

THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

# AN COSANTÓIR

www.dfmagazine.ie  
(ESTABLISHED 1940)  
Price: €3.00 (Stg £2.70)

Paralympics  
IRELAND



SEPTEMBER 2016



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# PARALYMPIC GAMES RIO 2016

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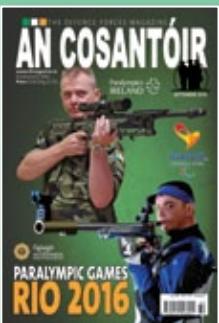
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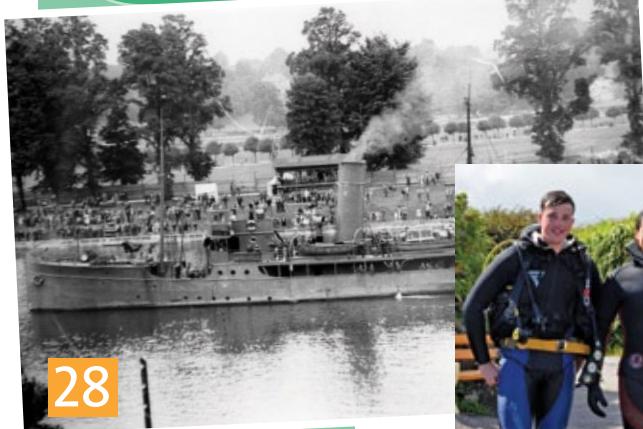
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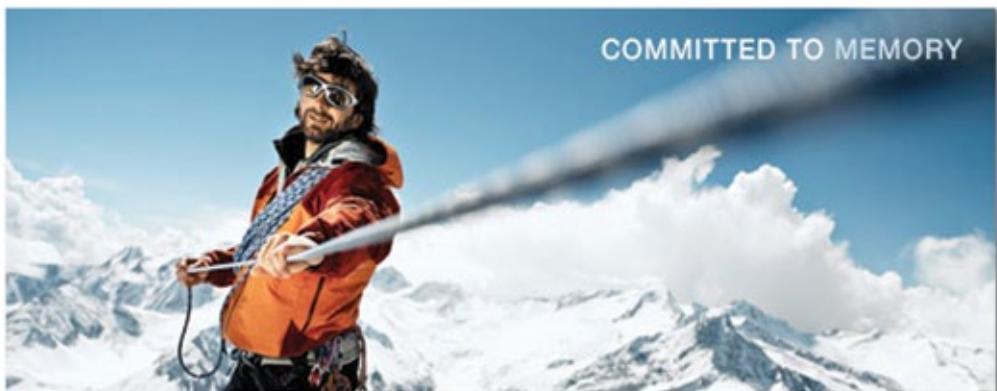
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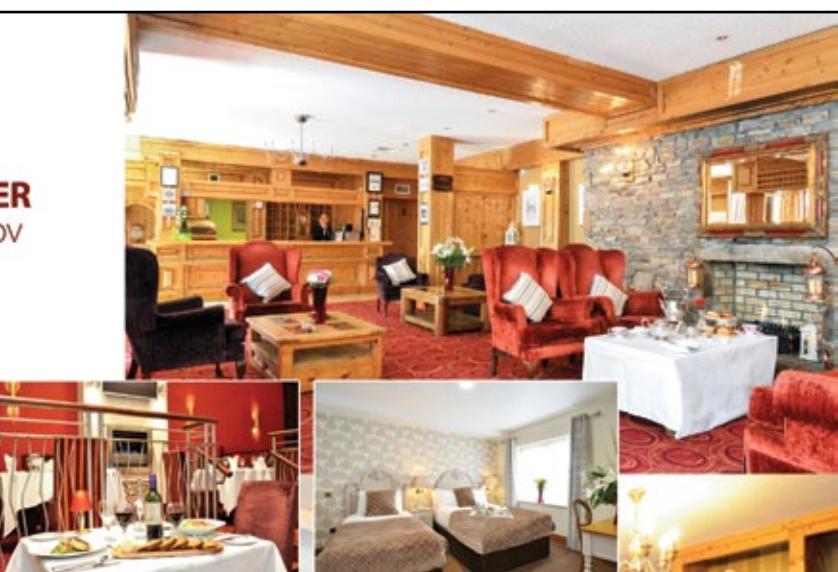
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SI LAN ATLANTHAIGH FHRÁIN

**Manager**

Comdt Colin Lawlor  
info@military.ie  
+353 (0)45 44 5306

**Editor**

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald  
magazine@military.ie  
+353 (0)45 44 5307

**Connect**

Sgt Karl Byrne  
connect@military.ie

**Photo/Journalist:**

Cpl Lee Coyle  
journalist@military.ie

**Photographer**

Cpl Neville Coughlan  
photo@military.ie  
045 44 5307

**Subscriptions**

Cpl Kelly Gallagher  
+353 (0)45 44 5312  
subs@military.ie

**DF/PR Information:**

Cpl Lynn Ryan (Overseas)  
admin@military.ie  
+353 (0)45 44 5308

**DF Webmaster**

Sgt Mick Burke  
+353 (0)45 44 5309  
webmaster@military.ie

**Magazine Archivist**

Mr Sean Shinnors

**Designer/Advertising**

JM Publishing & Media,  
Arklow, Co. Wicklow, Ireland  
Tel: +353 15331911  
Tel: +353871344135  
Web: www.jmpublishing.ie  
Email: info@jmpublishing.ie

**Printer**

Turner's Printing Co., Ltd  
Earl Street, Longford, Ireland  
Tel: +353 (0)43 3350500

*The fact that an article appears in this magazine does not indicate official approval of the views expressed by the author.*

© Published by OiC Public Relations Branch for the Defence Forces at DFHQ, Block 5, Ceannt Bks, DFTC, Curragh Camp, Co Kildare, Ireland.  
Tel: +353 (0)45 445312

**Front Cover**

Pictured is CQMS Sean Baldwin.  
Design concept by Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald.

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# Editorial

**H**ello and welcome to our September 2016 issue. This 40-page issue is due to there being so much content supplied over our summer break - we decided to get it all out to you now.

This issue starts with your pictures *On Parade* – please keep them coming in. This month *In Focus* looks at a military career from both ends. Firstly ‘God’s Tears’ ... *Fuchsia Appeal 2016*, looks at the largest annual fundraising appeal by the ONE for retired members of the DF who have now fallen on hard times. That is followed by the experiences of a young RDF member starting out on his reservist career on an *RDF Range Weekend*. *Veterans News* by Sean Shinnors looks at this year’s Annual IUNVA Conference that was held in the Tullamore Court Hotel in Offaly.

Our front cover feature ‘*The Bright Side*’ is on prolific Paralympic shooter CQMS Seán Baldwin, who gives an honest interview on his recovery from a coma to where he is now – many thanks to Paralympics Ireland for the report and photos. In *Charting a New Course - Life after the Defence Forces*, CPO/ERA Ruairí de Barra NS gives us a look at some Defence Forces members on their transitioning to civilian life after lengthy careers. Next we have a short piece on a recent visit made to the *Magazine Fort Phoenix Park* by regular contributors and military historians/authors, Paul O’Brien and Mícheál Ó Doibhilín on behalf of *An Cosantóir*. This is followed by another interesting piece by Christy Parker, who informs us about the *Irish Navy to return Historic Crest to Malta* story. In the first exercise feature, Cpl Lee Coyle and Armn Adam Murphy visited the Glen of Imaal to see how members of the Corp of Engineers on *TACEX 9 ‘Combined Effort’* got on.

Our *Strategic Review* by Paul O’Brien MA looks at *Libya: A War on Many Fronts* - Libya is the fourth-largest country in Africa and has a population of just over six million. *In Reserve* is by CQMS Mike Barrett RDF 7 Inf Bn who gives us the reservist’ views from the previously mentioned COE Exercise ‘*Combined Effort*’. This is followed by *Exercise ‘Strongbow’* by Comdt Eamon Cahill, where members of 3 Inf Bn deployed to Rosslare Europort, Waterford Airport and Bellview Seaport as part of a co-ordinated major emergency exercise.

Our *History* feature *Diving Into History – The Helga & The Aud* by CQMS Mick Duffy looks at the Defence Forces Diving Group’s (DFDG) recent historic dives. The DFDG are also our first *Sports* feature as we visited them on camp in Bere Island during a beginners diving course. Our second *Sports* feature ‘by Comdt Barry Byrne’ is on the inaugural international *Beaufort Cup* regatta boat race. This issue finishes with our other regular features: *Gear Up*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews* and *What I Do*.

**Check out our competitions and results on pages 35 and 36.**

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor

## CAN YOU HELP?

A/Sea Robert Dean was tragically lost at sea on 20th July 2000, while returning from an international visit to the USA with LÉ Eithne. Dean's mother, Eleanor, is looking for any photographs of her son. (She received nine rolls of film in his belongings but there were very few photos of Dean on them). This photo was taken on Dean's last day in Boston and sent to Eleanor by an American lady with a lovely letter about Dean's kindness to her and her family when they visited the ship. Eleanor asks: “*If anyone has some, would they be so kind as to let me have a copy. Thanking you in advanced.*” Email: [edeanmum2@gmail.com](mailto:edeanmum2@gmail.com)



# 6 | ON PARADE



## VISITING BA RESERVE OFFICERS ▲

Pictured recently are Col JOM Lytle and Lt Col S Cassells, Reserve Officers from 38th Irish Brigade, who were guest speakers at the Senior Reserve Officers Developmental Course in Pearse Officers' Mess, DFTC. L/R: Comdt (AR) P Keenan, 28 Inf Bn, Lt Col (AR) S O'Reilly, J3/5 DFHQ, Lt Col S Cassells, 38th Irish Bde, Lt (AR) N Stringer, (Cse Coordinator) OTW, Col JOM Lytle 38th Irish Bde, Lt Col (AR) G Maguire, G7 DFTC HQ and Lt Comdr (NSR) S Murphy, DUNSR. Photo: Lt Col (AR) G Maguire, SSO RDFTE, HQ DFTC



## RDFRA MEET MINISTER KEHOE ▲

On 12th July, an RDFRA delegation met with Minister of State for Defence Paul Kehoe TD, to discuss matters relating to the RDF. Of key importance were: RDF recruitment, DFRs revision, promotion, supports required by the RDF, and employer relations matters. The Minister gave an undertaking to further investigate all matters raised. The RDFRA delegation were extremely pleased with the positive progress made. L/R: Eugene Gargan (Vice-Chairperson, RDFRA), Minister Paul Kehoe, Patrick Mulley (Chairperson, RDFRA), Jason Kearney (Head of Defence Forces Personnel Policy Branch) and Neil Richardson (General Secretary, RDFRA).



## MERCY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION CORK ▲

The NCOs' Mess, Collins Bks hosted the presentation of a €1,000 cheque to Mercy Hospital Foundation Cork, a charity that aims to provide the best paediatric assistance and comfortable surroundings to kids, teenage patients and their families during their stay in hospital. The presentation was made after the laying up of the colours of 53 Inf Group UNDOF. Lt Col Daragh McEvitt, OC 1 BAR/Collins Bks and OC 53 Inf Gp is pictured with Deirdre Finn, Campaign & Community Manager Mercy Hospital Cork, along with members of 53 Inf Grp UNDOF. Photo: Sgt Barry McCarthy, HQ 1 Bde



## BSM RETIRES

### WITH 45 YEAR'S SERVICE

Pictured is Brig Gen Philip Brennan, GOC 1 Bde making a presentation on behalf 1 Brigade staff to BSM Leslie Doyle, HQ 1 Bde on the occasion of his retirement from the RDF after 45 years unbroken service. Photo: BSM Leslie Doyle, HQ 1 Bde



## TO HELL & BACK ▲

E Coy, 3 Inf Bn, Wexford's RDF unit recently raised funds for the Irish Heart Foundation by completing the Hell & Back Challenge. The Irish Heart Foundation is the national charity fighting heart disease and stroke, funded by 92% by public donations. Back row: Cpl Colin Dillan, Pte Peirce Bowen, Sgt John Cooney, Pte James Mythen, Pte Kieran Murphy. Front row: Comdt Enda McDonald, Sgt Dick Martin, Sgt Joe Turner and Sgt Frank Murphy. Photo: Comdt (AR) Enda McDonald, E Coy 3 Inf Bn



## LIFEGUARD COURSE ▲

Pictured are instructors and students on the recent Lifeguard Course that was run in the DFPES. Front Row: Tpr Halligan (Instr), Cpl Wrafter (Instr), Cpl McDermot, Pte McNally, Sgt Devereux, Cpl Whelan, Pte Phillips, Cpl Burke, Sgt Brogan (Instr) and Cpl Whelan (Instr). Rear Row: Pte Allen Cpl Kiely Cpl Crowe, Sgt Eaton, Cpl Coates, Pte Gallagher and Cpl Bennett. Photo: Cpl Lee Coyle, PR Branch



### NATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION ▲

Pictured are members of 1 Cn Cois, Galway, at the wreath laying ceremony for the National Day of Commemoration Ceremony held in NUIG on 10th July 2016. Photo: Cre John Greene, 1 Cn Cois



### THUMBS UP ▲

Sgt Val Murray gives the thumbs up on another successful mission by Air Corps 112, as tail number 274 departs Galway's University Hospital on 24th March 2016, which was Sgt Murray's last day of flying before retiring – We wish him well in his next adventure. Photo: David McGrath



### BRECON BEACONS FOR CHARITY ▲

In June we reported that a team of DF veterans and friends called 'Team Alpha' were taking on the Fan Dance in the Brecon Beacons in Wales on 2nd July for charity. The Fan Dance is part of the fitness and navigation phase of the SAS selection process, in which participants carry a 40lb load for a 24 km long-distance march. The event is the nearest that you can get to experience the real SAS selection course. All Fan Dance staff are ex-SAS or SBS soldiers, and the event is run with a strict military protocol.

We are glad to report that the team finished in under the mandatory cut off times with no injuries and meeting their fund raising target of €7,000 for the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind. Well done to the team and their support staff. Photo/Text: Anthony Power, Team Alpha



### CROAGH PATRICK CHARITY CYCLE ▲

On 14th July a small group from Dún Uí Mhaolíosa took part in a charity challenge from the barracks to Croagh Patrick (93km), and then climbed the Reek afterwards. A charity fund has been set up in 1 Cn Cois. At the end of the year the money raised is given out to a charity. Photo: Cre John Greene, 1 Cn Cois



### SEA SUNDAY AT CHRISTCHURCH CÓBH ▲

On Sunday 17th July 2016, Christchurch, Rushbrooke, Cobh, hosted 'Sea Sunday' for 2016, as it has done for many years. Rev Adrian P. Moran, and his 'Select Vestry', and parishioners, were all very pleased that their church is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its consecration, and decided to mark the occasion with a distinctive ceremony. Photo: Domhnall Mac Cáirtháigh FS, PRO Cobh Branch ONE



### ALL ARMY ORIENTEERING COMPETITION ▲

Pictured is the winning team from 1 Inf Bn, Galway, of this year's All Army Orienteering Competition held in Kilworth Camp on 10th June 2016. Photo: Sgt Daniel Sheehan, 1 Bde HQ

# 'God's Tears' used to help former members of the Defence Forces

- Fuchsia Appeal 2016

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY ARMN ADAM MURPHY

**O**n the 6th July 2016, the Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM launched the Organisation of National Ex Service Personnel (ONE) Fuchsia Appeal at the Defence Forces monument in Merrion Square, Dublin. In launching the appeal, the COS was accompanied by Mick Carroll, National President of ONE; Ollie O'Connor, Chief Executive of ONE; newly elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, Cllr Brendan Carr and Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Defence Paul Kehoe TD. Also present were Minister of State for Justice David Stanton TD and former Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD, now Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The Fuchsia Appeal was first launched in 2009 and since then the appeal fund has gradually grown from around €14,000 to over €100,000 in 2015. The ONE Fuchsia Appeal helps raise much-needed funds to assist former members of the Defence Forces who have regrettably fallen on hard times.

ONE also needs to fundraise €600,000 annually to continue running its residential centres in Dublin, Letterkenny and Athlone and drop-in centres in Dundalk and Limerick.

ONE is currently providing residential care for up to 40 former Defence Forces members at a modest cost to the state.

The Fuchsia badge is sold as part of the fundraising initiative, and is stamped with the word 'Cuimhnímis', - 'Let us Remember' to remind everybody of this great initiative. The fuchsia itself was chosen as their fundraising symbol because it is widely grown throughout Ireland. Today, the Fuchsia serves as a fundraising symbol, a badge of remembrance and an emblem to honour all those currently serving in the Defence Forces.

Ollie O'Connor, ONE CEO, says: "The Fuchsia appeal is vital for the organisation. It enables us to help former colleagues who are having a difficult time and are without a home. Many of these people gave outstanding service to the state and to the United Nations and for one reason or another have not been able to make ends meet since leaving the service."

Minister Kehoe thanked Ministers Coveney and Stanton for their continued support of veterans of the Defence Forces. Minister Kehoe said, "With all the 1916 Centenary celebrations this year it is important to remember all those that have served and died in the Defence Forces... It is fitting that we remember them at this memorial."

He also thanked ONE for their continued support of former members of the Defence Forces, telling them: "You really make a difference to ex service personnel".

Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM said it was a privilege and honour to launch the appeal. He spoke of the support, sacrifice and hope that ONE provides to its members, saying charity begins at home and he commended and thanked ONE for their continued work. He said he remembered living in Co Mayo on Ireland's west coast, where the fuchsia grows freely and was called *deora Dé* or 'God's tears'.

There was also a special presentation of a certificate of appreciation to Trisha McLoughlin, who has been a great advocate and fundraiser for ONE, as she herself battles cancer. Trisha has recently raised €6,600 by swimming a mile for the ONE, which is one of her many recent fund-raising efforts. Trisha is the wife of Defence Forces veteran Colin McLoughlin and mother of Cpl Kira Conaghton, 6 Inf Bn. ■



# RDF RANGE WEEKEND

BY PTE DOMINIC WILLIAMS, RDF 7 INF BN PHOTOS BY PTE PAUL MAGEE, RDF 7 INF BN

**R**DF Range Weekend took place on 28th - 29th May 2016 in TIS Kilbride Camp. This range weekend was a learning experience for me, as it was my first time being mounted on guard duty and to be trusted with the security for the range.

While on security duty I gained a new perspective on just how well the RDF conducts its training operations. Sometimes it is easy to overlook just how well organised and timed each task is carried out, especially when you are directly taking part in the task or operation. During my shift it became evident just how precise each task was carried out. From unloading supplies and organising firing details to preparing meals - each task was carried out with precision and attention to detail.

With weapon safety being the priority, everyone on the range or in the butts wore full body armour and helmets. Everyone present in the noise danger area wore his or her hearing protection.

Personal were divided into groups of ten to fire their annual

range practices (ARPs). Initially everyone fired grouping shots at the 100-meter range to zero their weapons. All firers under the supervision of the range manager also carried out the customary 'make safe' procedure after firing. Following this they moved back to the 300-meter mark to start their range table. Upon completing this, the firers made their weapons safe and advanced to the 200-meter range in a skirmish line, taking care no one was ahead of anyone else. This method was repeated to the 100-meter range.

Attention to detail was replicated again when we were preparing to leave Kilbride Camp. Work parties were organised to clean the barracks and range, so that when we left it would be in the meticulous condition that we received it in. Following the handover of the barracks we checked and double-checked to ensure no equipment would be left behind.

The weekend was a success with all the required personal having the opportunity to fire their personal weapons. ■



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

## IUNVA Conference 2016

BY SEAN SHINNORS PHOTOS BY SGT MICK BURKE

**T**he 2016 IUNVA annual delegate conference was held in the Tullamore Court Hotel on 25th June. The guest speakers for this year's conference were Brig Gen Peter O'Halloran, ACOS (Sp), and Lt Col Ollie Barbour, Director PSS.

On arrival General O'Halloran was welcomed by IUNVA Chairman Eddie Robinson, and inspected a guard of honour of delegates under the command of Peter Philips of Post 9, Athlone. The general had a warm handshake for each member on parade, many of whom he recognised from their soldiering days.

Commencing his address he said: *"It is a huge honour to be invited here this afternoon, and a privilege to be among such a distinguished body of men and women who are united by a single criteria: all of you are veterans and each one of you has served your country in the cause of peace."*

Brig Gen O'Halloran went on to remember the Veterans Day last year in Cork, when the minister conveyed to him that he

was, "honoured to be present on the day and that he understood and felt part of the culture and comradery of the veterans."

He went on to say: *"Ireland has played its role in peace-keeping since it joined the UN in 1945, with 86 members of the Defence Forces having lost their lives in the service of peace."*

Speaking of IUNVA, the general said he was impressed to know that there were 21

posts and he went on to say: *"Serving soldiers in the Defence Forces are what you were, and you are what we will one day be - veterans. Our institutional interests therefore should be as one. It is important that IUNVA goes from*

*strength to strength each year; I do not just mean numbers, but the profile IUNVA now enjoys, and the high regard in which it is held throughout this country."*

He finished his address with an old Irish saying, *"Ní neart go*

*cur le chéile"* (There is no strength without unity), adding: "Thank you for looking after our veterans."

IUNVA's national president, Maj Gen Vincent Savino Retd, announced that the association is in discussions in relation to the construction of a national monument in honour of all those who served overseas, the location of which has yet to be decided. He wished the delegates and the association a good conference and looked forward to the year ahead.

Chairman Eddie Robinson congratulated the association on the excellent work accomplished in the past year and praised the hard work of the National Executive and the National Secretary, Jim Casey.

He said that it had not been an easy year and that there had been some difficulties but that these were overcome through the co-operation of the posts and the National Executive. He thanked Offaly County Council for the welcome that was afforded to the Association on the eve of conference and he also thanked Michael Thompson for the liaison work he did to get the conference underway in Tullamore.

Finally, he stressed that all delegates, posts and the National Executive needed to continue to work together for the future success of IUNVA.

Lt Col Ollie Barbour, Director PSS, spoke to the conference and stressed the importance of supporting those in need. He spoke on the difficult subject of self-harm and how it is increasingly prevalent in the 40-50 year age group and males over 60.

*"People need to talk to people,"* he said, *"and IUNVA meetings mean a lot to all serving and retired soldiers."* He emphasised how much the words 'keep in contact' meant to many people and had great praise for the work of the Friday Clubs and the efforts of the veterans organisations, in conjunction with the Defence Forces, in keeping them going. He concluded by thanking and praising IUNVA for the work it had done in supporting veterans and those in great need.

Among the many other items on the day's full agenda were reports from IUNVA's Secretary, Treasurer, Development Officer, and Welfare Officer.

An Cosantóir would like to thank IUNVA for the invitation to attend their ADC and we look forward to working with them in the years to come. ■



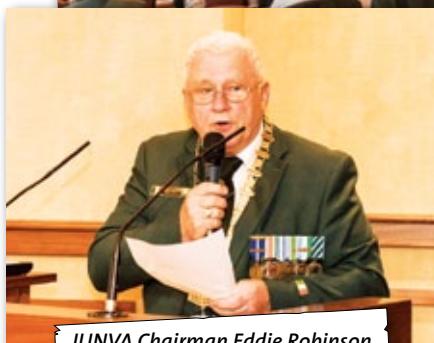
Brig Gen O'Halloran inspects a guard of honour of delegates



Brig Gen O'Halloran addresses congress



Congress delegates



IUNVA Chairman Eddie Robinson addresses congress

*strength to strength each year; I do not just mean numbers, but the profile IUNVA now enjoys, and the high regard in which it is held throughout this country."*

He finished his address with an old Irish saying, *"Ní neart go*

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# THE BRIGHT SIDE

REPORT & PHOTOS BY PARALYMPICS IRELAND



“

*When I woke up from the coma I found it very hard to find a bright side – but it didn’t stop me looking* ”

CQMS Seán Baldwin

**championships, and kicked off 2016 by taking part in the IPC Shooting World Cup which was held in the United Arab Emirates.**

On 4th July 2016, the Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Patrick O'Donovan T.D., announced the Irish Paralympic Team for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games that will take place from September 7th to 18th. The team of 44 athletes will compete across nine different sports at the games in Rio.

For thousands of sports lovers around the world, Seán Baldwin is truly living the dream. Not only is he passionate about his sport and dedicates hours of his days, weeks and months to it, but he also has had the honour of representing his country at numerous Para-Shooting World Cups and indeed, at the 2012 London Paralympic Games.

Now, with his hopes firmly set on representing Ireland at Rio 2016, the Kildare man talks to us about a life focused on targets – in more ways than one. For him, it's not just about shooting, it's not just about medals and it's not just about hard work and training. For him it's something more - it's 'More than sport'.

## Here's his story.

“I am in the military now almost 31 years,” the 48-year-old reflected. “Shooting is part of military skills and for a long time, I saw shooting as my job and not necessarily a sport. Soon after that, when I was about 34, I met my friend (and now coach) Ray Kane. He was giving a demonstration on Olympic Target Rifle Shooting and I fell in love with how technical it was and how precise everything has to be in order to shoot a perfect score.

“Then, Liam Crawford introduced me to

**S**éán Baldwin is a talented shooter who competed for Ireland at the London 2012 Paralympic Games and has won a slot for his country in shooting for the Rio Paralympic Games 2016. His performance in the 50m Rifle Prone at London was one of his best, where he scored a new personal best. Since London he has continued to compete in European and World championships, and kicked off 2016 by taking part in the IPC Shooting World Cup which was held in the United Arab Emirates.

Paralympics Ireland in 2011, approximately eight years after the day that changed everything for me – November 27th 2003, the day I became an above-the-knee amputee. I lost my leg while I was serving with the Irish Defence Forces and when I got to hospital after the accident, I remember being told lots of bad news – the first of this being they told me I only had a few hours to live! I'm still here though!

“After I woke up from an induced coma, I then realised how bad my injuries were - the most obvious of these was that I had lost my right leg from above the knee. When I realized what had happened to me, I found it very hard to find a bright side but that didn't stop me from looking. However, this was the day I remember lying in my bed and setting new goals for myself.

These goals were: To be able to sit up in bed by myself. To be able to get into, and use, a wheelchair; To get out of a wheelchair and use crutches to get about – which took about six months to accomplish; To walk – which took another two months; To get back to work, and to get into sports.

“It took me two years to be strong enough to take up shooting,” he continued. “Now, I have lots more goals. I set goals and reset them all the time and that's why 'More Than



*Sport' means a lot to me. It is more than sport and if I can inspire a generation or even just one person to take up a sport and become an elite athlete I have done my job.*

*"I often dreamed about representing my country. I took the sport seriously from the beginning, but it was years before I realised that I might be able to compete on an international level.*

*"I train extremely hard now for this and sometimes, I have a love/hate relationship with it. The days that aren't going well are the days I hate it, but I always get up the next morning and focus, smile and start again. I strive for perfection – and that's the part of the sport I love the most.*

*"Up to now, the stand out moment for me was the London Paralympic Games in 2012. With a lot of hard work, I got the opportunity to represent the people of Ireland as Ireland's first Paralympic Target Rifle Shooter at these Games.*

*"In order to get there though, you really need to believe in yourself. You need to be focused. You need to train hard to constantly improve skills and it takes a dedication and love for the sport. You need to be mentally and physically able, for as the saying goes 'a healthy mind is a healthy body'. Most importantly, you have to enjoy the whole experience."*

*"I have always had a competitive nature no matter what sport I was involved in. I wanted to be the best I can be. I never focus on negative criticism but I do listen to constructive criticism. My injuries are an obvious barrier but I don't focus on what I can't change. I try to find the correct balance between everything going on in my life, so for the moment, I'm focused on time management.*

*"Now, my preparations are on target and to schedule. It is hard to believe the preparations for Rio started five years ago. Training is going to plan, but there have been down sides which I had to work through, for example, my equipment malfunctioned more than three times this year while competing internationally, but I dealt with it and moved on.*

*"Looking back on my life to date, there are moments I would relive and moments I would like to go back and change. For example, East Timor in 1999 was a moment I would definitely relive. To be able to help and return families to their villages and loved ones,*



*when it seemed all hope was lost for them really defined my career as a soldier.*

*"It's humbling to represent your country in any sport and competition but to represent your country at the biggest event in your sport and to hopefully now do it twice is a dream come true.*

*"I would like to thank Pamela, my family and friends, my coach Ray and my manager Liam and all who follow and support me in my endeavours."*

**This article was previously published on [www.paralympics.ie](http://www.paralympics.ie) (4th July 2016), and is kindly republished with their permission. <http://bit.ly/seanbaldwin> ■**

**Paralympics Ireland: "Leading elite athletes with a disability to Paralympics Games success"**

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**#MORETHANSPORT**

# Charting a New Course

# LIFE AFTER THE DEFENCE FORCES

# Charting a New Course

BY CPO/ERA RUAIRÍ DE BARRA, FLEET OPERATIONAL READINESS, STANDARDS & TRAINING (FORST)

**T**he Defence Forces represents a unique career and lifestyle that presents great opportunities along with great challenges. The military ethos, with its strong bonds of friendship and camaraderie soaks into the fibre of everyone that passes through it. However, like all good things in life, it must come to an end at some point and this article explores how some retirees have found the transition to civilian life and what impact training and education has had on them.



**Educational opportunities and development:** From the days of the Army Apprentice School to today's Technical Trainee Scheme, vocational training has been providing the enlisted ranks with a wide variety of skills and trades.

Building on those traditions, current Defence Forces training and educational standards are at an all-time high. With determination and vision, diploma-level academic accreditation was achieved for the Potential NCO course. Accreditation represents a major advance and affords the opportunity for any serviceperson to eventually achieve a BA degree for the Senior NCO course (level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications).

These qualifications allow an NCO's skills to be easily recognised and understood by potential civilian employers as well as providing a foundation for further study.

**Exploration and exploitation:** Cdr Brian Fitzgerald was one of the driving forces behind this successful achievement. He has a passionate belief that NCOs' years of service and experience was going unrecognised and unrewarded. *"The Naval Service has to continue to encourage and enable its personnel to engage with personal development through further education opportunities," he says.*

*He emphasises the importance of individuals undergoing training being enabled for "exploration and exploitation of further education in order to self-actualise."*

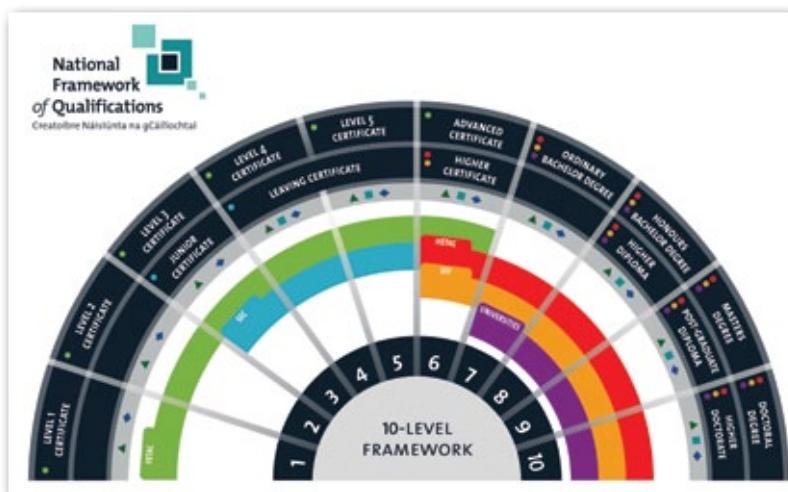
While all this education and training is very beneficial to the individual, it is also hugely beneficial to the organisation as a whole. Having highly-trained and competent people at all levels of the Defence Forces will enable the organisation to achieve even more in the future.



**Making the grade:** Eamon Dolan, who retired from the Naval Service in 2011 with 25 years' service and is now Training and Quality Manager with a logistics and mailing company, has just received an MA in Maritime Security from the University of Coventry. Eamon, who served five overseas tours of duty, had previously achieved a BA degree, with distinction, as a student on the first Senior NCO course to achieve accreditation. He has also been invited to attend an International Maritime Security Forum in Izmir in September and to submit a paper.



What advice would he give to those planning retirement or a change of occupation? *"I would say that preparation and planning are key components of any exit strategy. Envisage where you see yourself in the future and then consider what you need to achieve that. The main thing is to take responsibility and make it happen."*





**The spark of a salesman:** A key to achieving success can be finding an area that you have a real passion for. Andy Mackin, who retired as a PO/ER after 21 years' service, splits his time working between his offices in Ireland, England, Sweden and the USA.

Andy built on the solid technical background of his trade by studying Health and Safety with University College Cork and then Training and Education with NUI Maynooth and Galway. He now runs his own company, Mackin Consultancy Ltd. “*We are an integrated management solutions company helping all manner of businesses, including multinationals, to achieve certification in quality, health and safety, or environmental standards,*” Andy told me. “*Having business in four different countries presents challenges but my hope for the future is to continue to grow my business and see how far the journey takes me.*”

**The importance of planning:** A veteran I spoke to who is employed in the manufacturing industry offered this advice: “*Start looking for a job early and make full use of any jobs websites; different ones suit different skill levels, so look around.*”

On CVs and managing one’s expectations to secure employment, he advises: “*Tailor your CV to suit the job description. Remember, while a high level of training may be required it’s not always academic. I found looking for a technical job locally wasn’t going to happen, so my wife and I set down areas we were willing to move to for employment and, using the job-search websites, selected these areas.*”

**Having the right attitude:** While many employers have knowledge of the Defence Forces and what we do, there are many more that don’t. I spoke to Martin Gibbons, a successful businessman and former lieutenant in the Naval Service, about what he looks for in a potential employee. “*I have employed ex-DF staff, and I find their strengths are their ability to team play and to work within a disciplined structure towards each goal.*”

“*When looking at a CV, or during an interview, while I value academic qualifications, as they are an indicator of intelligence and discipline, real life experience is more important. And above all, I look for the crucial ingredient, the right attitude!*”

**Providing assistance:** PDFORRA is of the view that further education not only enables individuals to perform better in the workplace but also helps to improve their overall development, health and wellbeing. Gen Sec Gerry Rooney says: “*The accreditation system allows members who progress through the ranks to have their service both recognised and rewarded. This recognises that Defence Force Service has worth both internally and externally.*”



Education can be very expensive and is a huge factor with those who have seen wages substantially reduced while mortgages and other costs of living have risen. This narrows the options when it comes to investing in themselves. However, it is often the case that choosing the right course could make all the difference to substantial gains when the time comes to exit. To this end, Gerry Rooney would like to see the Department of Defence budget for external education increased. He says: “*All external educational courses should be open to all ranks and a larger budget would improve access. PDFORRA believes that loyal service in the Defence Forces should be developed and rewarded through access to personal and professional development.*”



**Slip and Proceed:** In writing this I have been struck by how many retirees still define themselves as Army/Navy/Air Corps, even after having left for many decades and having established entire new careers. That bond still exists. One retired tradesman, who has worked in Europe for many years since he retired from the Army after 22 years' service, told me: “*The biggest problem I found on leaving was the lack of comradeship. I know that we all complained about many things when we were serving, but it is often not until you leave that you understand the good points that the DF has and brings to our lives.*”

People join the DF for a variety of reasons and often stay for quite different reasons; gaining a different understanding of themselves within the organisation as their life circumstances change over time.

While it is incumbent on the individual to ensure that they are prepared to meet future challenges, it is also incumbent on the organisation that those who provide loyal service to the state are properly prepared for life after the Defence Forces.

The Army Apprentice School motto still rings true: “*Ní Obair in Aisce i*” ■

# The Magazine Fort Phoenix Park

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA PHOTOS BY MÍCHEÁL Ó DOIBHILÍN



**Recently An Cosantóir were given access to one of the Phoenix Park's most iconic military installations and is a well known post to many veterans that served with the Defence Forces.**

Located strategically on St. Thomas's Hill to the south-east of the Phoenix Park, the bastion fort and magazine were constructed in 1734 and built on the site of the former 'Phoenix Lodge.' The original star shaped structure built to designs by engineer John Corneille were constructed from brick and limestone.

*The main body of the fort is approximately two acres in area and is surrounded by a dry moat. Each corner is defended by a demi-bastion and the walls are 1.5metres (5ft) thick. The large barrel-vaulted brick magazine chambers themselves are approximately 270 square metres (2,900 sq. ft) in size and located to the north west of the main enclosure. These were serviced by overhead cranes and gantries – for moving powder kegs. A later triangular barracks and accommodation block was added on the south-side in 1801, to designs by Francis Johnson. Other sheds and outbuildings were added in the 20th century.*

The Magazine Fort was in use for almost 250 years and subject to two notable raids.

In 1916 members of Fianna Éireann launched an unsuccessful attack which was intended to signal the beginning of the Easter Rising. The second raid took place on 23rd December 1939 when members of the Irish Republican Army raided the installation for weapons and ammunition. However their haul of stolen equipment was recovered in the weeks that followed.

With the signing of the Anglo Irish Treaty the Magazine was handed over to the Irish Free State and continued in use until 1988 when it was signed over to the Office of Public Works (OPW).

Many members of the Irish Defence Forces were stationed within its walls at some point in their careers and now there is an opportunity to revisit this historical complex.

The Board has commenced a conservation and restoration project for this historical building and have opened up the complex for a number of limited guided tours. These will enable visitors to view the building and also to see the OPW conservation processes and techniques that will preserve the Magazine for future generations.

Admission to the Magazine Fort Tour is by ticket only. Tickets are available on a first come first served basis from the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre. Tours are available on Sundays and Fridays only until the end of October 2016. Tour Times are: 10.00am 12.00pm and 14.30pm. Further details are available on [www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie)



*'Casey, C., Dublin, the City within the Grand and Royal Canals and the Circular Road with the Phoenix Park (Yale University Press, 2005) ■*

# IRISH NAVY TO RETURN HISTORIC CREST TO MALTA

# IRISH NAVY TO RETURN HISTORIC CREST TO MALTA

BY CHRISTY PARKER

**A** historic naval crest that lay ignored at three Irish addresses for over 60 years is to be returned to Malta in a ceremony aboard the LÉ James Joyce next month. The occasion follows a strange coincidence by which the crest was passed to a Youghal man whose father had served at its original location.

The emblem represents the Maltese heritage site Fort St. Angelo, one of only two such forts categorised as 'stone frigates' by the British navy. It is one of two original crests made for the fort, the other being in private ownership. Fort St. Angelo, believed to be 1,000 years old, served as a British garrison from 1800 to 1979, during which time it was first classified as a *HMS Egmont* (1912) and later *HMS St Angelo* (1933). Malta regained the fort in 1979, with its upper part given to the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in 1998 and now on Malta's tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The crest, believed to have been made during or shortly before WWII was discovered in an antique drawer chest brought from England to south Tipperary by a returning Irish emigrant.

Made of solid bronze/brass casting and mounted on its original base, the item gathered dust in Tipperary for 20 years.

It was then picked up by Michael Faul a Youghal-based inspector of Fisheries. Michael Faul retained it in his garage for 25 years before passing it to David Cooley, a member of Cork County Council's outdoor staff, who collects memorabilia. David Cooley stored the crest for three years before asking his friend and local businessman Hugh Carson to research its history.



*Lt Cmdr Niall Manning accepting the crest from David Cooley on board LÉ James Joyce.*

By peculiar coincidence, Hugh Carson's father, also named Hugh had served as a British Navy warrant engineer at Fort St. Angelo and aboard the *HMS Chequers* during the Palestine crisis of 1948/49. Hugh Carson had the crest's authenticity assured by Fort Angelo Museum curator, Mathew Balzan.

David Cooley said he was keen to have the crest returned to its rightful owners at Fort St. Angelo, and through the recommendation of Lt Gary Delaney of the Irish Naval Service, it now resides aboard the LÉ James Joyce on its current migrant rescue mission in the Mediterranean.

When the ship berths at Valletta next month, for restoring rest and recuperation, Mr Colley will formally present the crest to Mr Balzan. The ceremony will form part of a reception for the Irish ambassador to which David Cooley, Michael Faul and Hugh Carson, along with their wives, have been invited. ■

# IRISH NAVY TO RETURN HISTORIC CREST TO MALTA

# TACEX

## *'Combined Effort'*

BY CPL LEE COYLE



**W**hile the Corps of Engineers continues to play a key role in the maintenance and upgrading of barracks and installations, their role in providing engineer support is very broad and includes mobility, counter mobility, survivability and general engineering.

The recently conducted TACEX 9 'Combined Effort', conducted over two weeks in June, was designed to put these roles to the test. It was also a chance to showcase new equipment, like the recently acquired High-Mobility Engineer Excavator (HME).

The exercise was carried out in the Glen of Imaal with 285 infantry, cavalry and engineer personnel, including 53 reservists, nine of whom are serving in the Engineer Corps.





## HME

The High Mobility Engineering Excavator (HME) is a centre-mounted, backhoe loader for use on rough terrain and unprepared roads. It is primarily used for excavating and earthmoving in support of mobility and survivability operations.

It is capable of self-deployment by road and the loader end is fitted with a manual quick hitch and hydraulic self-leveelling, which maintains shovel angle during loading. It is also fitted with an air system for tyre inflation.

Other military forces currently deploying the HME include the UK, Sweden, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, and the US, the latter of which operates over 800 of the vehicles. Attachments purchased with the vehicle include rock breaker, pole driver and torque wrench.

The Defence Forces has purchased the theatre entry model with STANAG Protection Level 3B. The cab is constructed of rolled-steel sections, backed by 9.5mm of armoured steel with additional floor and roof plates of 6.44 mm hard steel. The windows, or transparent armour, comprise 57mm-thick, laminated-glass panels. Driver safety is of high priority, with a blast attenuation seat and spall liner, and a belly plate of 10mm armour providing additional blast protection to the operator.

**Weight:** 16000kg.

**Top speed:** 88kph.

**Power:** Cummins 190hp engine.

Selectable all-wheel-drive system.

The main training objective was to deploy a hybrid engineer company organised along conventional lines and capable of performing a full spectrum of operations for a 96-hour period. This would benchmark their capabilities, training and equipment in a realistic, multi-role scenario, and give them the chance to practice providing support to an infantry/cavalry force in a defensive operation.

The engineers' main tasks were to assist with mobility, including erecting an infantry assault bridge and a medium girder bridge (MGB); counter-mobility, comprising route denial with wire obstacles, cratering and field fortifications; and survivability, through the erection and maintenance of a brigade water point, which provided clean drinking water from a river.

The construction of a HESCO bastion-type tactical command post on Cemetery Hill was another task undertaken by the engineers. This will remain as a legacy on Cemetery Hill and will be a welcome training aid for future exercises.

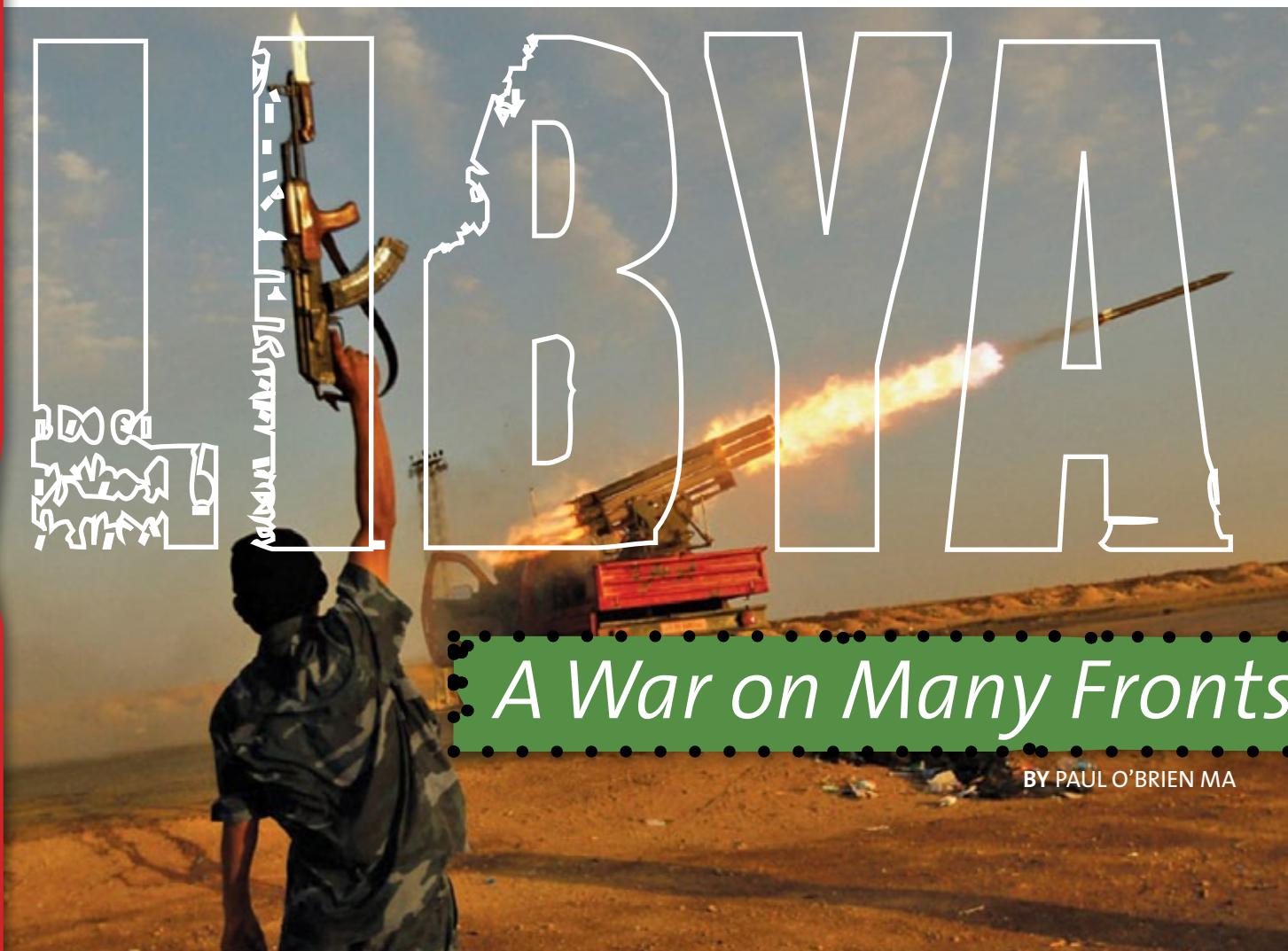
The 7 Inf Bn with an integrated RDF platoon provided most of the exercise troops. Apart from providing security for the engineers, the exercise troops were required to 'defend, deny and dominate' within their area of responsibility. This was achieved by the construction of entrenched defensive positions along Cemetery Hill and conducting various patrols and tasks throughout the exercise. ■



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BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA

**T**he name Muammar Qaddafi is inextricably linked with Libya. Having seized control of the country in 1969, Qaddafi's authoritarian dictatorship lasted more than 40 years before being overthrown in 2011. However, while one cruel chapter in Libya's history was ending, another one, just as brutal, was about to begin.

Covering 1.8 million sq kms, Libya is the fourth-largest country in Africa and has a population of just over six million. Located in the Maghreb region of North Africa, the country is bordered by the Mediterranean to the north, Egypt to the east, Sudan to the southeast, Algeria and Tunisia to the west, and Chad and Niger to the south. The capital, Tripoli, with a population of one million, is located in the west, while Benghazi, the second largest city, is situated in the east.

Libya was an early centre for Christianity until the fall of the Roman Empire, which left the country susceptible to invasion. A long period of colonisation by Arab settlers was followed with wars and occupation by Spain and the Ottoman Empire. In the early 20th century the country was colonised by Italy and was an important, strategic area of operations during World War Two. In the aftermath of the war, Italy lost control of the country and Libya became an independent kingdom in 1951.

In 1969, a military coup ousted King Idris I, bringing Colonel Muammar Qaddafi to power. Qaddafi shut down American and British military bases in the country before demanding a bigger

cut of oil revenues from foreign oil companies operating in oil-rich Libya. He also expelled foreign nationals and Libyans who he believed were a threat to his regime. Libyan intelligence agents also travelled throughout the world, intimidating and assassinating dissident Libyans living in exile.

Initially Qaddafi did not seek outside support but eventually began to open negotiations with the USSR. As the Cold War was steadily escalating at this time, Qaddafi's approaches to America's adversary resulted in the US and its allies imposing sanctions.

Qaddafi's increasingly eccentric behaviour manifested itself in increasing oppression and ruthlessness. He executed any person or group that threatened his regime and he also financed various groups throughout the world, many of them terrorist organisations.

A US airstrike in 1986, ordered after an explosion at a Berlin disco frequented by US servicemen, failed to kill Qaddafi. In 1992 the UN imposed sanctions as a result of investigations into Libya's links to the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, in which 270 people died, and UTA Flight 772 over Niger, which killed 170 people.

The Arab Spring movement that deposed the rulers of Tunisia and Egypt paved the way for an uprising in Libya that began on 17th February 2011. The revolt soon developed into a civil war that spread rapidly throughout the country, leaving thousands dead and a country in chaos. The uprising resulted in an international



intervention against Qaddafi's forces after they were accused of violating international law. US forces played a pivotal role in this campaign, with B-2 stealth bombers and other aircraft striking 3,000 targets in 14,202 strike sorties. Tripoli was targeted,

with buildings and streets reduced to rubble as 2,000lb bombs exploded, creating apocalyptic scenes of devastation.

On the ground, rebel fighters, with NATO air support, fought their way into Tripoli, occupying Green Square by 22nd August 2011. Street battles continued within the citadel for the next two months. In October, the final battles of the uprising were fought in the streets of Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte where the dictator was finally captured and subsequently executed. This short civil war cost the lives of 30,000 Libyans.

As with many similar conflicts, the outcome was not to everyone's satisfaction and a number of rival armed militias with tribal affiliations (often linked to particular cities and regions) have all tried to fill the power vacuum created in the aftermath of Qaddafi's death.

In 2012 an election resulted in the General National Congress being tasked with the formation of an interim government and the drafting of a new constitution. Attacks against the government, as well as international interests in the country, weakened the elected government, resulting in more elections and governments that were short lived.

In 2014, another election was marred by violence and a low turnout left the country in turmoil. The UN supported further meetings among the various rival groups and on going peace negotiations in 2015 in an attempt to bring stability to the region.

The country is currently divided between east and west, with two groups vying for power. In order to ship its oil, one group must seek the other's permission to access ports in order to ship its produce. Delays or refusal may result in a backlog that can lead to an international energy crisis.

Libya has Africa's largest oil reserves and before Qaddafi was ousted was producing 1.6 million barrels of crude oil per day.

Today, due to the divisions within the country, oil production has been reduced significantly with only 400,000 barrels being pumped daily.

With rival parliaments and a country on the brink of further conflict, tribal militias and jihadist groups have been monitoring the situation. In 2014 and 2015, ISIS seized the cities of Derna and Sirte, giving them a firm foothold in the region. This dangerous development has not gone unnoticed by the West nor for that matter by Libya's neighbours, who have carried out bombing raids against ISIS-held positions.

Lacking a functioning government for the last five years, the country has rapidly deteriorated. In recent months, UN intervention has created a new Unity Government, that on paper looks good, but only time will tell if the two political sides can reach a compromise and regain control of the country and end the ongoing crisis.

It also looks like an international coalition force may be needed to wrest back control of areas taken by insurgents, but Western governments are reluctant to 'put boots on the ground'. The first course of action will be to provide advisers to train a Libyan army to secure the country and protect its population.

The threat of ISIS and the migration crisis from Libya is of great concern to European leaders and must be addressed as a matter of urgency. All of North Africa hangs in the balance; the lack of stability in the region enables insurgent groups to exploit and take control of large areas. Oil and precious elements are extracted and used to finance an ever-increasing insurgency that is beginning to spread out from Libya and threatens the disintegration of the whole region as the world watches on. ■





# EXERCISE Combined Effort

REPORT & PHOTOS BY CQMS MIKE  
BARRETT (RDF), E COY, 7 INF BN

**E**xercise 'Combined Effort', the annual Corps of Engineers exercise took place in the Glen of Imaal from 19th to 23rd June 2016. My unit, 7 Inf Bn, was to provide an infantry company to participate in a defensive phase of the exercise. Under the command of Comdt David Foley, 7 Inf Bn provided a company HQ, a company logistics point, and three infantry platoons, two composed from the battalion's PDF companies and one from the RDF companies.

The company departed Cathal Brugha Bks and deployed straight onto the training ground on arrival in the Glen of Imaal, with the three platoons siting and digging trenches near Cemetery Hill.

*Moving out to the dig in area*

I was attached to the Coy Logs Point, which set up its own location, dropping our stores container, erecting our admin tent, parking our trucks and covering everything with camouflage nets. Then we began a busy schedule of deliveries of water, reserve blank ammo, picks, shovels, radio batteries, and rations, to Coy HQ and the front line trenches. We returned with rubbish bags and other used ordnance items for disposal.

For these deliveries the logs staff had the use of Gator all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), the

first time these excellent vehicles were used by 7 Inf Bn on an exercise, and they proved ideal in moving stores over the rough, muddy, and bumpy ground of the Glen that we are all so familiar with! Gators were also seen being used by the engineers during the exercise, and could be pressed into service in the role of casualty evacuation if required.

The exercise continued for 72 hours, and at all times was tactical, with all participants camo'd up and carrying full weapons and equipment.

The weather was generally warm and humid for the duration of the exercise, with the resident 'mozzies' and other insects making sure they were acquainted with everyone on the ground.

Before dusk, as the enemy made nocturnal probes, night vision equipment and illumination flares were issued and used by the dug-in platoons.

The enemy's final assault took place on the last morning of the exercise and 'EndEx' came on Thursday 23rd, with all 7 Inf Bn personnel returning to barracks to clean equipment and weapons.

From my RDF point of view, exercises like Combined Effort show the single-force concept in action.

While our role is still modest, we hope to build on this, and this exercise showed us the amount of planning and preparation that goes into such endeavours.

Our continued participation in such exercises will give us the chance to play on the same team as our PDF colleagues. ■

*Siting weapons*



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- George Bernard Shaw

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# Managing Responses to Critical Incidents

## GRO 03/14 CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT.

How the Defence Forces support staff members after a critical incident is very important. Early and appropriate intervention can help reduce the effects of stress and minimise the possibility of further problems developing later. Interventions at the initial stage should be simple, pragmatic, local and informal. Our primary focus should be on providing care and minimising further stress. Several types of interventions may be conducted depending upon the circumstances of a particular incident. Intervention may be on an individual one-on-one basis or, ideally, in small groups. The following types of interventions, singularly or in combination, are the most common. However in the event of a critical incident or potentially traumatic event, commanders at all levels should ensure that one of the following interventions is provided:

### a. Pre-Incident Education or Pre-Crisis Preparation

Pre-Incident education regarding stress, stress recognition and stress reduction strategies is an essential part of the crisis support process. Educational programmes for line and command staff also include information on critical incident stress debriefings, how to contact a team, and on-scene considerations. Programmes should be provided for recruits, refresher training, and overseas personnel. Programmes for spouses and significant others may also include stress recognition and management.

### b. On-Scene Support Services

Types of service for staff consultations, prolonged or large-scale incidents:

- (1) One-on-one sessions with personnel exhibiting signs of obvious distress.
- (2) Consultation with the Officer in Charge or the scene commander.

### c. Demobilisation or De-escalation

Used during or following a large-scale incident as units are released from the scene to determine if all personnel are accounted for, to make announcements, etc. A Defence Forces CISM Team member or an experienced peer takes 10 to 15 minutes to provide information about the signs and symptoms of stress reactions that may occur. The unit may be released from duty or return to the barracks or camp. The incident commander may require that all personnel go through a demobilization session before they are released from the scene.

### d. Crisis Management Briefing (CMB)

Crisis Management Briefing (CMB) is a practical four (4) phase group crisis intervention. CMB may be used in a wide variety of situations. The four (4) phases include the following:

- (1) Assemble the group in an appropriate venue such as a meeting room or auditorium depending on the size of the group.
- (2) A credible source or authority explains the facts of the crisis event.
- (3) A credible crisis support resource discusses the most common reactions relevant to the particular crisis event.
- (4) Personal coping and self care strategies are addressed that may be of value and provide access to community and organisational resources.

### e. Defusing

A small group session conducted shortly after the incident, usually within 3-4 hours. It provides information about the incident and general information and advice on stress reactions. In some circumstances, a defusing may involve a more in-depth discussion of participant's feelings and reactions. It requires two (2) CISM support team members. A defusing may eliminate the need for a formal debriefing.



## Danger

Critical incidents might be closer than you think

### f. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

Ideally it is conducted within one (1) to ten days of the incident. It is a confidential, non-evaluative discussion of the involvement, thoughts, reactions and feelings resulting from the incident. It also includes education regarding possible stress related symptoms and coping strategies.

### g. Individual Crisis Intervention

One-on-one intervention for concerns related to the incident. It may be conducted by a mental health professional or a CISM peer team member. Providing on-going counselling is not a function of the Defence Forces CISM crisis support team. However, team clinicians may be used for referrals.

### h. Significant Other Support/ Family CISM

Includes the following services: educational programmes for significant others, debriefings for significant others, bereavement support, grief and crisis counselling, and family support.

### i. Follow-up Referral

Follow-up Referral is conducted following individual consults, defusings, debriefings, demobilisations, and significant other support in the weeks or months after an incident. It may include phone calls or personal follow-up. It is concerned with the detection of delayed or prolonged stress syndrome. It may also be used to evaluate debriefing services offered.

Visit the DF IKON site for the full version of GRO 03/14 Critical Incident Stress Management.



# EXERCISE 'Strongbow'



BY COMDT EAMON CAHILL, OC B COY, 3 INF BN

**M**embers of 3 Inf Bn deployed to Great Island Power Station, Rosslare Europort, Waterford Airport and Bellview Seaport from 17th - 18th May 2016 as part of a co-ordinated major emergency exercise. Exercise 'Strongbow' was conducted in conjunction with An Garda Síochána and the various vital installation authorities to assess operational readiness and to maintain and develop capabilities across all emergency responders.

DF planning for the exercise commenced in March 2016 and was designed to test the 3 Inf Bn response plan in the event of an increased threat to national security.

The exercise company consisted of a mobile company HQ, located at Ballinaboola GAA grounds and Waterford Institute of Technology sports grounds over the two-day

deployment. The HQ was supplemented with two recce detachments, one sniper pair, one mUAV detachment, a ground radar surveillance detachment, three Naval Service Reserve RHIBS and a cavalry CRV troop, to provide an all-arms military response capability. Three infantry platoons were deployed on a daily basis, in a range of soft-skin vehicles and APCs, to various vital





installations in order to test the unit's response and sustainability plans.

Members of the mechanised infantry company were exercised in a range of likely events, from public protest right up to the use of deadly force. In addition a CBRN decontamination unit participated within the serials, so all military exercise personnel could experience its function, and civilian staff at the various installations could also view this capability.

In addition, specialist equipment such as the mUAV, Foxtrack radar station, and the surveillance suite of the CRV greatly impressed all the non-military participants.

Exercise 'Strongbow' highlighted to 3 Inf Bn the requirement to continually evaluate and adapt our reaction plans in order to improve operational readiness. Internally, this exercise was an ideal opportunity to improve inter-company and inter-corps familiarisation when deployed in crisis management operations. This deployment was hugely positive for 3 Inf Bn and offered a real-life exercise environment for the unit, enhancing our preparation and training for crisis management operations.

The success of this exercise has allowed a platform for the DF and An Garda Síochána to discuss capabilities, roles and responsibilities, thereby improving inter-agency co-operation and understanding. Co-operation from all external stakeholders was very forthcoming for the exercise, which greatly helped to simulate realistic conditions for a major emergency within our area of responsibility. It has highlighted the requirement to maintain ongoing liaison with members of An Garda Síochána and continue to develop this hugely positive relationship, working together to improve jointness and interoperability. ■



## Vox Pops



### SGT TOMMY WELDON

*"This exercise gave me the chance to act as a CQMS in a high-tempo environment, and sustaining over 150 personnel on the ground was certainly an exciting challenge."*



### SGT TONY O'MALLEY

*"As directing staff we made every effort to make this exercise as realistic as possible in a crisis management setting, and we have built up a hugely positive relationship with members of An Garda Síochána in the region."*



### CPL JOHN RICKARD

*"I was a section commander with the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). We were tasked with responding to any emergency or escalating situation. It was a great opportunity to refine the skills we would require in a real situation."*



### PTE EVAN POWER

*"It was great to work side by side with An Garda Síochána in vehicle searches at Rosslare Port and Waterford Port. Our team learned a lot from the exercise."*



### CPL MARTIN KILLEEN

*"As the CBRN instructor I operated the decontamination unit. It was an excellent test of our drills to cater for over 150 military personnel. The exercise also allowed us to plan for decontaminating civilians in a chemical environment."*

# Diving Into History

## THE HELGA & THE AUD

BY CQMS MICK DUFFY, 7 INF BN

**T**he state's 1916 commemorations this year were co-ordinated by the Ireland 2016 Team in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, where Comdt Stephen MacEoin and Sgt Andrew Lawlor had responsibility for co-ordinating the Defence Forces' input.

Most of the events have been high profile but there have been a number of smaller, less publicised events; one such was run by the Defence Forces Diving Group.

During a conversation in the DFTC Transport Yard duty room in January, the subject of Sir Roger Casement's gun running ship, the *Aud*, came up. The duty fitter, Tpr Thomas 'Dock' O'Doherty, told the others how the DFDG had been to the wreck site on numerous occasions. One of the lads asked if Dock knew what had happened to the *Helga*, the gunboat that had shelled Dublin from the Liffey. He didn't, so they turned to Google. Moments later they had learned that she had sank off Kilmore Quay in County Wexford. This set Dock wondering why the group hadn't dived this wreck before. Target aquired!

At the group's next AGM Dock suggested commemorative dives on the two wrecks. Everyone agreed the dives should take place close to the Rising's anniversary, but with everyone predicting they would be living in their SD #1s we couldn't see how we could manage it.

Coy Sgt Kenneth Murphy wasn't going to give up easily and started researching. The next time we met he had co-ordinates, tides, depths and, most importantly, two dates that didn't seem to clash with anything: 20th April for the *Aud* (the anniversary of her arrival into Tralee Bay) and 27th April for the *Helga*, (the anniversary of her shelling Dublin). The 1916 Team were informed of our plans and it was made official.

We applied to the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for a license to dive on what are in effect national monuments, and with the license granted we continued our research.

The *Aud* began life as the SS *Castro*, a cargo ship built in 1907 for the Wilson Line of Hull, England. Captured by the German Navy in the Kiel Canal in 1914 and renamed *SMS Libau*, she remained virtually unused until 1916 when Sir Roger Casement went to Germany to try to secure aid for the planned rebellion. The Germans offered a shipment of 20,000 captured Russian rifles, 10 machine guns, explosives, and a million rounds of ammunition.

The *Libau* was chosen to smuggle the arms as she was similar to a Norwegian freighter named the *Aud*, which carried lumber from Norway to various European ports.



*The Aud-Norge*

*The Aud*

Camouflaged as the *Aud* and with the weapons hidden under a cargo of lumber, she set sail from Lubeck on 9th April under the command of Capt Karl Spindler, taking a circuitous route to avoid the Royal Navy's 10th Cruiser Squadron in the North Sea and inshore auxillaries in Ireland, both of which were expecting some sort of arms smuggling operation.

The *Aud*, with no radio, was unaware that plans had changed after she left and arrived at Tralee Bay on 20th April, whereas the Irish Volunteers weren't expecting her until the 23rd.

When the *Aud* attracted the attention of *HMT Setter*, an armed trawler, Capt Spindler allowed his vessel to be boarded for a routine search but nothing was found. Later, trying to run to sea the *Aud* was intercepted by *HMS Zinnia* and *HMS Bluebell* and escorted towards Cork harbour for a detailed search.

Approximately 3kms off the coast at Crosshaven the *Aud* stopped. *HMS Bluebell* observed a plume of white smoke coming from her stern hold and two German naval ensigns and a flag of surrender being hoisted. Capt Spindler and his crew, now wearing German naval uniforms, climbed into two lifeboats and rowed away. Explosives in the *Aud*'s hull detonated, sending her to the bottom within minutes.

Later depth charged to destroy its cargo and wire swept to ensure it wouldn't become a hazard for fishing trawlers, her flattened remains lie in 33m of water.

The *Helga II* was built in the Liffey Dockyard in 1908 as a fishery protection cruiser for the Department of Agriculture. Taken

# HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

over by the Admiralty in March 1915, she became the *HMY Helga* (the 'I' was dropped), an armed steam yacht serving as an anti-submarine patrol vessel as well as undertaking escort duty in the Irish Sea. In April 1918 she sank a submarine off the Isle of Man and was awarded a star on her funnel for this achievement.

In October 1918 *RMS Leinster* was torpedoed off the Kish and 600 lives were lost. The *Helga*, fuelling in Dun Laoghaire at the time, managed to rescue 90 passengers.

However, it was for her shelling of Dublin in April 1916, mainly Liberty Hall, that she is best known. Most of the shells aimed at Liberty Hall missed, due, it is suggested, to firing at an extremely high trajectory in order to avoid hitting the Loopline railway bridge. While the *Helga*'s shelling caused limited destruction it played a significant role in the psychological battle of the Rising.

She was later used to transport Black and Tans around the coast when many of the roads were rendered impassable by Irish forces in the War of Independence.

The *Helga* was handed over to the Irish Free State in August 1923 and renamed *Muirchú* (Hound of the Sea); the only ship in the state's newly established Coastal and Marine Service.

In the following year she was returned to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to carry on her task of fishery protection. The Coastwatching Service took over *Muirchú* on 12th December 1939.

In July 1942 this became the Marine Service, which in 1946 was incorporated into the new Naval Service. The following year the *Muirchú* was sold to Hammond Lane Foundry, and while on passage to Dublin on 8th May 1947 she sank off the Saltee Islands, but not before her entire crew got off safely. She now lies at a depth of 48m. Having been wire swept, all that remains of her is a boiler and some large sheets of metal.

On Tuesday 19th April (recce day) two boats arrived at HM Yachts Crosshaven and quickly prepared for launching. Following a detailed briefing by Coy Sgt Kenneth Murphy the boats left the marina and headed south. With good sea conditions the boats were on site quite quickly where a quick sonar scan located the familiar wreck of the *Aud*. The shot line was dropped to mark the location and kitting up began.

At 33m the dive was a dark one but torches cut through the darkness to reveal the ammunition-strewn bottom and large sheets of metal. A few short minutes of ferreting around and it was time to ascend along the shotline. The recce had been a success and the shot would be left on the wreck for the night to speed things up for the next day when the main party arrived for the main dive. With the kit stowed we departed for Collins Bks to refill cylinders and get some sleep.

The following day three boats and 12 divers were ready to go in warm, bright sun. Leaving the marina we could see that conditions were less than favourable and our cox'n's rough-weather handling skills would be put to the test. The trip out to the site was arduous but when we arrived the breeze died down and presented us with a chance to dive. However, the buoy marking the wreck was gone! (A fair bit of "Who tied the buoy to the line?" banter followed!)

Another sonar search allowed us to place the spare shot on the wreck. When the divers reached the bottom the visibility was even worse than the previous day with torches penetrating less than 1m into the gloom.

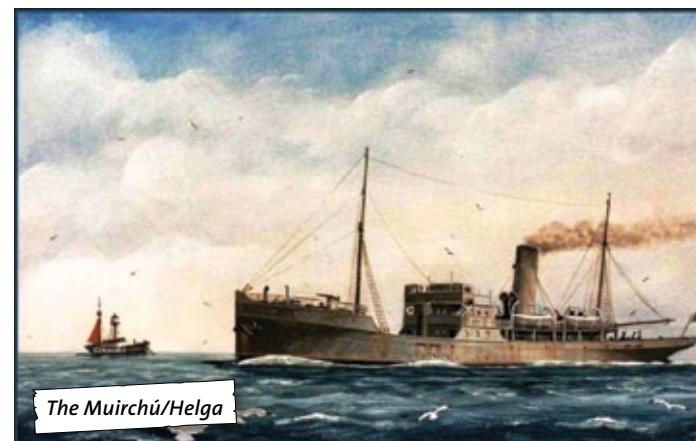
On returning to the surface the general opinion was that the recce dive had been by far the better experience.

A week later the group was back in action, heading to Kilmore Quay in Wexford. This time the recce was even more important as was the group's first dive at this site. Not only had we never dived the *Muirchú/Helga* but we didn't know anyone who had. We had co-ordinates for the wreck from charts and shipwreck websites, but no two sets of co-ordinates were the same. Once the two boats had been launched and the brief had been given, we departed for the dive site, approximately 13kms away.

The shot was dropped on the most likely spot and we put two very experienced extended-range divers into the water. It was supposed to be slack water but the current was so strong that the shot was being dragged at quite a rate. This may have seemed



*The Helga*



*The Muirchú/Helga*



*The Aud*

# HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

# DEFENCE FORCES DIVING

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS BY ARMN ADAM MURPHY AND DFDG

**T**he Defence Forces Diving Group (DFDG) recently conducted a beginners' diving course, which provides participants with the technical information and practical skills required for scuba diving. The course is run through the DFAA and is open to all DF members. Students are registered with Comhairle Fó-Thuinn (CFT) the national federation representing Irish divers, also known as the Irish Underwater Council, which is affiliated with Confederation Mondiale des Activités Sub-aquatiques (CMAS).

The first part of the course was conducted in the DF Physical Education and Sports swimming pool over four days. Entry requirements for the course, a zoom freestyle swim, 50m backstroke, and a submerged 30-second breath hold, were completed before the students embarked on a series of lectures, pool snorkels, pool scuba training, hand signals, and CPR. The lectures provided students with the theoretical knowledge of diving, including dive physics, effects of pressure, diving equipment, and buoyancy.



DFDG Aud Divers. Standing: BSM John Green, Coy Sgt David Browne, Cpl Killian Byrne, Comdt Ruairí O'Brien, Coy Sgt Kenneth Murphy, Tpr Tom Doherty, Sgt Diarmuid Scannell, Sgt Graham Burke and Sgt Mark Lane. Kneeling: CQMS Mick Duffy, Cpl Darren Rogers and COMS Ken Sheridan.



like a failure but as they say "Time spent on a recce is time well spent" and it gave us an idea of what the bottom was like; no rocks or weeds, just flat sand.

Once the divers were out of the water, the shot was recovered and we returned to the harbour, where we spotted the friendly face of Ivan Donoghue, a local diving instructor from Wexford Sub Aqua Club. After a catch-up chat and a quick tour of their club stores we explained what we were up to and the problems we had encountered. He told us that the area had no less than seven slack water periods in a tidal cycle. This information was pure gold. You can't beat local knowledge!

The following morning our three boats and 12 divers had a bit of an audience, including Elaine Walsh a local reporter and media writer who wrote an article on our efforts, (<http://visitkilmorequay.com/1916-commemorations/>).

Ammo at the Aud site



After the brief we left the harbour for the dive site. With such contradictory information on her whereabouts all we could do was trawl along slowly, watching the sonar screen. In metres, it read '50, 50, 50, 46, 46, 50, 50, 50'; and there she was. Turn around and back over: '50, 50, 50, 46...' "Drop the shot!"...46, 50, 50, 50'. It was like a scene from *The Hunt for Red October*. The other two boats referred to it as luck, but those on our boat know it was skill!

With extended range divers Comdt Ruairí O'Brien, Coy Sgt Murphy and CQMS Ken Sheridan, and the safety divers in the water it was confirmed that we were on target, which led the way for the other dive pairs to proceed for a successful dive. ■

Preparing to recover divers



DFDG Helga Divers. Comdt Ruairí O'Brien, CQMS Ken Sheridan, Sgt Mark Lane, BSM John Green, Coy Sgt David Browne, Sgt Graham Burke, Tpr Tom Doherty, Cpl Killian Byrne, Coy Sgt Kenneth Murphy and Cpl Darren Rogers and CQMS Mick Duffy.



# SPORT



Pool snorkelling gave the student the basic skills for scuba diving, including an introduction to basic equipment, finning techniques, mask and snorkel clearing, and methods of water entry.

Practical scuba training followed, consisting of a number of practical skills, drills and exercises, including assembly/disassembly of equipment, buoyancy control, buddy breathing techniques, lost mouthpiece retrieval, and an out-of-air exercise.

The students then moved to Bere Island, where the DFDG were on their annual camp, to complete part two of the course, spending the next eight days conducting open-water training. All the skills learned in the pool were put to the test, building the students' confidence while they faced progressively harder and deeper snorkels and scuba dives. Over the period they logged a minimum of 10 open-water scuba dives to a maximum depth of 10m.

Successful students received a trainee diver certificate and also have a chance to do further courses, like Diver First Responder or Diver Coxswain.

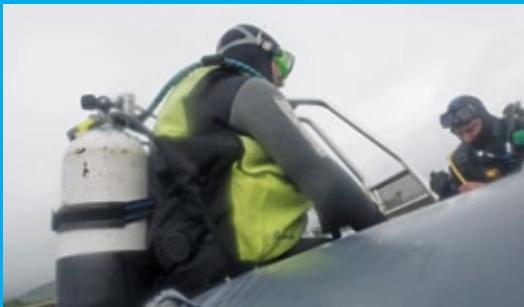
One-to-one tuition from very experienced instructors put the students at ease and created an informal and friendly learning environment. The instructors donated a lot of their free time to running a seamless, successful course.

The DFDG has been active for over 40 years and their annual camp gives beginners and trainee divers the opportunity to complete trainee, club, and continuation diver courses, as well as conducting crossover training for divers from other diving organisations.

The DFDG is one of the few groups accredited by the National Powerboat School of Ireland for coxswain training.

The group conducts numerous boat insertions and extractions for DF courses and exercises every year, as well as providing surface support on a number of searches.

Being a member of the group calls for and enhances skills that are valued throughout the Defence Forces: planning, preparation, teamwork, leadership, mentoring and instructing. If you have any of these traits and would like to join the group or get more information you can find out more on our IKON page. ■



## Vox Pops

### PTE KEVIN O'NEILL, 1 INF BN (STUDENT)

*"I already do kayaking and surfing, so I had a natural interest in scuba diving. I heard about the course through a friend who is an instructor in the DFDG. I found the course physically very tough. It pushed me to my limits but gave me a real, satisfying feeling."*

### LT SHANE FLOOD, 3 INF BN (STUDENT)

*"I first got an interest in scuba diving while on holidays where I did my first dive. Then I learned that the DF had a diving group and applied for this course. It was very well run and the diving group are a great bunch of lads that really work well together. I'd recommend this course to anyone."*

### CPL BEN BRENNAN, 401 SQN, 4 SP WING (STUDENT)

*"I completed PADI Open Water and Advanced Open Water courses abroad on holidays and joined the DFDG so I could do more diving. There is a big difference diving in Ireland compared to where I dived before; the water here is much colder and the visibility is much less. This makes it a lot more challenging. This course is very thorough compared to courses I've done outside the DF. The standards are excellent, the instructors are highly skilled, and the student's benefit from one-on-one tuition you won't receive outside."*

### GNR PATRICK J HURLEY, 1 BDE ARTY REGT (INSTRUCTOR)

*"I have been diving for over 20 years and have been instructing on DFDG courses for the last 5 years. We have a good mix of students on the course. They are fast learners and seem to be switched on, which makes it more enjoyable for them. Bere Island is the perfect location for diving and I look after camp admin here for 1 Bde Art Regt."*

# The Beaufort Cup

BY COMDT BARRY BYRNE PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE

**O**n 15th January 2016, I was called to attend a meeting in Carrigaline with Minister for Defence Simon Coveney, Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, and key personnel from the Royal Cork and Kinsale yacht clubs. The group, headed by Kieran O'Connell, chair of Volvo Cork Week 2016, had come together to plan a new sailing event, the Beaufort Cup, named in honour of Sir Francis Beaufort, creator of the Beaufort wind force scale.

The goal was to assemble 10 yachts, with military or emergency service crews, to compete in a multi-race event for Cork Week. Many present felt that given just six months we would be doing well to recruit three boats to constitute a class. However, one of the first teams to commit to the event was from the Royal Engineers, and I will be forever grateful to them for the momentum they gave us at such a formative stage of the cup's development, and by the time of the event we had 12 top-class teams compet-



ing for the inaugural Waterford Crystal Beaufort Cup.

Assembling and training a Defence Forces team from scratch and sourcing the necessary boats was our first challenge, but through the generosity of John Maybury (*Joker 2*), Tom Roche (*Meridian*) and Dan Buckley (*Justus*), we secured three competition boats. Our contingent increased to four when we were joined by *Another Adventure*, an A35 skippered for the event by Stefan Hyde. *Joker 2*, the national champion J109, would provide our main effort at winning the cup and I must thank our fantastic bowman, Flt Sgt Adrian Mulligan, for helping to secure its use.

Next came the team trials to select our four competition crews. That meant fitness, sailing, sea survival and medical training to ensure all boats and their crews complied with the same Cat 3 regulations that govern the annual Fastnet Race.

We schooled the beginners on our team in sail and race training with the help of the Irish National Sailing & Powerboat School

(INSS), while the Joker crew were put through their paces in manoeuvres with the help of professional coach Maurice 'Prof' O'Connell. Simon Johnson kindly assisted in training up our pit and bow team, and my brother, Bryan Byrne, also came along to share some knowledge.

As the event drew closer, it dawned on me that our newly assembled team was going to the home of yacht racing in Ireland, and the oldest yacht club in the world, to compete for a major trophy and €10,000 prize money (for a charity of one's choosing) while facing competition in our class from both national and international champions.

Applying military principles, we got *Joker 2* to Cork early and spent three days going through every single element of the boat, stem to stern, keel to windex. We replaced ropes, end-to-ended halyards, scrubbed, dehumidified, welded – you name it, we did it, and if I'd quoted 'Mr America's Cup' Dennis Conner's book *No*

*Excuse to Lose* to my crew one more time, I think they would have killed me!

We also had a hugely important rig settings technical session with Mark Mansfield, which was to prove invaluable as I wanted no ambiguity about what setting we were on for what wind condition, and I would work closely with my sole designated rig adjustor on this. We brought military principles to our sailing, too, with well-rehearsed SOPs and clear communications that stood to us throughout the week.

On the morning of the first day's racing, 11 July, the sound of scuba bubbles popping as crewmember Lt Wietse Buwalda scrubbed the hull provided the soundtrack as I observed our navigator reviewing the laminated, underlined and highlighted sailing instructions. I felt we had done everything we could to prepare for the first day – a daunting 24-hour race around Fastnet Rock.

I have been offshore racing for 20 years and can honestly say that the short Fastnet run of the Beaufort Cup is one of the most enjoyable I have ever raced. It is the perfect length, stunningly scenic and hugely tactical, with tidal and wind influences to test the very best and has the potential to be one of the great lures for international teams in future years.



At twilight, after ten hours of racing, eight boats rounded Fastnet right beside one another. It was spectacular – or as Prof would say, 'tremendous'.

Winning that race possibly came down to a single decision by our navigator, Comdt Ian Travers, to gybe out of Glandore Bay when becalmed. That said, I believe two factors came into play. One, our crew had a hot meal of high-energy army ration packs inside us at one in the morning when we made that manoeuvre, so the crew was firing on all cylinders: the gybes were good and kite peels went seamlessly. Secondly, our navigator had run seven weather routing predictions, all but one of which told him to go offshore on the way back, so he knew what he was doing even if I didn't.

We were awarded the impressive Sans Souci Cup at that evening's gala dinner in the Naval Base on Haulbowline. Honourable mention must go to the Royal Engineers, who were unluckily becalmed but, in the true spirit of military grit and determination, hung in to finish seven hours behind us, within two minutes of the deadline, and then, with no rest, donned their mess dress uniforms to be the life and soul of the party that night.

This was only the beginning of the Beaufort Cup. The next day saw tighter, inshore racing, where we produced two firsts and a second, with a solid performance from everyone on the team.

Thursday was the harbour race and, as luck would have it, we

dropped our course card over the side six minutes before the start. In the commotion, we ended up dead last on the start. But I have to say, what followed was one of the most tense but most enjoyable races of my life, as our navigator, Capt Mick Liddy, who had replaced Comdt Travers after the offshore, and tactician, Peter Bayly, picked clear lanes through the fleet and had us in the right air the entire way as we sailed from almost last to first place ahead of every other J109.

That race, which was to become the last of the event due to fog on the final day, confirmed everything I have always believed about yacht racing: put a team around you that you trust, and then trust them; let them do their job. I had one policy for the event in general: watch the tell-tales, keep the boat moving fast, and turn the wheel as little as possible. I trusted the team to do everything else.

At the prize giving I announced that, while the majority of our winnings would go to Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, as a mark of respect to the fantastic competition provided by the RNLI crew on True Penance (there were only seconds between us in most races) we would donate €1,000 to the RNLI.



Defence Forces COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM presenting the Beaufort Cup to Comdt Barry Byrne and the crew of Joker 2.

Commenting on our victory, Commodore of the Defence Forces Sailing Club, Col Peter Richardson, said: *"I believe the Beaufort Cup can, and will, grow to be the top services regatta in the world, attracting hundreds of international competitors, strengthening international and national bonds, and showcasing the fantastic sailing grounds that Cork has to offer."*

*"Every military recognises the benefits of offshore sailing for leadership and teambuilding; there are no places to hide on a boat in bad weather. As an island nation, we must embrace this resource."*

I would like to thank the entire Defence Forces team for their efforts in our Beaufort Cup challenge; Kieran O'Connell and the Volvo Cork Week race office for a great event; our sponsors Axiom Private Clients, Spanish Point Technologies, Helly Hansen and CH Marine; and everyone in the DoD and DF who helped make it happen.

Currently, teams from France, Italy, Spain and the US have already committed to the Beaufort Cup in 2018, and the Defence Forces will be there to defend it.

The crew of the Joker 2 comprised Comdt Barry Byrne, Lt Marcus Ryan, Peter Bayly, Capt Michael Liddy, Brian Phelan, Armn Gary Phelan, Sgt Patrick McGrath, Lt Wietse Buwalda, Flt Sgt Adrian Mulligan, and Comdt Ian Travers. ■

Application Deadline: 5th October.

Entry Forms available on: [military.ie](http://military.ie), [dfmagazine.ie](http://dfmagazine.ie) & IKON

Race Numbers Available from - 1100hrs.

Times: Blocks at 1200hrs and Teams/Runners/Walkers at 1330hrs

More info Ph: 045 44 5312/5308.



**AN COSANTÓIR**

*12th October  
Phoenix Park  
Time - 11.00am  
Fee - €10*

**2016 10k**



## **Tpr Bob Farrell Memorial Swim**

**Combined 50Km Swim**  
DFPES Swimming Pool, DFTC, Curragh  
Wednesday 14th, September 2016  
From 8.30am - 4pm



**Memorial Dry-Flo T-Shirts are available @ €15each**  
All proceeds will go to help fund the Organisation of National  
Ex-Service Personnel's (O.N.E.) Homes around Ireland.  
(Limited Places Available)



**Optional  
5Km Walk**

For further information please contact Paul Clarke 087-2565161, [paulclarke@gmail.com](mailto:paulclarke@gmail.com), Stephen Doyle 087-6444497, [stephendoyle02@gmail.com](mailto:stephendoyle02@gmail.com) - Kindly sponsored by: A.R.M.S. Limited, Paradigm, Lockwize and O.N.E.

# GEAR UP



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The Kestrel 5500 is built on the new 5 Series Kestrel platform. Users familiar with the Kestrel 4500 will be instantly comfortable with the similar menu operation, while welcoming the large high-contrast display, dual-color backlight, thicker window, sturdier battery door, Lithium AA battery and improved Portable Vane Mount. The Kestrel 4500 has been the trusted companion of Special Forces

Weather personnel, storm chasers, hunters, scientists and more for over 15 years, and the 5500 is advancing that legacy with its many improvements.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES:** Dual-color backlight (white and night vision-preserving red), Large, high resolution, high contrast, sunlight readable display, Environmental data log with user-settable storage intervals and graphical view of history/trends, Intuitive user-friendly design, Tough, scratch resistant window, Corrosion resistant battery compartment with heavy-duty door, IP67 Waterproof, MIL-STD-810G Drop Resistant, Floats and Powered by 1 AA Lithium Battery.



**Salomon XA Pro 3D Mid Forces Boots**  
Brown - €165



**Power Duo Multi-Tool**  
- €50



**Arc'teryx Konseal Jacket** - €100



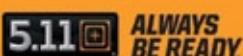
**5.11 Rush 72 Backpack OD Green** - €129.95



**Otis 9MM Pistol Cleaning System**  
- €40



**Streamlight Sidewinder Rescue Flashlight** - €90



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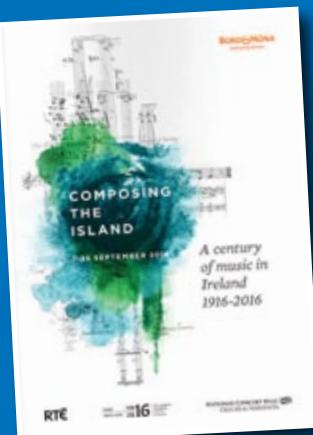
**For a chance to win 5.11 ATAC Pluv Tactical Flashlight, kindly sponsored by [www.team-alpha.ie](http://www.team-alpha.ie), answer the following question:**

**How much is the Arc'teryx Big A SS T-Shirt on [team-alpha.ie](http://team-alpha.ie)?**

Send your answer along with your name, address & contact number to An Cosantóir's address or by email to [subs@military.ie](mailto:subs@military.ie) by the 19th September 2016. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn. Last month's winner was: Ronan McGoldrick



# NOTICEBOARD



## DFSM PLAY THE NATIONAL CONCERT HALL

The Defence Forces School of Music (DFSM) is honoured to be invited to perform a lunchtime concert on Saturday 10th September 2016 as part of a retrospective series of Irish music since the foundation of the Irish state. A composite band will perform music composed for wind band by Ireland's foremost composers including former directors of the DFSM.

*Composing the Island: A century of music in Ireland 1916-2016* will be on for three weeks in September from the 7th to the 25th. *Composing the Island* will present 29

concerts of orchestral, choral, instrumental, song and chamber music by Irish composers written between 1916 and 2016. Tickets priced €5 and €10 are now available from the National Concert Hall. [www.nch.ie](http://www.nch.ie)

## BUTTON-FIX COMPETITION RESULT

**The winners of the 5 sets of Button-Fix Competition are:** Robert Taylor, Thomas Salmon, Paul Cullen, Nessan Heaslip and Alan Breen – Congratulations and we look forward to their reviews soon.

To purchase a standard packet of four button-fix costs only €5.00 (£3.97) in black or white check out [www.button-fix.org](http://www.button-fix.org) or visit them on [www.facebook.com/Button-fix-761272247336294/](http://www.facebook.com/Button-fix-761272247336294/)



## 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.

## Naval Service Fleet

Q	B	M	M	S	W	H	R	B	F	K	Z	K	T	J
E	C	Y	O	J	A	X	W	Q	O	X	Z	S	T	E
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EITHNE  
AISLING  
NIAMH  
ROISIN  
SAMUEL  
BECKETT  
JAMES  
JOYCE  
ORLA  
CIARA



## COMPETITION €50 VOUCHER

### Q. HOW MUCH IS A KIDS FLIGHT JACKET ON [WWW.PROTAC.IE](http://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.

Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Robert Gilbey.  
Closing date is 19th September 2016.

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## THE HALES BROTHERS & THE IRISH REVOLUTION

**Author:** Liz Gillis

**Publisher:** Mercier Press (July 2016)

[www.mercierpress.ie](http://www.mercierpress.ie)

**ISBN:** 978-1781173756

**Price:** €15.99

**Pages:** 256

*The Hales Brothers & The Irish Revolution* is the latest work from renowned historian and author Liz Gillis. It tells the story of the Hales family from Bandon in Co Cork, in particular the brothers Seán and Tom Hales and charts their involvement in Ireland's struggle for independence from the Rising of 1916 through the War of Independence and then the subsequent Civil War.

Tom and Seán orchestrated and participated in a number of attacks against British Forces throughout the region. They were closely connected and respected by their superiors that included well known republicans such as Michael Collins, Liam Deasy and Tom Barry.

The Hales family as a whole suffered greatly at the hands of Crown Forces in Ireland having their house destroyed, suffering imprisonment and torture and being constantly on the run for a number of years.

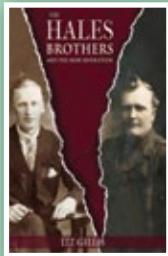
Gillis captures the brother's involvement in the War of Independence very well, bringing this period in history to life. However, it is the chapters on the Civil War where the author excels.

When the Anglo Irish Treaty was signed in 1921, Seán supported the new Provisional Government while his brother Tom became a senior commander in the anti-Treaty forces and was involved in the ambush that led to the death of Michael Collins. John L. O' Sullivan recalled the shock that Seán felt on hearing the news of Collins death.

*"Together they had been interned in Frongoch for a number of months after the 1916 Rising and were always extremely close."*

In the aftermath of this tragic event the war escalated considerably and the brutality of that period is well captured within the pages that follow.

Rather than a history book Gillis has written a great true story, not just about the Hales family, but a story that has similarities for every family that took part in Ireland's struggle for Independence and the Civil War that followed. It brings home the tragedy that affected all those families and the losses they suffered at the hands of former comrades in arms. This is an excellent read and highly recommended. PC



## THE SHARP END: The Fighting Man in WWII

**Author:** John Ellis

**Publisher:** Scribners; 1st edition (1980)

[www.scribnerbooks.com](http://www.scribnerbooks.com)

**ISBN:** 978-0684167282

**Price:** Varies

**Pages:** 396

Mud, Blood, Terror and Tea. Some of the major components of the front line fighting man of the second world war. This outstanding book published in 1980 is a fascinating look

at the last truly global conflict from the perspective of those who had to fight and die in it.

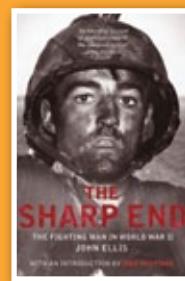
It examines both the human story and the data from the period, it documents the trials, tribulations and often harrowing experiences from both the accounts of individual servicemen but also from notable works of studies and other published sources such as memories etc.

It is vast in its scope and you get a sense that the author wanted to ensure that the true face of war would be exposed. His writing might stand a testimony to what the human spirit can endure even under stresses and extremes of danger beyond imagining.

With so much information presented in such an engrossing read there are too many highlights, one feature throughout the book is the way in which the author was able to condense the figures to extract the key numbers of the fighting forces, the ratio of forward to rear echelon forces was huge and the disparity in losses was immense, the "sharp end" went forward again and again.

The misery of the troops at the front brought them to the brink of physical and mental collapse, this could happen not only to the single rifleman but entire divisions or even armies could succumb to miserable weather and poor rations which when they appeared where often in insufficient quantity's and inedible.

As a study of the effects of war on the combat troop this book is outstanding. Dismantling of some of the myths surrounding both the second world war and its exposure of the realities of combat it is both educational and emotive. RdB



## THE TRAINING GROUND

As World War II rages in Europe a young Irish woman is blackmailed into espionage by her own country

**Author:** Angela Currie

**Publisher:** CreateSpace Independent Publishing (26 September 2015)

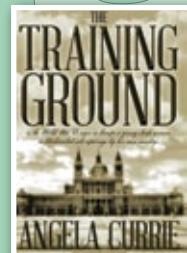
[www.createspace.com](http://www.createspace.com)

**ISBN:** 978-1512357714

**Price:** €15.88

**Pages:** 452

"World war II rages in Europe and two British agents have lost their lives while trying to retrieve armaments plans from the German embassy in Madrid. British Intelligence realises that a completely new and unexpected approach is needed. They approach G2 (Irish Military Intelligence) with a daring proposal. Anna Fingal is a gifted linguist who works for the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin. She is blackmailed by her own country into aiding the Allied war effort. Seamus Halpin works for G2 and will accompany Anna on the mission. He has personal reasons for wanting to return to Madrid, to a city that continues to haunt him. Malcolm Mortimer works for British Intelligence. Initially sceptical about the use of Irish agents, his opinion changes as the mission progresses. His remit is to lead the mission and to succeed at any cost. These three diverse individuals become bound together in a world of espionage and deceit where survival and success for the mission is the ultimate goal. 'Angela Currie spins fictional gold as she delves into the dark shadows of espionage during World War II. Officially neutral Ireland supplies secret agents in Spain for the Allied war effort, but those who risk their lives must face enemies both at home and abroad. A wonderful debut novel.' **Brendan Foley** – 'Under the Wire'



## NAME

NOEL MCDONNELL

## RANK

PRIVATE (BARBER)

## UNIT

HQ COY, 7 INF BN

BY CPL LEE COYLE

PHOTOS BY CPL COLIN DELANY

Before I joined the Defence Forces I was living in East Wall, in Dublin, and working in Dublin's dockyard. My brother had served in the DF in the early 1980s and had travelled overseas, which I thought was really cool and something I'd really like to do. I enlisted on January 12th 1988 with 27 Recruit Platoon, 27 Inf Bn, in Aiken Bks, Dundalk.

After training I was posted to A Coy, 2 Inf Bn, in Cathal Brugha Bks. I had a real interest in fitness and

in 1989 I got involved in pentathlon. I competed with the 2 Inf Bn pentathlon team in the Eastern Command and All-Army competitions, which we won, and I also got on the DF team. I travelled to the CISM World Championships in Germany, where we placed well in the tournament, competing against some of the fittest athletes in the world.

Soon after, I travelled overseas with 68 Inf Bn, UNIFIL, from October 1990 to April 1991, my first and only time overseas, which I enjoyed.

When I returned I got straight back in training with the pentathlon team, and returned to Germany a few times to do some training camps during the early '90s.

I also got involved with the DF CISM shooting team at the same time, and from 1990 to 1999 I competed in various events, from European to World championships, and in the Military Olympics in 1995, held in Rome.

I completed a sniper course and a circuit and weights training course during this time, which helped me in my training for the pentathlon. I also completed four gymnastics courses and became a member of the E Comd gymnastics display team, with which I travelled throughout the country performing for DF units, schools and community fairs.

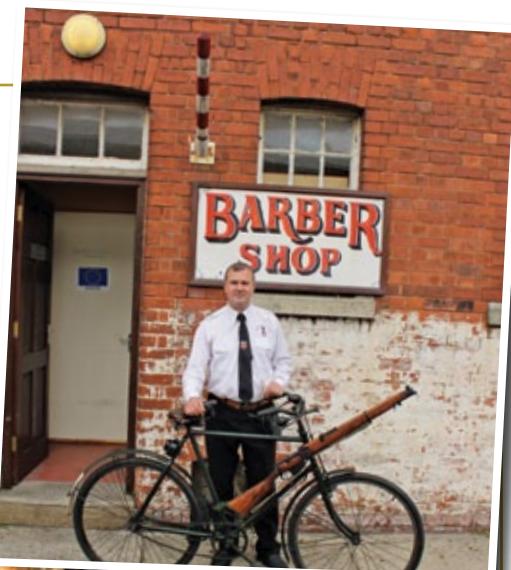
I also took part in the DF track-and-field competitions, competing in a number of events like the long jump, high jump, and sprints, to name a few.

Altogether I represented the DF on 10 international trips, three of them with the CISM shooting team and seven with the military pentathlon team.

In 2000 I went to Crumlin College for a three-year evening course to study barbershop and business techniques. A year into my course a barber vacancy came up in Cathal Brugha Bks, which was the perfect opportunity for me to get barbering experience for my course.

The job gave me the opportunity to hear stories from some of the 'old sweats' about the building I

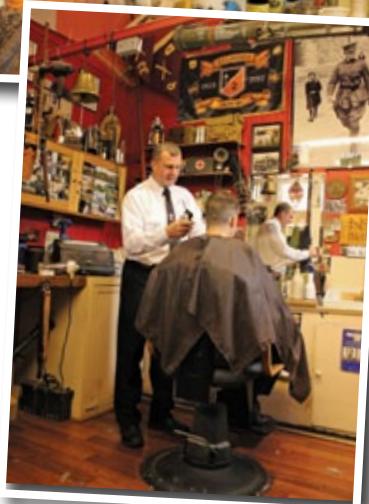
was working in. I started looking at the history of Cathal Brugha Bks and was impressed by Alphonse Culliton's photo



of Michael Collins that was taken in the barracks. I found the exact spot where it was taken and decided to do something to mark the place, and organised a memorial stone, which was funded by the barracks welfare committee. The memorial was unveiled by the then COS, Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle and Helen Collins, grand-niece of Michael Collins.

I have recently been appointed as barracks historian by OC Cathal Brugha Bks, which includes looking after visitors to the barracks museum and visitor centre, located in the old guardroom. I also provide tours around the barracks, which last about one to two hours and takes in the barbershop, museum and Collins' house (now the DF School of Music HQ).

The latest project I've been working on is a bell that was removed from a bell tower in the barracks years ago. The bell, dated 1809, a year before construction of the barracks, will be placed inside a stainless steel monument that will represent the spear of the 2 Bde flash, and will be placed close to where the bell originally hung. ■





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