while peacekeeping in Lebanon, especially “at this time” the three Irish soldiers who were killed on Tibnine Bridge in 1982.

He went on to say: “It is a great pleasure for me to attend, on behalf of the Force Commander, this transfer of authority parade and I wish to say goodbye to the FinnIrishBatt and welcome the IrishFinnBatt.”

Brig Gen Cillo also complimented both countries for their contribution to peacekeeping and for the way the outgoing unit had co-operated with the LAF and the local community to bring about a safe and secure environment.

After wishing Lt Col Howard every success as OC IrishFinnBatt, he officially transferred command and authority to him by handing over the UN flag.

Lt Col Howard expressed his appreciation, saying: “It is an honour and a pleasure to command this IrishFinn battalion”

The ceremony concluded with Brig Gen Cillo taking the salute from Irish, Finnish, Estonian and Fijian soldiers, who marched past to a great selection of Irish airs.

Later that evening Minister Kehoe addressed the Irish soldiers at Post 2-45. He told them that it had been “an absolute pleasure to be present at the historic occasion of the transfer of authority” and that attending the march past in Donegal had been “a very proud moment” for him.

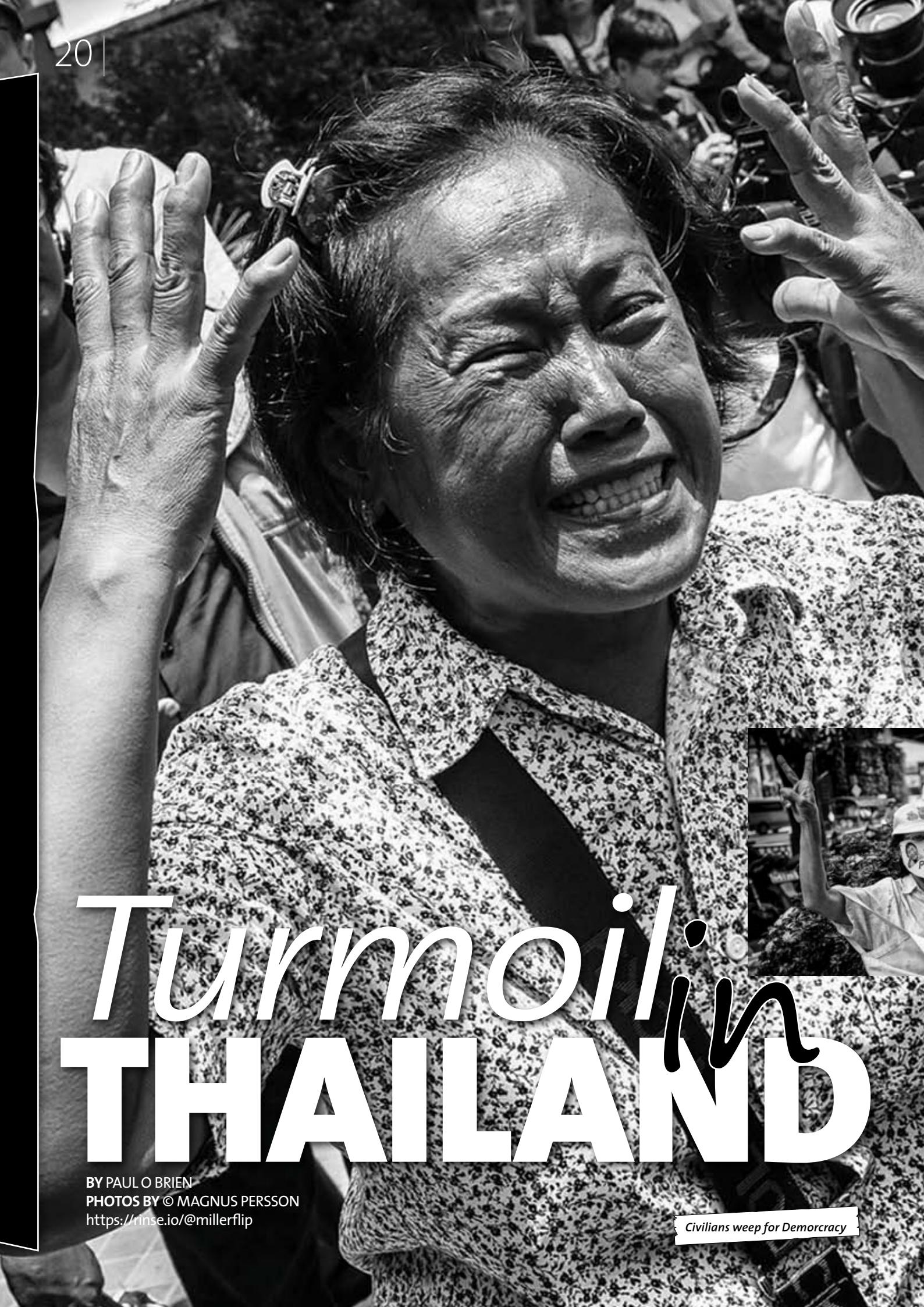
He went on to say: “I am always impressed by what the Irish troops do. The local population say how grateful they are for the presence of the Irish in the area.”

He wished a “happy and prosperous Christmas” to those who would be staying in Lebanon and expressed his appreciation for “the commitment the Defence Forces give over Christmas”. He finished by wishing Lt Col Howard “a very successful tour of duty”.

An Cosantóir team would like to thank the members of 109 Inf Bn for the hospitality shown to them during their visit to post 2-45. ■

Able Seaman Aaron O'Connor, chatting with Minister of State Paul Keohoe TD.





Turmoil in THAILAND

BY PAUL O'BRIEN

PHOTOS BY © MAGNUS PERSSON
<https://rinse.io/@millerflip>

Civilians weep for Democracy



A popular holiday destination for many, Thailand is currently governed by a military junta that took power in a coup d'état in May 2014.

After months of street battles between opposing political groups, leaders of the pro-reform People's Democratic Reform Committee and their main pro-government opponents, the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (AKA the 'Red Shirts'), attended a meeting at the Royal Thai Army club in Bangkok. This meeting was arranged after the military had imposed martial law and both sides met to discuss the future of the country.

Little is known as to what exactly happened at that meeting but when both sides failed to agree, the military announced they were seizing power and detained those in attendance. They later raided a number of houses throughout the city, culminating in the arrest of 200 activists.

This is the latest in a long history of coup and counter-coup in Thailand. (Depending on the source it can be somewhere between 30 and 40 transfers of power by force.)

Formerly known as Siam, Thailand is centrally located on the Indo-chinese peninsula in Southeast Asia. It covers approximately 513,000 sq kms and has land borders with Myanmar and Laos to the north, Laos and Cambodia to the east, and Malaysia to the south. It shares maritime borders with Vietnam through the Gulf of Thailand, and India and Indonesia to the west through the Andaman Sea.

Bangkok is the country's capital and also the political, commercial and industrial centre.

The population numbers in the region of 66 million, the majority of whom are ethnically Thai with the remainder consisting of smaller groups of ethnic minorities.

In the mid 1990s the country underwent significant economic growth as exports increased. Manufacturing, agriculture and tourism enabled Thailand to become one of the most powerful and attractive

in 1938 at a time of growing nationalism that also saw the change of name from Siam to Thailand.

Alliance with Japan led to Phibunsongkhram's downfall at the end of the war but in 1947 another military coup by units loyal to Phibunsongkhram deposed Prime Minister Banomyong and returned Phibunsongkhram to power until 1957 when he was ousted by another coup d'état.

While many countries experience civil war in the aftermath of a coup, Thailand has remained free of such conflict. Many have put this unusual phenomenon down to the reign of King Rama IX, Bhumibol Adulyadej, which began in 1946. Having spent his early years abroad, King Bhumibol accepted his royal responsibilities and took the care of his subjects very seriously. However, while he gave a somewhat steady hand to day-to-day events in Thailand, the power of the military and their coups d'état remained the mainstay of changing power in the country.

The Royal Thai Armed forces, as they are collectively known, have a formidable arsenal at their disposal: French helicopters, Swedish Saab jets and Erieye airborne warning systems; APCs and tanks from the Ukraine; and Israeli 155mm self-propelled artillery, Tar-21 bullpup assault rifles and Negev light machine guns. Their naval capacity consists of stealth frigates, an aircraft carrier and a number of smaller patrol vessels, purchased from Korea, China, the UK, and Singapore.

In recent years the country's defence budget has risen from \$5.4 billion in 2013 to \$6 billion in 2014 and this trend is set to continue.

The recent rise in Thailand's economy has been uneven with those in and around Bangkok benefiting the most. Increased wealth has accelerated urbanisation, pushing out many of those who resided on the outskirts of the city. This creation of an unequal society has brought protests onto the streets of the capital, as the ruling elite and the industrialists reap the profits, marginalising the ordinary people.

A class struggle developed in recent years with ex-policeman and



places to reside of the 10 countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Thailand's current borders were forged during the early years of the 20th century, when the Chakris Dynasty ruled Siam, hemmed in on one side by British India and on others by French Indo-China).

Although the Chakris embraced modernisation in an attempt to hold onto power, a group of military personnel and intellectuals launched a bloodless coup in 1932 to overthrow the absolute monarchy.

The reduction to a figurehead position led to the abdication of the king in 1935. His replacement was still a child and regents were put in place to perform ceremonial duties. One of the leaders of the 1932 coup, Field Marshal Luang Phibunsongkhram, became prime minister

businessman, Thaksin Shinawatra, endearing himself to people in the north and east of the country and leading to his election. After his government was toppled in 2006 Shinawatra was sent into exile. It was at this time that the pro-Shinawatra Red Shirts and anti-Shinawatra Yellow Shirts began to take part in violent demonstrations that lasted sporadically until the takeover of the current military junta under General Prayuth Chan-ocha. Despite its turbulent history and recent troubles, huge numbers of people still travel to this bustling Asian country to experience an oriental adventure and sample the best of what the region has to offer, mainly oblivious to the fact that the stability of Thailand, was, is, and for the foreseeable future will be, balanced on a knife edge. ■

BANG ON TARGET!

BY COMS MIKE BARRETT, RDF 7 INF BN

Firing from the lying position

Permanently attached to a modified Steyr rifle, the M203 grenade launcher's primary role is in support of the infantry section and can fire a variety of ammunition types, including high explosive, smoke and illumination. It is an under-slung, 40mm, low velocity grenade weapon system with a separate sighting and trigger mechanism. It can be used to engage troops in the open and soft-skinned vehicles, and its capacity to penetrate up to 90mm of rolled homogenous armour means it can also engage light armour or fortified buildings. It is also ideal for engaging enemy forces in dead ground - that is, ground that cannot be reached by direct small-arms fire - and can provide effective fire out to 350m at a rate of fire of between five and seven rounds per minute, depending on the proficiency of the firer.

As a section-level weapon, all infantry privates must be proficient in its use. However, although adopted by the Defence Forces over 10 years ago, it is a weapon still relatively unfamiliar to RDF troops. Accordingly, in early November 2016, the RDF elements of the Dublin-based 7 Inf Bn conducted a M203 grenade launcher qualification range practice on Kilbride Camp's military ranges.

Preparation for the shoot had begun some months previously, with personnel from the battalion's three RDF companies partaking in a course of training culminating in October with TOETs (tests of elementary training), which all personnel passed.

The day of the shoot, although quite cold, turned out to be perfect range weather, windless and sunny. Over 40 RDF personnel fired the standard qualification table, which includes standing, kneeling, and prone firing positions.

Training courses that culminate with qualification range practices like this one add to the education and skills of RDF soldiers, and allow for greater flexibility within the DF as a whole. Each newly qualified 7 Inf Bn RDF soldier can now be issued with the Steyr/M203 in any future exercises with our PDF comrades. This gives commanders more options in the assignment and deployment of RDF troops within integrated sections and platoons, thus, in practical terms, building towards the single-force concept of a combined and unified unit consisting of both PDF and RDF troops. ■



Members from the 7 Inf Bn RDF on the firing point



M203 GRENADE LAUNCHER STATISTICS

<i>Manufacturer</i>	Diemaco
<i>Weapon Type</i>	Grenade Launcher
<i>Country of Manufacture</i>	Canada
<i>Entered Service</i>	2002
<i>Calibre</i>	40mm
<i>Ammunition Feed</i>	Breach Loaded
<i>Weight</i>	2.15kg
<i>Mode of Fire</i>	Single Shot
<i>Range</i>	400m
<i>Rate of Fire</i>	5 to 7 rounds/min
<i>Length</i>	305mm
<i>Sight</i>	Iron Sight



European Awards 2016

BY COMDT COLIN LAWLOR, PR BRANCH. PHOTOS BY CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN

On 12th December 2016, Óglaigh na hÉireann was presented with the prestigious European Movement Ireland, European of the Year 2016 award. The award, sponsored by Zurich Insurance PLC, was presented to the Defence Forces by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD, in recognition of their contribution to international peacekeeping and humanitarian work.

Presenting the award An Taoiseach said: "The Defence Forces have a proud history of international service for Ireland and on behalf of the European Union and the United Nations. I am very pleased, as Honorary President of European Movement Ireland, to present Óglaigh na hÉireann with the 2016 European of the Year award. They are a very worthy recipient, especially this year, when, as well as their ongoing humanitarian and peace-keeping endeavours abroad, they have played a very prominent and important role in our 1916 Centenary commemorations."

Chairman of European Movement Ireland, Mr Maurice Pratt, commended the Defence Forces for their performance and record on peace-support operations since 1958. He also praised our Naval Service personnel for their contribution to Operation Pontus, where over 15,000 lives have been saved in the Mediterranean, saying:

"The Irish Defence Forces have stepped up to the mark in the international arena and have made the entire nation of Ireland proud, making them a very commendable deserving winner of the 2016 European Movement Ireland European of the Year award."

The Defence Forces were represented at the event by personnel drawn from all services, and included personnel recently returned from overseas service. Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, accepted the award on behalf of the men and women of Óglaigh na hÉireann and thanked European Movement Ireland for the award and for hosting the event. In his address Vice Admiral Mellett said: "This is a special tribute that endorses the considerable efforts and sacrifices our personnel make in order to fulfil the roles we have been assigned, not only in the international arena, but also domestically and particularly during this year of centenary commemoration. It is testament to the outstanding service of our soldiers, sailors and aircrew who seek to inspire pride and lead excellence in the performance of their duties, at home and abroad, on land, sea and air."

European Movement

Founded in 1954, European Movement (EM) Ireland is the longest established Irish NGO working on European affairs. An independent, not-for-profit, membership organisation, EM Ireland works to develop the connection between Ireland and the European Union. It facilitates links between all



sectors of Irish society and the EU, through advocacy campaigns, education programmes, training courses, information briefings and networking events. For more information, visit: www.europeanmovement.ie ■



Developing a Wellness Toolbox

A Wellness Toolbox is:

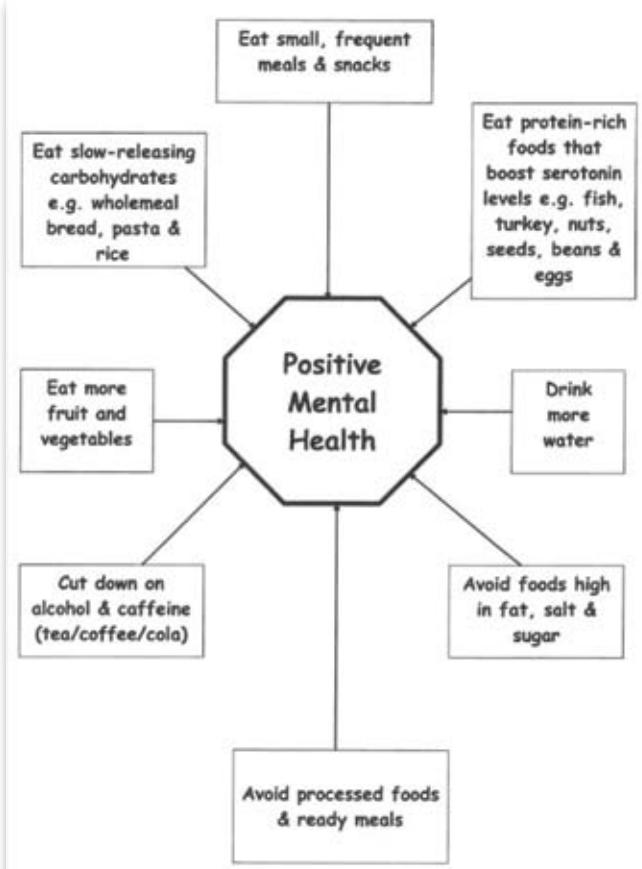
1. A list of things you have done in the past, or could do, to help yourself stay well. It can also include physical items that make you feel good such as a photo, music cd, or even chocolate.

AND

2. A list of things you could do to help yourself feel better when you are not well.

Suggestions:

- Talk to a friend / 'peer counselling'
- Talk to a health care professional
- Take prescribed medication
- Take vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements etc .
- Have a good diet
- Limit intake of alcohol & caffeine
- Do regular exercise
- Attend regular activities, groups or classes
- Get plenty of sleep and rest
- Do some relaxation exercises
- Get some natural light every day
- Attend a support group
- Listen to music
- Get some little jobs done
- Have a warm bath
- Do something creative e.g. art work, cookery, sewing, knitting, photography, playing an instrument or singing
- Do some writing in a journal or write a letter to a friend
- Wear something that makes you feel good



Developing a Wellness Toolbox – reminders and resources to call on

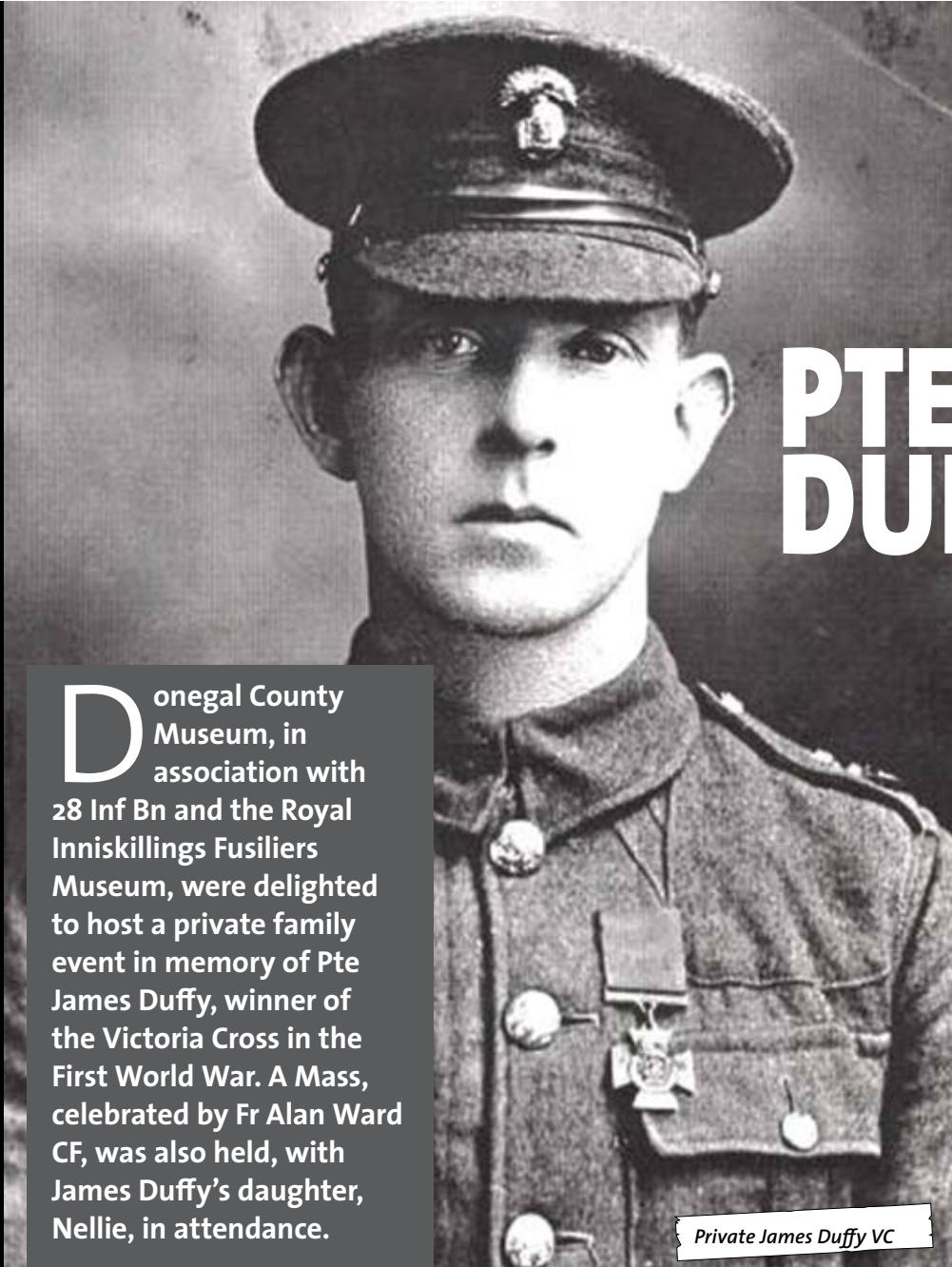
- a. In my experience these are things that support my wellness – this works for me:

- b. This is what carries a sense of meaning or significance for me, this is what inspires me and reminds me of my values

- c. These are some things that I would like to try to see if they would support my wellness



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PTE JAMES DUFFY VC

BY CAROLINE CARR, DONEGAL COUNTY MUSEUM
www.donegalcoco.ie

Donegal County Museum, in association with 28 Inf Bn and the Royal Inniskillings Fusiliers Museum, were delighted to host a private family event in memory of Pte James Duffy, winner of the Victoria Cross in the First World War. A Mass, celebrated by Fr Alan Ward CF, was also held, with James Duffy's daughter, Nellie, in attendance.

Neil Armstrong, curator of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Museum, Enniskillen, facilitated the loan of Pte Duffy's VC for the occasion.

James Duffy was born in 1889 at Thorr, Crolly, Gweedore, Co Donegal, and brought up in Letterkenny. At 16 he emigrated to Glasgow where he found work in the shipyards. He enlisted in the army on 1st

December 1914 and was posted to the 6th Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. The battalion was sent to Gallipoli, later to Egypt, and then onto Palestine in September 1917.

On 27th December 1917, Pte Duffy was serving as a stretcher-bearer at Kereina Park, Palestine, when his company was under sustained Turkish attack. His heroic



Pte James Duffy's daughter Nellie with his Victoria Cross.

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Pte James Duffy's medals on display in Donegal County Museum.



Pte James Duffy's family, with Comdt John Anderson (right), 28 Inf Bn.

actions that day in single-handedly retrieving two wounded comrades while under heavy fire, led to his award of the Victoria Cross.

His medal citation, published in the London Gazette on 27th February 1918, read:

"For most conspicuous bravery displayed whilst his company was holding a very exposed position. Private Duffy and another stretcher bearer went out to bring in a seriously wounded comrade; when the other stretcher bearer was wounded he returned to get another man; when again going forward the relief stretcher bearer was killed. Private Duffy then went forward alone and under heavy fire succeeded in bringing both wounded men under cover and attended to their injuries. His gallantry undoubtedly saved both men's lives."

King George V presented him with his medal on 25th July 1918 at Buckingham Palace. He was also awarded the 1914 Star, the British War medal, the British Victory medal and the 1937 King George VI Coronation medal.

When the war was over Private Duffy returned to Letterkenny where he married Maggie Hegarty

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in 1919 and raised a family of eight children. James Duffy died on 7th April 1969 and was buried with full military honours, organised by the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Association, in Conwal cemetery, Letterkenny.

In 2004, a new €22 million accommodation block named after James Duffy VC was opened in Catterick Infantry Training Grounds, Yorkshire, England. His daughter, Nellie O'Donnell, and granddaughter, Evelyn Gallagher, attended the opening. Letterkenny Town Council also acknowledged their native son's achievement by erecting a stone bench in his memory in July 2007 in Letterkenny Town Park. ■

British troops on parade at Jaffa Gate during the capture and occupation of Palestine, December 1917. Photo: © Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Division Washington DC, USA



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'One-Inch Group' in the Congo

The source of information for the following article is an unsigned contemporary report on the activities of 1 Inf Gp in the Congo in 1961, written towards the end of the deployment.

Written by Commanding Officer Lt Col J.C.O. O'Donovan and endorsed by Comdt M.F. Quinlan, and sent in by Congo Veteran Christy Fleming.

Photos: www.unmultimedia.org

1 Inf Gp, or 'One-Inch Group' as it was affectionately called by its members, was formed in April 1961 for service with the UN in the Congo. Comprising a company from Eastern Command and one from Southern Command, with a tactical HQ, it was the first Irish formation to be armed entirely with the new FN rifle and the Carl Gustav 84mm recoilless rifle and was designed to be a hard-hitting, highly-powered, independent, self-contained unit.

Shortly before leaving Ireland it was announced they would be heading to Kasai province, where, a few days earlier, tribal warfare had broken out in the area of Mwene-ditu, where the HQ was to be based.

The unit flew out on 25th and 26th May and when they arrived in Mwene-ditu they started taking over from the Ghanians. However, as a virulent small-pox epidemic was raging in the territory, the senior UN MO ordered that anyone who had not been vaccinated within the previous three months would have to be revaccinated before going into the area. (Throughout their deployment small-pox and other diseases were so rampant that the whole of south Kasai was known as a pathologist's paradise.)

Due to the revaccination delay it wasn't



Irish ONUC soldier Pte W. Ambler on guard duty at Coy HQ in Albertville. 1st August 1960. © UN Photo

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ONUC Irish contingent troops en-route to the airport on the first leg of their journey to Elizabethville, where fighting has broken out.
1st December 1961. © UN Photo

until 17th June that the Group had taken over the entire south Kasai sector, with an area of 6,000 sq miles to look after.

1 Inf Gp was responsible for guarding over 60 miles of important railway line that provided the main supply line from Elizabethville through Katanga and Kasai to Port Franqui.

At least three times a week the unit provided train guards to protect hundreds of refugees travelling on the line, which ran along the borders of Baluba and Kanioka territories, and also between Lulua and Baluba tribes, who were traditional enemies. Any relaxation of vigilance could mean a flare-up of the tribal wars that had unhappily caused so many UN casualties a short time previously.

1 Inf Gp held the area for over two months, eventually occupying posts previously occupied by a battalion with a recce squadron in support.

The unit's posts were barbed-wire enclosures about the size of a football pitch, which they never left except to patrol in strength, living in primitive conditions under canvas and with a constant shortage of water; one post had to travel over five miles to collect their water in jerry cans.

The Ghanaians had taken their transport with them and the Irish had to wait a considerable time for the arrival of UN replacements. In the meantime, the transport for one company, with two posts over seven miles apart, consisted of one jeep, two pick-ups and a bullet-riddled, five-ton truck. Roads were rutted tracks and after a few miles faces and clothes were covered with a thick coating of black-red dust. Loaded weapons were carried by all personnel at all times. Snakes were also plentiful; at one post four deadly mambas were killed in one day alone.

By the time 1 Inf Gp was withdrawn to Kamina, south Kasai was considered a 'safe area' due to their efforts, and the UN garrison

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there was not replaced. When the last company was leaving Mwene-Ditu, the Minister of the Interior came to the railway station to address the Irish, telling them that they were welcome back to south Kasai at any time. At each station on their route deputations met the train and similar speeches were made. It was a testament to the Irish soldiers' efforts, given that two months before there had been a shooting war between local troops and UN personnel.

On arrival in Kamina after four days travelling in dilapidated railway coaches, OC 1 Inf Gp took over as base commander and as commander of the NW sector of Katanga, an area over 100 sq miles previously occupied by a Nigerian brigade, and which included 100 Swedish troops. In addition to running the huge base and its outposts 1 Inf Gp also had to garrison Kilubi, 60 miles away, where a hydro-electric station supplied power to Kamina.

With such a huge area there wasn't much time for rest but living conditions were excellent and the work was much easier. Strength on the base, including the Swedes, was roughly 300.

Then, on August 27th 1 Inf Gp was handed two Katangan officers to guard; one a French mercenary. The next day, captured mercenaries started to roll in from the rest of Katanga and in a short time they had 150 under guard, along with 27 others they had rounded up in their own area. These mercenaries were tough and unpredictable; a roving army of 'guns for hire' who had fought in Korea, Indo-China, Palestine, Europe, and Cuba.

From 2nd September the Irish unit also had to send a nightly patrol of 50 into Kaminaville, 30km away.

Along with all the extra duties and extra guards, the situation meant that trouble was almost inevitable. It duly arrived.

On the night of September 12th 'stand-to' was ordered. There were 14 roads and a railway line leading into the base and it had been acknowledged that it would require a brigade to successfully defend Kamina, a town whose importance was recognised in the saying "who holds Kamina holds Katanga". With small numbers, the best Lt Col O'Donovan could do was to man strategic strong points around the base and scramble the mobile reserve.

Reports coming in of enemy strength were of 1,200 troops, equipped with long-range mortars, and eight Saracens armed with 57mm cannons, twin machine-guns, and .5" machine guns; completely out-gunning the Irish unit. The enemy also had a reserve of 2,500 troops in the Kaminaville sector and it was claimed that they could arm 20,000 tribesmen.

On the afternoon of September 14th they attacked. The first wave came up against a strong point manned by 29 Swedes with an Irish mortar section in support. This attack was broken up and the 84mm knocked out two Saracens. Irish mortar fire also blew up an enemy ammunition truck containing about five tons of mortar rounds and small-arms ammunition. Lt Col O'Donovan quickly deployed his mobile reserve and further attacks were broken up as they arose. Probing tactics, sniping and mortar fire continued from the edge of the jungle, but men and weapons

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were quickly moved to counter threats and in all cases the enemy were beaten off.

Late on the evening of the 15th around 30 enemy infiltrated houses on the outskirts of the base where the jungle grew right up to the perimeter. At first light on the following morning an Irish platoon counter-attacked and after a fight lasting about three hours dislodged the enemy who left three dead behind.

When the base came under long-range mortar attack, Irish mortar crews crept forward under fire and brought down deadly fire on the enemy positions. The Irish crews kept changing their positions and continued striking enemy positions while their opponents seemed to be unable to shift their fire quickly in response.

The enemy never set foot on the base again and it was the nearest they came to the airport five miles away. Enemy dead during these actions was estimated at 35 killed and 48 seriously wounded.

The defenders were also subjected to regular air attacks from Fouga jets and all roads and bridges into the base had been blown up. Gradually, however, their meagre force was reinforced by air at night. As each new unit came in they took over positions from the Irish troops who moved further and further out in search of the enemy. While they came up against some sniping and mortar fire they no longer faced serious opposition.

On the night of the 19th 55 men of B Coy in Kilubi, who had been cut off when the enemy blocked and mined the road, were evacuated by helicopters. The rearguard of one officer and seven men destroyed all stores and equipment before taking off. The garrison was no longer needed in Kilubi as the power line had been cut.

1 Inf Gp used its generators for power and to supply emergency lighting for the airport's runways and power for the control tower.

On receiving information that enemy reinforcements were moving in, 50 Irish troops were sent out to ambush them. Positions were chosen, prepared and manned, but the enemy didn't materialise. Another 50 Irish were sent out to guard against a possible attack from the Jadotville/Kolwezi road.

By the time a ceasefire came on the night of 20th September the base was manned by 320 Irish, about 300 Swedes, and about 100 Indians, all under the command of Lt Col O'Donovan.

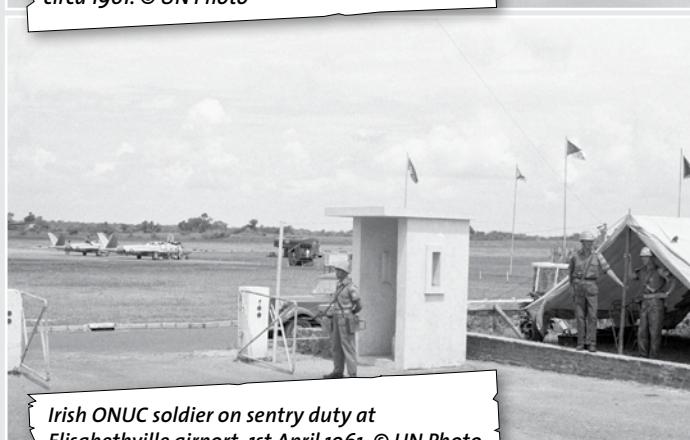
Not only had they secured the base but had advanced out and were holding all the ground up to the jungle's edge.

Despite the air attacks and the vastly superior range of their opponents' weapons (until some long-range mortars were captured and turned on the enemy), the only casualties suffered on the base were three Congolese civilian refugees killed and an Italian pilot wounded in the first Fouga attack, and two civilian pilots wounded in a later attack when their plane was bombed on the ground.

After the ceasefire the troops still had to man the outer defences and hold the ground they had won. There was little rest,



An artist's rendition of the United Nations flag, circa 1961. © UN Photo



Irish ONUC soldier on sentry duty at Elisabethville airport. 1st April 1961. © UN Photo

with 24 hours on, 24 off. Then on 9th October 1 Inf Gp received 24 hours' notice to pack-up and move to Nyunzu near Niemba.

The Swedish company from Kamina also moved to Nyunzu, still under the command of 1 Inf Gp.

Taking over from the Ghanaians, they were the first white troops to occupy the area. Back into the bush and into tents, but this time at the height of the rainy season. They were also back among the Balubas and carried out frequent patrols to Niemba, and sad pilgrimages to the scene of the ambush.

In Nyunzu they had 144 Katangan prisoners to look after, in addition to guarding the town, a railway, the road network and an airstrip.

By the time the report on which this article is based was written, 1 Inf Gp had occupied seven stations since their arrival in the Congo five months previously, operating for all bar two weeks at 'battle stations'. The writer of the report said that morale, which had been very high when things were toughest, was dropping steadily with the arrival of each batch of newspapers from Ireland as the troops found that the Irish public were not being informed of their activities. Far from being a nebulous outpost of 35 Inf Bn in Elizabethville, as portrayed in the papers, Kamina was over 200 miles away and was an independent command.

While giving all credit to 35 Inf Bn for the magnificent job they did in Elizabethville, the men of 'One-Inch' Group felt they also deserved credit for the work they had done and the hardships they had endured in the Congo; spending their entire service stationed near small towns without shops or modern amenities, confined to their camps because all their deployments were in trouble spots. Credit they certainly deserved in light of the above story. ■

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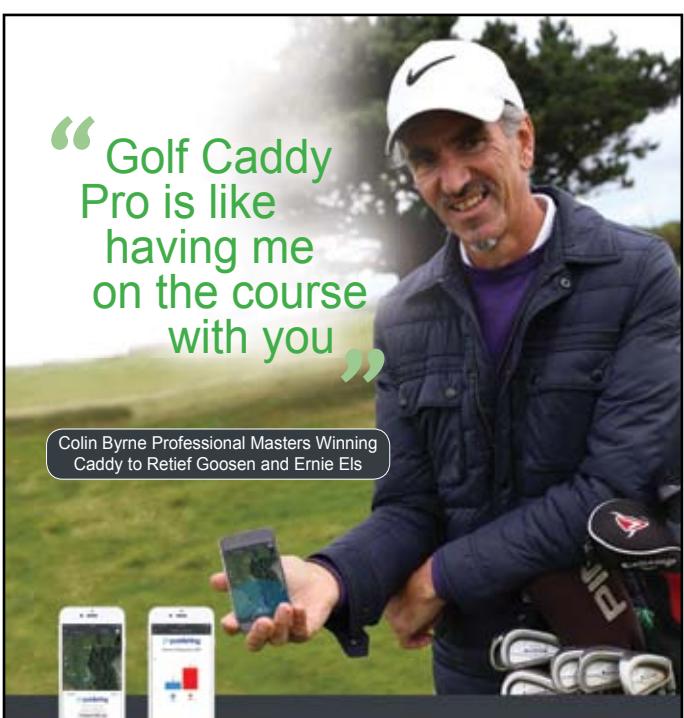
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Tone and Figure

BY CPL LEE COYLE

Fitness is an important part of being a member of the Defence Forces, and in the last two decades there has been a major surge of new and impressive ways of keeping fit, from cross-fit to kettle-bells. But bodybuilding, which is now classed as an 'oldie', has become one of the most popular ways of keeping fit.

We recently met up with Pte Elvina Vizbaraite, 7 Inf Bn RDF, a dedicated bodybuilder, to talk to her about her recent wins in the Tone and Figure class.

Elvina, got started in bodybuilding at 15 when she joined her local gym in Lithuania. It didn't take long for her to become addicted and she began competing at junior events when she was only 16.

Over eight years ago, at 19, Elvina moved to Ireland with her mother and father. Initially she found the move difficult as she didn't know much English or have many friends, but the gym was always there and was a good way of meeting new people and making friends that shared her interests.

She is currently living in Maynooth, Co Kildare, and after studying fitness in Por-



SPORT

tabello College, Dublin, she now works as a personnel trainer in one of the largest gym chains in Ireland.

Elvina's interest in joining the RDF came from her childhood. When she was 12 she joined a local Lithuanian riflemen's union, which is something similar to the RDF as the members wear military uniforms, learn how to march and to shoot air rifles, and go on camps a few times a year. On national holidays they would also march in parades around their local towns.

It was Elvina's mother who suggested she should join the DF, after hearing about a new enlistment campaign for the RDF and PDF through a friend. Elvina applied for both and went through the enlistment process for each, even doing the fitness test twice. In the end she opted for the RDF as it still gave her the opportunity to finish becoming a fitness instructor and personal trainer, which were a passion and a dream for her.

The passion she has for the sport of bodybuilding is clear from the enthusiasm in her voice. After only talking to her for a few minutes, the enormity of her dedication was apparent, with her days calculated down to the minute; including times to wake up, times and amount to eat, times to exercise, and what body part to train.

When I asked her how hard it is to keep to such a tight schedule her immediate response was: *"Discipline and routine are the most important things when competing in this sport."*

She has competed in many competitions since coming to Ireland, under many different federations and associate bodies, such as the Republic of Ireland Bodybuilding Federation (RIBBF), the National Amateur Bodybuilders Association (NABBA) and the World Fitness Federation (WFF).

The last year has been her busiest, with five events, and most successful year to date. She told us: *"The last year has been tough, as I haven't really had a break or much time off, but I'm happy with what I have achieved".*

Her major achievement was winning the Tone and Figure class in October at the WFF National Championships in the Olympia Theatre, Dublin. She was also the women's overall winner at those championships, which was a great result.

These wins gave her the chance to move forward to the WFF World Championships, as part of the Irish team. Luckily, these

were held in Ireland this year in City West, Dublin, so she didn't have to travel abroad to compete in her first world event.

Elvina performed very well at the championships, finishing in the top six, which is very good for a first timer at the World Championships.

She puts a lot of last year's success down to her trainer, Tommy Staunton, who has given her great advice and mentoring. However, Tommy says the reason for her success is that *"she has great genetics for bodybuilding and is very dedicated"*.

Working as a personnel trainer in a gym has its advantages, Elvina says, especially helping her to keep to her strict diet and training schedule, and she also gets most of her cardio work done during the classes she instructs, which include spinning, boxing, circuit training, and body conditioning and strength.

When asked to give us a quick rundown on her typical training routine, Elvina told us: *"I mostly train with weights on my training days, with very little cardio as I instruct a lot of fitness classes."* She went on to tell us that her training is broken down into a six-day cycle, where she trains two different body parts over two days, has a day's rest, then repeats with different body parts. When this six-day cycle is up, she starts again from day one.

Going away with the RDF can be a bit tricky for Elvina's diet, although there are plenty of eggs at breakfast, which she says is a good start to the day. She also says it is funny when some of her fellow soldiers, especially the men, see her with all her cans of tuna and the amount of food she consumes in a day.

Elvina is hoping to compete again this year with everything going well, with her first contest being the Spring Classic. This will be the start of her prep for the summer contests and hopefully on to the nationals.

We would like to wish Elvina all the best in the future and to 'keep soldiering on'. ■





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Winter Lecture Series 2017

**Glasnevin Trust & Trinity College Dublin present a series of lectures
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2nd February 2017 Michael Kennedy (RIA): 'Ireland and the war at sea, 1917'.

9th February 2017 Myles Dungan (RTÉ) & Nerys Williams (UCD): 'Poets of the black chair: Francis Ledwidge and Hedd Wyn 1887-1917'.

16th February 2017 Conor Kostick: 'Ireland and the Russian revolution, 1917-23'.

23rd February 2017 Liz Gillis (RTÉ): 'The Hales' brothers and the Irish Revolution, 1916-23'.

2nd March 2017 Kate O'Malley (RIA): 'Women of the Irish Revolution and India: Maud Gonne, Charlotte Despard, Mollie Woods, and the struggle for Indian independence in the 1930s'.

**All lectures start at 7pm and will be held in the Museum's Milestone Gallery, Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin 11.
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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Desmond Murray, Co. Louth. Closing date is 20th February 2016.

THE IRISH ON THE SOMME:

A battlefield guide to the Irish regiments in the Great War and the monuments to their memory



Author: Steven Moore
Publisher: Colourpoint (August 2016) <http://colourpointbooks.co.uk>
ISBN: 9780954971519
Pages: 256 PB
Price: €18.50

The Decade of Centenaries has heralded shelf upon shelf of publications to coincide with the seismic events that have shaped our history. Arguably, it is only occasional that years of dedicated research, prompted by such obvious personal interest, is ever reflected so succinctly in a universally accessible style as accomplished by Steven Moore in his book 'The Irish on the Somme - A Battlefield Guide to the Irish Regiments in the Great War and the Monuments to their Memory'. Over 1/4 million Irish went off to war between 1914 - 1918 and this book provides a wealth of valuable information about the full spectrum of service and sacrifice of the Irish divisions, regiments and individual soldiers (in all regiments of the Commonwealth Forces) across the Western Front (and not only the Somme as the title suggests). This book will certainly become a seminal source for the research student but its greatest appeal will be as well thumbed reference for visitors to the battlefields, cemeteries and memorials from Mons to the Marne. For the avid military historian and the curious student alike, it is evident from first page to last that Steven Moore appreciates the varying depths of detail required by the different enthusiasts at any particular time. No collection of First World War references will be complete without 'The Irish on the Somme' and for the relative newcomer to the subject this book may probably be the only book initially needed to provide the comprehensive understanding of the Irish story across the Western Front. DF

HELL AND GONE

(The Retreads Book 1)

Authors: Henry Brown
Publisher: Virtual Pulp Press (July 2014)
ISBN: 978-1456598983
Pages: 262
Price: €2.80 eBook / €12.00 PB

Henry Brown's self-published *Hell and Gone* action adventure thriller is a real gem in a treasure trove that is Amazon books. Henry goes for all action with his 'Dirty

Dozen' like squad sent on a daring mission in Sudan, with a final battle that reminded me of *Black Hawk Down*. This mixture of Special Operators from all services within the US Military is put together by the CIA. This band of brothers is led by retired SEAL team leader 'Rocco' Cavarra, who has never met his team, only what he's read in their dossiers.

Their mission, to capture a nuclear bomb that is hidden with a heavily fortified terrorist training camp in the desert in northern Sudan, which breeds suicidal martyrs. The bomb's intended target is a middle eastern country, who is ready to strike before it leaves Sudan. Two Mossad agents have been sent on a parallel mission to intercept the bomb. There is also a civil war going on within this African landscape. The ending of the book is explosive, you are in the thick of it.

The sequel to *Hell and Gone* is out now *Tier Zero* (2013). WF



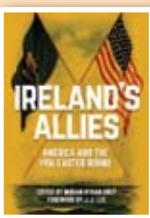
IRELAND'S ALLIES

America and the 1916 Easter Rising

Contributors: Miriam Nyhan Grey (editor)
Prof J. J. Lee (foreword)
Publisher: UCD Press October 2016
www.ucdpress.ie
ISBN: 9781910820131
Pages: 400 HB
Price: €36.00

Renowned historian Professor J.J. Lee has observed 'No America, no New York, no Easter Rising. Simple as that.'

The year of 2016 has been for many people an extraordinary busy time, commemorating and reflecting on what took place a hundred years ago, during the Easter rising of 1916, especially in our capital Dublin.



The events and the many stories recalled or written about, one such story untold: is about the role that the United States of America played in the Easter Rising.

At that time war was raging across Europe, and a rebellion taking place in Ireland, that eventually lead to an Irish free state separate from Britain.

In his forward J.J. Lee observes the Easter Rising from a transatlantic position, along with the twenty-four scholars, each with their separate chapter, who offer the reader the fruits of their combined, knowledge and interest in the actual people and events leading up to the 'Easter Rising' of 1916.

In Miriam Nyhan Grey's introduction she recalls to the reader a paragraph that was written on the subject of 'Nationalism' by Timothy Meagher, distinguished scholar of Irish America.

Nationalism – the commitment to restore some political autonomy to the old country was an essential part of Irish American life almost from birth of the American Republic. From the United Irish Exiles in the 1790s and early 1800s to the Repeal movement in the early 1840s to the Fenians of the 1860s, the Land Leaguers and the Home Rulers in the 1880s to the Friends of Irish Freedom and members of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish.... and....Clan na Gael.... Irish Americans have invested considerable resources of time and money into freeing the old country.

All readers seeking an in depth knowledge and as a reference book, with regard to America and the Easter Rising 1916, this volume is recommended reading. **For further information contact:**

www.ucdpress@ucd.ie SS

GIVING BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

BY CPL LEE COYLE

with the Order of the Malta Ambulance Corps.

Mick has been a member of the DF since 1999. He completed his initial medic's course in 2002 and is currently serving as a sergeant medic in the Curragh military hospital. He got involved in the Order of Malta Ambulance Corps over two years ago, after he had heard about it through a doctor, Capt Patrick Kelly.

Seeing this as a great way to get involved in his community and to give back by helping others with his medical skills, Mick joined his closest unit, in Palmerstown. The unit meets once a week to go over drills and organise the tasks and training that will be conducted over the next week. Some of these tasks may include instructional training in schools or places of employment, and visiting shopping centres and other public places to demonstrate CPR and other first aid techniques. Their duties can range from caring for elderly and disabled people in their homes to providing transport for the infirm so they can attend special occasions, which Mick says is great as "it helps them socialise and be part of their community". They are also called upon by the HSE to assist with patient care and transport.

Another important role they play is providing first aid and medical services at national and local community events, like road races, concerts, or major sporting events. Regarding the latter, Mick told us about an incident that occurred when he was run-

Volunteering your time to a local sports club or charitable organisation can be a great way to give something back to your community. We spoke with Sgt Mick Barry about being a volunteer medic

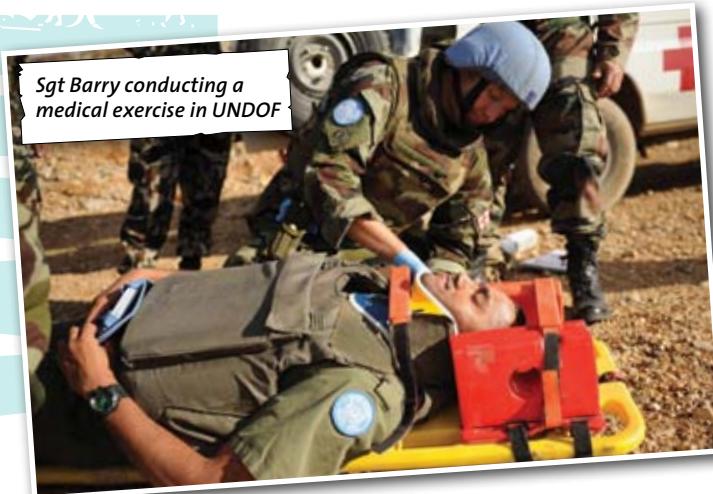
ning the Dublin Half Marathon in July 2016. Another runner collapsed a few metres in front of him at the finish line and went into a ventricular fibrillation. Mick was the first on the scene and started CPR, and was soon joined by members of Civil Defence and Dublin Fire Brigade. Thanks to Mick and the others' quick response the man had what is termed a return of spontaneous circulation and was then moved to Beaumont Hospital where he had open-heart surgery.

In his career Mick has undergone a wide range of medical training and has completed various medical courses, including EMT (emergency medical technician), PALS (paediatric advance life support) and PEP (paediatric education for practitioners) courses.

Mick told us that "the DF and Order of Malta have a symbiotic relationship; they both get something back". Being a member of both gives Mick the chance to up-skill and to hold on to his practitioner's licence. He also told us that the Order of Malta is very happy to have members of the DF operating with them "as we are very highly trained".

Recently, Mick has been appointed as the training officer of the Palmerstown unit, and is now responsible for the running of courses such as CPR training and medical first responder.

Mick is thankful for the opportunity to be able to give back to his community and would like to encourage others to consider joining the Order of Malta. The Corps has people from all different backgrounds - ranging from trained professionals such as nurses, advanced paramedics and doctors, to a priest - teaching and learning together.



The Order of Malta

The Order of Malta is one of Ireland's largest and longest running voluntary organisations and has nearly 4,000 members. They run courses ranging from simple first responders all the way to EMT.

Adam's Gift is an initiative supported by the Order of Malta Ireland Ambulance Corps, that aims to help people recognise cardiac arrest and to have the knowledge and training to offer lifesaving skills. If you would like to know more, please visit their website www.orderofmaltaireland.org. ■



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