



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

# AN COSANTÓIR

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NOVEMBER 2015

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We wish all retired members of the  
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Forces a Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year

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**Front Cover**

*Pictured is Gnr Charlene Bailey, 1 BAR/50 Inf Gp during UNDOF MRE, by Cpl Neville Coughlan.*

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

# Editorial

**H**ello and welcome to our November issue, we cast our net wide this month with articles from the Glen to Cork, Sligo, Galway, Portlaoise and Berlin.

*On Parade* was a tight squeeze this month, but keep your photos coming. *In Focus* features a nice letter from DF Veteran Liam Nolan on his *Veterans Day* experience in Cork, next Sgt Karl Byrne recently visited the *IUNVA Post 27 Deceased Members Mass* and Col James Fitzmaurice Remembrance in Portlaoise. *Veteran's News* features 3 short tales starting overseas with 25 Inf Gp in the Sinai, then it's down to Kilkenny for the formation of the 3 Inf Bn Association and finally to Drogheda for the 25th Anniversary of the tragic death of L/S Michael Quinn DSM.

In our first feature we visit the ONE Annual Delegate Conference (ADC) in Sligo, to hear how they are *Supporting Veterans with ONE Hand*. We travelled west next to listen to PDFORRA's 24th ADC in Galway. Next we went to Berlin to the European Military Press Association's Conference and Awards, regrettably we didn't win an award, but the nomination to be among Europe's leading official military magazines will suffice – for now!

Our centre spread features members of 50th Inf Gp undergoing their *Mission Readiness Exercise* in the Glen of Imaal recently, prior to their upcoming deployment to Lebanon. *Strategic Review* looks at *Cyprus 1974: a Canadian Soldier's Perspective* by veteran, author and former peacekeeper Frank Reid.

Capt Martin Mulvey and members of RDF 2 Bde CIS feature *In Reserve as Reservists Keep the Score* at Brigade and All-Army shoots. In *History*, Derek Warfield and Liam Murphy look at *Semper Fi! The US's Irish Brigade Marines from 1775*. Our *Sport* pages are filled with this year's *An Cosantóir 10K Road Race*. Plus we have all our regular features and reviews.

**COMPETITIONS:** Check out our competitions and results on pages 11, 30 and 32.

*Wayne Fitzgerald*

**Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor**



## RETIREMENT PRESENTATIONS

A retirement presentation was held in the NCOs Mess, McKee Bks on Friday 25th September 2015 to Sgt Eddie Pollard (25-yrs service), Sgt Frank Dunleavy and Cpl Richard O'Neill (both 21-yrs service). Pictured L/R: Comdt Niall McCorry (DCOS Ops Br), CQMS Dave Morrissey (Mess President), Sgt Eddie Pollard (McKee Bks Coy), Sgt Frank Dunleavy and Cpl Richie O'Neill (DCOS OPs Br), Coy Sgt Ken Murphy (Office of the ACOS) and Coy Sgt Ben Lindsay (DCOS Ops Br). Photo: Sgt Jeff Flood, DCOS Ops Branch

## LUCAS LECTURE 2015

Pictured on 11th September 2015, at the Lucas Lecture 2015 in the Stephens Green Hibernian Club is Mr Patrick Downes, Chairman of the Lucas Committee with the guests of honour including Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, COS, HE Kevin O'Malley, US Ambassador to Ireland and Charles Flanagan TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade. Photo: Patrick Downes







## FATHER & SON

Sgt PJ Bourke, 3 Inf Bn RDF Templemore and his son Paudrig Bourke Piper 12 Inf Bn Sarsfield Bks Limerick. Paudrig is 3rd generation military, as Sgt Bourke's father served with the LDF and his uncle also served with 12 Inf Bn. *Photo: Sean Shinnors*



## EMERGENCY SERVICES PARADE

Pictured are members of the ONE, IUNVA and other Veterans at the National Services Day parade organised by the Frontline Emergency and Security Services Eire Forum (FESSEF). *Photo by: Michael McDonnell, ONE*



## HISTORY OF WEXFORD BKS

Wexford Bks held an Open Day incorporating a historical tour of the Barracks on 20th September 2015, which was a fantastic success. Some of those present were, Ger Carthy Mayor of Wexford, Lt Col Stephen Ryan OC 3rd Inf Bn, Cllr Kathleen Codd-Nolan Vice Chair Wexford Co Co, Comdt Enda McDonald OC E Coy, 3 Inf Bn with Lt Loretta Harte and Pte Pierce Bowen both E Coy, 3 Inf Bn giving the historical tours of Wexford Bks. *Photo: Comdt Enda McDonald, OC E Coy, 3 Inf Bn.*



## MP TRAINING WITH AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

Coy Sgt Pat Balfe (MP Gp, DFTC) is pictured presenting a DF plaque to Chief Supt Anne Marie McMahon, Director of Training and Garda Sgt Frank Lavin, Senior Garda FCI, where he underwent a Forensic Collision Investigation (FCI) in the Garda Training College, Templemore. The course was part of a University Certificate in Professional Development (UCPD) and was conducted by the Accident Investigation Training School (AiTS) Gloucester, UK through De Montfort University in Leicester, UK. *Photo: Coy Sgt Patrick Balfe, NCO IC Inv Pl, MP Gp, DFTC*



## FUCHSIA CAMPAIGN

Pictured in Tesco Artane while collecting for the ONE Fuchsia Campaign are L/R: John Whelan, Dougie Doyle and Sean Shinnors, all members of the Fr James Gilmore Br of ONE. *Photo: John Whelan*



## ROWING CHAMPIONSHIP

On 13th September 2015, the DF Rowing Association Crew won the annual Blue Light Services Rowing Championship at Whitegate, Co Cork. The annual race over 1,500m is for crews representing 'Blue Light' emergency services. The crew won in 2014 and retained the championship by winning the race by 1/3 of a length, beating crews from An Garda Síochána, the Fire Brigade and the National Ambulance Service. The crew: Lt William Hurley (Tpt Gp DFTC), Lt Peter Williams (Tpt Gp, DFTC), Lt Fionn McCaffrey (2 Cav/EUBG) and Cdt Colm Dowling (Air Corps). *Photo: Lt Peter Williams, Tpt Gp, DFTC*





### EXCELLENCE THROUGH PEOPLE ▲

Pictured is GOC 1 Bde Brig Gen Philip Brennan and Mr Fergal O'Byrne, Head of Business Excellence Certification, National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI) with 1 Bde Bk Comdrs and Bde Staff at the Excellence Through People (ETP) accreditation ceremony for 1 Bde. The ceremony marked the successful achievement of the Excellence Through People standard for HR policies and best practice. *Photo by: Cpl Christine O'Leary, HQ 1 Bde*



### DF RACE DAY CURRAGH ▲

On Sunday 11th October 2015 the DF Race Day took place on the Curragh Racecourse, where proceeds were given to the Army Benevolent Fund and ONE. Pictured L/R: Lt Col Michael Dawson OIC PR Branch, Edward Lynam (Winning Trainer), Brig Gen Joe Mulligan, GOC DFTC, John O'Connor Managing Director Ballylinch Stud (Winning Owner) and Billy Lee (Winning Jockey). *Photo by: Sgt Karl Byrne, PR Branch*



### BALLINDENISK INT HORSE TRIALS ▲

The Ballindenisk International Horse Trials took place recently and had a military theme running through it. The military personnel and equipment was provided by 1 BAR from Collins Bks, Cork. Minister for Defence, Mr Simon Coveney TD was in attendance. *Photo by: Sgt Kevin Murray 1 BAR*



### HAPPY RETIREMENT CON ▲

Pictured recently is Brig Gen Philip Brennan (GOC 1 Bde) making a presentation to Mr Con Reardon at his retirement reception in the NCOs Mess Collins Bks, Cork. Con joined the civil service in 1969, he served in Dublin before being posted to Collins Bks, in the 1970s, where he served for 46 years with the Dept of Defence (DoD) and was the longest serving DoD member to date. All DoD and DF members wish Con and his family well on his retirement. *Photo: Sgt Barry McCarthy, 1 Bde HQ*



### 8TH FIBUA INSTRUCTOR COURSE ▲

The 8th FIBUA Instructor Course took place in 1 BTC, Collins Bks, Cork in June 2015. The 28 students were put through their paces over the 3 weeks duration. The syllabus covered: introduction to urban operations, command and control, FIBUA techniques, combat support, combat service support, conducting battle exercises and tactical training and exercises. *Photo by: Cpl Lee Coyle, PR Branch*

### INTER BRIGADE FINAL ▲

The Inter Brigade Final between 1 and 2 Brigades took place on 30th September 2015 in the Army Grounds, Phoenix Park with 2 Bde winning after extra time. Pictured is Capt Ian Kilbride accepting the trophy from Col Tom Aherne, J1 and DF Football President. *Photo by: Pte David Hogarty, 2 Bde HQ*





# Veterans Day in Collins Barracks

BY LIAM NOLAN, IUNVA POST 25, FERMOY

**This is an abridged version of Liam's letter following the Veteran's Day Parade in Collins Bks Cork, where 2,500 veterans, families and serving personnel attended.**

Thanks to the Defence Forces for giving us old soldiers a day to remember on Veterans Day the 12th September last. On 14th January 1957 I first ventured inside the main gates of Collins Bks with my two friends, Seanie Hull and Pakie Flood and JJ O'Connor followed a week later. I would quite honestly say it was the most intimidating thing I had ever done in my life and I'm sure my three friends felt the same way. 58 years later I was back in Collins Bks, did I ever think it could be possible, not in my wildest dreams.

When I joined the Defence Forces it never entered my mind that one day a request from the UN for Irish troops to take part in peacekeeping missions abroad. When it did happen in July 1960 every soldier from the Chief of Staff down was overwhelmed. The UN didn't want troops in 2-months, they wanted them ASAP. Within 3-weeks the 32 and 33 Inf Bn totalling in excess of 1,300 men plus a Bde HQ known as 9 Brigade were deployed to the former Belgian Congo. Lt Gen Sean MacEoin, Defence Forces Chief of Staff was appointed as Force Commander ONUC from January 1961 - March 1962. This was a tremendous honour for the Irish Defence Forces.

On 12th September 2015, as we assembled in the NCOs Mess for refreshments on Veterans Day the first person I met was my platoon sergeant from those halcyon days with the 32 Inf Bn. Just as we were exchanging stories another 32 Bn veteran joined us. We agreed it was difficult to imagine the experiences that happened 55-years-ago and we were now sharing, and how lucky we were to have the good fortune to be here on this special day. It's nice to know the DF appreciates the sacrifices and effort of the 6,141 soldiers who served in Congo. 26 of who lost their lives and Tpr Pat Mullins, 1 Motor Sqn still remains MIA.

Our presence helped bring a peace of sorts to the areas we served in, while hostilities were an everyday occurrence between the different warring factions with extreme poverty, starvation and plundering everywhere. It was incredible that a country with so much natural minerals and wealth could be so dysfunctional.

A very nice female officer was assigned to us; she outlined the programme for the day. Following mass in the garrison church we were shown to seats for the Vets not parading, it was nice to be made a fuss of and treated as a VIP for the day. The personnel on parade were drawn from the Army, Navy and Air Corps in addition to the 1 Bde brass and pipe bands. The veterans were made up of parties of 30 personnel each from IUNVA, ONET and ARCO.

Minister of Defence Simon Coveney TD laid a wreath on behalf of the Irish Nation and the veteran associations laid three more. Overall it was a wonderful emotional day greatly appreciated by all who attended.

Today's DF is one of the most respected in the world for the simple reason we empathise with the people in whose country we're serving. We supply much needed assistance such as medical and central care. In some cases we have set up orphanages and try to resolve conflicts. But we're not just respected overseas, our Defence Forces has never been found lacking when called upon to assist in the many situations outside its remit. People do appreciate the role of our Defence Forces. ■



*Pictured are 2 Congo veterans enjoying the Veterans Day at Collins Bks: Liam Nolan with 3 Congo tours 32, 37 Inf Bns and 3 Armd Car Sqn and Dan Clancy with 2 Congo tours 35 Inf Bn and 3 Armd Car Sqn. Bet they had Mingi (Swahili for plenty, mingi years before UNIFIL) yarns to swap.*



*The Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD lays a wreath in honour of deceased members of the Defence Forces, with an honour guard drawn from 1 BAR.*



*The Minister Coveney along with Brig Gen Philip Brennan, GOC 1 Bde with DF veterans. L/R Mossey Geary, Michael Kelly and Liam Nolan. Photos by: Barry McCarthy, Press Office, 1 Bde HQ*





# IUNVA POST 27 Deceased Members Mass & COL JAMES FITZMAURICE Remembered

BY SGT KARL BYRNE PHOTOS BY ARWN LAURA MCHALE



**M**ore often or not an average Sunday is passed off as a day of rest. Not very often would it be thought of as a time to remember the fallen soldiers of the Defence Forces and members of IUNVA Post 27. On 27th September 2015 such a day arose, and the members of Post 27 were on call to honour those who had lost their lives as serving members or retired members of the DF.

After a special mass was held in Portlaoise at which the members of Post 27, GOC Air Corps Brig Gen, Paul Fry, and members of the Air Corps attended. After the mass Post 27 marched down to the UN memorial in the Peace Park where a wreath laying service took place. Twelve wreaths were laid in honour of deceased members of Post 27, deceased members of the DF, deceased members of An Garda Síochána and as a very nice tribute, one for the deceased members of the Royal British Legion.



From there, the spectators were invited up to Fitzmaurice Place just 100 meters from the UN memorial, where a ceremony was held in honour of the 50th anniversary of the death of Col James Fitzmaurice, from the Air Corps, who was a member of the famous 'Bremen' flight crew, which made the first successful East to West flight over the Atlantic. The members of IUNVA Post 27 marched up to the location and took position at the back of the monument after a 20-man honour guard from the Air Corps formed a semi circle around the front of the monument.

Councillor Jerry Lodge addressed the parade, thanking the members of IUNVA for their great work in helping to restore the monument and surrounding area. IUNVA member Archie Raeside, Brig Gen Paul Fry and Councillor Jerry Lodge then laid wreaths at the monument. Brig Gen Fry then addressed the parade in which he commended the career of Col James Fitzmaurice. The event then concluded with the sounding of the Last Post, Reveille and the National Anthem.

Events like these really bring home the sacrifice that members of the DF have suffered over the years of its existence. IUNVA Post 27 have excelled themselves in showing that these sacrifices won't go un-noticed and that its own members, DF members and other services will forever be remembered with their annual remembrance mass. ■





# The Forgotten Group

BY PTE WILLIAM GRANT RETIRED

In order to dispel any misleading information about the 25 Inf Gp doing a full tour of duty in the Sinai. The 25 Inf Gp was made up of the group that went to Cyprus and also the group that formed up in Magee Bks, Kildare. I was part of the group that formed up at home and went to Cairo, Egypt. Where we spent 6-weeks in Cairo before we went to Raba Camp, which was an UNTSO camp to form our OPS. The group left Ireland on 5th November 1973 and returned on 8th May 1974. I served with Transport Platoon, HQ Coy. As 'The Forgotten Group', I feel we deserve a little more mention of our efforts there. *Pictured are members of Tpt Pl and HQ Coy of the 25th Inf Gp.*



## 3 Inf Bn Association

On 3rd October 2015, a group of retired members of the 3rd Infantry Battalion gathered in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny to formalise and launch the 3 Inf Bn Association. It took those involved 3-years to set up the association so it was a big day for organisers and all the soldiers who are known as 'The Bloods'. Some members present: Tom Hetherington, Bobby Duggan, Paul Fagan, Mick Duhig and Jodie Power. We wish the association well and hope to bring you a more detailed report soon. *Photo: Joseph Power, 3 Inf Bn Assoc.*



## LS Michael Quinn Remembered

On Sunday 4th October 2015, the 25th Anniversary of Leading Seaman Michael Quinn DSM took place in St Mary's Church, James Street, Drogheda. Members of the Drogheda and Slane Branch of ONE, and members of the Michael Quinn Branch, Irish Naval Association paraded on the quayside at the Scotch Hall Centre, Drogheda for a wreath laying ceremony in memory of their fallen colleague who lost his life while saving others on the night of 30th January 1990.

*Photos: Paul Kellett DSM, ONE*





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# Supporting Veterans with ONE Hand

## ONE ADC 2015

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY SGT MICK BURKE

**A**n Cosantóir was kindly invited to attend the annual convention of the Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women (ONE), which was held in September in the Radisson Blu Hotel in Sligo.

In his opening address, outgoing ONE President John 'Gus' Hennessy welcomed the delegates to the convention and thanked ONE's CEO, Ollie O'Connor, and his assistant, Paul Cooley, for their help and support. He also expressed his appreciation for the work carried out by Dick Dillon and Sinéad Black (manager and assistant manager, respectively, of Brú na bhFiann). The outgoing president also welcomed his successor, Mick Carroll, from St Conleth's branch, Newbridge.

Chairman Paddy Rooney then gave his report, in which he spoke about ONE's disappointment at the lack of a veterans policy in the government's 2014 Green Paper on defence, which led, following a number of meetings with the Chief of Staff and the Department of Defence, to such a policy being included for the first time in the subsequent White Paper.

Mr Rooney went on to ask delegates to give their full support to the proposed devolution of responsibilities to ONE's area councils, as well as thanking the committee that worked on changes to the layout of ONE's Connect magazine. In relation to fundraising, he also spoke about ONE's Mayo branch and its production of the *Home, Sweet Home* DVD, which is on sale for €5, with all funds going to ONE; telling delegates that it shows what a small branch can do through innovative thinking.

On the subject of training, Mr Rooney told the conference that the board continuously undergoes training in the areas of company law, accountancy reporting, charity regulations, health and safety, employment law, and governance, saying: "We don't invent these laws or regulations, but we have to implement them for the good of the organisation."

CEO Ollie O'Connor was the next speaker. He told the delegates that "The new White Paper on defence, which will be DF policy for the next decade, now includes a veterans policy. We see everyone that served in the Defence Forces as a veteran and hope they will all join ONE."

He went on to tell conference that ONE is now subject to the Charities Act 2009 and that under new legislation he had to register as a lobbyist in order to be able to speak to politicians on behalf of ONE.

Ollie thanked everyone for their continued support for the organisation and expressed his appreciation for DF veteran Benny Hill for setting up the 'Friends of Brú na bhFiann' and the great charity work the new group did for ONE's homes and drop-in centres this year.

He also thanked the former Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle, for the 'Friday Club' initiative, which sees veterans



Lt Gen Gerry McMahon Retd speaking about ONE's strategic plan.



ONE Board member Derek Ryan

being invited to meet serving personnel over a tea or coffee in many barracks around the country.

In relation to welfare, Ollie reminded delegates that the DF's PSS is available to veterans, and also spoke of the importance of fundraising initiatives like Christmas cards, golf classics, and the Fuchsia appeal. He thanked all those who have helped in these areas, including ONE's Fundraising Committee, and spoke of the need to keep coming up with new ideas, such as Mayo branch's charity DVD.

After reminding delegates that the Niemba remembrance Mass is on in Cathal Brugha Barracks on November 7th, Ollie finished by reading out the names of ONE members who passed away in the last year.

Next to the podium was board member, Derek Ryan, who





ONE's CEO, Ollie O'Connor



ONE Mayo branch receiving their Branch of the Year award.



Sgt Major Dick Dillon Retd, speaking about Brú na bhFiann.

briefed delegates on the Alliance of Retired Public Servants, which is lobbying to address the issue of state pension reductions. As ONE is excluded from the Haddington Road agreement, the Alliance has as an important role to play in protecting veterans' pensions.

The head of ONE's Strategic Committee, Lt Gen Gerry McMahon (retd), then addressed delegates on the future of the organisation, telling them: *"It's great to see what has been achieved through all the hard work that ONE, along with IUNVA and ARCO, has done, and that we are now recognised in the veterans policy in the new White Paper"*.

Gen McMahon spoke about the Strategic Committee's draft five-year plan for 2016-2021, titled 'Building for the Future', which has to be agreed by the board before being sent out to the branches for deliberation, after which the final draft will be presented at next year's convention for acceptance.

The draft plan contains information on the organisation under the headings of 'CEO and Board', 'Vision', 'Mission', 'What We Do', 'Values and Structure' and 'Strategic Plan'. Gen McMahon said the plan was designed to enhance public awareness of the organisation and to increase finances and membership.

Brú na bhFiann manager, Dick Dillon, then spoke about the great, and not well known, work the staff of the house do for many ex-service personnel who may find themselves homeless for a variety of reasons. *"Brú na bhFiann was founded as a homeless initiative,"* he told conference, *"and is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year."*

The home, which is audited quarterly and annually by Dublin City Council, has nine staff (five full-time and four part-time), seven of whom have military backgrounds. Dick (a retired sergeant major from 5 Inf Bn who I had the pleasure to serve under, and rarely heard speaking softly!) spoke about his residents with care and compassion as he informed delegates about the great service ONE's homeless initiative provides for our former comrades.

The conference was hushed while Dick gave the background of some of Brú na bhFiann's residents (without revealing their identities), such as one man in the third stage of Huntington's disease. *"There is no help from the Defence Forces now he's left,"* Dick said. *"It's up to us in ONE to help these veterans."*

Dick told the delegates that he and his staff have the highest regard for the residents, and reminded members of ONE that when visiting ONE HQ, which is located in Brú na bhFiann, they are entering the residents' home, and that they shouldn't look down on the residents *"unless they are offering a hand up"*.

Addressing the delegates directly, Dick said: *"Did anyone here ever visit anyone in one of ONE's homes? Did you ever drop-off a Christmas present? Only you can answer these questions."*

In conclusion, he said: *"We must fully support ONE fundraising initiatives, as this is what we were set up for. And we need to be set up for future DF personnel who will be in need of our help – because this problem is not going away!"*

After a well deserved standing ovation, a delegate from Youghal said that he had used the overnight accommodation available in Brú na bhFiann and was impressed with the way both residents and guest are treated, and he congratulated Dick and his staff for their work.

The final speaker was Lt Col Dermot Hannifin (OC 2 Arty Regt), who was representing the chief of staff as a guest. *"I'm here representing the COS,"* he said, *"but really I'm here to represent the serving members of the Defence Forces and to acknowledge the great work you have done, and the work you continue to do. I think you have finally been given that recognition in the new White Paper's veterans policy."*

Lt Col Hannifin also encouraged members of ONE to attend the new Friday Clubs being held around the country to meet with serving members and to learn about current DF equipment and technologies.

The evening concluded with a number of presentations. In a very tight, three-branch finish, Mayo won the Branch of the Year award, while ONE medallions were presented to Jim Nolan (Roger Casement branch) for 43 years service with the organisation; to Lt Gen McMahon, for his service to ONE; and to Dick Dillon, in recognition of his great work with Brú na bhFiann.

Finally, Gus Hennessy handed over the chain of office to the incoming president, Mick Carroll.





New ONE National President Mick Carroll with predecessor Gus Hennessy.

## A Tale of Two Presidents

The outgoing president, Gus Hennessy, from New Ross, Co Wexford, enlisted in McDonagh Bks, the Curragh, in February 1956. He served in HQ Coy, GTD, and as a training corporal with 10 Inf Bn in Wexford, before finishing his career in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny. He served overseas with 38 Inf Bn ONUC; 42 Inf Bn and 24 Inf Gp UNFICYP, and 49 Inf Bn UNIFIL. He retired after 27 years service on March 17th 1983, the same day his son Ray joined up.

After he retired, Gus joined ONE, (James Stephens branch) and served in the following appointments: branch chairman; member of the old national executive; chairman of the Leinster Council; president of the Niamba 50th Anniversary Committee; and national president for the last two years.

In handing over he said: *"I would like to wish Mick the best of luck, and good health. I would also like to thank my branch for all their support."*

The incoming president, Mick Carroll, from Suncroft, Co Kildare, enlisted in 3 Inf Bn (The Bloods), in the Curragh, in November 1962. He served overseas with 2 Inf Gp ONUC; 42 Inf Bn, 12 Inf Gp and 18 Inf Gp UNFICYP; and 59 Inf Bn and 63 Inf Bn UNIFIL.

He retired in 1994 after 33 years service and joined St Conleth's branch of ONE in 1999. He served as branch chairman for eight years, and also served as president and chairman of the Leinster Council. He was also treasurer of ONE's only band, the St Conleth's pipe band (which he helped to set up in 1999).

On assuming his role as national president for the next two years, Mick said: *"I would like to thank Gus for his 'heads up' on the position, and to wish him the best for the future: I have a hard act to follow. I would like to thank my branch for the nomination, and the CEO, chairman, and all the branches for their support, and I hope to be able to honour all invitations to branches and events throughout my period in office."* ■

## WHITE PAPER ON DEFENCE



The Veterans Policy, outlined in the White Paper on defence, launched on 26th August 2015, recognises the contribution of former servicemen and women who have 'served Ireland and the Defence Forces in defending, protecting and supporting the citizens and sovereignty of the State since its foundation' and who 'have also contributed to Ireland's profile in the area of international peace and security because of the commitment of Defence Forces personnel by successive Irish governments to UN-mandated and authorised operations'.

The government only formally recognises two veterans' organisations, IUNVA and ONE, and the White Paper states that this will continue to be the case.

Existing service-level agreements (SLAs) between the Dept of Defence and IUNVA and ONE includes holding regular meetings to discuss issues that affect veterans; providing support at fundraising launches and commemoration ceremonies; providing financial support through annual subventions; and inviting representatives of both organisations to specific commemoration ceremonies.

While committing to the current SLAs, the White Paper also outlines plans 'to further develop the supports available to exiting personnel and veterans'. This will include developing the annual Veterans' Day, which seeks to honour the service of both living and deceased Defence Forces veterans; incorporating representation from the associations into state and DF ceremonial events, where appropriate; improving current arrangements in the case of personnel retiring from the Defence Forces to include appropriate training, CV development and interview skills, to facilitate transition to civilian employment and to ensure that personnel will not exit the Defence Forces without an appropriate recognised civilian qualification consistent with their capability; and continued development of the current pre-retirement courses.

*'...Every effort will be made to facilitate the transition to civilian life, drawing on existing support networks where appropriate. It is recognised that in limited circumstances additional supports may be required and the representative bodies for retired members of the Defence Forces have an important role in this regard.'*

The White Paper also commits the Department to ensuring that veterans continue to have access to the Ombudsman for the Defence Forces, in relation to complaints concerning actions that occurred while they were serving.

The full White Paper can be downloaded from [www.defence.ie](http://www.defence.ie).



# PDFORRA CONFERENCE 2015

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY SGT MICK BURKE



**This year PDFORRA held its 24th Annual Delegate Conference in the Clayton Hotel, Galway, from the 6th to 8th October. With over 200 delegates and more than 45 motions, this was another busy conference for the representative association.**

One topic discussed was primary medical care, with one speaker talking of the requirement for injured personnel to receive the necessary treatment to give them the opportunity to fulfil the criteria to remain in service, and speaking of the possibility of a PDFORRA-funded medical plan.

Motions passed by the delegates included calls for restoring pay and allowances; increasing numbers in the Naval Service; employing medical consultants; for the NEC to have access to the Labour Relations Commission; a common rate for flying pay and for it to be made pensionable; equal opportunities for Air Corps personnel on career courses; a 'duty of care' document for investigating officers during redress of wrongs process and a review of the process.

Another motion called for the payment of an armed overseas allowance for Naval Service personnel serving with the humanitarian mission in the Mediterranean.

There was also a call for the Ombudsman for the DF (ODF) to be reverted to a full-time position, as there has been no annual report since 2012 - it was subsequently released on 16th October 2015.

In his address to the ADC, Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD told delegates of the "value, importance and significance placed by the government on the tremendous work being done by members of the Defence Forces", and commended the performance of the Naval Service crews involved in the humanitarian mission in the Mediterranean. Minister Coveney also thanked PDFORRA for its input and engagement in the White Paper process.

Referring to 2016 the minister said, "Key anniversaries (are) arising as part of the decade of centenaries ... and the Defence Forces will provide significant support and input to many of these commemorative events." He also said the DoD would engage with PDFORRA on the terms and conditions of a commissioning-from-the-ranks



Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD

process and was working on the issue of the low representation of females serving in the DF (6%).

In his address, PDFORRA Gen Sec Gerry Rooney said that "the military and civilian sides deserve great credit for the current White Paper." Among other things, Mr Rooney said PDFORRA wanted action on the issue of females availing of parental leave who are then penalised for that leave when it came to qualifying for a pension. Speaking about the near 20% deductions in pay DF members have suffered in the last few years, Mr Rooney said the proposed 6% to be given back was 'modest at the least'. In conclusion, the general secretary spoke about the 7,000 migrants that had been rescued by Irish Naval Service personnel in the current Mediterranean mission and said it was "disappointing and disrespectful that their pay hasn't been settled". He said that while the DoD has "parked the bus" on this, PDFORRA might have to "drop an anchor" on it.

In his first address to PDFORRA's ADC, new Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM said, "Soldiers, sailors and aircrews proudly wear the uniform and commit themselves to a culture of service to defend, protect and support the government and citizens of Ireland.

*I want to lead our forces using the six core values of moral courage, physical courage, respect, integrity, loyalty and selflessness. This is what you should expect from the leadership and what the leadership of the organisation should expect from you."*

PDFORRA President Mark Scally spoke about the post-1994 personnel achieving their 21 years service, and that "while there were tough negotiations still ahead, PDFORRA are up for the fight!"

He went on to congratulate Medical Corps personnel for their service with the mission to fight the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone and also Naval Service personnel for their continued excellent service in response to the Mediterranean migrant humanitarian crisis.

Mr Scally also called on the minister and the DoD to do more for retiring service personnel, and said they all should receive academic qualifications before leaving.

The president concluded by expressing his thanks to ACOS Brig Gen Colm Campbell, prior to his retirement early in 2016, for all the work he carried out with PDFORRA. ■

PDFORRA President Mark Scally



PDFORRA Gen Sec Gerry Rooney



COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM





# MILITARY PRESS

## Co-operation



REPORT AND PHOTOS BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

**T**he European Military Press Association (EMPA) is an association for editors and directors of military periodicals published in Europe. Established in 1977, the EMPA supports its members by providing a point of contact, offering opportunities to exchange information, and promoting understanding of security policy issues and knowledge of armed forces.

The Association currently has members in 20 nations: Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Lithuania and Sweden.

The EMPA held its 36th annual congress in Berlin from 29th September to 1st October, which was attended by 68 participants from 17 countries, including two representatives from *An Cosantóir*.

He also told us that this process was under review.

Speaking of Germany's contribution to European security he said: *"We have benefited from the protection of the Allies, and now it's time for us to give something back."* Mr Lorenz also spoke about how he served in the army during the Cold War, which the West won without firing a bullet.

A recent development has seen the process by which the Bundestag mandates overseas missions changed to allow for very quick action when a mission needs to be established without delay, such as the emergency evacuation of German nationals from a conflict zone. Many other NATO countries are looking at similar procedures to allow for a rapid response to situations such as the current refugee crisis.

While in the Bundestag we also got the opportunity to speak briefly with Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen, Germany's first female minister of defence, who is the commander-in-chief of the 185,000-strong Bundeswehr in peacetime (the Chancellor takes over in wartime).

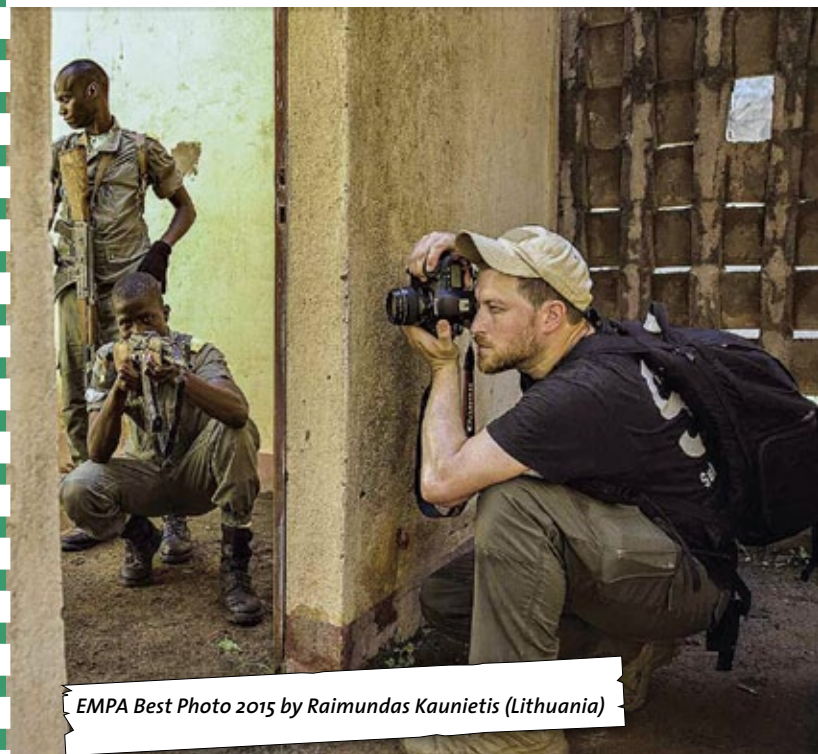
The next day we visited the second residence of the Federal Ministry of Defence (FMoD) in Berlin, which has 900 military and 1,300 civilian employees. (The headquarters is based in Bonn.)

Col GS Thierman welcomed us to the FMoD before speaking to us about public information. *"Young people don't read papers anymore,"* he told us, *"so we have to target them. They want to consume bite size media for their mobiles, so we focus on our YouTube channel, which is more successful than the US Marines' channel!"*

The Bundeswehr has revamped its website so that it is accessible on all platforms and is in the process of combining all its weekly papers and monthly magazine into one publication. He told us: *"Apps are too costly, so we focus on web-based browser information and products."*

Lt Col Martin Werneke then briefed us on the development of Germany's current White Paper. *"We will go into the editing phase and inter-ministerial consultation by the end of October,"* he said, *"and the White Paper will be published before the next general election, which is due before the end of 2016."* Prior to that they will have 10 expert-panel workshops and will allow comments to be made on a special website during the participation phase, before it is adopted by cabinet.

Next we heard from Col Manfred Baumgartner, 2i/c of the Bundeswehr Territorial Command, based in Julius Leber Bks, a very large military installation in Berlin, with 23,126 personnel.



EMPA Best Photo 2015 by Raimundas Kaunietis (Lithuania)

As part of the congress the EMPA incorporated a number of visits and briefings through which we learned much about Germany's armed forces and their command and governance.

Our first visit was to the Bundestag (Parliament) in the Reichstag building, where Wilfried Lorenz, a member of the ruling CDU party and former military officer, briefed us on Germany's defence policy. He told us that *"The Bundeswehr [Germany's armed forces] is an army of the parliament, and needs the full support of the parliament to mandate for missions. There has been no mission so far that has been rejected by this process."*





EMPA congress members in the Reichstag building with host Wilfried Lorenz. Photo courtesy of Bundestag Press Office.

(The Bundeswehr has 15 land commands spread across 15 federal states, with 31 regional commands.) Col Baumgartner, who has previously served as ISAF Press & Information Officer (PIO),

Bundeswehr PIO, and Bundeswehr magazine editor, told us about his unit's responsibilities in implementing territorial tasks and other joint tasks across the country.

He was followed by Col Anderer Benutier (Bundeswehr Territorial Command, Ops Division), who spoke to us about the current refugee crisis, telling us that a directive for refugee relief operations, issued by the minister for defence in August, gave the Bundeswehr the responsibility of co-ordinating the national response to the crisis. He told us that the Bundeswehr had received 326 requests for support, and that 16 facilities had been fully or partially handed over to the Federal Facility Management Agency.

Forty-two dual-use Bundeswehr buildings have been made available to house refugees and 4,000 troops are involved in a 'helping hands' assignment, with Medical Corps personnel and equipment providing assistance in 14 locations countrywide. Two main staging areas in Bavaria, with a capacity for 5,000 refugees each, to look after reception, enrolment and to provide a buffer function, are controlled by the Red Cross and supported by the Bundeswehr. Col Benutier said: *"This is the way to go, and another staging area near Bremen will be established shortly and will involve the transfer of authority to the Federal Agency for Migration, which will plan for conservation and sustainability for 2016 and beyond."*

Later that evening we went downtown to visit Zentralredaktion building, which houses the Bundeswehr Public Relations and Information offices, along with other civilian press offices and publications. PR Branch has a staff of 121 (60% civilian) working on magazines, newspapers, YouTube, their website, and the Bundeswehr radio station, which Col Kuhn told us *"operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with soldiers broadcasting for soldiers."* Their Facebook account has 336,074 'likes', and their audiovisual unit produces 400 videos a year.

The next day, Brig Gen Peter-Georg Stütz greeted us at Julius Leber Bks where we were briefed on Joint Operations Command. Lt Col Boris Schnelle (Ops Comd PIO Div) told us: *"It is our job as PIOs to give as much information as possible to the public, within the parameters of the Constitution, so*

*that they are informed about Germany's foreign policy and defence matters."*

Joint Ops Comd has three pillars: Conventional Ops Abroad, Special Forces Ops Abroad and Crisis Missions Abroad (involving German citizens). This is where national mission planning takes place, along with NATO liaison officers.

There are currently 3,200 German soldiers serving overseas with: EUTM Mali; EU NAVFOR (combating piracy around Somalia); and AFTUR (on Turkey's border with Syria and Iran). There is also a fast attack craft operating with UNIFIL that is training the Lebanese navy in border control and radar, and a frigate operating with EU NAVFOR, now called 'Sofia', in the Mediterranean. However, their largest troop commitment is with KFOR, where 680 German troops are stationed in Kosovo, providing a Role 3 medical facility, an infantry company and a QRF battalion. There is also a reserve battle group of 700 on call at home if required.

Later that day we attended the EMPA Congress, where we received briefings on the Association from the EMPA's president, treasurer, and auditor. We were also briefed on next year's congress in Norway, which will contain briefings on Norway's defence policy and industry. (Norway is unique in that it has conscription for both males and females.)

These were followed by the EMPA awards, including 'Best Photo', which went to a picture of a Latvian combat camera team in action, by Raimundas Kaunietis (Lithuania), published in Tēvijas Sargs (Lithuania).

The award for best article went to 'Christmas Truce – Live and Let Live', by Laszlo Feith, which was published in Magyar Honvéd (Hungary).

The final business was the election of a new board to manage EMPA for the next four-year term; with the first female president, Ms Līga Lakuča (Latvia), saying farewell after a very successful term for her and her board.

Elected to the new board were: President Brig Gen Wolfgang Peischel (Austria), Secretary General Karl-Heinz Leitner (Austria), 1st Vice President Regula Ferrari (Switzerland), 2nd Vice President Mikko Juho Illko (Finland), and Andreas Hess (Switzerland), as Treasurer.

Overall it was a very successful congress and while *An Cosantóir* didn't win any awards it was good to be listed alongside some great military publications. It is also good to play our part in the EMPA, which strives to enhance and support military magazines throughout Europe. ■





# Mission Ready Exercise 50 Inf Gp UNDOF

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS BY CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN AND CPL LEE COYLE

**W**ith the ongoing mission in the Golan Heights area, to observe and maintain the ceasefire between Israeli and Syrian forces and to supervise the implementation of the disengagement agreement, having a highly disciplined and well-trained Infantry Group in the area, is very important.

The 50th Infantry Group, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was officially formed up on 10th August 2015, with the main body of the unit coming from the 1 Bde Arty Regt and 1 Cav Sqn from Collins Bks Cork. This is the first time Artillery and Cavalry Corps have made up the main body of an overseas mission.

Out of the 130 members of the unit, 30 of them are on their first trip overseas and 7 have served in Syria before. So there is a lot of experience within the unit, and with the different corps making up the main body, it gave members the chance to cross train artillery and cavalry skills.

The initial training being conducted in Kilworth, Co Cork, covered a wide range of skills including signals, medical, chemical biological radiological and nuclear (CBRN), anti-ambush drills, mine awareness and counter improvised explosive devices (C-IED).

With the Mission Ready Exercise (MRE) being the culmination of overseas training, the 50 Inf Gp conducted theirs over two weeks in September in the Glen of Imaal. The MRE pulls together all the information and instruction they have received over the form up. The exercises covered platoon and company level, in various scenarios, which puts the skills they have learned into practice. ■







## Vox Pops

### **GNR CHARLENE BAILEY** **- 1 BDE ARTY REGT**

*"This is my 2nd trip overseas, having served in Chad with the 101 Inf Bn. I found the training intense and robust, covering a lot of areas. I'm traveling as part of the Quick Reaction Platoon (QRP) and I'm confident in the training we have received. I will miss my partner Rob and my Daughter Dolly who is only 22 months old."*

### **SGT MICHAEL RONAYNE** **- 1 BDE ARTY REGT**

*"Having 5 trips overseas to Lebanon, Liberia and Kosovo, I still found the training a good experience, especially the ranges and Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT). I have my wife Carol and 2 Daughters Ellie (13) and Ruby (6) at home, and will miss helping my daughters with their Camogie training. This is my first trip overseas since Ruby was born, and Ellie has just started secondary school."*

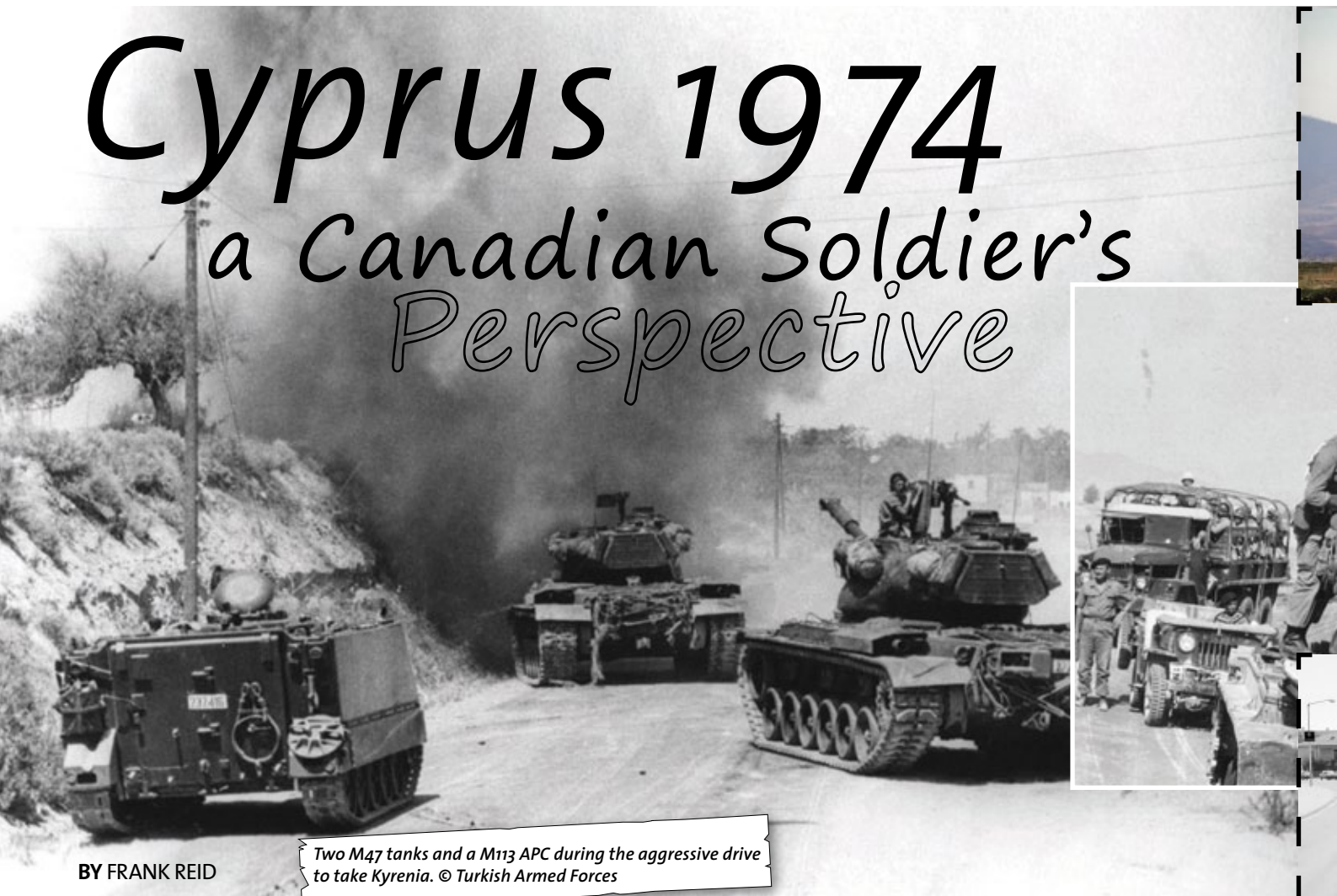
### **CPL JAMIE SAHBANI** **- 1 CAV SQN**

*"I'm traveling out as a section commander. I have 2 trips overseas before to Lebanon and Kosovo. The training has been more intense with CBRN and Counter IED. I've a good section traveling with me and they are confident with all the instruction they have received over the last few months."*



# Cyprus 1974

## a Canadian Soldier's Perspective



BY FRANK REID

*Two M47 tanks and a M113 APC during the aggressive drive to take Kyrenia. © Turkish Armed Forces*

**T**he Turkish invasion of Cyprus occurred on 20th July 1974. Barely 4½ months later (with less than two years service in the military) I arrived on the island as a UN peacekeeper. For my part in this show the UN was paying me an allowance of \$104.17 to risk life and limb. Not bad considering my basic pay was only \$285.00 per month.

On 6th December when I boarded a military plane at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton as part of a peacekeeping contingent from 1st Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment, it was a chilly -10°C; it was around 17°C when we arrived in Cyprus some hours later.

On our arrival in Cyprus the burnt-out wreckage of a plane strewn across the runway greeted us. It had been on the tarmac at Nicosia airport when the invasion started and that was where it met its fate. This brought home really quickly the situation we had been thrown into and for some it was a bit unsettling.

My duties were to man one the OPs along the Green Line that divided the parties to the conflict. There were 28 critical OPs to be manned 24/7 and five non-critical OPs, which were unmanned but could be occupied should an emergency situation arise.

Our weeks were long due to a shortage of manpower and we worked 12-hour shifts for nine days before getting a day off. During the daytime you could often find yourself on duty alone, even though it was stated in orders that "Members of UNFICYP engaged on operational duties when armed, will never be on duty alone." Maybe they considered that we weren't alone since we

were dropped off and picked up but if so that's what I call stretching the rules! At night, however, we always had two people on patrol and in the OPs.

The main OPs I manned in Nicosia were Maple 1 and Hermes. Despite the alleged ceasefire, the shooting was still continuing and there was an average of three or four major ceasefire violations for every day of our six-month tour.

Standing in plain view, at the top of a building in a conflict zone, was a risky business; even at night, as the lights from the city and the shining stars transformed you into a perfect target. I remember standing maybe a foot away from my buddy, our heads close so we could hear each other. The night had been calm so we felt quite relaxed. Suddenly, around three o'clock in the morning, we heard a shot go off, and a strange whistling sound, like air being displaced between us. Whoosh! We looked at each other and realised we had just been shot at and the bullet had passed in the space between our heads. For the first time in my life I truly understood vulnerability. The difference of a few inches either way and one of us could have been on his way home in a pine overcoat.

One evening when the Greeks and Turks started shooting at each other our soldiers were safe in their bunkers but one guy had left his helmet on the parapet of the trench. When the firing stopped, his helmet had a nice clean hole in it.

It is difficult to remain on alert without a break for a period of





*M-113 APC from Canadian Contingent at OP BRAVO ONE shortly after the cease-fire was restored, on 16th August 1974. © UN Photo/Yutaka Nagata*



*A view of an OP, manned by members of the Canadian contingent and of the Turkish Force, as seen from the gun turret of a Canadian Lynx armoured vehicle in 1974. © UN Photo/Yutaka Nagata*



*An M-113 APC with 106mm recoilless anti-tank gun of the 2nd Command Group of the Canadian Contingent on security patrol at the UN controlled Nicosia airport. Left is a destroyed Cyprus Airways trident, on runway 14 in 1974. © UN Photo/Yutaka Nagata*

six months but that is what was expected. On the last day of my shift rotation, I went down to the Junior Ranks mess for a little R&R, where I indulged too much but thought: "No problem, I can sleep in late tomorrow." I left the mess about 2:00am,

stumbled up to my room and passed out, only for the Duty Sergeant to arrive around 4:00am banging on everyone's doors and telling us to put on our flak jackets and helmets and get downstairs. When we got to the foyer of the Ledra Palace, where we were staying, we were issued with live rounds, which my sleep-deprived brain told me

was not a good thing. A patrol had been caught in a crossfire and an officer had been sent down to get our people out. We were told in no uncertain terms that if the negotiations failed we would be going out to extract the patrol. I remember being so tired as I listened to the sergeant, leaning against a wall so I wouldn't fall over, and hoping we would not have to go out. We waited for three hours in full web gear and flak jackets until the word came down that our guys were safe.

I had a few close calls during that six-month period. At one point I had been tasked with going out on a roving night patrol consisting of a Canadian sergeant, a Canadian private (me) and a Turkish liaison officer. I, being the low man on the totem pole, got to carry the radio on my back. It was my

duty to monitor the radio on my headphones and keep our base informed of our whereabouts. The purpose of the patrol was to inspect behind the Turkish lines to ensure that agreements were being honoured.

It was early in the morning and we had been walking for a while, checking positions. With the headphones on I could hear a voice but couldn't distinguish what it was saying and thought it was my sergeant talking to the Turkish officer so I kept walking. Once again I heard a voice and, this time I realised it wasn't speaking English. I also heard another sound that made me stop in my tracks; the sound of a weapon being cocked. I looked to my left and then my right but nobody was there. Then I looked behind and approximately five feet back stood my sergeant with the Turkish officer who spoke to the figure in the darkness. Nothing happened. Our Turkish LO then slowly walked forward; a brave man to approach a startled soldier who had no idea who he was.

Although the night was quite dark, I strained my eyes until I finally could make out a tall Turkish soldier standing with a gun aimed at my midsection. A quick move on my part and it would have been all over for me and for the other two as well. These kinds of communications breakdowns were common between all sides during our tour.

Another day, while on patrol by myself, I noticed a pack of hungry looking dogs on my left. We had been warned in Canada that all dogs in Cyprus were diseased and were to be "disposed of" so I put a round in the chamber of my rifle and removed the safety, which was strictly against regulations.

I finally arrived at the Greek checkpoint, which was manned by three Greek Cypriot soldiers, unshaven, untrained, undisciplined, and heavily armed with AK 47s and other weapons. None spoke English and I did not speak Greek. I was calling our base camp to give them my SITREP when one of the Greeks touched my radio. Bad move! It was not like they had never seen a radio before. Then, one of his buddies perpetrated a cardinal sin; he touched my rifle! I motioned to the one who had touched my rifle to come close. Apprehensively he moved forward. I started to pull back the action of my rifle, just so he could see the brass colour of the cartridge. Now he knew it was loaded and ready. I pointed to the bullet with my finger and then I tapped him on the forehead. Some gestures are universally understood. I could see the fear in his eyes and all three moved away from me. I turned around and walked back to camp.

Soon our six-month tasking was over. It had been exhausting but the days went by fast. The time spent peacekeeping in Cyprus was an eye-opener for me and certainly changed my perspective of the world and life in general. ■



*Frank is the author and self-publisher of '1972-1979 A Canadian Soldier at Peace' (ISBN: 978-1-927371-55-8), it is available digitally for \$1.99 through Smashwords, hard copy visit [www.artistsreids.ca](http://www.artistsreids.ca) or directly from [frankwreids7@yahoo.com](mailto:frankwreids7@yahoo.com).*



# RESERVISTS

## *Keep the Score*

BY CAPT MARTIN MULVEY, RDF 2 BDE CIS

Every tasking presents its own unique difficulties and challenges, and providing CIS support to the Brigade and All-Army shoots presents significant challenges for any unit. Also, these shoots were to be held on consecutive weekends, which meant that in addition to the normal technical challenges faced by 2 Bde CIS Coy (Res Pln), we also had the difficulties imposed by two consecutive long weekends in Finner Camp, Co Donegal. As reservists this meant not only a commitment from ourselves but also from our families. As any reservist will tell you the most critical phase of planning is booking time off from work and from our loved ones!

*“As any reservist will tell you the most critical phase of planning is booking time off from work and from our loved ones!”*

The tasking dictated three main requirements: namely, the provision of fast, efficient and reliable communications on both rifle and pistol ranges and from the ranges to the central registry; the provision of an admin net for the numerous support services, such as MPs, medics, logs, etc, that operate behind the scenes on a major event such as this; and a public address system to provide an announcement facility for the central registry and also for the prize-giving ceremony.

Once the taskings and requirements were clearly identified it was time to start the planning.

With phase one of the planning cycle complete it was time to look at the more technical aspects. The Motorola GP 340 series radio would provide the easiest option as they are compact, reliable and very user friendly. It was further decided to deploy SINCGAR radios as an alternative should the Motorolas have difficulty because of the lack of line of sight between the pistol range and the proposed location of the central registry. Once we were confident that we could easily provide the required comms it was time to start pushing the envelope!

As most of the reservists had recently qualified in the deployment of the Harris Falcon HF set we decided to use this new found skill. Using the data capability of the Harris we would transmit basic Excel spreadsheets

*Lt Shane Dunne configures the remote camera.*



*An interior view of the central registry showing the video monitors. The left monitor is displaying the scores as available on the public network.*

*Lt Mairghead Kelly uploading results for the Falling Plates competition.*

from the pistol range down to the central registry where CIS staff could quickly add the pistol scores to a master score spreadsheet. The principle was sound but as the complexity of the spread-

sheet increased and more and more macro functions were added the Harris began to struggle with the file size. It looked as though we would have to revert to a more basic format of sending voice over the Motorolas. This was until a fortuitous conversation with Lt Shane Dunne, who is currently serving in J6 (CIS) DFHQ but in civilian life is a systems engineer

with Cisco Systems. Lt Dunne suggested a 3G/4G solution involving file transfer. CIS staff in the pistol range would enter the scores into the spreadsheet and then save it to a shared folder. The CIS detachment in the central registry would simply open the pistol scores spreadsheet and drop them into the central registry spreadsheet.

Lt Dunne started parading with 2 CIS and working with some of our more technical reservists. There followed a period of developing, training and, indeed, adding more and more ideas to what might be achieved. At the conclusion of each parade Lt Dunne would inevitably say: "You know, I was just thinking..."

After a period of development and training we carried out a site survey in Finner Camp which proved that our concept was workable. This proved the concept of file transfer over a 3G/4G network using a Cisco router. We also proved that we could live stream video from a camera located on the pistol range to the central registry.

On Thursday 14th May 2015 we assembled in Cathal Brugha Bks at 18:00hrs and after loading stores we set off on the long journey to Finner Camp.

The following morning we had an early start to set up all our kit for the first competition of the 2 Bde shoot, which was the GPMG. We were quickly operational and this gave us some time to deploy the camera on the GPMG range as

a trial run for the pistol competition the following day. With everything running smoothly we then set about publishing provisional scores over a public network. This gave both competitors and spectators alike the ability to check the scores on their smartphones anywhere on the range.

Saturday saw the USP competition taking place on the pistol range 1km away. While the distance was short, the pistol range was 30m above sea level (ASL) and the registry 5m ASL. With Finner Camp in between at an elevation of 40m ASL, this would prove a serious problem for any line-of-sight (LoS) system. However, our 3G/4G solution performed admirably and the scores flowed seamlessly, while the live video streaming had our viewers enthralled!

The penultimate competition was the Falling Plates, which took place on the Sunday. This is a very exciting, spectator-friendly competition and was ideal for showcasing the ability of our live-feed, remote camera. The camera was set up approximately 50m forward of the firing point, which gave a great view of the teams as they sprinted to the firing point and loaded their weapons. Once a pre-set was activated, the camera immediately panned and zoomed to a tight shot of all the plates so that viewers got a close-up view of the plates as they fell. This made for some very exciting viewing!

The following week we again set off for Finner Camp to repeat the process for the All-Army Shoot. Once again all systems worked perfectly, with scores arriving seamlessly via file transfer and live video streaming keeping the spectators entertained. We also had scores available via smartphone and the additional facility of video footage of the previous weekend's Falling Plates competition, again available on smartphone.

The lead-in to these competitions involved many hours of hard work and organising but was well worth the effort, as we achieved an excellent showcase for CIS capability and exceptional training for the CIS RDF element in relevant skillsets for data networking. It also strengthened the single-force concept and demonstrated some extremely valuable skillsets available to the Defence Forces in the guise of reservists and their civilian employments.

It should also be noted that both the Brigade and All-Army competitions were organised, for the first time, as a combined PDF/RDF shoot in keeping with the single-force concept. This further increased the pressure to ensure that all systems worked flawlessly and credit must go to Comdt

Mick Roche, OC 2 Bde CIS, who entrusted his reserve platoon with such a high-profile tasking. ■

*Sgmn David Young installing the remote camera on the range.*





# DEFENCE FORCES in review

BY LT COL MICHAEL P. DAWSON, OIC PUBLIC  
RELATIONS BRANCH

*"On some positions, Cowardice asks the question 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question 'Is it politic?' And Vanity comes along and asks the question 'Is it popular?' But Conscience asks the question 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but we must do it because Conscience tells us it is right."*

When one examines the article titles contained in this year's review, I suggest that this quote from Martin Luther King is very apt as it resonates throughout each separate theme irrespective of the specific topic. Across the broad range of contemporary topics covered, our contributors invite us on a journey of research, delivering honest findings and unambiguous conclusions. May I also suggest and hope that on reading the compelling articles in this year's review that you too may be encouraged to engage in further critical thinking, to debate military issues close to your heart and ultimately decide to contribute to our special edition for 2016.

This year sees the Review celebrate its twenty-second birthday. Back in 1993, (when known as the "An Cosantóir Review") the compilation of articles succeeded in stimulating widespread discussion amongst its readers and fostering an already hungry appetite to broaden horizons and garner fresh opinion on a wide range of military topics. As the years progressed, we have been very fortunate to receive contributions from our colleagues in the academic, corporate and diplomatic arenas. These submissions have greatly enhanced the currency and status of the Review and we in the Defence Forces really appreciate this alliance. The Defence Forces Review has stood the test of time and this is a testament to the commitment of its contributors and its credibility as a literary publication. ■

COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM with  
journalists Tom Brady and Kevin Myers.



COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM  
launching the Defence Forces In Focus.





# THE 5 STAGES OF GRIEF



Loss is a strange beast and affects us all differently, however we all go through a number of stages as part of coming to terms with loss. The Kübler-Ross model of grief (the five stages of grief) describes five primary responses to loss. These stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Someone who is grieving may go through these stages in any order, and they may return to previous stages.

## **Denial:** "This can't be happening."

Individuals may refuse to accept the fact that a loss has occurred. They may minimise or outright deny the situation. It is suggested that loved ones and professionals be forward and honest about losses to not prolong the denial stage.

## **Anger:** "Why is this happening to me?"

When an individual realises that a loss has occurred, they may become angry at themselves or others. They may argue that the situation is unfair and try to place blame.

## **Bargaining:** "I will do anything to change this."

In bargaining, the individual may try to change or delay their loss. For example, they may try to convince a partner

to return after a breakup, or search for unlikely cures in the case of a terminal illness.

## **Depression:** "What's the point of going on after this loss?"

At the stage of depression the individual has come to recognise that a loss has occurred or will occur. The individual may isolate themselves and spend time crying and grieving.

Depression is a precursor to acceptance because the individual has come to recognise their loss.

## **Acceptance:** "It's going to be okay."

Finally, the individual will come to accept their loss. They understand the situation logically, and they have come to terms emotionally with the situation.



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HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

# Semper Fi!

## The US's Irish Brigade Marines

BY DEREK WARFIELD AND LIAM MURPHY

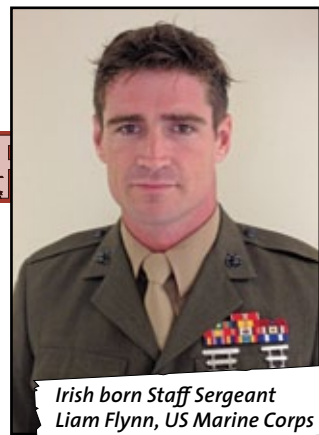
**T**he death of Staff Sergeant Liam Flynn, US Marine Corps, in a helicopter accident during a training exercise off the Florida coast in early March is a sad reminder of the long association between Irish volunteers and the US Marines. The 34-year-old native of Clane, Co Kildare, had served in the Marines Corps since 2006. He had completed four tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and had received the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. (The Badge of Military Merit, which was established by General George Washington during the American War of Independence, was revived as the Purple Heart in 1932, and subsequently became exclusively awarded to those killed or wounded in action.)

There has been no shortage of Irish names in the pantheon of US Marine heroes, including Capt John Welsh of the Continental Marines, killed-in-action leading an assault on British fortifications along the Penobscot River in Massachusetts (now Maine); Lt Presley N O'Bannon who led the Marines 'to the shores of Tripoli', as referenced in the *Marine's Hymn*; aviator Pat Mulcahy, who

battalions of marines to fight "to advantage by sea" and on shore, thereby establishing the Continental Marines.

When Samuel Nicholas became commanding officer of the newly formed unit he began recruiting around the city of Philadelphia. One of his first recruits was popular patriot Robert Mullan, the owner of the Tun Tavern, which subsequently became part of military lore as the birthplace of the Marine Corps. In addition to becoming the chief recruiting officer and serving at sea, Captain Mullan commanded a company of marines in Washington's Trenton/Princeton campaign in 1776-'7.

But the main source of Irish recruits for the Continental Marines comes on 13th May 1779, the day 137 men of the Regiment of Walsh (Infanterie Irlandaise Regiment de Walsh-Serrant), who were serving with the French army, joined the Marines en masse on board John Paul Jones's ship the *Bonhomme Richard*, which had been bought by Benjamin Franklin's purchasing agent, Cork-born James Moylan, brother of General Stephen Moylan, Chief of Cavalry in Washington's Continental Army. (This event was



Irish born Staff Sergeant  
Liam Flynn, US Marine Corps

Painting of the *Bonhomme Richard* in 1779.



Painting 'The action between His Majesties ship *Serapis*, and The *Bonhomme Richard*, 23rd September 1779', by William Elliott, © US Naval Academy Museum Collection.



fought in two World Wars; Ed Murphy on Iwo Jima; Ray Davis in World War II and Korea; Robert Emmett O'Malley and Paddy Collins in Vietnam; John Kelly in Iraq; Robert Kelly in Afghanistan; Marine Corps Commandants Charles McCawley, PX Kelly, Al Gray and James Conway; and Sgt Maj Dan Daly (double Medal of Honour recipient for his exploits in China in 1900 and Haiti in 1915) who, when leading an assault at Belleau Wood in the First World War, is reported to have shouted at his men: "Come on, you sons of bitches! Do you want to live forever?"

The Corps traces its history to 10th November 1775 when the Second Continental Congress approved a resolution to raise two

recognised in 1992 when the US Congress passed a resolution designating May 13th as Irish Brigade Day.)

These 137 marines were members of a 'Wild Geese' brigade that had existed in the French army for almost a century at that point, made up of Irish exiles, some recent and some the descendants of men who had gone to France over the preceding hundred years, during which the Irish Brigade had compiled a proud and valiant history.

On 23rd September these Irish Brigade marines got their chance to confront their ancient enemy off the English coast when the *Bonhomme Richard* engaged the Royal Navy ships *Serapis* and *Countess of Scarborough* in one of the bloodiest, and most memo-

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY





Sgt Maj Dan Daly, double Medal of Honour recipient.

nable, sea battles in US history. The fight continued into the night, lasting for almost four hours. Despite being outgunned by the better equipped *Serapis* and losing half his men Jones continued what looked a futile fight. With marines armed with pistols and grenades in the rigging and his ship lashed to the *Serapis*, Jones eventually prevailed and took the British ship. However, the *Bonhomme Richard* was too badly damaged to survive and sank the next day. The Irish Brigade volunteers in that battle proved themselves worthy of their Irish Brigade motto '*Semper et ubique Fidelis*' (Always and everywhere Faithful),

*"Come on, you sons of bitches! Do you want to live forever?" – 1st Sgt Dan Daly, USMC, at Belleau Woods June 1918*

which many believe is also the source of the US Marine Corps' motto '*Semper Fidelis*', adopted in 1883.

According to historian and author Professor Lt Col Charles Neimeyer, USMC, the uniform of the Continental Marines changed from green with white facings to green with red facings in late 1779 in tribute not only to the blood shed by the marines of the *Bonhomme Richard*, but also in memory of their Regiment of Walsh uniforms: red with blue facings. Professor Neimeyer also contends that the blue uniforms with red piping, that the US Marines inherited from Wayne's Legion in 1798 (and which colours continue today), were accepted as appropriate in that the colours were the same (only in reverse) as those

Painting 'John Adams reviews Jones' Marines, 13th May 1779' by Colonel of Marines Charles Waterhouse (former Artist in Residence of the US Marine Corps).



Ensign flown by *Bonhomme Richard* in defeating *Serapis* on 23rd September 1779.

of the uniforms of the Irish Brigade marines on the *Bonhomme Richard*.

In his homily at the 2015 St Patrick's Day Mass for the deceased members of the 69th Regiment of New York, the Most Reverend John O'Hara, Auxiliary Bishop of New York, cited a document signed by George Washington, proclaiming March 17th 1780 as "...a day of celebration to honour the heroic contributions of the Irish ... to the Revolutionary cause..."

#### About the Authors:

Derek Warfield is a singer, songwriter, musician, music historian, and founding member of *The Wolfe Tones*. Derek has produced two books, 'The Songs and Ballads of 1798' and 'The Irish Songster of the American Civil War'. One of Derek's latest musical recordings is 'Washington's Irish', Irish music of America's Wars for Independence, 1765 - 1815. He has also written a two-volume biography of Robert Emmett.

Liam Murphy is a retired naval officer, a Vietnam War veteran, and a 1965 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, with an MA in American History from Fordham. His first enlistment was in the Marines. ■



# An Cosantóir 10K 2015

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD  
PHOTOS: CPL COLUM  
LAWLOR, AIRMEN ADAM FOX  
AND DILLON LACEY-BYRNE,  
105 SQN

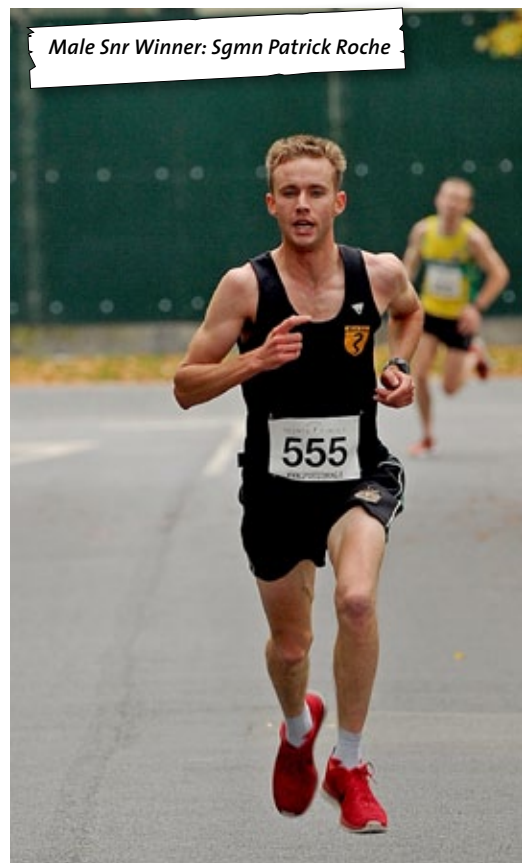
**T**he An Cosantóir 10K Road Race, a highlight of the Defence Forces competitive sporting calendar took place in The Phoenix Park on the 14th October 2015. Were 1,100 members of the Defence Forces along with invited guests took to the roads for the 36th annual An Cosantóir 10k Race. The Best Male category was won by last years 2nd place, Sgmn Partick Roche (CIS Gp, DFTC) in an impressive time of 31:21 and the Best Female was won by Sgt Tara Kennedy (DFHQ) in a time of 38:39 for a 2nd consecutive year. This year the Best Block bragging rights were earned by 3 Inf Bn, while the 6 Inf Bn won Best Team for a very impressive 7th consecutive year.

A 1-minute silence was observed in respect of our An Garda Síochána colleague Garda Tony Golden who tragically lost his life in the line duty last week.

Col Jim Burns J7, said in his address to the large number of personnel gathered in the gymnasium, *"We are not only here for the sport, but for the enjoyment it involves and to meet friends and other DF members."* He continued, *"I challenge you to get more involved in your chosen sport, get on a committee, and encourage more of the younger members of the DF to get involved in sport."* He thanked all those involved in making it another great event.

The two main sponsors again this year were Friends First and ANSAC Credit Union, and we thank them kindly for their continued support. Well done to all who took part and a big thank you to all who put the graft into making the event what it is, in particular the organising committee, the An Cosantóir/Information Office, the Defence Forces Athletics Association (DFAA), and all those who gave a hand on the day. ■

Male Snr Winner: Sgmn Patrick Roche





## CATEGORY WINNERS

Name	Unit	Time
<b>Male Senior</b>		
Sgmn Partick Roche	CIS Gp, DFTC	31:21
Pte Kenneth Rodgers	12 Inf Bn	31:33
Pte Paul Buckley	6 Inf Bn	33:36
<b>Female Senior</b>		
Sgt Tara Kennedy	DFHQ	38:39
Pte Maeve Fenton	12 Inf Bn	39:46
Sgt Valerie Cole	Mil Col, DFTC	41:55
<b>Male O/35</b>		
Cpl Peter Walsh	6 Inf Bn	34:41
Sgt Owen Connolly	Air Corps	34:53
Sgt Andrew Darcy	2 Cav Sqn	37:41
<b>Female O/35</b>		
Cpl Mary Molloy	3 Inf Bn	43:42
Sgt Jackie Kelly	2 Arty Regt	43:49
<b>Male O/40</b>		
Pte Anthony Devaney	Engr Gp, DFTC	36:48
CQMS Thomas Monks	Ord Gp 2 Bde	37:00
Comdt Noel Conway	DFHQ	38:33
<b>Female O/40</b>		
Comdt Jayne Lawlor	2 Cav Sqn	44:03
Sgt Siobhan Boyle	DFSM	1:00:01
<b>Male O/45</b>		
Sgt Declan Madden	6 Inf Bn	36:24
Lt Col Kevin Campion	DFHQ	39:12
<b>Male O/50</b>		
Sgt Tom Bishop	DFSM	36:42
Pte John Joyce	6 Inf Bn	38:18
<b>Male O/55</b>		
Sgt Joseph Quinn	28 Inf Bn	39:08
<b>Block (25 start with 20 needed to finish)</b>		
1st Block	3 Inf Bn	39:10
2nd Block	27 Inf Bn	39:12
3rd Block	28 Inf Bn	39:56
<b>Team (A combined time of 6 individuals)</b>		
1st Team	6 Inf Bn	38:18
2nd Team	DFHQ	44:35
3rd Team	2 Cav Sqn	50:32

Full results online, visit: <http://sportstiming.ie/>

Block Winners: 3 Inf Bn



Female Snr Winner: Sgt Tara Kennedy





# UNIFIL An Cosantóir 10K 2015

BY TADHG O'DONOGHUE, 49  
INF GP, UNIFIL

The An Cosantóir 10K was held in UNP 2-45 on 10th October 2015, where 150 UNIFIL personnel participated, including: French, Estonian, Finnish and Irish competitors who battled the 27°C heat and a challenging course to complete the 10K route. Having registered the previous evening participants had been issued with their An Cosantóir 2015 T-Shirts and wore them for the event creating an atmosphere familiar to Irish peacekeepers that compete in the perennial event in Ireland.

The event commenced at 0800hrs, with the piper in ceremonial dress greeting the participants of the team event at the start line. A team comprised of four personnel. A total of eight teams competed. Peacekeepers from the Estonian Platoon eventually won the race following a thrilling finish where 5 Platoon B Coy offered excellent competition.

At 0900hrs the individual event commenced. Personnel competed in categories of Over 40s, Senior Female and Senior Male.

The Irish Piper again developed an optimistic atmosphere at the start line as race director, Captain Tadhg O'Donoghue explained the route and wished all competitors good luck.

The finish line was on the Camp Helipad, high and overlooking the wadis of South Lebanon. First to finish was the winner of the Senior Male category, Estonian Lt Andy Sepple, a high profile runner based in UNP 2-45. He was trailed by Gnr Billy Guerin of B Coy and 1 Arty Regt. First to finish among the females was Cpl Kay Meaney of BSG and 12 Inf Bn. The Over 40s category was a close affair, Sgt Dos McAllister of Bn HQ and DFTC the eventual winner.

Gp Comd 49 Inf Gp welcomed personnel of all nationalities to an important event in the calendar of the Defence Forces and congratulated in particular the winners of each category. The event was a highlight of the deployment of the 49 Inf Gp who will rotate in November. The An Cosantóir 10K marked for many, the culmination of a successful running event series that the unit engaged with since deployment in May. ■



*Sgt John Kelleher during the An Cosantóir 10km run at UNP 2-45.*



*Pte David Stack gasps for air after finishing the team event.*



# SPORT

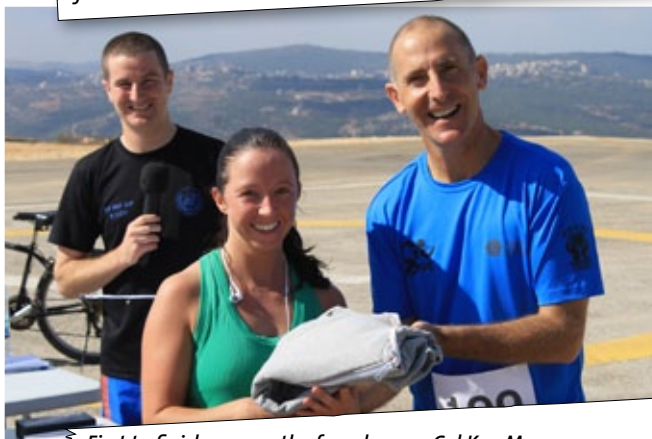
31



*Sgt Donal McAlister, Sgt Terry Whelan, CQMS Nicholas Bent and CQMS Phil Power.*



*Gnr Billy Guerin accepts his second place prize, he was the first Irish man across the line.*



*First to finish among the females was Cpl Kay Meaney.*

*Pte Nicola Doherty in action. She came second in the women's event.*







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Send your answer along with your name, address & contact number to An Cosantóir's address or by email to [subs@military.ie](mailto:subs@military.ie) by the 23rd November 2015. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn. Last month's winner was: Shane Lynch, Co Kildare.





# NOTICEBOARD

## Charity Event Wicklow Way



Pte Ronan Guerin, 2 BAR, with the help of two friends Brian Gallogly and Martin McDowell both 2 Cav Reserve, have planned to walk the full length of the Wicklow Way from Clonegal, Carlow to the finish in Marley Park, Dublin. The charity they are supporting is Pieta House - The Centre for the Prevention of Self-Harm or Suicide.



They plan to undergo the challenge on the 28th December 2015 and the walk is 127km in length over mountain trail and they hope to do it in under 48 hours!

They have a fundraising target of €1,270 for Pieta House, which is only €10 per kilometre. But their main goal is to raise awareness for suicide, especially over the Christmas period. So we kindly ask if you could like, share and invite friends to their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/127kwicklowway> to help gain support for their worthy cause! And to make a donation please visit: [www.mycharity.ie/event/127k\\_wicklow\\_way\\_for\\_suicide](http://www.mycharity.ie/event/127k_wicklow_way_for_suicide)

## 'A' Coy 47 Inf Bn REUNION

A reunion of 'A' Coy, 47 Inf Bn is planned for Saturday 21st November 2015 at 2pm in the NCOs Mess McKee Bks. Please spread the word to all Officers, NCOs and Ptes of A Company that you have contact with. Any personnel who wishes to attend please email: [todoherthy71@gmail.com](mailto:todoherthy71@gmail.com) or ring Capt Tony Doherty (Retd) on 086 1991226.

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## COMPETITION €50 VOUCHER

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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Marcus O'Byrne, Dublin 25. Closing date is 23rd November 2015.

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## COURAGE BOYS WE ARE WINNING AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE 1916 RISING

**Author:** Michael Barry  
**Publisher:** Andalus Press (October 2015) <http://andalus.ie/>  
**ISBN:** 978-0956038395  
**Price:** €25 H/B  
**Pages:** 208



On the 28th April 1916, in an official communiqué issued by James Connolly, the words, 'Courage Boys We are Winning,' were included to give the Irish Forces encouragement as they held on to a number of strategic positions throughout Dublin city. The newly declared Irish Republic would be short lived as British Forces engaged the Irish Volunteers with rifle, machine-gun and artillery fire.

In his latest work, historian Michael Barry has written a comprehensive and engaging read resulting in an excellent illustrated history of Easter week 1916.

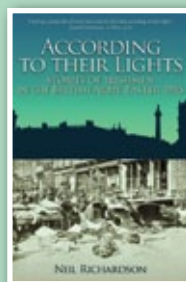
The author weaves his well researched narrative around the photographs, an effective method in keeping the reader absorbed in a work that provides a detailed account of events as well as being an easy read. The imagery is excellent throughout and what is particularly striking is when modern photographs of the city's battlefields are put alongside period black and white shots, bringing the events of that momentous week to life.

While many readers will be attracted to this work because of its excellent photographic collection, Barry has also managed to include a large number of previously unseen sketches, maps and official documentation that contributes greatly to the story of the Rising and those involved. One in particular is a sketch of a Volunteer in position at Marrowbone Lane that vividly brings to life the waiting for battle that many soldiers experience.

Michael Barry's publication is outstanding and this highly recommended work will be an essential addition to the libraries of those interested in this turbulent period in Irish history. **PO'B**

## ACCORDING TO THEIR LIGHTS STORIES OF IRISHMEN IN THE BRITISH ARMY, EASTER 1916

**Author:** Neil Richardson  
**Publisher:** The Collins Press (October 2015) [collinspress.ie](http://collinspress.ie)  
**ISBN:** 978-1848892149  
**Price:** €15.99  
**Pages:** 440



During the Rising of 1916, a small force of Republicans faced the might of the British Empire as they fought to declare Ireland an independent state. Often overlooked, until now that is, is that many Irishmen faced fellow country men during that insurrection. Thousands of British soldiers in the Rising were Irishmen having enlisted for a number of reasons that included, the fight for Home Rule, Ulster Unionism, and adventure or to escape from poverty. None imagined that they would be facing their fellow citizens in combat on the streets of Dublin city.

*According to their Lights, Stories of Irishmen in the British Army, Easter 1916*, written by renowned author and historian Neil Richardson, is a detailed account of British Forces during that turbulent week in Irish history. While many historians are familiar with the various Irish Regiments that took part, Richardson looks in detail at the individual soldiers, their lives and their actions during that week. While the exploits of Captain J. Bowen-Colthurst and his involvement in the murders of a number of innocent civilians are well documented by the author the book also examines the lives of other less well known participants.

Often a forgotten part of Ireland's history, the stories of these men and their deployment in Dublin is a fascinating insight into the mindset of those tasked with putting down the insurrection.

This book is a well researched, well written and a compelling account of Irishmen in Khaki fighting in Dublin. Neil Richardson has produced a very original piece of work that is a welcome addition to the military history of 1916. Highly recommended. **PO'B**

## BLOOD RED TIDE BAD TIMES #2

**Author:** Chuck Dixon  
**Publisher:** Bruno Books 1st edition (January 2014)  
**ASIN:** B00HZOLA9H  
**Price:** €4.50  
**Pages:** 326



Book 2 in Chuck Dixon's new sci-fi series. Having made millions from their first trip back in time

to prehistoric Nevada, by retrieving the ancient gold to fund a new time travelling tube. Now the Taubers, Morris and Caroline along with Dwayne, Chaz, Jimbo and their other Army Ranger buddies try and stay off the grid whilst planning their next trip back in time.

This time they go back to ancient Greece, and the time of Pirates roaming the Mediterranean Sea. Equipped with ancient philosopher treasure papers, they plan to hide on a Greek Island in wait for the location of the buried treasure. Things don't go to plan and between a poisonous snakebite and being held prisoner on a pirate ship and going into battle with the same Pirates to save their very lives. The team go on one hell of a swashbuckling adventure, with mystery and intrigue around every page turn; this is another great series from Chuck. **WF**



# WHAT I DO

## NAME

MICHAEL BURKE

## RANK

SERGEANT

## UNIT

PR BRANCH,  
DFHQ

**W**hen I finished school at 17 it was hard to find work in my hometown of Templemore, Co Tipperary. A part-time job in a joinery shop didn't have many prospects so I decided to follow two of my uncles and join the Defence Forces.

I enlisted in the Curragh in the General Training Depot (GTD) on 24th January 1978, and following recruit training I was posted to 6 Fd Sigs Coy in Ceannt Bks where I became a driver with the unit after completing an MT Drivers course.

In 1980 I travelled overseas for the first time with 47 Inf Bn, UNIFIL, in Lebanon, as a signals driver. I enjoyed the tour and became a regular visitor to Lebanon in the years that followed.

My second tour came the following year as switchboard operator with 5 IrComp.

In January 1983 I underwent a Pot NCOs course and was promoted to corporal in 6 Fd Sigs Coy, before going back to Lebanon as an NCO with 56 Inf Bn Sigs Pl.

In 1985, I completed an Orderly Room Sgts course and became Orderly Room Sgt in 6 Fd Sigs Coy.

My fourth, fifth and sixth trips to Lebanon followed with 61 Inf Bn (1987), 63 Inf Bn (1988), and 66 Inf Bn (1989).

In 1990 I underwent a Std NCOs course, which was followed by my seventh and eighth trips to Lebanon (25 IRCOMP, and 32 IRCOMP).

I was promoted to sergeant in February 1996 and at the same time began what would become a long career in computers when I completed a CAPS course, followed by an OIS Instructor course in 1997.

I was posted to the, then, School of Admin as an instructor in 1998, where one of my main tasks was setting up and organising the central admin for ECDL for Defence Forces personnel.

I completed numerous computer courses including Advanced Amipro, Advanced MS Office, MS Front Page Web Design, and with my thirst for IT knowledge I was constantly undergoing additional online computer training.

In 2007 I attended Carlow IT and received a national certificate (HETAC) in Information and Technology, Training and Support. In 2010 I attended NUI Galway where I received a national certificate (HETAC) in Training and Education. I am also a Certified Training Professional.

In January 2008, I travelled overseas again, this time as A/Coy Sgt employed as Webmaster with G6 cell.

In 2009 I was asked to fill in as Webmaster for military.ie to maintain and update the website, which was only in its infancy, in addition to my duties in the School.

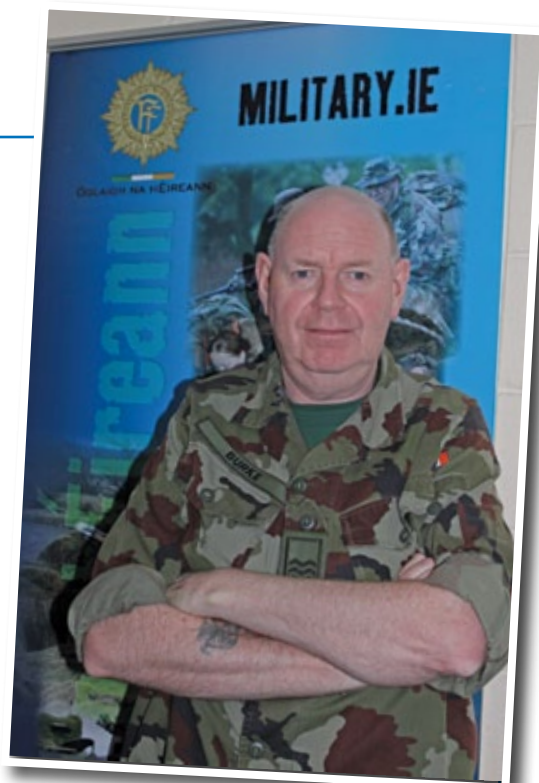
In 2010 the post became full-time and I was attached to the Information Office, PR Branch. The long process of developing military.ie started, and the soft launch of the site followed in February 2011.

In 2013, the DF launched IKON, a SharePoint information and knowledge management system, and I completed the Information Knowledge Management (IKM) power-users course in 2014 and the SharePoint 2013 Administrators course.

On a daily basis I upload information to the DF newsfeeds; maintain the cosmetic look of IKON; and assist on various online projects with units who have a requirement for individual interaction with IKON.

I also assist PR Branch, including *An Cosantóir*, by creating backdrops, adverts and posters, and occasionally acting as a photographer. To help me with the additional PR tasks, I completed a diploma in Desktop Publishing, a DF Photography course, a diploma in Social Media Marketing, and a Basic Photographers course with the Shaw Academy.

I plan to remain serving in the DF until I have to retire and build on the work I have already completed with PR Branch to spread the DF's 'Defend, Protect, Support' message. ■



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