



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

# AN COSANTÓIR

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FEBRUARY 2019

## 'FIBUA EXERCISE'

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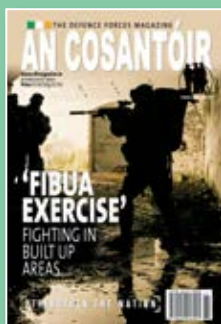
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**Charity Fundraising Table Quiz**

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 7.30 p.m.**

**Venue: The Graduate Bar & Restaurant**  
 Killiney Shopping Centre, Rochestown Avenue,  
 Killiney, Dún Laoghaire, County Dublin.

This table quiz is being organised to raise necessary funds for O.N.E. (Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann) – Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel (Chy. No. 13868) and I.U.S.R.U. - Irish Underwater Search and Recovery Unit (Chy. No. 20132)

All welcome - Teams of 4 persons  
 Entry fee: €40.00 per team.  
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It is not necessary to book in advance but if you wish to do so or require further requests, please email:  
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## Front Cover

94th Cadet Class conducting a FIBUA Exercise in Fort Davis.  
Photo by Sgt Karl Byrne

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

**H**ello and welcome to the first issue of *An Cosantóir's* 79th year. This month's topics range from FIBUA (fighting in built-up areas) to instructor exchanges with the British Army, international courses, cyber security, and much, much, more.

As ever your photos are *On Parade* to start us off, providing a wide view of the day-to-day activities of our military family. *In Focus* follows with two short pieces; the first about a fundraising event for a retired officer diagnosed with motor neurone disease, and the second taking a look at the DF Review 2018, which focuses on peacekeeping and peace-making interventions over the 60 years since Irish troops first deployed overseas.

Our *Veterans' News* looks at the 2018 Veterans' Military Ball, which raised nearly €9,000 for ONE's Fuchsia Appeal.

This month's lead article looks at 94th Cadet Class undergoing a FIBUA exercise in Fort Davis, Co Cork. This is complemented by *The Infantry Platoon Sergeant in FIBUA*, written by instructors from the NCO Training Wing, Military College, which looks at this type of urban warfare.

In *Sharing Knowledge: UK Instructor Exchange*, Sgt Rory Behan reports on his attendance as an observer on the British Army's Urban Operations Instructors' Course, which also included close-quarter battle shooting and fighting in woods and forests (FIWAF).

Reservist Capt Damien O'Herlihy gives us a snapshot of his unit's activities in *Two Weeks in 2 Bde Cavalry Squadron Reserve*, which includes participating in the escort

of honour for the WWI Armistice centenary commemorations, the inauguration of President Higgins, and a 72-hour joint tactical exercise in the Slieve Blooms.

Our own Cpl Lee Coyle gives us *Friendships & Memories in Custume Barracks*, in which he tells us about his meeting with some female civilian employees in the barracks who have given a combined 369 years' service to the DF.

Lee also provides us with a look at *Advanced Training on Security Sector Reform*, which is an international course conducted by UNTSI.

Our regular Naval Service contributor, CPO/ERA Ruairi de Barra, tells us about a recent Advanced Marine Damage Control and Fire Fighting Course conducted in the National Maritime College of Ireland.

To start off our *History* section, Justyna Mazurek-Schramm tells us about the third conference on Polish/Irish history, held at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan in conjunction with the city's Irish Culture Foundation.

In *Athy's Heroes & Veterans*, I write about visiting that town's impressive Heritage Centre to learn about its military past and meet veterans who have set up one of ONE's newest branches.

Peter Mulready MA looks at the strategic importance of *The Siege of Malta 1940-1942* before our *Sports* pages finish the issue with a look at the DF Gaelic football team, which is under new management and building for the future.

All this, plus our regular *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Book Review* and *What I Do* features.

*Wayne Fitzgerald*

**Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald**

## Ombudsman's Visit

The Ombudsman for the Defence Forces (ODF), Mr Alan Mahon, continued his orientation with a visit to the DFTC before Christmas. He found the day very informative and wishes to thank all those who facilitated the visit.

Pictured are Lauren O'Donovan, Brian O'Neill, Alan Mahon, and Micheal O'Flaherty, along with Comdt Jamie Troy and Pte Iggy Mitchell. Photo: Capt Peter Dunne





### ▲ DF HURLING TEAM IN LONDON

Congratulations to the Defence Forces Hurling Team and management who defeated the Bank of Ireland Hurling Team in a very competitive fixture which took place in London on the 23rd November 2018. Many thanks to the 1st Bn, Irish Guards in Hounslow Barracks, who provided accommodation and transportation for the duration of the trip. *Photo: Comdt Stephen Molumphy*



### ▲ CHARITY RUGBY MATCH

The Defence Forces Over 35s were deserved winners over the Dáil & Seanad XV in a Charity Rugby match in Donnybrook before Christmas. In an exciting game where the rules were almost as fluid as the play the DF won 12-5. Many thanks to all the players who toggled out, the Dáil & Seanad XV, Old Wesley RFC and the sponsors Sky. All funds raised went to the ONE's Fuchsia Appeal <https://oneconnect.ie/fundraising/fuchsia-appeal/>. *Photo: Comdt Rory McCann*



### ▲ NAVY CREW MEETS AN TUACHTARÁN

Pictured are members of LÉ William Butler Yeats, the ships company were privileged to meet An tUachtarán Michael D. Higgins during their recent visit to Áras an Uachtaráin on Friday 23rd November 2018.



### ▲ DFPES MILITARY CHALLENGE 2018

The Defence Forces Physical Education School (DFPES) Military Challenge was launched back in May 2018. With 12 teams numbering 120 soldiers from four formations taking on the challenge; in an attempt to earn the title of the Defence Force's fittest unit. The DFTC's '1 MIC Hamstrings' were ultimately triumphant and were presented with the cup and individual €40 vouchers from Elvery Sports by CMC Col McGuinness. Huge thanks to course designer Sgt Jim Maguire and all participants who made this competition so competitive. DFPES Military Challenge 2019 coming soon... *Photo: Cpl Lee Coyle*



### ▲ GAMING FOR PEACE (GAP)

Pictured are members of IUNVA Post 4 (Cahir, Co. Tipperary), IUNVA's newest post, who were at the launch of Gaming For Peace (GAP) in Trinity College on the 10th January 2019. They are (L/R): Richard Purcell, John O'Callaghan, Paddy Hackett, Pat Mc Garry, and Bob Farrell. *Photo Armn Sam Gibney*

### ▲ FAREWELL EUGENE

Eugene Brennan a Service Officer in Defence Forces HQ/ Dept. of Defence, Newbridge has recently retired. Eugene was one of the first people you would meet on entering the Dept, and was always welcoming. All the staff in DFHQ/DoD and An Cosantóir would like to wish Eugene the very best with his future endeavours. *Photo: Pat McDonnell, DoD*







### ▲ FAREWELL KEVIN

Pictured is Coy Sgt Kevin Young (AR), who retired late last year after completing nearly 43 years' service in the FCÁ/RDF. Kevin was a member of 2 Bde CIS and is seen here being presented with a statuette from Comdt Julian Ensor (AR), SSO 2 Bde CIS. *Photo: Comdt Julian Ensor (AR)*



### ▲ AIR CORPS AW139

Pictured in December 2018 Irish Air Corps AW139 tail number 276 operating as AIRCORPS112 on the old helipad at University Hospital Galway. *Photo: David McGrath*

### COFFEE MORNING IN AID OF LAURALYNN

Members of 2 Bde Military Police Corps in Government Buildings held a Coffee Morning recently in aid of the LauraLynn Ireland's Children's Hospice <https://lauralynn.ie>. Pictured L/R: Sgt Ian Farrell, Coy Sgt Vincent Nugent, Niamh Doyle, LauraLynn Fundraising Executive and Cpl Mark Bowes. *Photo: Coy Sgt Vincent Nugent*



### ▲ IMVG PRESENT BENCH TO AN COSANTÓIR

On 5th December 2018, the Irish UN Living History Group and their colleagues in the Irish Military Vehicles Group (IMVG) made a presentation of a bench in appreciation to the staff of *An Cosantóir* and PR Branch, at their offices in the Curragh Camp. Pictured are *An Cosantóir*/PR Branch staff flanked by IMVG vehicles, UN Veteran's Tony O'Reilly and Charlie Mott, along with Kevin McCormack from the Irish UN Living History Group and Kieran Flynn and Finbarr Rush from IMVG – Many thanks for presentation. *Photo: Armn Jamie Barrett*



### ▲ NS CREW SUPPORTS PIETA HOUSE

LÉ Samuel Beckett ship's company raised money whilst on deployment to the Mediterranean on OP SOPHIA, and following the Naval Services Annual FOCNS Inspection presented a cheque to Pieta House. Pictured (L/R): CPO/Sea Daithi Hughes, Lt Cdr Eoin Smyth, OC LÉ Samuel Beckett, PO/Cook Padraig O'Flynn, Pat Duffy from Pieta House and Lt (NS) Alan Flynn. *Photo: Lt (NS) Alan Flynn*



### ▲ IRISH RED CROSS AWARD

The Irish Red Cross bestowed a special honour on the Defence Forces to mark 60 years of unbroken service to the United Nations at their inaugural Irish Red Cross Humanitarian Awards Ball in the Clayton Hotel Burlington Road, Dublin on 24th November 2018. Pictured accepting the Award to a 'standing ovation' are the Defence Forces Values Champions 2018 along with Minister with Responsibility for Defence Mr Paul Keogh TD. *Photo: Irish Red Cross*



# 'Sing or Swim for Noel'

In support of the Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association (IMNDA)

REPORT & PHOTOS BY TADHG CROWLEY



Group photo of swimmers who volunteered for the swim.



Noel Shannon with former colleagues, (L/R): Lt Col Sean Dunne and Comdt Eamon Kennelly.

**O**n Saturday 5th January 2019 a fundraising event 'Sing or Swim for Noel' was organised to support retired Defence Forces Captain Noel Shannon who was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease in 2016.

Noel is a former Area Manager with the National Learning Network which he took up after retiring with over 21 years' service with the Defence Forces. The 'Sing or Swim for Noel' fundraising event was organised by Assistant Manager Padraig Healy of the National Learning Network in Hollyhill Cork in a show of support for Noel, who is his long-time colleague and friend.

The event took place at Fountainstown Beach and saw over a hundred people turn out to swim on the day in harmony with Noel. A large number of supporters jumped in for the invigorating swim, serenaded by the Band of the Defence Forces as well as a great group of traditional musicians.

With a huge set-up by the Defence Forces' 1 Brigade and the Irish Coast-guard providing safety and support to everyone taking part. A great day was had by all, as everyone enjoyed the hot soup, endless cakes, tea, coffee, music, and comradery in support of Noel.

The event on the day raised over €5,664, which was donated on the day directly to the Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association (IMNDA), who is the only organisation of its kind providing care and support to people with Motor Neurone Disease, their families, friends, and carers.

You can still donate to this great cause using the online link which will remain active until March: [www.idonate.ie/SingOrSwim](http://www.idonate.ie/SingOrSwim). ■



Volunteers collecting donations including Eileen O'Keeffe and her daughter of Cork Rock Choir, Noel's wife Angela Shannon, Adrian Brady, James Hyde, Stacey Birmingham and Crystal Long of the National Learning Network.



Members of the Irish Coast Guard are pictured with Noel Shannon.



Noel Shannon's two daughters, son and wife are pictured at the starting line. They are (L/R): Orlaith, Eoin, Angela, and Sadhbh.



Pictured are DF members from Collins Barracks who kindly volunteered and provided refreshments and tents. They include: Lt Col Sean Dunne, Brig Gen Patrick Flynn (GOC 1 Bde), and Comdt Eamon Kennelly.



# DEFENCE FORCES REVIEW 2018

BY COMDT RORY FINEGAN,  
MILITARY COLLEGE  
PHOTOS CPL LEE COYLE



**T**he Launch of the Defence Forces Review 2018 took place at NUI Galway on 22nd November 2018, where the Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM formally launched it. The theme of the Review was Peacekeeping and Peace-making Interventions and dovetailed with the 60th Anniversary of when Irish troops were first deployed overseas, namely a group of Observers to Lebanon in 1958. 2018 was also noteworthy in that it was the 40th anniversary of when Irish troops were first deployed to South Lebanon as part of the UNIFIL Mission. Today an Irish Unit still stands watch in the Land of the Cedar Tree along the potentially volatile Blue Line; as does a sister unit on the Golan Heights as part of the UNDOF

mission, where in Syria an on going Civil War involving numerous actors has led to unspeakable human suffering and tragedy.

These Missions reinforcing Ireland's commitment to helping maintain peace and stability in the Middle East, are just part of what the Chief of Staff has noted of the contribution to peacekeeping by the men and women of the Irish Defence Forces on a literal global scale; whereby, *"the Irish Defence Forces has over 650 personnel serving overseas in 13 missions in 13 countries and on one sea."*

The 2018 issue of the Review was published in an academic collaboration with the School of Political Science and Sociology and the Irish Centre for Human Rights, both NUI Galway; reflected both the pride and achievements of the Defence Forces while at the same time inviting comprehensive critical analysis with a view to understanding what lessons can be learned from the entire spectrum of this unique peacekeeping record. As President Michael D. Higgins noted at a commemoration in 2018 to mark this important milestone, *"this is a unique record and one of which the Defence Forces and the Irish people can be justifiably very proud...it has established our acceptability as peacekeepers, and peace defenders and thus has enabled us to play an effective role in the international community."*

The fifteen articles within the Review from both Defence Forces personnel and academic contributors reflect the evolution and change within peacekeeping that has evolved and developed since the foundation of the UN; whereby peacekeeping has undergone several epochal changes.

The range of articles encompassed within this edition also mirrors the complex world with its multiple *"Wicked Threats"* which face our troops. Richard Cole of DFAT in his considered piece looks at the pragmatic evolution and development of Ireland's peacekeeping in the Middle East. It is indicative that the severe challenges to Human Rights witnessed in many conflicts along with sexual abuse are reflected in several articles, including those by LTC Richard Brennan, Caroline Hunt Matthes and Sally Anne Corcoran. Their articles also explore a theme resonant to our times of sexual violation carried out by not just warring parties and militias, but also regrettably, in some instances by peacekeepers themselves. The battle to implement UNSCR 1325 that seeks to protect women and children in conflict zones in which Ireland has been to the fore, resonates through these pieces. A particularly interesting article, first published in 2008 and reprinted in this edition is by Dr. John Moriarty, and is entitled *"Bullets, Bacteria and Boredom – A peacekeeping Memory of Lebanon"*; and is both whimsical and poignant in highlighting the deep bonds of affection that developed between Irish peacekeepers and the Villagers of Southern Lebanon. A very well received companion piece to this was the article by Private Terence O'Reilly of the DF Library, which was a fascinating micro study of the operational challenges faced by the 66th Infantry Battalion in Lebanon in the winter of 1989/90.

Professor Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh, President of NUI Galway, in welcoming the launch of the DF Review in association with the Academic Seminar at NUI Galway noted the long and enduring academic relationship that has evolved and developed between the University and the Defence Forces. The keynote speech during the seminar was delivered by Maj. General Michael Beary DSM who had just completed his appointment as the Force Commander in UNIFIL and delivered a focused yet incisive talk on the key challenges that he faced.

The enduring themes of the Seminar were poignantly and uncannily echoed in the words of US President John F. Kennedy who when he addressed the Joint Houses of the Oireachtas on 28th June 1963, stated, *"from Cork to the Congo, from Galway to the Gaza Strip, from this Legislative Assembly to the United Nations, Ireland is sending its most talented men to do the world's most important work – the work of peace."* ■



# VETERAN'S NEWS VETERAN'S NEWS VETERAN'S NEWS

## BLACK TIE GALA BALL SUPPORTS VETERANS IN NEED

BY BENNY HILL PHOTOS CPL LEE COYLE

**W**hat another brilliant turnout for the Veterans Military Ball that was held last August, when yet again we filled the venue of Morans Hotel, Red Cow. Our guest speaker on the night was Mr Anthony (Tony) Stafford, a former member of the DF who due to his circumstances had to avail of the services of Brú Na Bfhiann. Tony's story, one of heart-break, struck a chord and will live long in the memory of those who heard it.

MC for the evening was provided by Tommy Conlon, who opened proceedings and got the night started by introducing our speakers and special guests, welcoming everyone who attended, and reminding us of our chosen charity: Brú Na Bfhiann our soldiers homes.

The Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel were represented by their HQ staff plus members of the Erskine Childers Branch who took three tables, the Roger Casement Branch and the Peadar Clancy Branch who also took a table. The Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) were also represented by Post 9 and Post 1, and many other UN Veterans from other posts. We had many other Veterans associations represented, such as: 2nd Battalion, 5th Battalion, Garrison Tpt, BWS Tpt, 2 Mtr Sqn, the Military Police, 2 Fd Arty, the Military Engineers and many more. We also had support from the Army Transport club, the Bde transport reserve formerly 11th Field Supply & Transport.

Our Colour Party this year comprised of: Paula Cooley in the place of honour accepting the colours. Willie Mc Cormack of 2 Bde Tpt Reserve carried the Tri Colour, Anthony Byrne carried the United Nations Flag, and Paul Cooley carried the ONE Pennant. We would like to thank all of the units and associations who supplied their unit pennants.

You don't need to have served in the Defence Forces to purchase a ticket, everyone is welcome and we had many guests who had no connection except the desire to support a good cause and to have a great evening.

After the event, the sum of €8,760 was raised for Bru Na Bfhiann, to support Irish Defence Forces Veterans who have fallen on hard times and are in need of accommodation.

The occasion would not be a military event without the use of pipers to escort the colour party, provided with the help of IUNVA Post 1 and formerly of the 5 Infantry Battalion: Anto Byrne, Stefan O'Reilly and Joe Burke. We also thank our bugler Brian Douglas.

A big thank you to all who supplied spot prizes I won't name you for fear of leaving someone out.

We especially wish to thank our sponsors and assistants: Jean Maher, Vinny Devoy, Mattie Doyle, Mick Reynolds. Our organising committee remains

the same four warriors, Benny Hill, Paul Clarke, Tommy Conlon and Vinny Kearns. The 2019 Black Tie Ball is scheduled for the 24th August in Morans Red Cow, Naas Road. Contact Benny Hill on 087 6798 691 for details. ■



One of the event organisers Benny Hill with veterans from the Cavalry Association.





Recently retired RSM Mick Dillon, along with CQMS Paul Gifford and his wife Annette.




Guest Speaker and DF Veteran Tony Stafford.






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# CAN YOU HELP WITH INFORMATION ON The Arctic Convoys 1941-1945?



**The Arctic Convoys 1941-45 period: 'Ice forming on a 20-inch signal projector on the cruiser HMS Sheffield whilst she is helping to escort an Arctic convoy to Russia' & 'Members of the crew clearing the frozen focsle of HMS Inglefield during convoy duty in Arctic waters.'**

**Dr Angela Byrne, Historian-in-Residence at EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum is planning an exhibition on the 'Irish at Sea', for temporary display in March-April 2019. Dr Byrne hopes to include the Irish participants in the Arctic Convoys of 1941-45 in the exhibition and would be very grateful if any reader with any information or photographs could get in touch with her.**

**Dr Angela Byrne: [abyrne@epicchq.com](mailto:abyrne@epicchq.com) - [www.epicchq.com](http://www.epicchq.com)**



# CADETS FINAL FIBUA EX



BY CADET  
JACK SETRIGHT  
& CADET  
SEAN GREENE  
PHOTOS BY  
SGT KARL  
BYRNE



**F**ighting In Built Up Areas (FIBUA) exercises enhance a soldier's ability to operate and succeed in close quarter combat and challenging environments by gaining intelligence on the enemy's location, their tactics techniques and procedures, whilst also developing a soldier's decision making abilities, with the ultimate objective of destroying the enemy and clearing the area. The 94th Cadet Class recently conducted a FIBUA exercise in Fort Davis, Co. Cork in November 2018. This is our story.

**ORDERS:** Beginning in the early hours of the morning Cadet Platoon Commanders delivered orders under the watchful eye of Sgt Major Fitzsimons, who for the exercise was our acting Coy Cmdr and Sgt Sargent as acting Coy Sgt. The question pondered during pre-orders was "What exactly is our mission?" It was a simple yet effective one: "Seize Vital Installation Points (VIP's), close with and destroy the enemy". The Stage was set! The anticipation was further enhanced by information received that we would be inserted by sea using two Naval Service vessels, the LÉ Niamh and LÉ William Butler Yeats. We were to anchor off the Cork coast and be quickly transferred as assault teams onto RHIBs (Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats), and then make a covert fast approach to our objective, Fort Davis.

**EMBARKING ONTO NAVAL SHIPS:** Arriving at Dublin Port on a brisk chilly morning only to be greeted by the sight of two mammoth naval ships, it was an eye-opening experience. After being split into our platoons we boarded our own designated ships. Having grown up in the Curragh I had little experience about the workings of a ship and those who operated it, but I cannot emphasise the professionalism of the crew whilst working alongside them. A full tour was given, explaining the functions and capabilities of the ships along with information about the tours both ships have made to the Mediterranean mission and shores further afield. The crew were incredibly competent, exceptionally friendly and passionate about their duty as Naval personnel. Their expertise contributed to the overall enjoyment of the exercise by making us feel as if this was a 'live situation' rather than an exercise. More importantly, they also aided us in combatting the dreaded seasickness, which many of us suffered from. After a 13-hour trip from Dublin Port to roughly 5 km from the Fort Davis shore we



were ready for the next phase of our mission, which began at 5 am the following morning.

T-30 mins before we were launched onto the ribs and towards our AOI (Area of Interest). All the Cadets with acting Coy Cmdr Sgt Major Fitzsimons leading us and acting Coy Sgt Sgt Sargent were fully camouflaged, magazines were loaded, weapons cocked and made safe, we were ready to say farewell to the naval crew and launch onto the RHIBs and speed towards our objective, Fort Davis. The excitement was intense, only to be amplified by Capt Barry's (Artillery School, DFTC) real time intel updates via the use of drones, giving us our first "eyes on" of our target area. We waited for the signal! Flares shot up out of the naval ships and we were off. I can assure you that this was one of the best experiences during our Cadetship, not only being transported by RHIBs to our objective but primarily by understanding how vital and necessary it is to train and operate with all services of the Defence Forces in combined, joint operations.

**FROM THE RHIBS TO THE SHORE:** The journey took approximately three minutes thanks to the sheer power of the high-powered RHIBs. After detaching our life saving equipment we landed on the pier at Fort Davis only to be greeted by concentrated enemy fire. Having acquired and developed our skills and drills in the Cadet School, we responded by reacting competently to effective enemy fire. Our GPMG's were tactically deployed to maximise their enfilade fire capabilities on either side of the pier with our riflemen spread along the line whilst Platoon Commanders issued clear and precise fire control orders enabling our assault team to suppress the enemy which then gave the remaining elements of the Company the chance to reach land and make their way safely into pre-assigned rally points to later successfully seize the first two positions of Fort Davis.

**SEIZING FORT DAVIS:** The Company had seized the first two positions in front of the gatehouse which were lightly fortified using barriers and razor wire. We advanced forward clearing and securing our first objective (the gatehouse) of Fort Davis on the north side of the peninsula. Once the lead section raised the green flag on the entrance it was the signal for the following section to roll through and push on. They were then tasked with clearing the track from the rear of the gatehouse up to the tunnel, which led down to the lower level's main road. However, this task was exceptionally challenging as the enemy had placed IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) along our route. Several initiated, resulting in friendly force casualties and further secondary small arms enemy contact. The CUF Drill (Care Under Fire Drill, which essentially is trying to stop haemorrhaging after an initial injury) was initiated whilst the reserve sections suppressed the enemy. The casualties were then sent back towards the casualty collection point under the control of our Coy Sgt. Due to the small numbers of students involved to try and fill the Coy, and to keep the exercise running realistically all casualties received new names, ranks and army numbers and were then ready to be tasked as replacements on request of the Pln Cmdrs (Platoon Commanders). 1 Pln had reached their LOE (Limit Of Exploitation) allowing 2 Pln to roll through, clearing all rooms left and right of the main road. Moreover, we had to be exceptionally alert at the possibility of further IED's and ambushes from enemy positions at any stage of the operation. Many of the entrances were locked and thus required the Cadets to use previously taught breaching techniques. Locked doors were 'unlocked' by use of the tools in the MOE (Method Of Entry bag). The knock-knock, which is like a handheld battering ram and an explosive entry system was utilised with speed and aggression. Once 2 Pln reached their LOE, 3 Pln rolled straight through with un-surmountable momentum. 3 Pln cleared the final few buildings before they reached the Coy LOE. At this point the Coy Cmdr

ordered a consolidation and reorganisation, which would lead to a change of appointments for us the students and preparation began for DIBUA (Defence In Built Up Areas).

**DIBUA (DEFENCE IN BUILT UP AREA'S):** We fortified the entrance of the tunnel and set up sentry positions securing our position. Throughout this period Cadets were conducting preparation and planning drills as well as administering their equipment for the final push of the exercise. Playing to our advantage the deteriorating weather allowed our reconnaissance team move swiftly towards their AOI without engaging in enemy contact. Upon returning to the Coy HQ their intelligence gathering was processed with maps and models constantly being updated allowing the Cadets to develop a concise battle-picture for future actions of the mission.

**STAND TOO:** Stand too was initiated at 4.30am the following morning and the new Pln Cmdrs formulated their plans. Our mission was to patrol as a Company along a zigzag route to the upper level of Fort Davis. 1 Pln and 2 Pln cleared the cluster of buildings with 3 Pln taking the gunnery positions of the area. Ladders were introduced with the breaching of high-level entry buildings thus allowing the Cadets to secure VIP's. 1 Pln and 2 Pln pushed on towards their LOE but were faced with constant enemy contact due to the multiple blind spots primarily by the nature of the infrastructure of Fort Davis. Having destroyed the Enemy and seized key areas of Fort Davis our mission was achieved concluding FIBUA and one of the most realistic and enjoyable exercises the Cadets have experienced to date.

The 94th Cadet class are due to be commissioned in early February 2019. Cadets or trainee officers engage in 15 months training in the Military College, DFTC covering many basic and practical soldier skills and military fields of study before taking up an operational appointment in the Permanent Defence Forces. ■



# The Infantry Platoon Sergeant

# IN FIBUA

BY VARIOUS NCOS NCO TNG WNG, MIL COL  
PHOTOS SGT KARL BYRNE

**A**ccording to the Manual of the Infantry Battalion, the purpose of Fighting in Built Up Areas (FIBUA) is to gain dominance on a critical objective, rupture the defence of the enemy, facilitate future operations of friendly forces and/or deal the enemy a decisive psychological blow.

FIBUA is an infantry task, supported from the combat support arms such as engineers, artillery, and cavalry. Success is determined by decisive battles at platoon and company level within a wider battalion or brigade operation. In order for platoon actions to be successful it is critical that the platoon commander and his/her section commanders know the special characteristics of this type of fighting such as urbanisation (knowing the layout of the buildings), restricted fields of fire and observation, cover and concealment, obstacles, avenues of approach, the difficulty of locating the enemy and presence of non-combatants to mention a few. In support of these actions a comprehensive combat

service support (CSS) plan is required; and the unique aforementioned characteristics of the urban battle space pose significant challenges. The platoon sergeant must be cognisant of these characteristics when devising his/her CSS plan and how it interfaces with the company and battalion CSS plans.

There are five stages of a battalion FIBUA operation: Investment; Break-In; Securing Objectives; Clearance; and Reorganisation. For the platoon sergeant it is critical to know what stage or stages the platoon will play a role in, as the CSS considerations vary for each and become increasingly difficult the deeper into the built-up area that the platoon will operate. For example, if the platoon is to form part of the investment force or break-in, then CSS is largely similar in nature to typical infantry assaults in open terrain. However, once moving beyond the initial foothold gained in breaking-in to the periphery of the built-up area, the characteristics of FIBUA begin to shape and challenge even the





most experienced CSS planners. Thorough knowledge of battalion level FIBUA TTPs therefore is critical for the platoon sergeant's estimate process in support of his/her platoon commander.

As the administrative and logistics head of the platoon and its 2IC the platoon sergeant must be fully versed not just in the platoon commander's battle plan, but also in the company and battalion CSS plans. This is because the platoon sergeant is responsible for ensuring the soldiers doing the fighting are fully equipped, fed, armed and ready for each stage of the battle and that requires 'plugging-in' to higher level CSS systems. During FIBUA, the terrain and nature of operations create unique demands on units and formations. Increased ammunition consumption, increased water consumption, likely higher casualty rates, restricted access for transport all place extra demands on CSS to ensure resupply can move forward and casualties and prisoners of war can move rearward. The very nature of urbanised terrain and the associated devastation that follows intense artillery and aerial bombardment can thwart existing CSS plans, requiring quick thinking sergeants and company sergeants to improvise as the battle develops.

### Platoon Level Battle Preparation

An experienced and competent platoon sergeant is essential in the preparation for and execution of the FIBUA battle. As outlined above, the battalion and company level CSS plan will be challenged, the deeper the unit progresses into the built-up area. Therefore, as early as possible, ammunition (including grenades) and water must be pushed forward to the assaulting soldiers, shortening the resupply time. Company sergeants can adopt a pro-active or 'push' system in this case, where resupply demands are anticipated and executed prior to being requested. Similarly, the company sergeants and platoon sergeants must constantly liaise and move casualty collection points forward to keep up with the battle and minimise confusion associated with navigation in a rubble and devastated urban environment.

The platoon sergeant delivers the CSS paragraph of the platoon commander's orders as with other operations, but in FIBUA the following nuances should be given consideration. In terms of dress, TM 201 states that the minimum kit should be worn to allow unrestricted movement through mouse holes or trapdoors etc. Therefore, combat equipment should be stripped to the minimum with an emphasis on ammunition, water, medical kit, and any special breaching kit. Casualty evacuation drills should be well-rehearsed and thoroughly discussed, with an emphasis on locations of casualty collection points and routes to them. Designated stretcher carriers and bearers should be identified to all as well as any specially trained medical personnel attached to the platoon, company, or battalion.

Overall the role of the platoon sergeant in the FIBUA environment is to aid the platoon commander by ensuring that all troops have the necessary kit and equipment to complete their mission and tasks. They must ensure to give comprehensive and detailed CSS orders so that all troops are properly equipped and prepared crossing the line of departure. The soldiers must be assured that an effective and detailed casualty evacuation plan is in place. This will instil confidence in the soldiers to carry out the close quarter battles asked of them and maintain their morale as the battle progresses. The platoon sergeant should endeavour to push ammunition and all necessary equipment forward to assaulting sections in order to maintain the momentum of the battle which is an important aspect in FIBUA. Finally, the platoon sergeant should maintain a clear picture of the battle as it progresses. This means knowing the status of every soldier in the platoon and their condition at all times. This information will aid the platoon commander's decision making when the platoon transitions through the stages of the FIBUA operation or on to future operations elsewhere. ■





# Sharing Knowledge

## UK INSTRUCTOR EXCHANGE

BY SGT RORY BEHAN, NCOTW, MIL COL

The Military College's Infantry School has a long standing association with the British Army's Infantry Battle School (IBS). In 2018, the NCO Training Wing (NCOTW) and the IBS deepened this relationship with a number of exchanges and visits. Early in the year, the British Army's then most senior enlisted leader, Warrant Officer Class One Glenn Haughton, addressed the NCOTW's 35th Senior NCO Course. This was followed in June by a visit by an IBS colour sergeant, who joined up with the NCOTW for a week as a guest instructor. That particular week was chosen because the students of the 10th All Arms Standard NCO Course were deployed on a week-long field training exercise with the students of the 5th Potential NCO Course, allowing their guest to see two career courses in training.





The guest instructor's inputs added value to the week's activities, particularly for the NCOTW instructors who gained a lot from the exchanging of views and opinions on NCO training.

To reciprocate, I was selected to spend two weeks with the IBS in October as a guest instructor.

Based in Brecon, Wales, the IBS comprises the Platoon Commanders' Division, which conducts the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course (PCBC); Senior Division, which conducts the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course (PSBC); Junior Division, which conducts the Section Commanders' Battle Course; and the Infantry Weapons Division. Exercises take place in the Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA) located approximately 16km from the School.

For the first week I was attached to Senior Division, which was running an Urban Operations Instructors' Course (UOIC), attending lectures as an observer and also getting to work with the instructor staff during their co-ordination and planning meetings. During this week I also got to engage with the instructors and gain valuable insight into the conduct of their PSBC, which is equivalent to our Infantry Platoon Sergeants' Course (IPSC). This was particularly relevant as the NCOTW were at that time updating the IPSC syllabus.

The rest of the week was spent on the ranges in SENTA, where the students were taught close-quarter battle (CQB) shooting. The CQB shoot I observed was quite realistic and the students were exercised in engaging targets at



*Sgt Rory Behan and Sgt Major WO2 Stephen Mulhearn, Platoon Commanders Division.*



*L/R: Sgt Rory Behan, Lt Col Chandler, CO Infantry Battle School, Regt Sgt Major WO1 Muldoon, IBS and Sgt Major WO2 Bennison, Senior Division.*



very short range and in crowded locations where precision firing is vital. The use of simunitions and unarmed combat during this course was a surprise to me and perhaps could be added to our toolbox to enhance our own FIBUA training.

In my second week I spent time with the Platoon Commanders' Division, who were running a Platoon Commanders' Battle Course, the equivalent of our Infantry YOs Course. During this I was attached to a platoon for a defence exercise in SENTA, accompanying the instructors and students on a long insertion march that led to a company attack against a well-entrenched enemy. From there, three platoons set up hasty defensive positions until first light, followed by a number of independent platoon actions, including advance-to-contact and fighting in woods and forests (FIWAF). Late on the second evening the platoons reached their limits of exploitation and began to dig full defensive positions. This carried on through the night and for the next two days, throughout which the platoons also carried out offensive patrol actions, such as ambushes and raids.

As I left the training area on Thursday night the students were only four days into a ten-day exercise, with many more tasks ahead.

At all times during my visit I was treated as a peer rather than a guest, and my opinions were not just welcomed but sought after.

My trip to the IBS was very beneficial, not only in boosting relations between the two schools but also in seeing how our counterparts work. The IBS is world-renowned for its leadership and tactical training and I was exposed to the inner workings of the machine that produces strong NCO and young officer commanders and I left with an overall impression of professionalism and diligence.

I also left with the satisfying feeling of knowing that the professionalism and ability within the Defence Forces is at a similar level to that which I had observed in the IBS. ■



# Two weeks in 2 Bde Cavalry Squadron Reserve

BY CAPT DAMIEN O'HERLIHY (AR), 2 CAV SQN



SQMS Martin, Sgt Mann and Sqn Sgt Shiels in Dublin Castle.

Here is a snapshot of a two-week period at the end of 2018 which shows a very eventful time for members of 2 Bde Cav Sqn Reserve. Three members of the units Reserve answered the call to be a part of the presidential motorcycle Escort of Honour for the WW1 Armistice Centenary, then later for the inauguration of President Michael D Higgins.

The three qualified Dispatch Riders (DR) Sqn Sgt John Shiels, SQMS Darren Martin and Sgt David Mann came in and worked to prepare the Escort of Honour bikes to ensure that they were at the highest of standards befitting a Presidential Inauguration and the commemoration to mark the centenary of the end of WW1.

This was not the first time that members of the Reserve Defence Forces (RDF) have been involved as part of a Presidential Motorcycle Escort of Honour, as several reserve members of the unit were involved in many of the escorts in 1916. Both on the motorbikes and in the support vehicles, but this is the first time that members of the reserve have been involved with a Motorcycle Escort of Honour for a Presidential Inauguration.

Less than a week after escorting President Michael D Higgins, several members of 2 Bde Cav Sqn including Sgt Mann were

involved in a 72-hour joint tactical exercise with some of the reserve members of 1 Armoured Cavalry Squadron, 1 Mechanised Infantry Company and 1 Cavalry Squadron in the Slieve Bloom Mountains from Friday 16th November to Sunday 18th November. The exercise was excellently planned and organised by RDF members of 1 Armoured Cavalry Squadron, DFTC, Curragh Camp.

To hone their skills for this exercise reserve members of 2 Bde Cav Sqn implemented a three-month training program over parade nights and a refresher-training weekend in October in the DFTC. Here they rehearsed and practiced their skills that would be needed for the exercise. They included: map reading and navigation, setting up and operating and maintaining the SINCGAR radio, moving tactically and rehearsing their actions on drills, using night vision equipment and thermal imager. These are all essential tools and necessary skills that are needed and used by an OP detachment.

On Wednesday 14th December, Capt Damien O'Herlihy, a DF military driving instructor was asked to assist with an on-going driving course as one of the instructors was now unable to complete the course. The 2 Bde Cav Sqn run course was being delivered to PDF members of 2 Cav Sqn and 7 Inf Bn. Answering the call Capt O'Herlihy took the students out on the following Monday morning and assessed their driving and continued to instruct them. For the remainder of the week he helped them prepare for their driving test that was being held in the Transport Vehicle and Maintenance School (TVMS), DFTC the following week.

2 Bde Cav Sqn reserve members have always had an excellent working relationship with their PDF squadron colleagues, and this is replicated in many units all over the island.

This two-week snap shot of the squadron shows how members of the Reserve Defence Force can support the front line to achieve the mission and work together in the single force concept. ■



SQMS Martin, Sgt Mann and Sqn Sgt Shiels on Church Square.



2 Bde Cav Sqn Reserve Recce Patrol.

Members of 1 Cav Sqn, 1 Armd Cav Sqn, 1 Mech Inf Coy and 2 Bde Cav Sqn on exercise in the Slieve Bloom Mountains.





# FRIENDSHIPS & MEMORIES IN CUSTUME BARRACKS

BY CPL LEE COYLE



**A**n Cosantóir recently received an invitation to come along to Custume Barracks, Athlone to meet some of the female civilian workers in the barracks. This invitation had something that stood out and it was this '369 Years Service'. If you are like me, you probably read that twice, and yes it is not a typo.

This amazing feat was completed by only ten members of the barracks and from civilian members at that. These women serve in different appointments from around the barracks, most of them being typists, but also included a seamstress, a switchboard operator and the head of 'front of house' in the officer's mess.

It is an incredible achievement for anyone to serve an organisation for such lengthy periods and they should be commended for their service. Two of them (Betty and Pauline) who are typists started working for the DF in 1971 and are the longest serving amongst the group. They started when they were only 17 years-of-age and they have 47 years service each. Between the group of women they have worked for many units in Custume Bks and from the Western Command and 1 Bde, some of which have been disbanded for some years.

Sitting and chatting with the ladies, it was really humbling to hear them talk of the old days and how they reminisced

with stories of the characters they have met throughout the years. It was really interesting to hear them talk of the changes that have seen the DF go from an old army to a modern defence force, which even included changes to their working life. Some of the changes have been with technology, with some of them starting their journey as typists with manual typewriters then to electric typewriters and then on to computers. Betty told a very funny story of the day a computer first landed on her desk, stating that she had only seen one of them in use in a bank and only from the back of the screen. They also had a minimal time for training on these new jumps in technology, but they always had help from serving soldiers who knew more. Back before the computer the work was hard with having to manually type out documents, with them normally being typed out to produce nine copies for distribution around the bks.

It was also nice to hear them talk of when they first joined they looked up to all the older soldiers, and now it is them that all the soldiers look up to, with them being like a motherly figure in the barracks. They spoke of how good the Defence Forces and all the personnel have been to them, and they also get to see its personnel grow up, even getting to see young officers become generals.

The seamstress Teresa told us of a lesser known fact, that they produced the Defence Forces Tricolour flags, which most would assume were bought. She also produced some of the National Colours that are in use across the DF and have been marched on parades for some of the highest dignitaries that have visited Ireland and some are probably still in use today.

We also spoke with Sgt Amy O'Connor, who has worked with these ladies for a number of years, she told us, *"These ladies have given more than their typing skills, they have given their time, friendly advice, friendships, memories of people and times, unwavering confidence and a true sounding board for many a serving soldier."*

Apart from doing their daily tasks from around the barracks, these ladies have also stepped out and took part in Defence Forces Women's Network (DFWN) meetings and initiatives. It is only right that we recognise their work ethic and never ending helping hand to everyone in uniform.

On the morning of the 13th December 2018, the DFWN in conjunction with then OC 6 Inf Bn and OC Custume Bks Lt Col Johnny Whittaker, officially recognised these civilian ladies for their service to the DF. The morning was supported by members of each of their units and members of the DFWN within the barracks. Thank you for your service ladies. ■



Elizabeth Regan and Pauline Mannion



L/R: Aishling Holt (19 years service), Maeve Begley (38 years service), Teresa Kenny (35 years service), Elizabeth Regan (47 years service), Pauline Mannion (47 years service), Patricia Macken (44 years service) and Mary Kavanagh (39 years service).



# ADVANCED TRAINING ON SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

BY CPL LEE COYLE



## *'What is Security Sector Reform? An approach, not an activity'*

**T**he big question on most people's mind reading the title of this article is 'What exactly is Security Sector Reform?' Well firstly we need to look at what 'security' means in this case, if you're thinking that it's just the protection provided by the military, police force or state, you are only half right, this is the traditional state-centric idea of security. Today 'security' has shifted attention towards the people and their well-being, but also the livelihood and even property of those people, this has become widely referred to as human security. So, when we

talk about the reform of the security sector, this includes many different state and non-state services and organisations.

This is the first time this course has been ran in UNTSI and had International students attending from all over the globe, from China to Uganda, they also came from

various agencies involved in SSR. Lecturers delivered the course from the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), in conjunction with the International Security Sector Advisory Team (ISSAT). Before the commencement of the course, each student was given some pre-course reading material to give students a case study that would be used throughout the course; this case study was on the subject of Mali and the recent events that have happened there.

### **The course began with a look at the Characteristics of SSR:**

1. Fundamental Approach - Local ownership
2. Core objectives – Effectiveness and Accountability
3. Essentials dimensions – Holistic, Political and Technical

These characteristics would play a major role throughout the week and would be the building blocks that the students would use for all exercises. Each of these characteristics needed to be looked at when dealing with any part of SSR, they each have their own framework and elements that need to be considered, with them also having a complex inter-relationship that affect each other and their performance. In a way, it is a balancing act with a lot of moving parts, finding a perfect solution is not an easy task with each country engaging in SSR being unique and bringing its own challenges to the table.

This then leads into the new concept of security and the move from traditional security to human security and the key security actors that range from state to non-state and then from security and justice providers to governance,







oversight and management that added to the complexity of SSR. This helped the students understanding the Security Actors involved in SSR, and explained their different roles and significance. The first of these actors was at national level and were grouped in four categories covering state security and justice providers, state governance and oversight mechanisms, non-state state security and justice providers, and non-state governance and oversight mechanisms. The next list of Security Actors was the involvement of the international community, these include UN, African Union (AU) and EU organisations, but it also includes Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and private actors such as companies providing technical expertise and private military and security.

The course then moved on to the main topics, which were on areas that are proving to be challenging in SSR programmes. The first was on Governance and its importance and integration to SSR programmes, this paid particular emphasis on addressing the root causes of corruption that plague war-torn and troubled nations. The second important topic took a look at the Justice and Policing system; this highlighted the importance of ensuring the coherence between justice, police and rule of law with the broader justice and security sector. It also

looked at the use of customary and traditional security and justice systems that are used in some countries across the world. Another interesting topic from a military perspective was on security and defence and their role, national security strategies, and providing direction for defence and SSR. This was interesting as it looked at areas that we in Ireland would not consider, like the use of liberation armies, guerrilla forces and private security companies in the security of the state.

After each topic session students were then given a scenario from the case study of Mali to come up with a plan to address an area of SSR. These group exercises were really helpful and gave the student time to put their range of skills from their different backgrounds into practice, while also giving different perspectives that each student could learn from.

The final topics of the course covered monitoring and evaluating security and justice support programmes; this highlighted its importance to the delivery of successful SSR and its role as a key component in the learning cycle. We also looked at Effective Advising, a new topic for some of the students attending, which will help them in the future.

Some of the Crosscutting issues that affect SSR raised on the course included gender based violence, which includes domestic violence, gun violence, human trafficking, child abuse, sexual violence, rape, genital mutilation, sex-selective massacres and anti-homosexual violence. Another crosscutting issue is post-conflict recovery in the form of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of combatants, including child soldiers. The course also highlighted the coordination among national and international partners is crucial for the effectiveness, credibility and sustainability of SSR programmes, but it is an area that is fraught with obstacles and is an area needing a lot of work.

Security Sector Reform is a hot topic that has gone global in recent years, with all agencies involved in providing security and aid having a policy and working groups in dealing with the challenges and crosscutting issues with SSR. This training on SSR is an important aspect for individuals travelling overseas as it gives a unique overview of the bigger picture in the countries we serve in. ■

## Vox Pops



### LT COL TIMOTHY O'BRIEN, SCHOOL COMDT UNTSI

*"This course has provided an excellent opportunity for a range of instructors from across the Military College to engage with the complex topic of*

*SSR. As School Commandant of UNTSI, I will ensure that what my staff and I have learnt this week is passed onto the officers and NCO's who rotate through our School during their pre-deployment training. I am particularly pleased with the multi-dimensional make-up of the participants: police, military, civil servants and academia, as this reflects the makeup of the various actors our troops and sailors engage with on contemporary PSO missions."*




### DONGXU SU, POLICE REFORM ADVISER OF THE STANDING POLICE CAPACITY (SPC)

*"I'm the Police Reform Adviser of the Standing Police Capacity (SPC), which*

*is a component of the Police Division of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). It has been my honour to participate on the Advanced Security Sector Reform (SSR) course. Though this is the first SSR course hosted by Ireland, the professionalism, efficiency and hospitality of the Irish Defence Forces have impressed me and other international participants deeply, we also enjoyed the Irish tradition, food, music and sense of humour very much. Ireland has been actively contributing to UN peacekeeping during the last six decades. Irish soldiers and police officers have worn the blue beret in a couple of peace operations, and some of them sacrificed their lives while fulfilling the mandates authorised by the Security Council. Meanwhile, the aid agencies, such as the Irish Aid, have also been supporting the host states to address humanitarian needs and to promote the rule of law in post conflict environment. During this short but fruitful week, I had an opportunity to share experience on SSR with Irish colleagues as well as participants from other countries/organisations, and we learned a lot from each other. UNTSI, as a centre of excellence, has extensive experience of organising both national and international military and civilian training on peacekeeping. We are looking forward to strengthening our cooperation and coordination with the Irish authorities, institutions and colleagues for international peace and security."*



# EVER PRESENT DANGER



A crid, thick, hot smoke forms an oppressive layer above the lurid yellow helmets of the firefighting team. Heat radiates from the burning fire in the corner of a cabin, the noise of water bouncing off the deckhead is deafening, the steel structure reverberates, and the team leader shouts out commands through the facemask of his breathing apparatus. Every command has a purpose, and is delivered with an intensity befitting the seriousness of the situation. In response, each command is repeated verbatim, and once executed the team leader is informed immediately.

BY CPO/ERA RUAIRÍ DE  
BARRA, LÉ SAMUEL BECKETT



There is no place for an individual here. Only by working as a team will these five sailors fight their way through hatches and down ladders, deeper into the burning vessel, negotiating total darkness to find the seat of the fire. There is no room for fear or failure during a fire at sea; ship-mates' lives are at stake.

The training exercise described above is from the last advanced marine damage control and fire fighting (DCFF) course of 2018. Although conducted in the relative safety of the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) fire yard, the seriousness of the exercise is not lost on the students, all officers and NCOs here to renew their certificates and ensure that their training is up to date.

There are two DCFF courses for NS personnel: a three-day basic course, which is a requirement for every sailor, and a five-day advanced course, which is a requirement for all command-and-control appointments.

The basic course teaches fire and damage control theory, from the fire triangle (fuel, oxygen, heat) to DCFF shoring techniques; doffing and donning of fire fighting suits; breathing apparatus (BA) and emergency escape breathing apparatus (EEBA) use; search and life line techniques; first aid fire fighting appliances, including fire blankets and hose reels; and full-team door and hatch entry. Each lesson being practiced until the required standard is met.

The advanced course revises the basics before rotating students through roles such as the Damage Control Officer and IC of the Forward Control Point. Under the watchful eye of the instructors, the students must make plans, deliver them to the fire team on scene, and build a picture of the developing incident on the incident boards using standard markings.

During the final exercises, the information flows thick and fast over the comms net, and the board fills up as multiple teams go



on and off air, relief teams hot-bottle change and stand by for re-entry. The scenario is altered without warning, causing the students to adapt to new threats and change the plan of attack.

The training is measured yet intense, because it needs to be.

The goal is to build the students' confidence in their roles, giving them the skills to achieve their mission in the event of fire or flood at sea. Operating hundreds of miles from support, in some of the toughest waters on the planet, the crew must look to themselves first for survival. Their vessel is their best lifeboat and everything must be done to ensure it is kept afloat.

Marine fire fighting students are taught by NS instructors in the DCFF Training School (also known as the Fire Yard) at the NMCI. To serve as an instructor in the college, hull artificers (HA) and mechanics must pass the gruelling Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Damage Control course at the Royal Navy School *HMS Excellent*, Portsmouth, where its DCFF training facilities include the Phoenix Damage Repair and Instructional Unit, which has a mock-up of a flooding ship that rocks and rolls as sailors try to plug gaps in the hull, and a fire training unit that replicates compartments such as engine rooms, machinery control rooms, mess decks, galleys and passageways. The gas-powered fires inside are supported by smoke generators, and can be controlled by tutors.





There, students are trained to the exacting standards of a navy that learned its lessons in combat, for example during some of the most horrendous actions of the Falklands War.

While these facilities are among the most advanced in the world, the more basic facilities available at the NMCI are more than capable of providing a challenging training environment.

The DCFF School is one of the busiest of the Naval College sub-schools, with hundreds of students passing through its classrooms each year. Senior instructor, PO/HA Keith Mallon, explains: "Our naval training is kept inline with International Maritime Organisation (IMO) requirements. We are also responsible for delivering DCFF training to civilian students here in the NMCI."

Asked what he considers the most important aspects of the school's training, he says: *"I'd sum them up as knowledge, competency and realism."*

*"We have to ensure that our training is at the correct level and is kept current; that's the knowledge element. Then we have to ensure the competency of not just the students who must leave here able to perform their assigned roles in a competent manner, but also of our instructional staff who are responsible for maintaining standards. There is no room for error."*

*"The realism is achieved through training with the kit in use each day on our ships. We start off with the basic building blocks of theory and drills, then build on that foundation, applying measured pressure to the students, mentoring the weaker ones and challenging the leaders."*

The other vital part of DCFF training is carried out by the Fleet Operational Readiness, Standards and Training (FORST) unit, which achieves its mission by assisting ships' OCs by providing guidance, sea training and assessment to generate and maintain the five pillars of operational capability: operational viability, sustainability, readiness, interoperability and deployability.

Training received by NS personnel is delivered at the standards set by FORST, which in turn ensures that the training, SOPs and drills been used in the fleet are maintained at that standard. In order to achieve this, FORST co-ordinates the efforts of Operations, Support and Naval College Commands to ensure that a plan/do/check/adjust loop is completed, tailored to each individual ship. Plan: FORST plans the correct approach to achieve the op capability based on the requirements directed by the OCNOC and in liaison with Support and Naval College Commands.

**DO:** FORST co-operates with Naval College and Support Commands to ensure delivery of high-quality service to the fleet that is constantly changing to meet current demands.

**CHECK:** FORST checks the standards, equipment, personnel training competencies and op capability through assessment and sea training.

**ADJUST:** Having worked through the first three stages, FORST will advise of necessary adjustments to training and support efforts.

FORST also carries out research into new techniques or equipment to better enable front-line sailors to cope with what ever is thrown at them. Exercises directed by the unit on ships range from the most basic fire drills, to elaborate multiple incident events where simulated fires, flooding and casualties are used test the crew's ship's knowledge, their DCFF competence and their determination to save their ship.

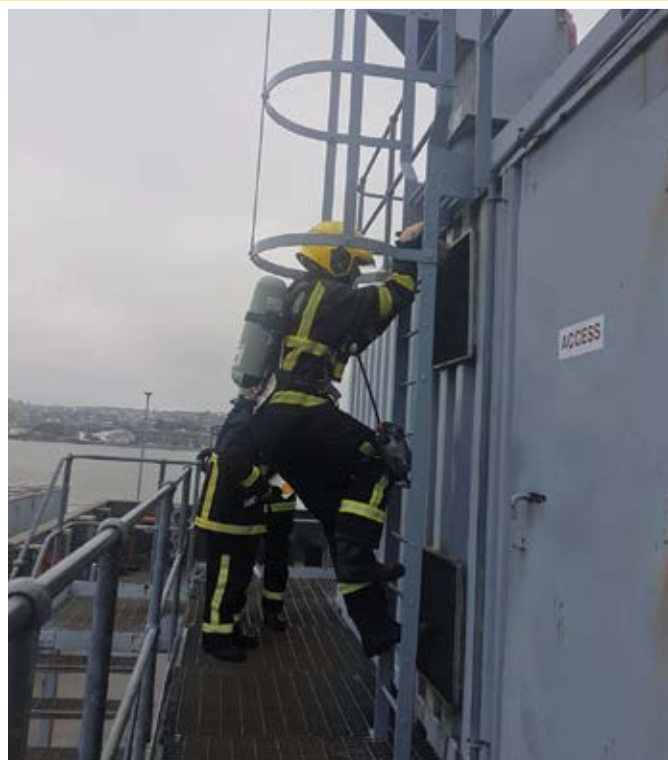
All of this training translates into a highly co-ordinated response to any event by a well

drilled crew. Onboard each vessel designated emergency response teams are in place at all times to respond instantly to a fire alarm or other emergency: the Standing Sea Emergency Party (SSEP), normally the CPO/ERA and three other NCOs; the Attack Breathing Apparatus (A/BA) team, normally two personnel; the Containment Team, normally the PO/HA and one other. On the first sound of an alarm these teams will switch on their radios, and don their anti-flash hoods and gloves over their General Duty Rig. The A/BA team will head to one of the two stations where their pre-checked BA sets are on standby. Within seconds a pipe will broadcast the location of the alarm that has been set off.

Arriving at the scene of the alarm, the SSEP will be fully prepared to face a fire with first aid fire fighting appliances such as extinguisher or centre feed hose reel. This is because every alarm will be treated as a fire until the SSEP determine it is not. To do otherwise would be to risk allowing a minor fire the time to take hold and spread.

The IC of the SSEP will then investigate and report 'no fire' or call the ship to emergency stations, which will rouse the entire crew to muster at their stations.

The bottom line is that every sailor onboard a ship is a fire fighter because fire is the ever present danger. ■







## BREACHING DEFENCE FORCES THROUGH SOCIAL ENGINEERING

Looking back to Ancient Greece, around 1200 BC: After failing to breach the City of Troy with regular kinetic warfare, the ancient Greeks construct a huge wooden horse, loading it with Special Forces soldiers and then giving the pretence of 'abandoning' it to flee. To the Trojans this symbol of Greece now becomes a captured war trophy and is paraded into the city by the jubilant but unknowing. Troy falls as a direct result of social engineering.

Fast-forward three thousand years: This subterfuge and deception isn't so different to the social engineering of today, employed by those aiming to breach Defence Forces' security. They will try targeting information including your identity, banking information, address, family, your role, colleagues' names, your location in Ireland or when deployed overseas, information about weapons systems, tactics, plans, operations, and our allies. They will have researched you in cyberspace - the online world in which we all now live - creating a detailed picture of you to target Defence Forces and ultimately the security of the State. How is this done?

**PHISHING / SPEAR PHISHING:** We've all received emails requesting our banking details. While some such bogus 'phishing' emails are easy to spot, much trickier are those appearing to be from the Defence Forces claiming your security has been breached, requiring a password reset. The email's 'From' address is faked making it appear it was sent by a trusted source. Identifying spear phishing, where you're specifically targeted by name, is incredibly difficult. Emails might ask you to download a file which actually contains a virus, or lead you to a website to reveal password details. Always check the legitimacy of any message where any action is requested.

**VISHING / SMISHING:** You receive a call or text claiming to be an officer. The caller has conducted an online reconnaissance on the officer they're purporting to be and on you, making the call/text highly convincing. If you are unsure if you recognise the caller, end the conversation. Do not click on anything or call back any unknown number. To verify a call, only return calls to numbers you have on file and from a different phone before taking any action requested.

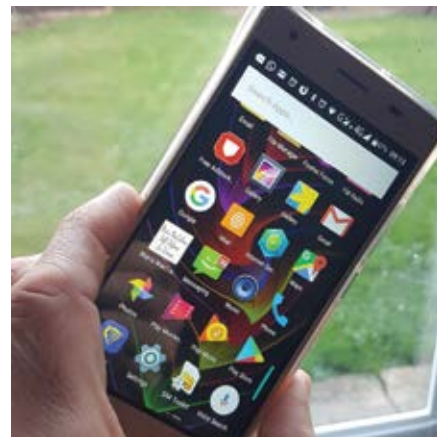
**TAILGATING:** Entering barracks, a man in a hi-vis who's 'here to fix the heating' is waiting at the entrance barrier. Of course we let him in; he is carrying a tool bag after all. But that 'contractor' is an adversary. That tool bag contains a bug he will plant to listen-in, and a device he will attach to a computer gaining access to all DF info. And all because we didn't want to appear rude and verify the identity.

**CYBER BLACKMAIL:** Information gathered in cyberspace is used to force you to do something against your will. One of the most sinister forms is sexual extortion. The victim meets someone online. They start communicating on camera, sending videos and photos. But it turns out they are not who they claimed. They are acting on behalf of a hostile state, terrorist

or other nefarious actor. They threaten to send these images to friends, family and your CO. They demand you conduct some task such as provide a password, access control pass, operational information, or place a 'key-logger' on a DF computer. While it might seem easier to give in, don't ever go down that path, as you'll be forever beholden. And if you are blackmailed halt all contact immediately - they are powerless if they can't communicate. Call your CO right away. You'll never be blamed for reporting such a situation. But infinitely better to avoid in the first place. Always be cautious. Every single thing about a person you meet online could be faked. The results of cyber blackmail elsewhere, especially sexual extortion, has been catastrophic for organisations and victims. Avoid cyber blackmail by listening to your instinct.

The danger warning signs of social engineering are not so different to the military environment you have been trained in. Apply that training online. Because online is now the real world. As the Roman Virgil said of the Trojan War, "Trust not their presents, nor admit the horse". Great advice from thousands of years ago to how we should live in cyberspace.

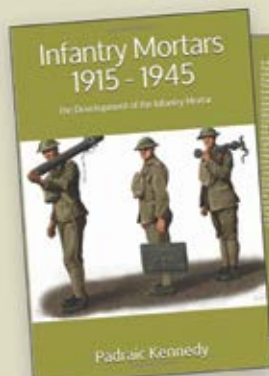
**Next month:** *The Internet of Things - and how it is permanently changing the military and warfare.*



The danger warning signs of social engineering are not so different to the military environment you have been trained in. Apply that training online. Because online is now the real world. As the Roman Virgil said of the Trojan War, "Trust not their presents, nor admit the horse". Great advice from thousands of years ago to how we should live in cyberspace.



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**Q: What type of fire is a mortar used for?**

**Winner: Liam Mangan, Dublin 16**

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**Q: Kilmainham Tales open in what year?**

**Winners: David McKenna, Mary Ryan & Liam Mangan**

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# HISTORY MADE IN POZNAN

BY JUSTYNA MAZUREK-SCHRAMM

Between 28 - 29th November 2018 the Institute of History at the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland along with the Irish Culture Foundation held their third conference dedicated to Polish and Irish history. The main aim of the conference is to bring together historians from both countries to talk on their nation's history, which are very similar and also in many cases are connected.

The first conference took place in 2015 and was entitled 'Poland and Ireland – A Common History?'

This conference brought together for the first time Irish and Polish historians to examine the similarities between 'Poland of the West and Ireland of the East.' The conference included papers addressing the centenary of the 1916 Rising, Poland in 1916, the media and the role of women during the revolution.

This year's conference brought together an eclectic group of historians to discuss an array of topics that included the formation of the Irish Defence Forces and the formation of the Polish Army, well known personalities such as de Valera and Collins, Józef Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski.

Historians from Ireland included Liz Gillis (Author & Historian), Paul O'Brien MA (Author/Historian & regular contributor to *An Cosantóir*), Cathy Scuffil (DCC Historian in Residence), Lorcan Collins (CEO of the 1916 Rebellion Walking Tour), and Cuan Ó Seireadáin (Historian at Conradh na Gaeilge). Polish historians from the History Department at the Adam Mickiewicz University included Professor Krzysztof Marchlewicz, Professor Przemysław Matusik, Professor Pior Okulewicz and Dr. Romuald Rydz.

Other speakers included Marcin Wisniewski (director of Wielkopolska Rising Museum) and Jarosław Łuczak (Poznan Military Museum). The Irish Ambassador to Poland, Emer O'Connell was also in attendance at the Institute of History at the Adam Mickiewicz University.

Polish Historian and Irish resident Adam Kucharski of the Irish Culture Foundation was instrumental in organising the conference and bringing the historians together.



The Foundation also works hard in bringing both Polish and Irish history to young people and many of those in attendance at the conference were young and eager to learn about their country's involvement as well as Ireland's connections to Poland.

Papers delivered by all the participants during the conference will be published in 2019 and will be available from the Foundation. ■





# ATHY'S HEROES & VETERANS

REPORT & PHOTOS BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

**A**thy, Co Kildare, is a thriving market town located approximately 65km from the Red Cow/M50 junction and 22km from the Curragh Camp and is the place where the River Barrow and the Grand Canal meet.

Athy became one of the initial Anglo-Norman settlements, after Richard de Clare (Strongbow) granted the area of *Le Norrath* to Robert FitzRichard in 1175, and other Anglo-Norman lords, including Robert St Michel, settled on the surrounding lands. At the beginning of the 13th century, the St Michel family built Woodstock Castle, and it was outside this castle that the first Anglo-Norman settlement developed.

Subsequently burned and sacked a number of times, it is believed the town was walled as early as 1297; walls that were maintained until well into the 15th century.

One famous local resident was renowned Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton, who was born in nearby Kilkea. The intrepid

ered to take part in the Somme campaign of 1916, serving as a bombing officer with the 7th Battalion of the Leinsters. On 3rd September 1916 he played a crucial role in the capture of Guillemont, which was rated as one of the great achievements of the 16th (Irish) Division, and was subsequently awarded a VC for: *"most conspicuous bravery during a heavy engagement, when, not content with bombing hostile dug-outs within the objective, he fearlessly led his bombers through our own artillery barrage and cleared a great part of the village in front. He started out with twenty-six bombers and finished up with only five, after capturing some fifty prisoners. By this very gallant action he undoubtedly broke the spirit of the enemy, and thus saved us many casualties when the battalion made a further advance. He was far from well at the time, and later had to go to hospital"*.

Holland, clearly a modest man, attributed his award to *"the fidelity and extraordinary gallantry"* of the men he commanded.



In the Shackleton museum.



Athy Heritage Centre's military history section.

Local historian, Clem Roche, beside the John Vincent Holland VC display.

explorer is honoured and remembered with a whole floor dedicated to him in Athy's Heritage Centre, which is based in the old Town Hall on Emily Square. (Visit [www.shackletonmuseum.com](http://www.shackletonmuseum.com))

When I visited the Heritage Centre I met with local historian Clem Roche, who took me through the town's military history, which predates the establishment of the Curragh. Clem has researched the exploits of Athy men through many wars and told me that they have been serving in the military since the 1730s.

The story that caught my attention was that of John Vincent Holland, born in Athy in 1889, who won a Victoria Cross (VC) in World War I.

Holland attended Clongowes Wood College near Clane, Co Kildare, studying veterinary medicine for three years before leaving in 1909 for a more adventurous life in South America, where he tried his hand at ranching, railway engineering and hunting.

On the outbreak of the Great War he returned to Ireland, and was commissioned as a lieutenant into the Leinster Regiment. He was wounded at the second battle of Ypres in 1915 but recovered

On his return home he received a civic reception, but did not remain in Ireland. He served for a time in the Indian Army, returning as a major during World War II. He finally settled in Australia, where he received a state funeral after he died in Hobart, Tasmania, on 27th February 1975.

It was my interest in this VC winner that initially brought me to Athy to find out more about its military past. This led to me meeting with some of the veterans who had started St Michael's ONE branch in the town, one of the newest branches in the veterans' organisation.

The branch, which was established nearly five years ago and has 12 full-time members and seven associates, takes its name from the parish of St Michael's, which in turn takes its name from the St Michel family mentioned earlier.

For the first four years St Michael's Branch held their monthly meetings in Dominican Hall and Methodist Hall on the Carlow Road before moving to Athy Community College (with many thanks to Principle Richard Daly) for the last year.



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no means easy but all agree it was worth the effort.

The branch has an excellent Facebook page that lets people know what they are about and to share photos of events/projects they are involved in. One of those projects, cleaning and renovating the grotto on the Monasterevin Road, has earned great acknowledgement for the branch. Due to the branch's efforts the grotto, originally built in 1954 by the Lower St Joseph's Residents' Association, now includes a roll of honour for the 87 members of the Defence Forces who died on overseas service, and has won numerous awards, including the Athy Tidy Towns Award in 2016 and again in 2018, jointly with another location.

Among the branch's many activities last year, they took part in the town's St Patrick's Day parade and provided a guard of honour for the visit of the Rose of Tralee.

The branch does a fair amount of annual fundraising, including holding a number of raffles, collecting for ONE's Fuchsia Appeal and lotto draw.

Their local charitable work includes donating large, framed pictures to St Michael's Parish Church, and plaques in the old and new graveyards.

As a result of all of the above, this young branch has already made an impact locally.

John said the branch receives very positive feedback in the



Anthony Davis, formerly Medical Corps; Pat Roche (John's brother and the father of Clem, the local historian who had been my guide in Heritage Centre) formerly Artillery Corps; John Lawlor, from Athy, formerly of the Engineer Corps; William Lawlor, who served in the Curragh and Dublin; Liam Foley, from Athy, who served in the Military College; and John Roche's wife Kathleen and his other brother, Michael, who are associate members.

At the start of our meeting the branch members paid tribute to Raymond Clarke, one of their founding members, who sadly passed away three years ago. Raymond had served with An Slua Muiirí and Civil Defence.

John recalls the meeting held in 2013 in Fingleton Auctioneers in the town to see if there was sufficient interest and ONE CEO Ollie O'Connor came along and spoke to those present. There was great interest and Kevin says: "Starting off it looked good with numbers." Of course, though, starting off any venture like this provides many challenges and obstacles to overcome so it was by

town for their charitable work. In recognition of its community spirit, St Michael's Branch became the first ONE branch to get a civic reception when they were given one by Kildare County Council in March 2018, at which the branch gave a presentation on the Fuchsia Appeal to the councillors to make them aware of the plight of veterans.

Looking to the future they would like to increase their membership numbers over the coming year, and have been in discussions with their local councillors for assistance for a suitable building they could turn into a Veterans Support Centre (VSC), along the lines of those that ONE has opened up around the country. Kevin says: "If we had our own VSC in the town we would have a place to meet veterans that might need help."

I was very impressed with the comradery within the branch and by the respect in which they are held locally. It was also good to meet the members in person after having come across them at many veterans' events over the years. ■

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# THE SIEGE OF MALTA

BY PETER MULREADY MA

## 1940-1942

**M**alta was an important military and naval base on Britain's supply route to India, positioned midway between Gibraltar and Egypt. However, in the run up to WWII, British authorities considered it to be strategically untenable and logistically unsustainable, given the proximity of Italian naval and air forces and its island isolation; the 27km by 14km island (with a population of around 250,000 in 1940) lay within 150km of airfields in Sicily.

On 10th June 1940 Italy declared war on Britain and France and on the same day 55 bombers of the Italian Air Force (*Regia Aeronautica*) dropped 142 bombs on three airfields in Malta, where the defending aircraft were obsolete Gloster Sea Gladiators, only three of which, *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity*, flew at once.

Although a further 402 Italian sorties followed over the next six months, dropping lightweight ordnance, it was not an intense enough campaign to maintain an effective state of aerial denial against the RAF on Malta. The offensive capability of the *Regia Aeronautica* was also lessened by the limited capabilities and combat techniques of its increasingly obsolescent medium bomber force.

The defenders dug an extensive system of tunnels, air-raid shelters and underground bunkers into the limestone rock underneath the capital, Valetta. These included the Lascaris War Rooms, a complex of bunkers housing the command and control centre for the defence of Malta. Hurricane fighters were added to the defence of the island.

The Luftwaffe arrived in theatre in January 1941 as a prelude to the German reinforcement of the Italian army in North Africa with the *Deutsche Afrikakorps* (DAK). X Fliegerkorps moved to Sicily, ensuring a combined air fleet of 250 aircraft was available for operations. Heavy attacks occurred that month when the aircraft carrier *HMS Illustrious* was in dock under repair. After the '*Illustrious Blitz*' the Germans launched numerous, small, nuisance raids, typically at night and composed of one to three bombers.

By April 1941 the Germans were considering an invasion of Malta but they followed the same flawed analysis that their Italian counterparts had months before - that the lack of British offensive aerial and naval action from Malta meant that the island had been adequately subdued from the air.

In May 1941 the RAF improved facilities and better co-ordinated operations to enhance Malta's striking power against Axis convoys supplying North Africa. Malta-based submarine operations were also stepped up. Signals intelligence and Bletchley Park decryption greatly assisted in targeting Axis operations. Then in June a large part of X Fliegerkorps was transferred east for the invasion of Russia.

Malta had been hard hit by X Fliegerkorps, especially compared to the Italian attacks of the previous year. Its bombers conducted 1,465 raids against Malta between January and May 1941, compared to the 402 earlier raids by the Italians. However, most of these 1,465 raids were small-scale nocturnal, nuisance raids of only one-to-ten aircraft. The heavy raids, while devastating, were not conducted with enough regularity to keep Malta's airfields suppressed.

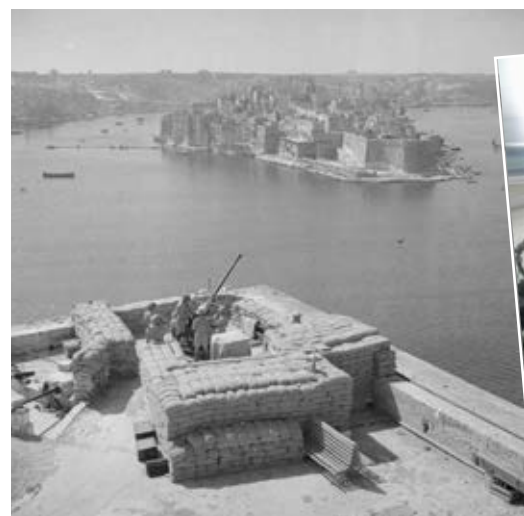
With RAF Blenheim and Wellington bombers now on Malta, the island's aircraft and submarines went on the offensive, and by November these operations had resulted in losses of over 60% of supplies despatched from Italy to North Africa.

The second stage of the siege began in early 1942 when Hitler deployed a full air fleet, *Luftflotte 2*, consisting of II Fliegerkorps and the remains of X Fliegerkorps, from the Russian front to Sicily. He also redeployed U-boats to the Mediterranean and appointed Air Field Marshal Kesselring as commander of all German forces in the Mediterranean, with the task of the annihilation of Malta, or failing that, to starve it into submission.

In March air raids reached a peak, forcing the bombers and submarines to evacuate to Egypt. Supply convoys for the island were attacked and either failed to get through or arrived with only a fraction of their cargoes intact, and by April starvation and disease was setting in. The RAF's Hurricanes were replaced with Spitfires, and in a morale-boosting move the island was awarded the George Cross.

On 29th and 30th April 1942, Hitler and Mussolini approved a plan for the invasion of the island, codenamed Operation Herkules, an airborne assault supported by a seaborne landing. By 10th May Kesselring believed that his forces' efforts had successfully neutralised the offensive capabilities of Malta and declared Axis aerial supremacy over the island and central Mediterranean.

Italy considered the conquest of Malta essential to victory, but





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it was not a German priority. In a conference with Admiral Raeder on 15th June, Hitler acknowledged the operation's importance but proceeded to list all the reasons making it infeasible, including the Eastern Front situation, a lack of transport planes, and distrust of the ability of the Italian armed forces to execute such a complex operation. Also he was wary of having his airborne forces, carefully rebuilt after suffering huge losses in Crete the previous year, squandered in an operation he felt was unlikely to succeed.

Rommel's sea supply lines had been temporarily secured and he insisted the priority should be the conquest of Egypt and the Suez Canal and not Malta, as such an invasion would take away supplies from his offensive, launched on 26th May and which had captured Tobruk on 21st June.

Accordingly, Hitler decided to suspend Operation Herkules and

give Rommel permission to proceed into Egypt, despite the risk of allowing Malta to once again become a threat to seaborne supply lines.

By the end of June 1942 all serious Axis planning for an invasion of Malta abruptly ceased, bringing an effective end to the Axis campaign of aerial denial over Malta. The RAF responded by stepping up attacks on Axis supply convoys to North Africa.

In June/July, although more Spitfires arrived, as did Air Vice Marshall Sir Keith Park to overhaul RAF tactics, resupply convoys were still being heavily interdicted, the population was starving, and the garrison was almost out of combat supplies, including aviation fuel.

The island was saved by Operation Pedestal (10th to 15th August) which saw a heavily escorted resupply convoy of 15 merchant ships and two oil tankers attempt to reach the beleaguered island. The convoy was attacked by all available German

and Italian naval and air assets and only five ships reached port. Crucially, however, amongst these, although badly-damaged, was the tanker *SS Ohio*. As a result, by October 1942 the RAF had regained air superiority over Malta and by November convoys started arriving at the island unopposed.

Malta suffered over 9,000 civilian and military deaths in 3,343 air raids, the last of which occurred on 20th July 1943, and about 30,000 buildings were destroyed or damaged.

Meanwhile, Malta-based submarines had sunk 390,600 tonnes of Axis shipping.

There were two reasons why the Axis failed to effectively neutralise and later occupy Malta during the two-year campaign. First, the *Regia Aeronautica* alone was unable to conduct an effective aerial denial campaign against the island. It was not ready for war, didn't have enough suitable aircraft, and also had to fight in Greece and North Africa. Second, Hitler didn't allow the Luftwaffe to mount an effective aerial denial campaign, even though it had the aircraft and tactics necessary to gain air superiority over the central Mediterranean - in both the spring of 1941 and the spring of 1942 it proved it could neutralise Malta's aerial and naval offensive capabilities.

The Italian attacks were mostly ineffective because they bombed from too great a height, 15,000 feet, and used 100kg bombs which did little damage to runways. By contrast, the Luftwaffe attacked the British airfields and installations from a similar altitude but used 250kg, 500kg and 1,000kg bombs.

The Luftwaffe in Sicily acted as an emergency firefighter for the struggling Italian war effort, and Hitler ignored the strategic importance of Malta to the Mediterranean theatre. His refusal to commit to an invasion allowed the island and the forces based there to play an important role in the final defeat of the Axis powers in North Africa and the Mediterranean.

**Peter Mulready has an MA in military history and is a council member of the Military History Society of Ireland. ■**



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# DEFENCE FORCES

## GAELIC FOOTBALL TEAM

BY COMDT ALAN COURTNEY

**A**fter a disappointing representative series in late 2017 in which the Defence Forces Gaelic Football Team lost all three fixtures against An Garda Síochána, Bank of Ireland and Allied Irish Banks, the only way was up in 2018.

Being competitive against the calibre of the opposition the DF would come up against was always going to be difficult but a meeting convened by DF Football Chairman, Lt Col Mark Prendergast in January, gave cause for optimism. Further discussion on the subject led to the appointment of Comdt Ross Glavin as the new Team Manager. Ross had recently led his club Moorefield to the Kildare and Leinster Senior Club Football Titles and his appointment signalled a serious statement of intent.

Ross quickly set about appointing his backroom team, which included selectors Lt Col Kieran Carey, Comdt Mark Lennon and selector/coach CQMS Philip Wolfe. Flt Sgt Rick Kearns (Statistician), Pte Eugene O'Toole (Kit Man) and Cpl Christy Dempsey (Asst Coach) completed the management team. Comdt Alan Courtney was also drafted in to provide logistics support to the management team.

The first encounter with potential players was an open trial in the DFTC, which was attended by over 40 players and was followed by a familiarisation BBQ. A fixture with the Underdogs, TG4s TV series team was mooted and further training sessions and team bonding pool sessions whittled the panel to 29 for the eagerly anticipated televised game.

The Defence Forces Team defeated the Underdogs by two points after a very competitive match and it was obvious that there were some very good players within the DF but more importantly that the team was starting to develop an identity, style of play and togetherness under Glavin's stewardship and were an honest, hardworking and organised unit.

The next training session was organised for the GAA's centre of Excellence in Abbottstown, which was followed by a BBQ that evening and a motivational team talk the next morning by former World Boxing Champion, High Performance Director of the IABA and member of Dublin Senior Football backroom, Bernard Dunne who spoke to the players about how they can prepare individually to perform collectively within the unique set-up that is DF Football.

As the team was developing very well, so too were arrangements for the representative series as fixtures were confirmed in Croke Park for the An Garda Síochána (GS) & Allied Irish Banks (AIB) games and an invite to London to play Bank of Ireland (BOI) was given Ministerial approval.

First up in Croke Park on Monday the 22nd of October were the Gardai. Their high profile inter county players Aidan O'Mahony (Kerry), David Clarke (Mayo), Emlyn Mulligan (Leitrim), Denis Glennon (Westmeath) and Eamon Callaghan (Kildare) were very impressive early on, organised in defence and decisive and incisive in attack putting them six points clear with fifteen minutes remaining. The Defence Forces team were never beaten and showed great composure to





grind down the opposition and come away with a one-point victory. The players were delighted after the game and they took the opportunity to get photos with the cup and their teammates, fellow unit comrades and club mates from both the DF and Gardai team. The impact of Kieran Malone (Clare) and Shane McEntee (Meath) from the bench made a huge difference and Captain Gary White, Pte Ryan Moore and Cpl Jackie Agnew also excelled.

Just over two weeks later, we were back in Croke Park to take on the AIB and yet again the players were confronted with household names such as Colm O'Neill (Cork), former footballer of the year James O'Donoghue (Kerry), Niall Scully (Dublin), Steven O'Brien (Tipperary) and Eoghan Kerin (Galway). This time however the DF team took the game to the opposition early on and were never behind throughout. Coming into the closing stages AIB did manage to equalise but in injury time Wicklow's Pte Rory Finn made a lung-bursting run up the pitch to kick the winning score from 35 metres out. Journeyman and Kerry native, Pte Chris Crowley received the man of the match award for nullifying his old school mate O' Donoghue and others to shine were Pte Niall Conlon (Louth), Rory Finn and Cpl Iain Corbett (Limerick).

The final fixture of the year was the eagerly awaited game V BOI in Ruislip GAA grounds, the home of London GAA. 24 players and 6 members of management travelled. The Minister of State with responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe T.D. led the delegation, accompanied by the Secretary General of the Department of Defence, Mr Maurice Quinn, Major General Kieran Brennan (President of DF Hurling), Brigadier General Joe Mulligan (President of DF Football) and Brigadier General Seán Clancy (President of DF Hurling 2019). Members of the team were delighted to be accommodated in the Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow, home of the 1st Bn Irish Guards. The Irish Guards also transported the team throughout and arranged feeding, which was very much appreciated.

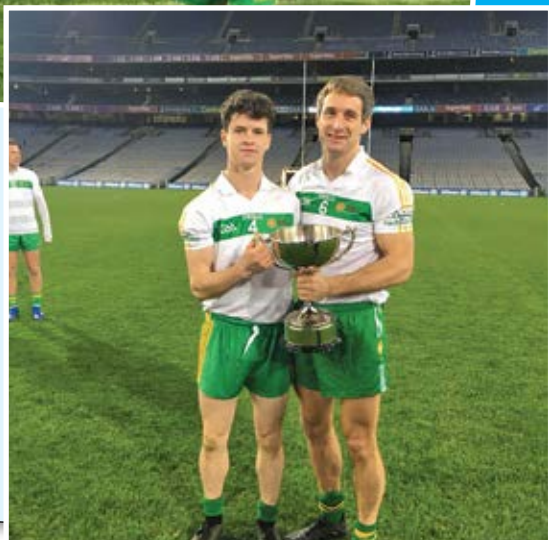
The game itself ended in disappointment for the DF team, losing out to a very good BOI side. Multiple All Star winner Keith Higgins was outstanding for the BOI team. They had other excellent performance from Conor 'Horse' Lawlor of Carlow, Brian O' Driscoll of Cork and Jack McCarron of Monaghan. Best for the DF on the day were Pte Adam Tyrell (Kildare), Pte James Robinson (Round Towers, Kildare) in goals and Lt Kevin Callaghan (Dublin).

Overall, 2018 was a great year for DF Football with over 60 players involved throughout the year and 34 different players getting game time on the hallowed ground of Croke Park. Young soldiers raved about the involvement of such a high profile manager in the team and fulfilled childhood dreams by getting to tog out in such an amazing venue...twice. The future is bright with more and more players being called into their respective county teams. Special mention must go to Pte Odhran McFadden Ferry who won an Ulster Club Football Title with his club Gweedore, Donegal. Aptce Kieran Malone starred for his club St. Joseph's Milltown Malbay as they won the Clare County Title

and lost out to Dr. Croke's of Kerry in the Munster Club Football Final. Others such as Adam Tyrell (Kildare), Patrick O' Sullivan (Laois) and Odhran McFadden-Ferry have been called into their respective county panels for 2019.

Planning for 2019 has already begun and it is hoped that the team will develop and improve in the high-performance environment that has been created.

Additionally, the Defence Forces Football committee want to increase participation and competition amongst units and formations and the Medical Services, Inter Bde and DF 7s competitions are perfect opportunities for this. The dates will be released in the New Year after the AGM. Gaelic Football, like any other sport in the DF, gives personnel opportunities to be part of a team, meet new people and improves wellness and work-life balance. It is also an opportunity for us to realise the calibre of young people we have in the organisation, both in a sporting capacity and on a human level. Investing a small bit of time and effort in these people will help us to *"Strengthen the Nation"*. ■







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## 5.11 TACTICAL CAMS 3.0 - 190L

### CAMS 3.0 - HEAVY DUTY

Everything that the CAMS (Carry All My Stuff) 2.0 was, but more! Reinforced (and replaceable) heavy duty wheels (now inset) rated for 68kg, durable corner protectors (also replaceable), and PE support board for high impact resistance. In other words, it's made to survive dog's abuse whilst carrying everything you'd ever need!

This bag is a beast - multiple storage compartments to hold anything you'd contemplate bringing, with a total capacity of 190 liters. Best of all, as you'd expect from 5.11, the CAMS 3.0 allowing you to organise your gear effectively across the multiple compartments. Loading up is simple thanks to the fibreglass support poles; they provide structure keeping everything safe and secure. Better again, they're removable so when you want to put the CAMS 3.0 into storage, it compresses right down!

5.11's motto is ALWAYS BE READY, and they mean it. The CAMS 3.0 is a significant improvement over its predecessor, taking on board critique and feedback from users in the field, and all to make sure they deliver the best possible product.

Securely transport your rifle, body armour, tactical gear, and keep any documents/valuables safely stored in the secure compartments. 5.11 weren't kidding when they say "Carry All My Stuff"!



**RRP €389!**



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SIMPLY ANSWER THIS QUESTION:

How many sizes are available in RUSH-series backpack?

- A.) One
- B.) Two

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO SUBS@MILITARY.IE

LAST MONTH'S WINNER:

CORMAC SMITH, CO DUBLIN





# PLEASE SUPPORT CHARITY EVENTS FOR Coombe Hospital & ONE's Fuchsia Appeal to help Defence Forces Veterans



The 10th Potential Officers Course are running a charity event in aid of the ICU unit in the Coombe Hospital. The event will be a FREE 2Km Kid's Fun Run & Obstacle Course. This event is to allow us to contribute whatever we can to the purchase of a new medical simulator, called Paul, which costs €75,000, however we will take any donations no matter how small, and funds are raised through from the go fund me page will go to the ICU, Coombe women and childrens hospital.

27<sup>th</sup> Feb - Children from local schools who have been selected will complete a 2Km Cross Country event inc. mini obstacle course on the Curragh as part of this event. You can donate to the GoFundMe Account here: [http://bit.ly/10thPOC\\_Coombe](http://bit.ly/10thPOC_Coombe)

28<sup>th</sup> Feb - There is a 4Km non-competitive Cross Country Run with obstacles. Location: DFTC Ranges  
Registration: €5.00 - Dress: Sports gear.  
Units can also enter a 4 person team for a timed event, dress is DPMs.  
Registration area will be in the vicinity of the Hospital Mess.  
All proceeds for this event will go to ONE's Fuchsia Appeal to help Defence Forces Veterans. [www.oneconnect.ie](http://www.oneconnect.ie)



## DEFENCE FORCES VALUES AWARDS 2018



**RESPECT**

**LOYALTY**

**SELFLESSNESS**

**PHYSICAL COURAGE**

**MORAL COURAGE**

**INTEGRITY**

OVERALL VALUES CHAMPION FOR 2018: RSM JOHNNY MURRAY, DFTC CIS GROUP

RESPECT: A/MECH RYAN O DRISCOLL, NAVAL SERVICE

LOYALTY: SGT PJ MCCABE, 2 BRIGADE MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

SELFLESSNESS: CPL THOMAS CAREW, 3 INFANTRY BATTALION

PHYSICAL COURAGE: CPL DAVID MCCORMACK, 1 CATHLÁN COISITHE

MORAL COURAGE: CPL CAITRIONA LACEY, 6 INFANTRY BATTALION

INTEGRITY: GNR DAVID STACK, 1 BRIGADE ARTILLERY REGIMENT



**STRENGTHEN  
THE NATION**



# NOTICEBOARD

## MILITARY HISTORY LECTURES FEBRUARY 2019

### FRIDAY 8TH FEBRUARY AT 8 PM

Brigadier John Powell will present 'General Sir Edward Bulfin: Ireland's forgotten general of World War 1' to the Military History Society of Ireland in Griffith College, South Circular Road, Dublin 8. All welcome – wheelchair access available.

### SUNDAY 10TH FEBRUARY AT 3PM

A free guided tour 'From Barracks to Museum' takes place in the Museum of Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, Dublin 7. Admission free, places allocated on a first-come basis 15 minutes before the tour starts. This tour is repeated at 3pm on Sunday 24th February.

### THURSDAY 14TH FEBRUARY AT 6.30PM

John Powell will present 'Haig's Tower of Strength – General Sir Edward Bulfin' to the Antrim and Down Branch Western Front Association in the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), 2 Titanic Boulevard, Titanic Quarter Belfast. All welcome.

### WEDNESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY AT 8PM

Catherine Scuffil will present 'The South Circular Road on the eve of the First World War' to the Dun Laoghaire Borough Historical Society in The Royal Marine Hotel, Marine Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. All welcome – entrance €3.

### THURSDAY 21ST FEBRUARY AT 8PM

Philip Lecane will recall 'The Sinking of the RMS Leinster' to the Greystones Archaeological & Historical Society in the Holy Rosary Centre adjoining Holy Rosary Church, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. All welcome – admission charge.

## WORD SEARCH

CROSS OFF THE WORDS IN THE LIST AS YOU FIND THEM.

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

### Fighting In Built Up Areas FIBUA

U	W	W	A	R	F	A	R	E	D	M	J	C	R	V
T	U	A	E	F	W	V	Z	A	B	U	L	O	R	X
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J	T	C	H	I	B	A	V	O	P	J	H	B	O	D
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C	B	M	J	H	S	N	O	I	T	A	R	E	P	O
A	F	B	K	U	S	U	Z	N	N	B	U	A	X	C
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W	A	S	A	E	R	A	K	Z	B	B	Z	M	V	F
E	E	V	C	E	T	E	R	R	A	I	N	Z	H	K
Q	E	M	K	N	L	E	F	Q	V	N	J	C	N	P
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OPERATIONS  
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URBAN  
WARFARE



## COMPETITION €50 VOUCHER

Q. HOW MUCH IS A SILVA RANGER SL COMPASS ON WWW.PROTAC.IE?

Post your answer along with your name, address and contact number to us or email [subs@military.ie](mailto:subs@military.ie) for a chance to win a PROTAC €50 Voucher to use in store or online.

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[www.facebook.com/protacmilitary](https://www.facebook.com/protacmilitary)



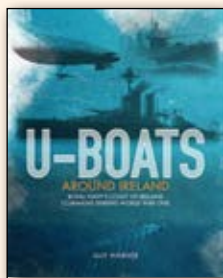
Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Robbie Ward, Co Cork. Closing date is 19th February 2019.



# BOOKSBOOKS

## U-BOATS AROUND IRELAND THE STORY OF THE ROYAL NAVY'S COAST OF IRELAND COMMAND DURING WW1

**Author:** Guy Warner  
**Publisher:** Colourpoint Books (December 2018) [www.colourpoint.co.uk](http://www.colourpoint.co.uk)  
**ISBN:** 978-1-780731766  
**Pages:** 239  
**Price:** €25.20



Guy Warner's latest book builds and develops on from his two previous books, 'Airships over the North Channel' (2005), and 'Airships over Ulster' (2012).

Ireland in 1914 was seen as a naval backwater, with only one naval-base of any consequence, located in Queenstown (Cobh), County Cork. But by the end of WW1, there were 18 Naval bases with hundreds of ships of all sizes and had thousands of personnel.

The war of 1914-1918 saw many technological changes, inventions and developments. The war at sea did not escape these developments as battle took place not only on the surface but also by underwater craft and in the air above. Both English and German naval Officers in pre-war days did not fully realise the potential that submarines would exert upon naval-warfare.

Part of Germany's war plans were to seriously disrupt the traffic of merchant shipping into British ports, this action would lead to the reduction of both food and other vital goods reaching the population of the UK/British-isles. This impeded Britain's ability to wage war against the German U-boats.

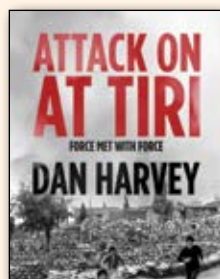
This book delves into the examination of the Royal Navy's anti-submarine activities, in order to devise counter measures to beat this new enemy - the German U-Boat. Additional chapters tell us of how the US Navy from 1917 onwards aided Britain in her defeat of her enemy.

We see the result from Guy's in-depth research at the National Archives in Kew, England in this excellent book.

I would highly recommend this book, for all readers with an interest in the history of underwater warfare during World War I. **SS**

## ATTACK ON AT TIRI FORCE MET WITH FORCE

**Author:** Dan Harvey  
**Publisher:** Maverick House (September 2014) [www.maverickhouse.com](http://www.maverickhouse.com)  
**ISBN:** 978-1908518187  
**Pages:** 191  
**Price:** €9.99

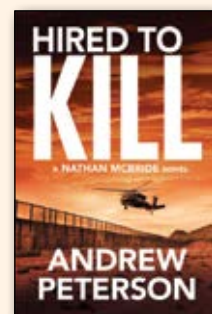


Between April 6th and April 12th 1980, the strategically located village of At Tiri in South Lebanon was the scene of fierce fighting between Irish peacekeepers and Christian Militia.

The village controlled the only road leading north towards a hill known as Hill 880. From this position, the surrounding villages and countryside could be dominated by direct fire. A number of attempts were made to take the Irish post but were repulsed by men of the 46 Inf Bn. During the engagement one Irish Peacekeeper, one Fijian Peacekeeper and one Militia man were killed. However in the days that followed two other Irish Peacekeepers were to lose their lives as the Christian Militia sought revenge for the casualty they suffered during the battle. This is the previously untold story of the attack on Irish Peacekeepers in At Tiri in South Lebanon. This well researched book details the events leading up to the incident, a host of first hand accounts detailing the battle of those action filled days and the tragedy of its aftermath. Dan Harvey, a retired Lt Col in the Irish Defence Forces has accurately retold the story of those that were there and also of those who did not make it back. This book is not only a credit to its author but also a credit to the thousands of Irishmen and Irishwomen who have been deployed overseas in the service of peace. **PO'B**

## HIRED TO KILL NATHAN MCBRIDE SERIES #7

**Author:** Andrew Peterson  
**Publisher:** Thomas & Mercer (July 2018) [www.andrewpeterson.com](http://www.andrewpeterson.com)  
**ISBN:** 978-1503949300  
**Pages:** 377  
**Price:** €9.63 PB / €3.95



I have followed the exploits of special operative Nathan McBride, from his military career as a Marine Corps Sniper to private security operative. *Hired to Kill*, the 7th instalment in the

Nathan McBride series is an explosion of action that you won't be expecting, as past missions come back to haunt him and his colleagues. This fast-paced thriller brings Nathan face-to-face with one of the deadliest enemies he's ever faced – striking at the heart of his family. The action takes place on the streets of San Diego and Washington, DC, as simultaneous deadly attacks terrorise his inner circle. Nathan's journey for revenge, along with Vincent Beaumont, a long-time friend and the CEO and team leader of an America PMC assault team. Takes them on a collision course with an ISIS training camp in northern Mexico that contains bioweapons to be used to attack the US mainland in an attack larger than 9/11. Find out if Nathan can complete the mission to neutralize the terrorist cell and get his revenge. **WF**



## NAME

DAVID O'REILLY

## RANK

COY SGT

## UNIT

NCOTW, MILITARY COLLEGE, DFTC



**C**oy Sgt David O'Reilly followed his childhood ambition to be a soldier, enlisting in the Army in 1994. He was fortunate to receive the 'best soldier' award in his recruit platoon and was subsequently posted to the 29 Inf Bn. Despite the operational tempo of the unit at the time he immersed himself in sports and shooting competitions, which led to him winning a number of All Army awards in boxing, orienteering, running and shooting. Later in his career he would compete internationally for the Defence Forces winning an international sniper competition.

His passion for military life led him to undergo selection for the Army Ranger Wing (ARW) and on completion of Selection Course Charlie One he spent 19 years with the unit. Service with the ARW provided a great platform for self-development, training, adventure and operations. This also gave him the unique opportunity of working with foreign militaries. His personal highlights are a Jungle Patrol Course in Belize, a Military Tracking Instructor Course in Brunei and embedding with the French Special Forces.

He has served overseas with B Coy, 81 Inf Bn UNIFIL, twice with SFOR, twice with KFOR, CJSOCC with EUFOR Chad, and with UNIFIL HQ. He has also attended a number of foreign military schools while continuing his personal education. He has attained a Level 7 BA in LMDS from IT Carlow, and a Level 9 Masters of Arts in Strategic Studies from University College Cork.

In 2015, he was promoted to Flight Sergeant in the Air Corps where he was the Senior NCO with responsibility for land and air operations in Air Corps Headquarters (ACHQ). This presented him with an opportunity to experience a different operational culture. His responsibilities in ACHQ ranged from co-ordinating air ambulance missions, creating situational awareness through coordinating Air Corps assets to generating statistics for the DoD. Liaison with DFHQ, external agencies were also key functions of this position.

In 2018, he was selected to be the Coy Sgt in the NCOTW where he is a key enabler in the training and education of NCOs from all Army Corps and the Air Corps (line) who wish to advance their careers. In 2018, the NCOTW conducted a Senior NCO course, two All Arms Standard NCO Courses, a Potential NCO Course, and three Specialised Instructor Courses as well as two Range Manager Courses. This means approximately 350 students passed through the doors of the NCOTW in 2018, supported by large numbers of soldiers from throughout the Infantry Corps during our FTXs. Coy Sgt O'Reilly's focus during these high tempo periods are Ownership, Self-improvement, Mission Command, the Infantry Ethos and Defence Forces Values. The NCOTW is student centred in its role of training and educating

NCOs summed up in its motto - Traeáilimid Ceannairi (We Train Leaders). In 2019 the NCOTW will conduct an Infantry Platoon Sergeants' Course and an All Arms Standard NCO Course.

His function is to help shape and influence the next generation of NCO leaders for the Defence Forces, in line with the NCOTW Mission: *"To educate, train, and inspire the NCO Corps to be leaders of strong character and professional competence, committed to the Defence Forces Values."* He helps achieve this mission by providing both task and purpose for students and NCO staff alike, ensuring the correct knowledge and skills are delivered. By putting the student first, the NCOTW continues to deliver professional, educated NCO leaders for the Defence Forces. His passion for NCO leadership development led him to write an article on the subject for *An Cosantóir*, the first time since 1945 that an NCO has published on leadership and he actively encourages other NCOs to study and write about their profession.

He acknowledges he has been very fortunate to have served with some great NCOs and officers both at home and abroad who have had a huge impact on his personal development stating a key lesson he learned early being *"To lead is also to serve"*. It is his intent in his role as the Senior NCO in the NCOTW to continue the development of NCOs in order to help others to achieve their potential, promote mission command, ownership and the development of mentoring within the Defence Forces where he sees it as a function leadership to make those coming up behind you to be not as good as you but be better. Coy Sgt O'Reilly is looking forward to training and educating the next generation of NCO leaders for the Defence Forces. ■







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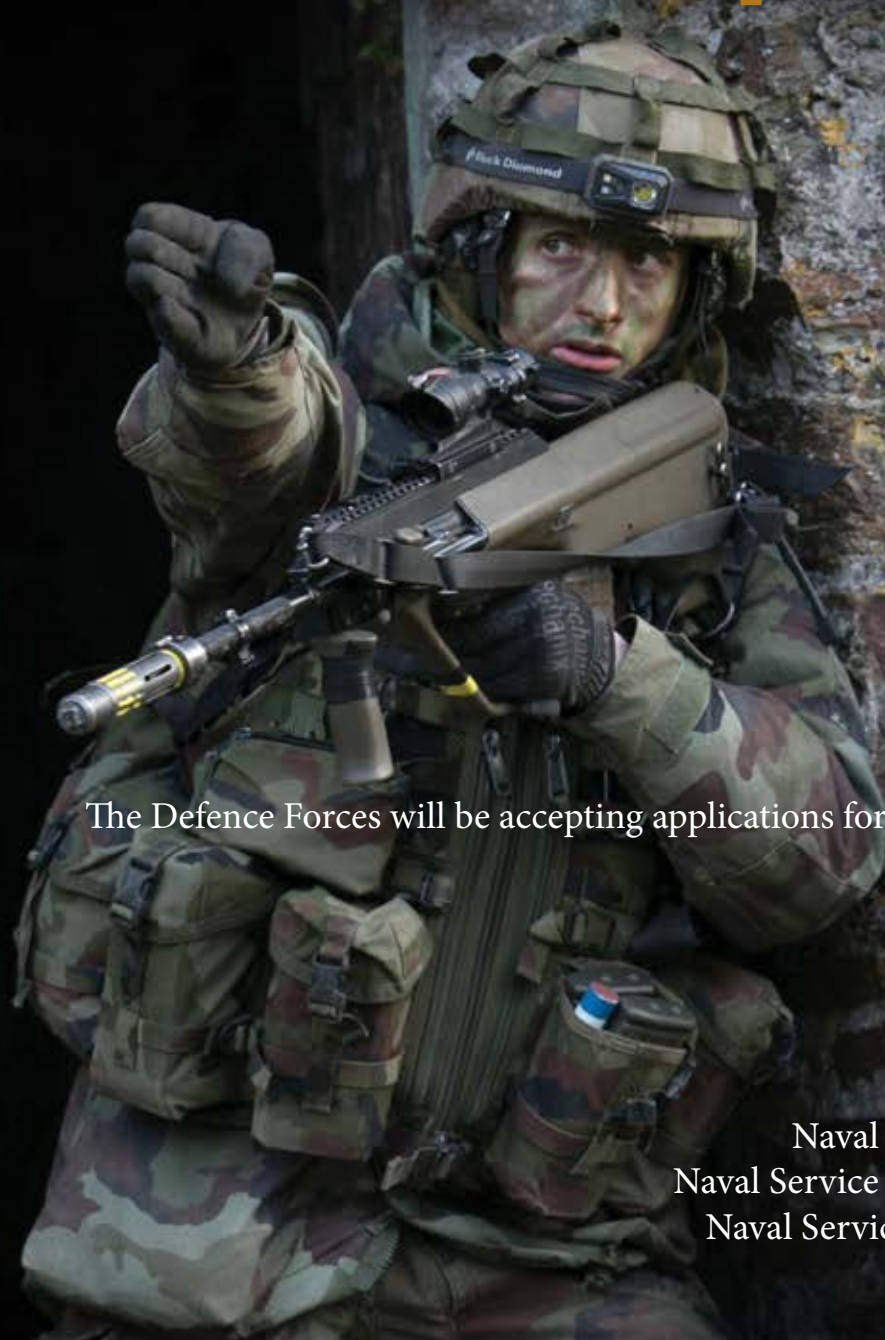


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# Cadetships 2019



The Defence Forces will be accepting applications for Officer Cadetships

Army Line  
Army Engineer  
Army Equitation  
Army Ordnance  
Air Corps Pilot  
Naval Service Operations  
Naval Service Electrical Engineer  
Naval Service Marine Engineer

This Competition will be launching soon

For More information - [www.military.ie/en/careers/current-competitions/](http://www.military.ie/en/careers/current-competitions/)



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