



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR

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DEC 2015 / JAN 2016

**FIBUA
TRAINING IN
FORT DAVIS**

**EXERCISE
ARDUOUS
SERPENT**

THE NINTH SHIP
50-YEARS OF THE NAVAL DIVING SECTION

ISSN 0010-9460



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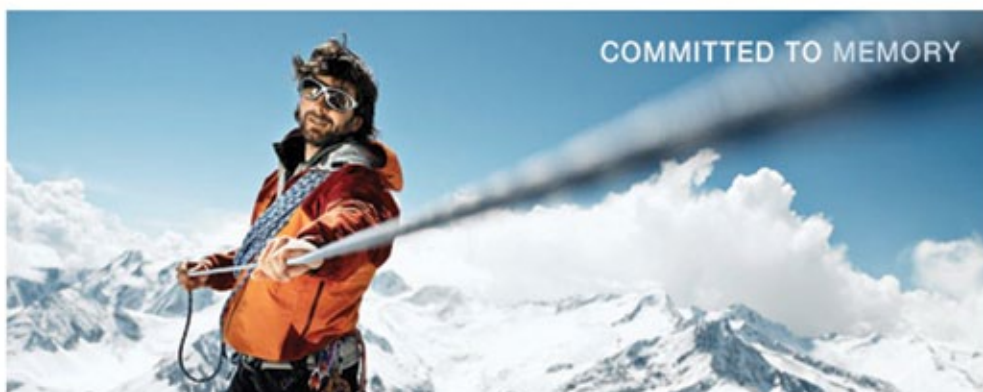
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Front Cover

Pictured is a member from the Naval Service Diving Section courtesy of CPO Martin Buckley Retd.

For more Defence Forces photographs, checkout:
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Editorial

Hello and welcome to our December/January double issue, it's crammed full of stories to get you over the festive season, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued readership on the anniversary of our 75th volume.

There's plenty to see *On Parade* this month, keep those photos coming. Our first *In Focus* piece is on the *50th Anniversary Celebrations of the 40th Cadet Class (1965/67)*, next we look at *Uniting Irish Veterans Globally* with irishveterans.org. *Veteran's News* features 3 short pieces on the 55th Anniversary of the Niemba Ambush Remembrance, held in Cathal Brugha Bks, the RBL Annual Remembrance Day Commemorations in Enniskillen and the Irish Defence Forces Veterans UK at the Commonwealth Graves in Seaford East-Sussex.

Our first feature *UN 60 from Congo to the Middle East, Celebrating 60 years of Irish peacekeeping* is by Lar Joye, Curator Art & Industrial Division, at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Bks. Next in *Helping the Helpers*, the Irish Emergency Logistics Team is training Ireland's latest NGO volunteers. In *Combined Weapons Shoot*, Compl TACA, 1 Cn Cois turns out in force in the Glen of Imaal. In *FIBUA Training in Fort Davis*, see how the 91st Cadet Class and their exercise troops got on down south. In *Strategic Review Planning Without Resources is Dreaming!* Lt Col Gerard Buckley writes about Military Finance Branch's primary role.

Our centre spread features the British Army's annual medical services tactical training exercise *Arduous Serpent*. Next we have 2 short features from overseas; first we have *EOD Training with UNIFIL* and the *Engineer Corps deployed to UNDOF*. On page 28 we have more snippets from around the DF. In *History*, we look at the recent book *The Ninth Ship* by CPO Martin Buckley Retd on the 50th Anniversary of the Naval Diving Section. We have 2 more extra history pieces; first GOC AC Brig Gen Paul Fry reviews Irish Aces of the RFC and RAF in the First World War and then in *April in the Valley of Total*, Coy Sgt Harry Mulhern Retd writes about his experience with the 49 Inf Bn Lebanon. In *Sport*, Aptc Daniel O'Brien is back and this time it's *Adventure Kayaking in Norway*. We also have more sport with the 2 *Bde Adventure Race 2015* and a *Sports Round Up* by Sgt Rena Kennedy. Plus we have all our other regular reviews and *What I Do* feature. **Check out our competitions and results on pages 26, 38 and 39.**

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor

Orders are now being taken for:

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The image shows the cover of the 2016 An Cosantóir Diary. It is a black A5 diary with gold-colored text and logos. The cover features the 'Óglaigh na hÉireann' (Irish Defence Forces) logo, a starburst with '€10', and the text 'DIALLANN 2016'. At the bottom, it says 'AN COSANTÓIR' and 'dfmagazine.ie'.

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AIME FOR CHARITY ▲

Recently the Association of Irish Military Enthusiasts (AIME) presented a cheque for €2,000 to St Francis Hospice, Raheny. This was the proceeds from their Salute! 2015 show. The show took place in August at the National Show Centre, Swords. Pictured L/R: Sean Curtis (Chairman), Eileen Curtis (Treasurer), Katrina Buchanan (St Francis Hospice), and Chris Mitchell (Secretary & PRO). *Photo: Chris Mitchell PRO AIME*



IRISH JUDO MASTERS

The Irish Judo Masters Open Championships were held on 10th October 2015. Pictured is Sgmn Martin Leonard (Blue) who won gold over 40s + 100kgs along with recently retired Sgt Paul McConville (5 & 27 Inf Bn) who also won Gold and Silver at the championships. Both Martin and Paul have been involved with the DF Judo team for many years. Paul is enjoying Judo now almost full time and has been competing successfully both at home and abroad. *Photo: Martin Leonard, DFHQ CIS Coy*



ONE LA NA BHFIANN ▲

ONE Lower Ormonde Branch, Nenagh held their mass for deceased members on Sunday 4th October 2015. Special guests were Billy O'Brien Chairman/President SAC, Mr Noel Coonan TD, Councillor Jer Darcy and ONE Director Martin Casey. A wreath laying ceremony took place before the mass. *Photo: Martin Casey PRO/SAC*



DEFENCE FORCES CRICKET TEAM ▲

Pictured is the Defence Forces Cricket Team who were the trophy winners against An Garda Síochána Cricket Team recently in the Phoenix Park. *Photo: Lt Col Shahzad Ahmad, SMO 2 Bde*



ROYAL MEATH BRANCH OF ONE ▲

Pictured in Cathal Brugha Bks along with the Sliabh na mBan Rolls Royce armoured car are members of the Royal Meath Branch of ONE. L/R: Conor Swords (Chairman), John Tobin, Dom Wallace, John O'Bryan, Cathal Rogers, Peter Rogers, Robby O'Bryan and Alan Laird. *Photo by Bridget Quinn, ONE*



70 YEARS OF PEACE IN EUROPE ▲

On 27th October 2015, a Coin to Celebrate 70th Years of Peace in Europe was launched in the Officer Mess, Cathal Brugha Bks. Among the guests was former President of Ireland, Prof Mary McAleese who is pictured with Col Brendan McAndrew, Sabine Deopito (key account Manager, Austrian Mint) and Michael Guilfoyle, the designer of the Coin. *Photo by: Pte Dave Hogarty*



UNITED NATIONS DAY 2015

For UN Day 2015 in Sydney, Pat Armstrong of Belfast laid a wreath on behalf of the United Irish Ex-Services Association of Australia, and the Royal Ulster Rifles along with Myles Mooney, of the legendary Irish Drovers band, representing Ireland and the 34 Inf Bn Irish Defence Forces. Photo: Ves Campion, Impact AV Australia



NO 10 PLATOON AAS REUNION

On 26th September 2015, No 10 Platoon Army Apprentice School held a reunion to mark their 50th Anniversary of enlistment in Devoy Bks, Naas from 1965 to 1968. Photo by: Martin Rowe Photography



MONSIGNOR EOIN THYNNE

Pictured are IUNVA Post 1 members who made a presentation to Monsignor Eoin Thynne, to mark his retirement as Head Chaplain of the Defence Forces in Arbour House, on 11th September 2015. Also present was Noel Cullen Secretary RBL with Maj Gen David O'Morchoe (retd) CB CBE, President of the RBL in Ireland. Photo: George Kerwin, IUNVA PRO



REMEMBRANCE SERVICE MULLINGAR

Pictured are members of the Westmeath Civil Defence, Westmeath Fire Service, Mullingar Branch ONE, Post 20 IUNVA and PDF/RDF personal from 2 Arty Regt, Athlone and members of C Coy (Mullingar), 6 Inf Bn Res who attended a Remembrance Service on 8th November in Mullingar. Photo: BQMS Ger O'Connor RDF



20TH ODC LTAV COURSE

Pictured are students and instructors of the 20th Operator Drivers Course, which was held in Custume Bks, Athlone recently. B Coy, 6 Inf Bn were tasked with training DF members in the driving and operation of the infantry standard variant of the RG 32 LTAV. Photo: Pte Aiden Sherlock, 6 Inf Bn



MILITARY HISTORY TRIP

Pictured at the Valkenswaard Cemetery & Irish Graves are members of the Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women (ONE) and friends who travelled to Holland and Belgium for a GTI Military History WW2 'Band of Brothers' tour. The group visited many European battle locations including the Somme, Flanders, Bastogne and a look at Waterloo monument during October. Photo by: John Whelan

40TH CADET CLASS (1965/67)

50th Anniversary Celebrations

BY LT COL MAURICE KEALY RETD - CLASS SECRETARY
PHOTOS BY CPL LEE COYLE, PR BRANCH

On 26th October 1965 the young men who would form the 40th Cadet Class arrived at the Cadet School in the Curragh to commence their two years of training. Fifty years later, on Tuesday 20th October 2015, twenty three of the twenty six members who were commissioned gathered in the Military College for a celebratory lunch and a nostalgic visit to the Cadet School.

Our class has held many reunions throughout our service, since 2002 we have met annually. In 2007, when most of us had retired, we decided to meet each October near our enlistment date, for two days mid-week in a hotel with a nearby golf facility. The event is arranged annually by the secretary and local classmates.

At last year's event we decided to mark our 50th anniversary in a special way: lunch in the Mil Col and make a significant presentation to the Cadet Sch. Classmates Cols Don O'Keeffe and Mark O'Brien got working with me at an early stage. The Mil Col and Cadet Sch were most receptive and accommodating. Two well researched proposals for a presentation were advanced - one by Lt Col Ray Twomey and Comdt Michael Heery. The class, however, accepted by a narrow margin Don's proposal to have a wood turning replica of the Cadet Sch collar badge commissioned, and he supervised the project to its end.

Our guests at the splendidly presented lunch in the Mil Col Officers Mess included Mary Earley, wife of classmate Lt Gen Dermot Earley DSM former Chief of Staff, who died in June 2010, accompanied by her son Comdt Dermot Earley, and Maureen Dolan, wife of Sean Dolan who was accompanied by his brother Tom. Sean, who died in August 2007, left during his first cadet year, but had maintained contact throughout his life. Also included were Col Howard Berney Commandant of the Mil Col, Lt Col Tom O'Callaghan Commandant of the Cadet Sch, and three of our class's former training officers Brig Gen Frank Colclough, Lt Col Colm Madigan and Comdt Tom McCormack. Two classmates, Comdts Joe Lynch, through ill health, and Noel Langan, due to a family bereavement, were unable to attend. The toast to the class and guests was performed by classmate Maj Gen Pat O'Sullivan.

At the Cadet Sch we were shown an accommodation passage and then joined the newly arrived 92nd Cadet Class, of three weeks, in Pearse Hall. A powerpoint presentation of photographs showing the class's time there was made by Lt Col Cormac Lalor followed by Don making the presentation on our behalf to Lt Col Tom O'Callaghan. In accepting the presentation the Commandant referred to the values of class esprit and comradeship exemplified by the 40th and suggested to the 92nd class that in fifty years time they, too, might return for a similar celebration. We received a briefing on the current cadet training plan and a display of modern weapons and equipment was laid out for all to view. Our visit continued in the Cadets Mess for coffee where our presenta-

Front Row L/R: Michael Heery, Dermot Murphy, Dermot Earley Jnr, Tom Dolan, Pat O'Sullivan, Mary Earley, Maureen Dolan, Mark O'Brien & Maurice Kealy. Middle Row L/R: Jack Burke, Paddy O'Brien, Enda Breslin, Tom Croke, John Byrne, Michael O'Dwyer, Ray Twomey, Niall Daly, Eddie O'Brien, Cormac Lalor, Owen O'Sullivan, Don O'Keeffe, Brian Wickham & Brian Hickey. Back Row L/R: Bernard Goulding, Frank Slattery, Andy O'Keeffe & Michael Stapleton.



Col Don O'Keeffe presents the Collar Badge Replica Shield to Cadet School Commandant Lt Col Tom O'Callaghan. The shield is two feet in diameter. (Produced by wood turner Herve de Wergifosse and wood sculptor Eoghan O'Sullivan www.wergiwood.com). Two translations of "Ga Gasced..." are offered from our research: 'What deed of valour shall I do today' and 'What weapons will we use today'.

tion was mounted on the dining room wall. Outside the main door facing the garden the class was photographed as it had been for its pre-commissioning photograph. Our sincere thanks goes to the Cadet Sch staff for their warm welcome and superb effort.

As the reunion continued the next day the golfers played in the Royal Curragh GC, and the non-golfers visited the Curragh Museum and National Stud. At our dinner that night Mark O'Brien performed the toast to the class and we're already looking forward to next year in Athlone. ■



92nd Class Naval Cadet Diarmuid Monaghan with Lt Col Maurice Kealy (Retd) viewing the accommodation passage.



The presentation shield mounted in the Cadet School Mess Dining Room.

UNITING IRISH VETERANS GLOBALLY

BY DECLAN HUGHES

The idea for Irish Veterans grew out of the identification of Irishmen who lost their lives serving in the Vietnam War and the 1999 visit to Ireland of a replica of 'The Wall', the US memorial that honours those who died in that conflict while serving with the US military.

A year or two later, several Irish veterans from the US military, who had met up during The Wall's visit, got together and decided to leave some form of lasting legacy: thus Irish Veterans was born. The organisation's first board included Irish veterans who had served in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and other conflict zones.

The aims of Irish Veterans are to:

- conduct historical research into the involvement of all Irish men and women who served in military and ancillary forces in all countries;
- establish a memorial, museum, research and exhibition centre to display the information gathered and to serve as a gathering-point and educational venue for veterans from the Irish Diaspora;
- establish and administer a global association;
- gather and collate information and documentation from all available sources to provide an information base for researchers, students and members of the public.

Irish Veterans is non-sectarian, non-denominational and has no political affiliations. Our aim is to unite all who identify themselves as Irish and who are military veterans, or who are interested in our shared history. We want to use Irish Veterans as a force for reconciliation and to emphasize shared military experiences. We do not seek to glorify war, but to remember and relate the Irish experience of conflict. There exists a huge national blind-spot in Irish history regarding the Irish contribution to modern conflict. We must be brave enough to address historical reality, not hide from it. We need to hear these stories to better understand ourselves.

Headed up jointly by myself and James Sikora, an Irishman who saw active service in the US military, Irish Veterans is a registered charity that aims to research and recognise the stories and contributions of Irish men and women and their descendants and anyone claiming Irish identity who served in the military at home

or abroad.

Irish Veterans hopes to establish a permanent memorial and research exhibition centre in Kinsale, and we are actively seeking members. A Christmas or New Year present of membership would make an ideal and unique gift, as it includes a beautiful, hand-made 'membership card' in the form of an Irish Veterans plaque, crafted in the Wild Goose Studio, Kinsale.

The first chapter of Irish Veterans was commissioned in Kinsale in April 2015, and named in honour of US Navy SEAL Lt Michael Murphy, who was awarded the Medal of Honour for his actions in Afghanistan in which he lost his life. Michael's parents and wider family, who all hail from the Cork region, attended the event, and were joined by US Ambassador Kevin O'Malley, the US Defence Attaché, representatives of the New York Fire Department, and a cast of hundreds, to honour Michael's courage and heroism. Chapters #2 and #3 are currently being formed in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

This is a veteran's organisation with a difference, as our members are part of a global group of people who strongly identify with serving in the military, and having Irish roots. This is about connecting the Irish veterans still amongst us and honouring those who are not. James and I are appealing to people across the world with Irish connections to become involved in this unique project as a way to connect with their peers and to honour those who have gone before. Enlisting in the project couldn't be easier; simply visit www.irishveterans.org and sign up or visit us on Facebook or Twitter. ■



Pictured at the commissioning of Irish Veterans Chapter 001 in Kinsale, was left James Sikora (from Rosscarbery, who spent 8-years in the US Army Infantry) and Capt Duncan Smith (US Navy SEAL officer).



Pictured are US Navy personnel who were present for the Commissioning ceremony, including some of the crew from the USS Michael Murphy.

Niemba Ambush Remembered



COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, lays a wreath.

The Niemba Ambush Remembrance was held in Cathal Brugha Bks, Dublin, on the 8th November 2015, which was the actual date of the ambush in the Congo in 1963. This commemorates the 55th anniversary of the ambush. The ceremonies, organised by ONE, commenced with a Mass in the Garrison Church followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the Memorial Garden, Cathal Brugha Bks. *Photos by: Pte David Hogarty, 2 HQ Bde*



Flags dipped in honour of the fallen.

Royal British Legion Remembrance



IUNVA Post 15 Cavan and Cootehill Branch of ONE were kindly invited to attend the Annual Remembrance Day Commemorations in Enniskillen. The Enniskillen Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) hosted the event. The parade fell-in in the foulest of bad weather at 10.30hrs and marched to the Cenotaph, members of the Royal Irish Regiment provided sentries. Respects were paid and compliments rendered after the customary 1-minute silence at 11.00hrs. In typical military tradition the rain ceased after the Cenotaph ceremony concluded and the Parade proceeded to St.

Malachy's Church for the religious part of the Commemorations. An Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD laid a wreath before addressing the dignitaries and guests in the Legion rooms. Interestingly, all the UN veterans spent most of their careers on the Border in Cavan Military Post (27 & 29 Inf Bns) and Dun Ui Neill (29 & 6 Inf Bns), assisted by members of 7 Inf Bn (FCÁ/RDF). *Report & Photos by Sgt John Doherty (Retd)*



Irish Veterans Remembered in UK

The Irish Defence Forces Veterans UK represented Irish Veterans alongside West-Indians and Canadians at the Commonwealth Graves in Seaford East-Sussex recently. There are quite a lot of Irish from both North and South of Ireland, who were laid to rest after WW1 & 2, that were stationed at Seaford. The IDFVUK are a self-funded Irish Veterans Organisation based in the UK and receive no government funding. *Photos: Edward Bell, IDFVUK*





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to all PDFORRA members serving at
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especially on United Nations
missions



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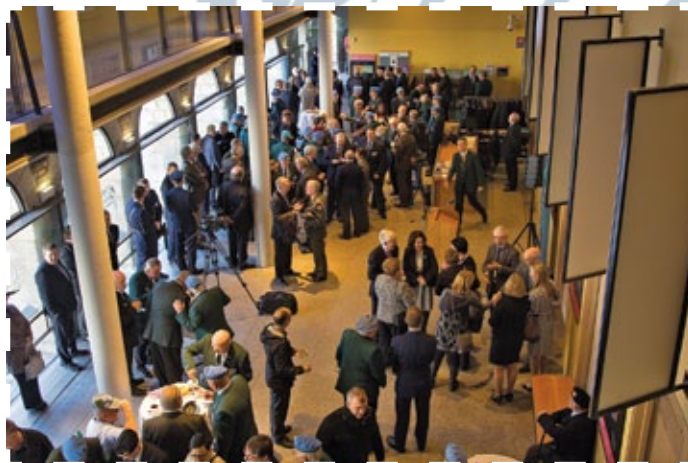
UN60 FROM CONGO TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Celebrating 60 years of Irish peacekeeping

BY LAR JOYE, CURATOR ART & INDUSTRIAL DIVISION, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND, COLLINS BKS

Ireland joined the United Nations 60 years ago in November 1955 and since 1958 has been involved continuously in peacekeeping duties throughout the world. Since 1960 Ireland has committed armed contingents at different times to the Congo, Cyprus, Somalia, the Sinai and the Lebanon, among others.

UN 60 is a new exhibition within the larger Soldiers & Chiefs Exhibition: The Irish at War at Home and Abroad since 1550 and examines the role played by these Irish men and women in the cause of world peace over the last 60 years. Despite the small size of the country's armed forces, Irish soldiers have built a reputation as skilled and dedicated peacekeepers. They have served in a number of hot spots around the world, both in small observer groups and at battalion strength. More than 80 Irish soldiers and 1 Garda have



died on UN service - they are commemorated in a memorial on Arbour Hill, just behind the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks.

The exhibition is aimed at a general audience with little knowledge of the Irish Defence Forces or the United Nations. It begins by examining what it is like to be a peacekeeper and what they do on their mission and then focuses on the large operations that Irish soldiers have been involved in from the Congo, Cyprus, Sinai, East Timor, Ethiopia & Eritrea, Somalia, Lebanon, Chad, Liberia and the occupied Golan Heights. In particular the exhibitions answer two questions which visitors have about the Irish Defence Forces on UN operations: Why the Irish were there and What was it like? In addition to the important role of the Irish soldier on UN operations the exhibition also explores the role of Irish policemen and women who have been involved with the United Nations since 1956. Until 1989 Gardai had to resign from An Garda Síochána to serve with the United Nations.

The exhibition was designed in partnership with the Irish Defence Forces, and An Garda Síochána and continues to December 2016. It also contains the objects and stories of Irish peacekeepers from their tours in Congo and Lebanon. Admission to all exhibitions is free and doors are open from 10am to 5pm Tuesday to Saturday and from 2pm to 5pm on Sundays. Closed Mondays and Bank Holidays.

Extract from the charter of the United Nations (Signed 26th June 1945)

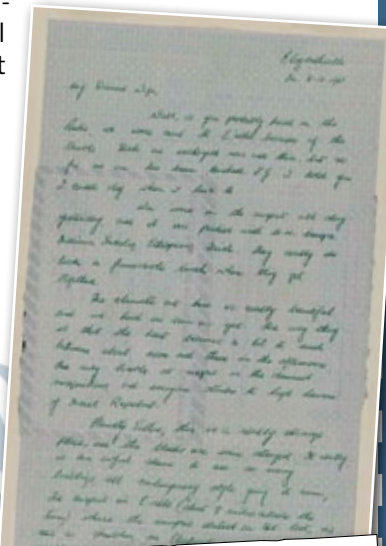
WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to

establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, AND FOR THESE ENDS to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS.

Objects on Display

LIEUTENANT PATRICK RIORDAN

25 year old Lt Patrick Riordan originally from Cork led 1st Platoon 'A' Company 36 Battalion (all from Dublin) in the attack on the tunnel against two companies of Katangan gendarme led by white mercenaries and was killed



The last letter home to his wife written on the 11th December 1961.



£1 note Lt Riordan was carrying at the time of his death, sent home from Congo.

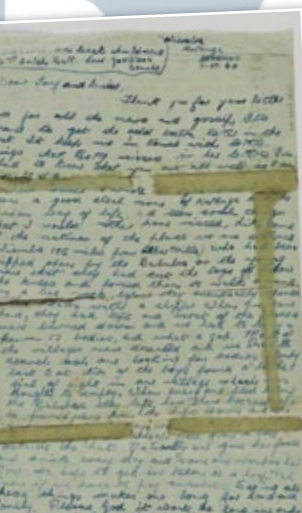


by a concealed machine gun along with Pte Andrew Wickam of Ballyfermot. Lt O'Riordan was commis-

sioned as a junior officer in 1956 and had arrived in the Congo on 5th December and he was only recently married. He posthumously received a DSM.

SERGEANT HUGH GAYNOR

A letter from Sgt Hugh Gaynor of 'A' Company, 33rd Battalion ONUC describing life for him in the Congo, as the country descended into an ever more vicious war. Sgt Gaynor was one of the 9 Irish soldiers who were killed during the Niemba Ambush in the Congo in November 1960, seven days after this letter was sent. ■



A letter from Sgt Hugh Gaynor of 'A' Company, 33rd Battalion ONUC describing life for him in the Congo, as the country descended into an ever more vicious war. Sgt Gaynor was one of the 9 Irish soldiers who were killed during the Niemba Ambush in the Congo in November 1960, seven days after this letter was sent.

UN60 WEEK UNTSI

To mark the 60th Anniversary of Ireland's involvement in the United Nations, the United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI), in the Curragh Camp recently conducted briefings to 500 Transition Year Students from Kildare, Limerick, Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Waterford, Wicklow and Sligo. Eleven schools from across the country attended the briefings, which covered the origins of the UN, UN charters, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recent and past DF missions, challenges of peacekeeping and future roles the DF may have within the UN.

The occasion of UN60 week has provided a unique opportunity for the DF to educate students on Ireland's contribution to the United Nations around the World since 1955 and its on-going engagements. The students being giving the chance to become more

informed and engaged with the different roles DF personnel have provided with the United Nations.

The objective of the briefings is to allow students to be able to appreciate the origins of the UN, realise the range of peacekeeping missions and the complex challenges of each mission and the roles of key countries involved in the UN. The event also gave the opportunity to provide information on

careers in the DF. The students were asked to complete surveys to assess the knowledge base of the education being delivered, which proved to be a great success.

A UN 60 Week folder is now live on UNTSI's IKON page.



Capt Deirdre Carbery and Sgt Denise English both from UNTSI briefing students.



Helping the HELPERs



BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

While an often quoted saying asserts that ‘charity starts at home’, there is nothing to say it should stay there. That would certainly be the view of two Dublin brothers, one of whom is a DF veteran, involved in setting up the Irish Emergency Logistics Team (IELT).

Will Holden, the founder and director of IELT, has over 20 years logistics experience working in the private sector and with international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) including five years as a member of the emergency logistics team with the World Food Programme. His brother Duane was in the DF from 1984-91, serving with 5 Inf Bn, the Air Corps, and 2 Fd Arty Regt. (Their father, retired sergeant Willie Holden, served for 23 years with 5 Inf Bn, E Comd HQ, and the ARW.)

While Will (junior) has never served in the military he has a

wealth of experience of operating in combat zones. He was senior logistics advisor with the Afghanistan Disposal Project, which dealt with the disposal of non-military equipment for the UK MOD, Danish and Australian armed forces and the dismantling of Camp Bastion, Camp Souter Kabul and other FOBs in Afghanistan in 2012/13. He also spent a year in Iraq as head of logistics and procurement for the Danish Refugee Council. From July to October this year he worked as interim supply chain manager with an international NGO on the Turkey/Syrian border dealing with the ongoing refugee crisis.

Will’s experiences and the number of Irish people he encountered working with NGOs around the world reinforced his opinion that Irish people’s reputation as humanitarians and peacekeepers is well earned. It was this belief that led to Will’s

Will Holden in Afghanistan, July 2013.



Duane Holden, Dublin 2015.



Will in Haiti in 2010 and a mass grave in Haiti, April 2011.



'Room with a view' - Will Holden in Antakya Turkey, next stop the Syrian border, September 2015.



better, but we do have skills and expertise that can help build the capability of local NGOs.

"So far we've worked with the Iraqi Institute for Development and the Syrian Training and Development Organisation, and we are currently in talks regarding setting up an emergency logistics team in Kenya. I've also been asked to set up a logistics operation in Macedonia for an international NGO, along with a number of other projects we are looking at.

"We have also held meetings with UNTSI staff with a view to collaborating on training, which we hope will come to fruition soon."

Duane sees a real opportunity for former members of the Defence Forces to get involved. "A lot of veterans have considerable experience and skills in humanitarian logistics but don't know what to do with them. The IELT is an ideal place for them to make use of their expertise. As it is, many of our pool of 12 instructors are DF veterans."

idea to utilise Irish expertise in humanitarian logistics and bring it worldwide, by setting up the IELT.

Will's aim with the IELT is to put together a team of professional logisticians equipped with the leading-edge knowledge and core competencies required to provide a suite of logistics and supply-chain management support to NGOs. Will and Duane envision IELT providing humanitarian emergency logistics assistance; emergency logistics and humanitarian aid training packages – in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) Ireland; stress and trauma support; pre-deployment training; and post-deployment follow up.

Will told us: "We aren't in competition with Irish NGOs. We are looking at this project as a global one; we see it as bigger than Ireland. There's nothing to fear from working with us. We want to partner with local NGOs in those countries that need assistance. We don't think we necessarily know

With reference to training, Duane told us: "Anybody coming in to IELT has to do the training and we don't expect to be sending anyone abroad until 2016/17, when they will be fully trained. When this does happen, we envisage deployments of no longer than six weeks and our personnel will be paid an NGO rate to cover expenses."

In the area of training and certification the IELT currently offers an Introduction to Humanitarian Logistics course, which is conducted over 12 hours on evenings or weekends at a cost of €200 for waged, or €100 for retired or unwaged. The first course was conducted in the Kimmage Development Centre in April. So far, 36 people have completed this course, including three DF veterans and two serving soldiers.

One of these, Sgt Ruairi Byrne, told us: "I completed the course earlier this year and found it very worthwhile and thoroughly enjoyable. It gave me a good insight to problems and solutions that are encountered on the ground and at a higher level, and which were easily comparable to those experienced in the DF in numerous scenarios. The instruction level was good with plenty of class participation with group projects, etc."

Those who successfully complete the introductory course are eligible to apply for the Certificate in Humanitarian Logistics course; a 40-hour course that takes place over five consecutive Saturdays, which is aimed at people who have past experience in humanitarian logistics and an interest in joining the team.

The first of these courses is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2016 at a cost €1,500 (price to be confirmed). It is expected that this course will be dual certified by the Irish and International chartered institutes of logistics and transport. William told us: "At present we are awaiting certification from CILT Ireland and CILT International and I'm very confident we will meet their requirements for certification."

(Former Air Corps senior logistics officer Lt Col Kevin Byrne (retd) is due to take over as president of CILT Ireland in January 2016.)

The IELT roster will be managed and supported by the charity Dinit (Irish for 'dignity'), a new Irish registered charity whose vision is "to help the vulnerable in troubled regions of the world to regain their dignity by providing assistance in a timely fashion." Former Deputy Director of International Relations for Dublin City Council, Michael Sands, is the current chairperson of Dinit, and one of the board members is Lt Col Michael Carroll (retd).

For more information on the Irish Emergency Logistics Team, visit: <http://emergencylogisticsteam.com/>, or contact info@emergencylogisticsteam.com or call (+353) 85 7547264 - they are also on Twitter and Facebook. ■



Will and Duane pictured during the Introduction to Logistics course in Kimmage, April 2015.



COMBINED WEAPONS SHOOT

BY SGT KARL BYRNE PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE & CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN

On Monday 2nd November Compl TACA, 1 Cn Cois (Sp Coy, 1 Inf Bn) turned out in force in the Glen of Imaal for a combined weapons shoot. The weapons being fired were the Browning 12.7mm HMG, the 60mm and 81mm Mortars and also an Intermediate Sniper Course turned out to add their metal into the mix.

THE 81MM MORTAR

The 81mm Mortar long barrel with the C2 AI Sight Unit and its ammunition, together with the Morfire Fire Control Computer make this equipment among the most modern and accurate in service anywhere in the world. The sight unit and fire control instruments can achieve an accuracy of one mil (1m at 1,000m) both for direction and elevation. This accuracy can be maintained in environmental extremes and in periods of limited or reduced visibility. The use of laser range finders can increase the probability of a first or second round hit. Its country of manufacture is France, the loaded weight is 41.5kg, the range is 5,000m and its rate of fire is 12 rounds/min with a crew of 5.

THE 60MM MORTAR

The Mortar Denel Vektor M1 60mm is designed for use by infantry units in all phases of battle. It is a smooth bore, muzzle loaded, high angle fire weapon. The mortar is carried in a single unit, with three main assemblies, the barrel, bipod, and baseplate. Weighing only 17.8kg the mortar can be quickly and easily moved, ensuring support at all stages of action. This mortar has a modern sight similar to the C2 AI sight in use with the 81mm mortar. This sight is also compatible with the Morfire Fire Control Computer system also employed with the 81mm mortar. The mortar can also be fired in a commando role by removing the bipod and baseplate and fitting a special small baseplate and attaching sighting unit/handgrip. Planning range is extended to 2,100 metres in the conventional role. Its country of manufacture is South Africa, it has been in service since 2003, its weight is 17.8kg, a range of 2,233m, a rate of fire of 20 rounds/min, with a crew of 4.



THE JAVELIN

The Javelin is a “fire-and-forget” missile with lock-on before launch and automatic self-guidance. This means that after the weapon has fired, the missile does not need any human intervention and the gunner is free to reload, change position, or avoid enemy countermeasures. The Javelin weapon system consists of two distinct components: The Command Launch Unit (CLU) and the Missile.

The CLU incorporates an integrated day sight and a thermal imaging sight. The gunner’s controls for the missile system are on the CLU. The day sight is equipped with x4 magnification and the night sight with x4 and x9 magnification optics. The Javelin has two attack modes: Direct attack and Top attack.

In direct attack mode, the missile travels to the target using the shortest route possible. This method is useful for covered targets such as bunkers and buildings. In top attack mode, the missile climbs above the target and strikes the roof of the target. This method is effective against armoured vehicles where the roof is the least protected area of the vehicle. The system is manufactured by Raytheon/Lockheed Martin and is manufactured in the USA, the DF first purchased it in 2003. The missile diameter is 126mm and weapon length of 1,260mm with a combined weight of 22.3kg. Its range is 2,500m and uses a LOCK-ON automatic Self-Guidance system with a detachment of 4.



4TH INTERMEDIATE SNIPER COURSE

While the combined shoot was taking place the 4th Intermediate Sniper Course also took part in the shoot. The course was run by Compl TACA, 1 Cn Cois from the 12th October to the 4th November. The course was made up of 17 students from 7 units of the Defence Forces and instructors from Compl TACA, 1 Cn Cois. This course is designed to give students a better understanding of ballistics, shooting techniques, sniper tactics techniques and procedures and also qualify the students in the .338 Accuracy International Sniper rifle and 7.62 FN spotter rifle. The course has 10-days of field firing which was conducted primarily in Galway with LFTT shoots in Kilworth and the culminating long range shoot in the Glen of Imaal, seeing students engaging multiple targets up to 1,500m.

The days shoot, although starting off slowly took flight in the afternoon, with mortars landing rounds within meters of the target area, the HMG teams pounding rounds down range into different targets and the sniper course targeting individual targets consistently and accurately. The javelin kicked off the shoot, with it being fired at a stationary target on the range. A direct hit set the mood as all targets were obliterated throughout the day and into the night shoot. ■



FIBUA TRAINING

in *Fort Davis*



BY SGT KARL BYRNE PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE & CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN

On a rare warm morning in mid-October, LÉ Eithne dropped anchor in the bay just off Fort Davis. Its cargo; over 100 battle-ready troops, comprising 91 Cadet Class and exercise troops from various units of 1 Bde, itching to be launched on the rigid-inflatable boats (RIB) to head for the fort. Making two runs each, three RIBs took the troops to the harbour, where the first group ashore immediately secured the area and placed a GPMG to cover the route from the harbour to the gates of the fort where the 'enemy' lay in wait, intent on disrupting the advance of the disembarked force.

When the force was fully ashore and deployed they began their attack, making light work of the initial gates with a SRAAW (short range anti-armour weapon) missile. However, as they began their advance the force was met with heavy resistance from within the fort, taking casualties but also inflicting some on the enemy.

Room by room, building by building, the systematic clearance of the fort began. No room left unchecked, no tunnel

left in the dark. The cadets took charge and tasked and launched their exercise troops through windows and doors, some of which were booby-trapped, as the group continued to fight its way through the maze that is Fort Davis.

After clearing the initial buildings, the group slowly began making their way through the lower levels of the fort. Each room presented a different obstacle to be overcome; whether barricaded doors or booby-trapped entrances, all of which had to be cleared and secured.

The operation went well, with the primary locations being secured. The problem, however, particularly with the short days at this time of the year, is securing these locations against counterattack. And sure enough, as the skies darkened over the Cork coast, the counterattack was launched from the upper levels of the fort and now it was the cadets' turn to hold onto the locations they had taken with their troops.

All through the night the cadets' positions were attacked and tested. However, the next morning, the cadets had



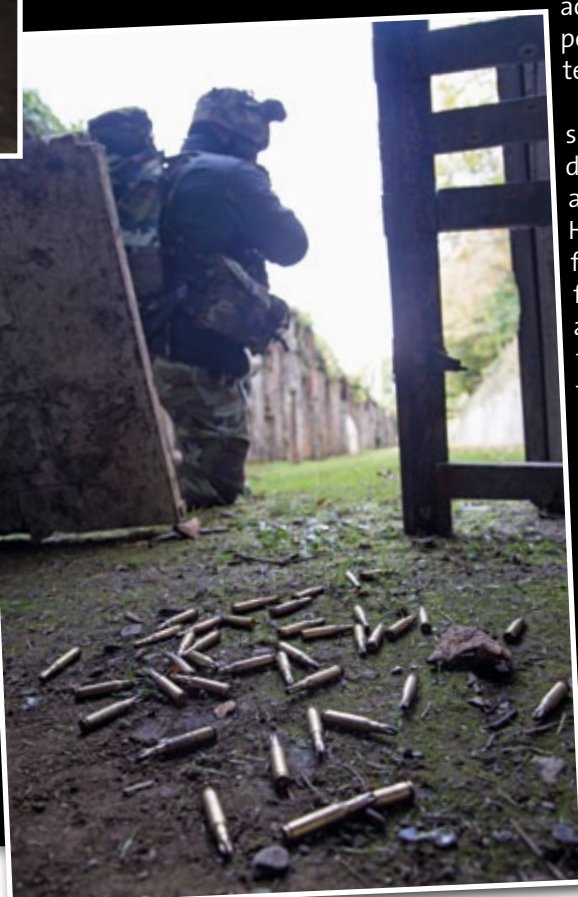
little time to celebrate having successfully defended the lower levels before leading their troops in the next push to take the upper levels; no easy feat as these were heavily fortified in anticipation of such an assault.

After more intense fighting the friendly forces took control of the upper levels as well as taking control of a mobile radar unit, which was deployed on the highest level of the fort. Once this was achieved they again fortified their positions to await the expected counterattack.

When it came, the enemy's onslaught was relentless and the defending forces endured numerous attacks throughout the next night. Having successfully driven the enemy force back into the lower levels of the fort, the cadets launched a follow-up attack in order to stop the enemy from re-establishing themselves in these positions.

Using the zig-zag track down to the lower level, the cadets and their 1 Bde troops broke left and right at the end of the track, clearing both sides all the way to the engine room and back down to the pier.

Successful in all their tasks throughout the week, and with plenty of lessons and new skills learned, 91 Cadets Class can be well pleased with their long, hard week in Fort Davis. ■



'Planning Without Resources is Dreaming!'



BY LT COL GERARD BUCKLEY

Military Finance Branch pictured L/R: CQMS Billy Bohane, Comdt Eugene Cooke, Ms Aideen Day, Lt Col Ger Buckley, Capt Mick Hosback and Cpl Tom Reddy.

Military Finance Branch's primary role is to provide the Defence Forces with a high quality financial management service that supports the delivery of affordable and value-for-money operational outputs and defence capabilities. In the recent reduced-resource environment, the Branch priorities were maintaining levels of support to personnel, supporting the retention of critical capabilities, and planning for medium term procurement; all within established expenditure ceilings. Emerging into a more robust financial environment, supporting the implementation of the Defence White Paper is central to our activities.

A secondary role of the Branch is enhancing financial awareness and understanding of the organisational financial mechanisms. It could be said that you don't fully know an organisation until you know how its financial resources are managed.

Military Finance Branch reports directly to DCOS Sp, who has budgetary control and responsibility for all expenditure in respect of subheads where authority has been delegated to him. (The defence budget is divided into 25 subheads of which 13 are either fully or partially delegated to the Defence Forces.)

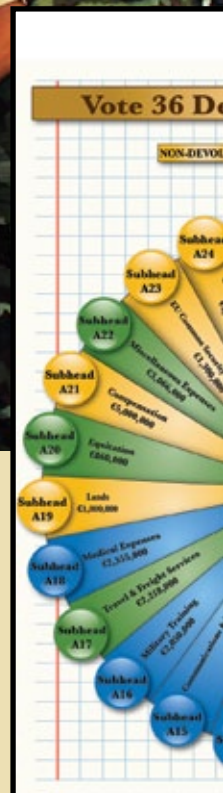
Amongst his many roles, D COS Sp is in essence the Defence Forces' Chief Financial Officer. The delegated subheads have a total spend of over €120 million for 2015, a considerable sum of money, which allows the Defence Forces to directly shape outputs. On behalf of DCOS Sp, Military Finance Branch has oversight of the military subhead holders (the service commander or corps director charged with the responsibility of overseeing, controlling and

monitoring the expenditure incurred in a subhead).

Parallel to its role within the Defence Forces, the Branch also acts as the financial point-of-contact with the DoD. Critical partners for us in this process are the DoD's Finance Branch in Renmore and Contracts Branch in Newbridge. The DoD Finance Branch is the financial shared services centre for the defence organisation, with services ranging from payroll to accounts payable.

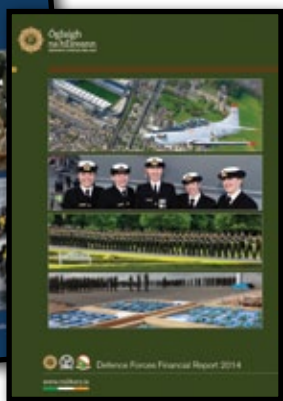
With the advent of financial management shared services, as part of the Public Service Reform Programme, a great number of the services currently provided by the DoD are scheduled to be provided by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER).

Central to the role of Military Finance Branch is oversight, firstly to safeguard public funds but also to safeguard the reputation of the Defence Forces. It is incumbent upon us in the Defence Forces, on behalf of the government and citizens we serve, to utilise the resources entrusted to us with the utmost care and diligence. Attaining the best possible value for the resources at our disposal is central to our endeavours. It is essential that good choices are made on the areas where money is spent and how resources are allocated. It is imperative that projects and programmes are implemented efficiently and effectively. A disciplined approach needs to be applied to all aspects of the



Vote 35
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The Defe



expenditure cycle, from the moment a proposal is put together, through its implementation and ultimately through to disposal. Delivering real value for money is about achieving objectives while providing the lowest whole-of-life costs; not just providing value at the point of purchase. Ultimately, all personnel must fully appreciate the 'total cost of ownership' concept, as to

do otherwise runs contrary to the delivery of true value for money.

The Defence Group consists of two votes within the national budget: Vote 36 (Defence) and Vote 35 (Military Pensions). Traditionally, these votes are mutually supporting: shortfalls in one have been made up by the other.

Recent national economic challenges, however, have led to significant changes to the annual budgetary process. In 2010 a

three-year plan was developed, which was followed by the Comprehensive Review of Expenditure (CRE) 2011 to 2014. This established a three-year financial cycle for each vote, detailing a medium-term budgetary framework (MTBF). The MTBF confirms the expenditure ceiling for each vote across the following three years. Under the DPER a second CRE was conducted in 2014, establishing ceilings for 2015, 2016 and 2017. These ceilings are reaffirmed annually as part of the budget.

The annual budget is now published in October and confirmed prior to the end of the year in the Revised Estimates or 'Rev'. Following publication of the 'Rev', which regularly tweaks elements of vote allocation, Military Finance Branch publishes the Defence Forces Estimates Book, which provides subhead detail, facilitating expenditure and oversight. The October budget compresses the estimates process and planners have to be cognisant of earlier deadlines to secure funds for the following year.

The center of gravity of the DF Annual Plan 2015 is 'The provision of adequate resources to achieve the end state.' This reaffirms that access to an adequate financial allocation is the critical enabler; the element that facilitates all other resources. We continue to face the challenge of operating with historically reduced financial allocations but this is a challenge the Defence Forces has successfully met year-on-year since 2009.

In 2008, €1.079 billion was

available to the Defence Group, an unprecedented high associated with our participation in the EU-led operation in Chad. (EU missions, unlike UN missions, rely on troop contributors to meet their own costs.) In contrast the 2016 Defence Group provision will be €903.5 million, a 16% reduction from that historic high. However, with reduced payroll costs associated with revised salaries and new strength ceilings, the Defence Forces is emerging into a period of financial stability. This is reinforced by the recent publication of the National Capital Infrastructure and Investment Programme 2016-2021 which will see €437 million invested in the Defence Forces.

A challenge for the Defence Forces is the underfunding of Vote 35 (Military Pensions) and in recent years funds from Vote 36 have been used to supplement Vote 35. However, pensions are demand-led and non-discretionary and saw a 30% increase between 2007 and 2012. (The number of pensioners now outstrips the number of serving personnel.)

Despite the current financial limitations, which sees Ireland ranked second lowest in the EU in terms of defence expenditure at 0.6% of GNP, the Defence Forces continues to retain critical capabilities and deliver high quality defence outputs, including an annual overseas deployment rate of approximately 9% of the force, demonstrating a significant expeditionary capability and setting an enviable international benchmark.

Cognisant of the Branch's role in enhancing the awareness of the organisation's financial mechanisms, we have this year offered both external and internal courses in the area of financial management, and recently selected 18 students to undergo the Certificate in Business Accounting conducted by the Chartered Institute of Management Accounting (CIMA). It is envisaged that the relationship with CIMA will be developed into the future with places on this course being advertised next year. In addition, the Branch has recently redrafted the syllabus for the Introduction to Defence Forces Financial Management course, which is aimed at personnel selected or aspiring to fill appointments in financial management, G8s, subheads, or national support elements (NSEs). In addition, the Branch conducts a series of one-day seminars throughout the year for those directly involved in financial management.

The Defence Forces Estimates Book and Annual Financial Report, published by the Branch, are essential guidance documents for all senior leaders and for those who aspire to fill such appointments.

Financial astuteness and resource management are core competencies for all personnel. Leaders at all levels should have an understanding of how they incur costs and how they can deliver greater value for money.

In planning, financial provision cannot be taken for granted, and a central message from the Branch is that '*planning without having the necessary financial resources required to execute the plan is dreaming.*' In the financial world admin and logs do not follow, they lead, and they must be part of the planning process to ensure financial viability. Too often in the past, financial provision was taken for granted. This time has passed.

Military Finance Branch, together with subhead holders and their staffs, and colleagues in the DoD play a critical role in the enabling process. The Branch's outputs have, in recent times, facilitated the maintenance of operational output; supported the retention of key capabilities across the Defence Forces; and delivered value for money during a period of unprecedented financial restrictions. We now look forward to a period of investment in the Defence Forces through the White Paper implementation process. ■



EXERCISE

'Arduous Serpent'

BY COY SGT DAVID O'CONNOR, CMU 2 BDE – SOME PHOTOS FROM 2014

Exercise Arduous Serpent is the British Army's annual medical services tactical training exercise. It is a competition-based exercise involving the evaluation of both military and medical skills. It takes place at different locations each year and this year's three-day competition took place in July in Thetford in the south-east of England. The Defence Forces entered a team for the third time, having previously competed in 2012 and 2014.

The aim of the exercise is to test personnel in leadership, command and control, and the military and medical skills required for current, contingent and future operational environments.

This year's competition had 22 teams, drawn from both regular and reserve medical units of the UK and Canadian militaries and the Irish Defence Forces. Teams had to comprise of 10 personnel and support staff and required to have both male and female members. Each team could include up to three non-medical personnel.

From the outset of our training for the event we set clear objectives: maintaining the high standards set by previous DF teams; trying to progress one step further by claiming the top spot; integrating CMU RDF personnel into the team to prepare for future

external units were involved in the training and their instruction proved invaluable. These included Med Sch (medical training), Ord Sch (foreign weapons) MP Sch (vehicle and POW search) Engr Sch (mine awareness and CIED) Sgt Nugent CMU 2 bde (CBRN) and 2 Bde Ord Det (tent erection). Team members also worked on their personal fitness and basic military skills, including patrol drills, care under fire, field craft and CASEVAC drills.

This year's exercise theme was the end of WWII, with scenarios based on the Battle of Berlin. Consequently, our preparations included a lot of FIBUA training.

Phase 1 of the exercise began in a staging and reception area with



The Irish team received a FRAGO.



RDF participation in the event; and to gain additional knowledge and experience by having our support personnel assist in the running of the competition stands.

The DF team comprised Capt Gerry Waldron (CMU 2 Bde), Sgt Philip Green (CMU 2 Bde), Cpl Paula Burchéal (CMU DFTC), Cpl Eric Hurley (CMU 2 Bde), Cpl James Condon (CMU 2 Bde), Cpl Seán O'Sullivan (CMU RDF), Cpl Brian Corrigan (Med Sch, DFTC), Cpl Paul Burke (CMU HQ), Pte Adam Boland (CMU HQ), Pte Johnny O'Hare (CMU 2 Bde), Tpr Clare Durkin (2 Cav Sqn), Pte Kelly Smith (7 Inf Bn), and Coy Sgt David O'Connor (CMU 2 Bde) who acted as team manager.

Team preparation was thorough and was based on a training programme developed from the experience gained by the teams that had participated in 2012 and 2014. Numerous DFTC schools and

equipment checks, exercise and safety briefings, where any kit deficiencies or variations from the exercise equipment check list would result in team penalties. We completed this phase without any penalties and a maximum score.

From the reception area the team deployed to a patrol harbour where, later that night, team captains were briefed and received orders before the team received their first FRAGO at 0430hrs.

Phase 2 began at first light, with each team navigating to either an urban or green-field training area. All movement had to be conducted tactically and tight timelines had to be strictly adhered to. Each team navigated a route of approximately 20-25kms on foot, completing tasks at 10 stands throughout the day. Each stand consisted of a military task with multiple elements (for example, securing a HLZ and evacuating a casualty under fire) and lasted 45



minutes to an hour, with 100 marks available per stand. An additional competitive element was introduced by having two teams arrive at each stand at the same time.

Tasks during the second day included cordon and search, recce of site for the deployment of a Role 1 hospital, care under fire, searching and securing compounds, FIBUA, POW search, CBRN, CIED, medical, and environmental health assessments. At the end of this phase of the exercise the Defence Forces team was in first place with a total score of 1,054 points out of a possible 1,200

and 98 points on the care under fire task. Our closest competitor was on 962 points.

The directing staff highlighted the fact that the two Irish teams (ourselves and 204 Fd Hosp from Northern Ireland) had scored top marks on the cordon and search/POW search stand which, they humorously stated, indicated our previous wealth of experience with these types of operations.

Phase 3 began the following morning with a timed battle run, carrying full kit and weapons, in which we finished second. The top three teams from the combined scores of phases 1, 2 and 3, then went head to head in a final one-mile urban battle run carrying stretchers with 80kg dummies and logs.

Our hard earned lead from phases 1 and 2 had been wiped out by our second place finish in the time trail and the eventual winners, 5th Armoured Brigade, had gained a 10-second head start for their first place finish. Despite a superb effort by all members of our team over final mile, we were unable to overcome the 10-second gap and remained in second place from start to finish. Our colleagues from Northern Ireland, 204 Fd Hosp, took the final medal spot with a well-deserved third place finish despite suffering two injuries during the final day.

While there was huge disappointment at not clinching the top spot, especially after such a fantastic performance on the first two days, there was consolation in regaining the perpetual trophy for second place for the second year running. In addition, the team received a number of individual accolades, with Best Officer and Best NCO awarded to Capt Waldron and Sgt Greene respectively. These awards were a testament to the professionalism, competency and demeanour of the entire Defence Force team,

which acted as a composed and cohesive unit throughout. The directing staff also made special note of the performances of Cpl Jimmy Condon and Cpl Paul Burke, who both narrowly missed out on the award for best junior leader or soldier.

Arduous Serpent is a superbly organised and well run exercise. It is also a mentally and physical challenging experience from which our personnel have hugely benefited. This event has also allowed us to demonstrate the high standards of training and professionalism of the Defence Forces and has fostered

excellent relationships between the Royal



points; an average score of 90 points per task that included a 100 point score on the C-IED

Army Medical Corps and the DF Medical Corps.

The success of these relationships is evident from our recent joint deployment to Sierra Leone to assist in the international fight against the spread of Ebola. The developing relationship is also evident in the Battlefield Advanced Trauma Life Support (BATLS) course conducted in the DFTC in September for both DF and UK medical personnel, and which was conducted by instructors from both countries.

I would like to finish with a word of thanks to all the staff of the DFTC that assisted with our training; GOC 2 Bde, D J4 and OC 2 Cav Sqn and their staffs for their assistance; and, finally, a special word of thanks for OC 7 Inf Bn and his logistics staff, without whom we would have achieved very little during our training and preparation. ■



Pictured standing (L/R): Col Kerr (DMB), Cpl O'Sullivan (CMU RDF), Coy Sgt David O'Connor (CMU 2 Bde, Team Manager), Sgt Philip Green (CMU 2 Bde), Capt Gerry Waldron (CMU 2 Bde), Cpl Brian Corrigan (CMU Med Sch), Cpl Paul Burke (CMU HQ) and Pte Adam Boland (CMU HQ). Kneeling (L/R): Tpr Clare Durkin (2 Cav Sqn), Cpl Eric Hurley (CMU 2 Bde), Cpl Paula Burcheal (CMU DFTC), Pte Kelly Smith (7 Inf Bn) and Cpl James Condon (CMU 2 Bde).

FINIRISHBATT EOD TRAINING

BY LT EMMA VALLI (FIN), FINIRISHBATT PIO & LT CDR CLODAGH MCCONNELL, FINIRISHBATT ORDNANCE OFFICER

A truly multinational unit, the current Finnish/Irish Battalion serving with UNIFIL consists of Finnish, Irish and Estonian peacekeepers working together to enhance cooperation and cohesiveness amongst all UNIFIL nations. As part of this effort Finlirishbatt recently organised a number of EOD/IEDD training activities.

An EOD/IEDD day was held at Finlirishbatt's UNP 2-45 with the aim of sharing information on EOD techniques and procedures, and knowledge about different IED devices, with other UNIFIL EOD/IEDD technicians. Participants from 11 different countries attended the event and the feedback was very positive. The day commenced with IED/WIT/demining briefs and continued with an exhibition where representatives of different nations described their own EOD/IEDD equipment.

Several other EOD-related activities were organised by Finlirishbatt Ordnance Section during the last five months. These included: a visit to the Cambodian UNIFIL demining site at UNP 4-28; a visit to a civilian Lebanese Mine Action Centre demining site; and an EOD day held hosted by UNIFIL's Spanish battalion at UNP 7-2.

During the visit to the Cambodian demining site, members of Estonian,

Finnish, Fijian and Irish EOD teams observed mechanical clearance (20m² per day) and manual clearance (1m² per day), as well as receiving equipment briefs.

The visit to the civilian demining site was also beneficial. After observing the Lebanon Mine Action Centre personnel at work, the UNIFIL EOD team members deemed their equipment and procedures very similar to UNIFIL's.

At the Spanish battalion's EOD day the visitors received a demonstration of EOD robotic capabilities, a canine explosive detection exhibition, IED detection and survey techniques, and a fire power demonstration.

These events have helped to foster good relations between UNIFIL personnel, while also providing valuable opportunities for information sharing on recent EOD/IEDD incidents that have occurred in the area of operation.

The determination by Finlirishbatt to remain current with EOD/IEDD trends and activities sees personnel training with the most contemporary concepts and leads to the high standards of skills required to deal

with whatever they encounter in the AO. In addition to the events already mentioned,

several C-IED briefs and C-IED training sessions have been arranged for Finlirishbatt troops during this mission. These included presentations and practical demonstrations that reinforced the need for all personnel to remain vigilant regarding any possible IED threat.

These activities and the positive interactive experiences at battalion level have had a significant effect on UNIFIL HQ level also, as Finlirishbatt has been requested to execute the IED devices and scenarios for an imminent UNIFIL-wide exercise, 'Angel Rescue', which will test all national EOD/IEDD teams and medical team responses. The initiative for these events was formulated by Finlirishbatt Ordnance Officer Lt Cdr Clodagh McConnell, whose home unit is Naval Ordnance Section. ■



Pictured L/R are the members of Ordnance Section: Sgt Ian Harrington, Lt Cdr Clodagh McConnell, Pte Joyce Byrne and CQMS Joey Donnelly.



ENHANCING FORCE PROTECTION *in UNDOF*

BY CAPT PAUL O'DONOGHUE

On 2nd September 12 members of the Engineer Corps deployed to UNDOF to carry out force protection works, primarily in UN Post 80, which is located in the Area of Separation (AoS) as laid out in the ceasefire agreement after the 1973 Yom Kippur war.

The post is an isolated forward operating base (FOB) bordered on the north and east by villages controlled by anti-government armed elements (AGAEs) and is manned by Fijian and Irish troops. Consequently, the risk from direct and indirect small-arms fire spilling over from local conflicts has posed a direct threat to the occupants of UN Post 80.

The engineers' tasks include the construction of over 1.4km of HESCO protective wall, two 40-person bunker positions, four new observation/defensive positions, vehicle fighting positions and a field ammunition storage facility for the post.

In addition, the engineers have carried out survivability tasks and contributed to the real-life support of the post through works including repairing a water main and electrical power lines and installing a generator to ensure an uninterrupted power supply to the COMCEN.

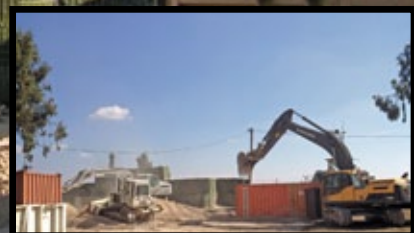
The engineer group's tasks required over 4,000m³ of material fill, which had to be transported to the post during

a pre-arranged three-hour opening of the IDF's technical fence by the Fijian Heavy Plant Section. As all crossing of the technical fence to gain access to Post 80 was strictly controlled by the IDF, the engineering projects required extensive logistical planning, some of which had to take place up to three-weeks in advance to ensure no delays occurred.

In addition to the routine challenges of an overseas deployment, the engineer team faced a two- to three-week deployment into the austere conditions of Post 80, followed by a three- to four-day rotation back to Camp Ziouani for personal admin and rest. While, long days in demanding, hot and dusty conditions were the norm, morale within the group remained high, even when temperatures plummeted with the onset of the Golan winter during the two-month deployment.

The project highlighted once again the expeditionary mindset of the Engineer Corps and its ability to deliver complex projects on time while operating in challenging environments.

As the engineers return home after a job well done, the gunners, troopers and infantry of 50 Inf Gp serving in Post 80 will benefit from the enhanced security and other improvements to the base provided by the engineer deployment. ■



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DO...

COMMUNICATION

- Do talk to someone you can trust
- Do listen to someone you trust
- Do arrange to meet with a friend

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

- Get some fresh air, go outdoors when you can
- Eat good food
- Make room for some quality relaxation time
- Be included and include others
- Get a good night's sleep
- Arrange a kick-around/puck about

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

- Explore additional interests as well as the Defence Forces
- Be patient
- Be aware of how your thoughts influence your mood
- Take deep breaths
- Accept mistakes
- Know that you can't win them all
- Give yourself a pat on the back

DON'T...

COMMUNICATION

- Don't isolate yourself or spend too much time alone
- Don't keep things bottled up

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

- Don't exist within a social media bubble
- Don't avoid friends, family, and military mates
- Don't take on too many commitments

POSITIVE ATTITUDE DEVELOPMENT

- Don't give up
- Don't criticise yourself negatively. Be constructive with your self-reflection
- Don't put too much pressure on yourself
- Try not to be impatient
- Don't worry what others might think
- Don't let bad performances get you down
- Don't feel guilty – it's not your fault!

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don't always need
professional help;
Sometimes self-
help can work*
#MINDYOURSELF

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WELL DONE!

FOR CONSOLE

On 1st November 2015 a 200km Relay Run Challenge was undertaken by personnel from 2 Fd Engrs, Athlone and 1 Inf Bn, Galway, raising €4,215 for charity Console. Console was chosen because they have been operating outreach services in Athlone out of Galway and the midlands region for the last few years. With increasing numbers availing of their services, they committed to establishing a full time centre in Athlone. GAA County Boards and a number of senior players expressed their willingness to support the event in any way possible. The route was from the Console Centre, Athlone, to O'Connor Park, Tullamore, then on to Cusack Park, Mullingar, through Pearse Park, Longford, over to Hyde Park, Roscommon, and then finishing in Custume Bks, Athlone. Leapfrogging the 16 runners, divided into 4 distinct teams achieved their target time of 24hrs, so each team ran a minimum of 10km in 1hr and resting for 3hrs with every runner eventually completing 50km approx. *Photos by: Ken Byrne Photography*



Back Row L/R: Sgt O'Malley G, Pte Maher B (Tipperary Hurler), Pte Coogan R, Pte Barry R, Sgt Flood M, Cpl McGuire M, Pte Foy C, Cpl Mc Lynn S and Capt Morrissey P. **Front Row L/R:** John Hanbury (Galway Hurler), Sgt Tiernan J, Lt Col Carroll M, BSM Lambe F and Capt Kilbride I (Roscommon Footballer).

48 INF GP UNDOF HELPING OUT

Members of the recently returned 48 Inf Gp UNDOF gathered to present a cheque to the DF Head Chaplain, Rv Fr Seamus Madigan who is also chairman of the DFBF committee. The money was raised when the Gp completed a very successful An Cosantóir 10k in Camp Zouiani on the Golan Heights, 130 members of the 48 Inf Gp displayed professionalism, endurance, fitness, spirit and comradeship, in the best traditions of the DF at home and abroad. Pictured L/R are: Fr PJ Somers, Chaplain 48 Inf Gp, Rv Fr Seamus Madigan Head Chaplain, Regt Sgt Major Noel O'Callaghan, Cpl Fergal McLoughlin and Lt Col Mark Prendergast OC 48 Inf Gp. *Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan, 2 Arty Regt*



AWARD WINNING DF TRAVEL OFFICE

The Defence Forces Travel office is embedded in J4 Branch and is the nerve centre for the DF movement around the globe. Their outstanding work was recently recognised at the inaugural Irish Travel Awards in the Westbury Hotel hosted by the Institute of Travel & Meetings (ITM). The Awards were for **Best Travel Manager**: Comdt Dorothy Donnelly was summarised by the judges "We considered this person as someone who operates in a very complex world where there could be a number of excuses to not achieve savings and improve the overall programme outputs. But "her" approach is highly professional... and real life challenging situations, often bringing a new dimension to the world of business travel!" **Best Business Travel Management Team**: Led by Comdt Dorothy Donnelly and staffed by Flight Sgt Mick Cusack, Sgt Jacinta McInerney and Pte Miriam Walsh. The judges recognised the complexity of the travel programme requirements and extensive remit of this relatively small team. Pictured L/R: Pte Miriam Walsh, Col Peter O'Halloran and Comdt Dorothy Donnelly.



IT CARLOW CONFERRING CEREMONY

The Institute of Technology, Carlow (IT Carlow) held a Conferring Ceremony on Thursday 5th of November, where almost 200 members of the Defence Forces were conferred at a special ceremony in the Barrow Centre IT Carlow, in what was one of the largest military graduations from a higher education institute. Graduates, drawn from Fmn/Bde throughout the Defence Forces, were awarded with Masters of Arts in Teaching and Learning and Bachelors of Arts, Higher Certificates and Certificates in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies (LMDS) through an academic collaboration between IT Carlow and the Defence Forces. This is the 4th conferring ceremony under this scheme. *Photo by: Cpl Lee Coyle, PR Branch*



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HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

THE NINTH SHIP

Naval Diving Section

BY CPO MARTIN BUCKLEY, RETIRED

In May 1964 a young Lt Joe Deasy NS received notification from Naval HQ that he was being sent to England on a seven-month Torpedo Anti-Submarine (TAS) course. On learning that the first part of the course comprised of a four-week diving module he was underwhelmed to say the least, having never felt anything remotely resembling a desire to go diving, and simply shrugged his shoulders and went home to inform his new wife about the course.

However, when Lt Deasy returned home in November not only had he successfully completed his TAS course but, much more importantly for the future of the Naval Service, he had been bitten by the diving bug and had begun to sow the seeds of a vision that would eventually lead to what is undoubtedly Ireland's most advanced diving group, the Irish Naval Diving Section.

Roll on to a Friday afternoon in June 1981. I was on the 14.20 Cork train on the way home to Dublin. It was the June Bank Holiday weekend and I shared the train with many other naval personnel heading to Dublin to spend time with our mummies. (Well, at least enough time to say hi, drop off a bag full of dirty laundry, and grab a bite to eat, before heading out to catch up with the mates.)

On the train that day I bumped into my good friend L/Sea Mui-ris (Mossy) Mahon on the way to the dining carriage. Mossy was a diver and I was interested in trying out a bit of diving myself.

'Hi Moss, would there be any chance of maybe doing a dive next week, just in the Police chamber? You know, just to see how things go. Nothing too exciting, mind!'

'Yeah, no bother. I'll shout you if we get the chance.'

Back in Haulbowline on the Tuesday after the long weekend, I was working in the Gunnery Bay, where I was a leading gunner. On answering a knock on the door, I was told to get down to the diving store fast as they were looking for me. When I entered the store I was met by another friend PO Gerry Duffy, standing over some diving kit laid out on the deck.

'Martin, I hear you're interested in doing a dive.'

'Yeah...' (Suddenly I got a sense of dread.)

'Well, come on! Get dressed, we don't have all day.'

The next few days was a whirlwind of dives, a medical in Dublin, more dives, a visit to the dentist, another train journey to Dublin, followed by a flight to Heathrow and a train ride to Portsmouth, where, late on a Sunday night, A/Tel John Lynch and I reported to HMS Vernon for diver training. Thus began my 29-year career as a Navy diver.

In June 2013 there was a reunion in the Naval Base for all past, retired, and current divers. Presentations were made by the then Flag Officer Commanding NS, Commodore Mark Mellett; after which there followed a prayer meeting, a poetry recital and a delightful practical demonstration of needlepoint and crochet... No, there didn't! Two days later, having recovered from the drink,



I decided that somehow or other, somebody, somewhere, was going to have to write the history of the Diving Section before we all popped our collective socks. Still, how could I ask anybody to write it if I wasn't prepared to? And so the die was cast: I would do it myself!

The book is an account of how the Diving Section developed from what was essentially one man's accidental entry into diving and how his subsequent vision became a reality. It tells of how, in the early 1970s, a succession of naval officers, NCOs and sailors, underwent diver training with the Royal Navy, and how, after a short while, it was realised that the Naval Service could, and should, train its own, and train them better. Thus in 1982 the first Naval Service diving course was conducted. To date, 30 courses have been run, with 132 personnel qualifying.

Focusing primarily on three main themes, 'training', 'operations' and the 'recompression chamber' (RCC), and how they dovetailed, the book attempts to show how divers were few in number, and operations even fewer, during the early, formative years, but as time passed more diver training led to more men and, hence, more kit and equipment and increased diving capability.



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY



A vertical strip of five small images showing various scenes from the film 'The Boatman'. The images are arranged vertically and separated by thin white lines. From top to bottom: 1. A close-up of a person's face in a boat. 2. A person in a boat, possibly the boatman, looking out. 3. A person in a boat, possibly the boatman, looking out. 4. A person in a boat, possibly the boatman, looking out. 5. A person in a boat, possibly the boatman, looking out.


Diving Section.

In reviewing the roll call of the Section, the list of people that have risen to senior commissioned and non-commissioned ranks over the years is long and impressive. These include: Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, two retired flag officers, one captain (retired), three commanders, 13 lieutenant commanders, one warrant officer, two SCPOs, and at least 19 CPOs. This says everything about the quality of personnel that have come through the Naval Diving Section over the years. Book reviewed on P41. ■



A large white naval ship, likely a minesweeper, is docked at a pier. The ship has a complex superstructure with various antennas and equipment. In the foreground, a small boat with two people is on the water. The background shows a green hillside and some industrial structures.

Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM in the Naval Diving Section in 1977.



IRISH ACES OF THE RFC AND RAF IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The Lives Behind the Legends

Author: Joe Gleeson

Publisher: Fonthill Media (October 2015)
fonthillmedia.com

ISBN: 978-1781554869

Price: €31.65 H/B

Pages: 272



I jumped at the chance to read this book, brought up as I was on a diet of WWI aces such as Mannock (61 'kills') and Ball (44), Germany's Baron von Richtoffen (80) and Boelke (40), and France's Rene Fonck (75, and leading Allied ace) and Charles Nungesser (21).

It is a fine production, with attractive cover sleeve artwork and containing many interesting pictures. I must confess I would be happier if there were more pictures as these are becoming more available now and they surely would add to the overall content in a positive way. The chapter layout is well structured and appealing, with each ace's story starting with brief biographical details, awards, and number of kills, which sets the stage nicely for each chapter.

The content lives up to the high print quality and production, and I couldn't put it down. A gripping, well researched, well interpreted analysis of these Irish aces. The details of their background, school life, early military service, and the locations mentioned where they grew up and were educated here are what really sets this book apart and add greatly to its interest for the Irish reader.

We all probably associate aces with single-seat aircraft pilots and I was surprised by the number of observers/gunners classified as aces, having more than five kills. These airmen crewed missions with a variety of pilots, yet managed to dispose of several enemy aircraft through accurate deflection shooting while their own craft was taking evasive action! A remarkable feat, and the kill was credited to the gunner, not the pilot. Noteworthy amongst these was Sgt JJ Cowell, a Limerick man who scored 15 kills as an air gunner and one following completion of his pilot training. He was awarded the Military Medal twice, as well as the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Another of note was 2/Lt Giles Noble Blennerhassett, from Sligo, who accumulated eight kills and was also awarded the Military Medal. Like Cowell, he trained as a pilot, serving in Home Defence fighter units to counter German bomber raids on London towards the end of the war. Following the Armistice he was posted to 11th (Irish) Group based at Baldonnell in 1919.

Few of the aces survived the war but those that did have their post-war lives traced out in satisfying detail. A few even served again in WWII.

One of these, Lt Harry George Crowe from, Donnybrook, Dublin, enlisted in the Royal Irish Regiment, seeing action on the Somme front then at Messines. Having survived a year in combat at a time when infantry officers' lives were measured in days, he was accepted as an air gunner, subsequently being credited with eight victories and winning the Military Medal. He then qualified as a pilot, graduating just as the war ended. After the war he was posted to RAF Collinstown, moving to RAF Baldonnell then Fermoy before a number of overseas postings. Following service as Air Group Commander (India) in WWII he received an OBE in 1944 and the Cloud and Banner Decoration with Special Cravat from the Peoples' Republic of China in 1946: a remarkable career and span of service!

One name that caught my eye was that of Major TF Hazell, MC DSO DFC and Bar, whose name I came across in the last two years after the discovery of his badly neglected grave in Newport, Co Mayo. Hazell was an accomplished air fighter with 46 kills to his name. His burial in Newport is appropriate, due to the Nieuport Scout being his favourite aircraft. His grave has now been restored and as next year is the centenary of the award of his 'Wings, there might even be a celebration in Mayo of his outstanding war service.

If you have an interest in early combat aviation, are an avid reader of WWI, or are an Irish military researcher or historian, then I cannot recommend this book highly enough. It is a tour de force, opening up an intriguing and previously unrecorded aspect of Irish engagement in WWI. It certainly has a place in the context of this decade of commemoration, marking as it does an alternative aspect to early 20th Century Irish fighting spirit and military service. ■

Reviewed by Brig Gen William Paul Fry, GOC Air Corps



4. Sopwith Pup, 1918. (C.11.14)



5. Sopwith Pup, 1918. (C.11.14)



6. Sopwith Pup, 1918. (C.11.14)



7. Sopwith Pup, 1918. (C.11.14)

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

April in the Valley of Total

BY COY SGT HENRY (HARRY) MULHERN (RETD)

In the hilly country of Southern Lebanon the village of Tibnin stands high up overlooking a valley and the area called Total. The ruins of an ancient Crusaders Castle overlook the village, which is populated by Lebanese Muslims and Maronite Christians. You won't find that name (Total) on any map because it's a made up name. Adopted because of the Petrol Station located there of the French company Total. The area has beauty despite its dry barren state from the end of March to early November.

Two days of travel would ensure sleep came easy on arrival and after a friendly mug of tea and sandwiches. First sighting of surroundings is a big shock for young men and women from the green island of Ireland. Having arrived late the previous evening and in the dark often to the sound of explosions and gunfire close by.

The name Total (pronounced Toe Tal) was adopted by Irish military personnel of UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) who were stationed there during the period of conflict in the area 1978-2001. Total is a valley of rough barren ground and rocky hills. The Irish Transport Group for the various battalions serving under UN Mandate lived and worked in the valley. Operating a fleet of worn out American M35's and M50 Trucks the task of keeping them going on a daily basis was tremendous. The work by transport fitters accomplishing that task was heroic and the drivers, whose duties involved traversing the mountain roads, such as they were, regularly had to talk their way out of dangerous situations.

A daily re supply convoy left Tibnin for the Israeli/Lebanon Border. This convoy would include an armed heavy weapon escort element, in order to get safely through the strongholds of the various factions. There were a number of groups regularly in conflict in Southern Lebanon, these would have included local Muslim groups, Palestinians and Phalangists made up of Maronite Christian soldiers working in cooperation with Israel and another group of Lebanese nationalists, whose cry was (Lebanon for the Lebanese).

Fresh water had to be drawn daily in large trucks from one of two underground water sources. It was then distributed to Irish outposts and camps in the area of operations. It

was dangerous work and involved negotiating sometimes very hazardous territory and terrain. These underground springs were the only local source of drinking water and then after chemical treatment. Despite being a long way from home and the comforts of home, the soldiers were for the most part cheerful as they went about their various duties. Now into the month of April almost overnight the mild winter weather departed, to be replaced by clear skies and brilliant sunshine. These conditions would not change until early November. Darkness arrived in the evenings very quickly unlike home where it was a more gradual process. After the intense heat of the day the cool evenings in the mountains are a welcome respite. The men could have a couple of cold beers as they gathered together and passed the time telling stories or listening to music. The sky at night is particularly beautiful in the Middle East. Contact with home was still predominately by letter and the value and importance of those contacts could never be understated.

The battalion football pitch was situated in Total (football pitch is a great exaggeration), stony ground on dusty volcanic soil it barely coped. On one occasion, the Irish played host to a visiting team from the Ghanaian contingent. They arrived together with a medicine man dressed in white with whitened face and with a carved wooden idol under his arm. The medicine man proceeded around the pitch with the idol waving it about. He then produced a small container of white powder and sprinkled the pitch, the ball and lastly the Irish goalkeeper with the powder. The Ghanaian soldiers warned that we would be beaten five nil and indeed we were. The athletic prowess and the speed of those men were far too much for the Irish.

Later they were given a taste of Irish hospitality, visiting the sergeants mess in the main Irish base (Camp Shamrock), a few days afterwards I noted that our 'Jameson Irish Whiskey' mirror in its elegant frame was gone and had been replaced by a familiar carved wooden idle. ■

Coy Sgt Harry Mulhern (Retd), 49
Inf Bn, Lebanon



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

Adventure Kayaking *in Norway*

Slides on the Ulvaa standard

BY APTCE DANIEL O'BRIEN

Last year four members of the DF Kayak Club headed to Nepal on a three-week expedition, kayaking remote rivers in challenging environments. This year three of the same team headed to Norway for 10 days for some steep creeking.

Kayaking is a general term for a sport that has many different disciplines, from expedition kayaking, as we did in Nepal, to kayak polo, which is a highly competitive but relatively unheard of sport in Ireland, to sprint, marathon and slalom, which are Olympic disciplines.

In previous years we have run trips to the Alps for river running, aimed at honing our skills both on and off the water.

This year we attempted the challenge provided by the steep creeks of Norway. Known as a white water Mecca, with beautiful fjords, steep gorges around every corner, snowmelt to keep the rivers flowing all year round, and 24 hours of daylight in the summer, it is a kayaker's dream destination.

Also, with several of the highest cliffs in Europe, year-round snow, and countless trails, Norway is the perfect destination for anyone with a buzz for outdoor adventure pursuits, allowing climbing, skiing, mountain biking, and base jumping, all year. The small town of Vossevangen in the south-west is the undisputed No 1 destination.

We started our trip with a six-hour drive to Otta, and from there we headed to the Sjoa River for several runs on different sections, starting off with Grade 3+ water and finishing with the Grade 5 Sjoa Gorge, a pushy run with steep walls, only one way out, and large waves/holes that could easily swallow a boat and hold you under for several minutes at a time.

Next up was the Store Ula a river that begins and ends high on a plateau, as the section after is an un-runnable gorge that would mean certain death. This river begins with some small slides and narrow turns before the water disappears in front of you down an 18-metre waterfall into a shallow pool: a drop that few have run, and many of those who did have been seriously injured. This is when you must weigh up the risk versus reward. Does the glory of conquering one section of white water outweigh the risk of injury or death? More often than not this is not a hard decision.

First drop on store ula

Scouting the sjoa gorge

After this drop the river begins to flow over a sharp rock-bed with twisting turns and large undercuts down steep slides. This is when your scouting of the river is key, as you pick your line based on how you read the water: this is a kayaker's most important skill. As well as understanding



A view of money drop from above



Slides on the Store Ula



The top of money drop

the hydrodynamics of how water flows, you must understand how a boat will move through, over and under this water; looking for eddy currents, boils of air and dangerous recirculating holes.



Halfway down money drop



The finish of this spectacular river is a series of five waterfalls, each within 10 metres of the next. The first three are spectacular drops ranging from four to ten metres, before the fourth's 18-metre drop, with a dangerous ledge four metres from the top, followed by the fifth fall, just after which there is a massive undercut and recirculating currents. The combination

of these dangers and stories of a British kayaker who was paralysed after the fourth drop makes for easy decisions. Instead we set up rescue at the bottom of the fourth for a pair of French paddlers who made the first four drops look easy and then skipped the fifth. The climb down and back up from the fourth drop was harder than the French pair made it look. After these falls the un-runable section began.

We pushed north to some steeper rivers with less flow, some of which are infected with a salmon parasite, meaning all gear must be sterilized after getting off the river; the disinfectant is widely available.

With a drive through the deep fjords and up over the mountains we hit long hard rivers, ending up many miles from our starting point. Each time we did, one of us would thumb a lift back to our car, and the Norwegians seemed very happy to provide this service.

With many rivers under our belts we moved west to Voss to the larger more famous drops such as the 18-metre Money Drop waterfall, which, up until recently, companies used to pay kayakers up to €300 to run.

When we arrived it was late at night and although the water levels were perfect we decided to wait until morning to run. However, rain fell all night, changing the drop a lot. Still, after some scouting and serious consideration I decided to go ahead and run the drop.

As you sit above ready to go, you can hear and feel the roar of the waterfall as thousands of litres flow over the edge every second. You think through everything in your head, again and again. You know what you have to do and how to do it. Strap yourself in and hold on tight, is the simple breakdown, but realistically you are trying to stay calm, slow your heart rate, ensure your safety team are in place, set up on the right line even though it looks completely different from this new point of view. As you go over the top your heart rate peaks, you take one last stroke and keep the boat aimed perfectly.

As you fall all sound seems to have disappeared as your focus is on your sole task, you reach the bottom and are completely swallowed by water, all light disappears. The sound is back now, and you can feel crushing pressure on your ears and eyelids. You can feel the water pound down on top of you as it rages and tries to tear the paddle from your hand. You squeeze tight with your hands and feel the pressure on your ears begin to ease as you rise to the surface. Light begins to shine through the bubbles, and finally you pop up, with a mere moment to celebrate before your focus changes to getting to an eddy before you get washed over the next drop.

While Norway is known for being expensive, that should not deter you from travelling there, as it is mainly alcohol, sugary and processed foods that take the hit. Fuel was comparable to Ireland and we managed to keep our costs low by bringing a gas cooker and sticking to a diet of rice, pasta, veg and some meat all mixed in together; porridge for breakfast; and bread, etc, for lunch.

With our 10 days in Norway costing around €700 each, including flights, this fabulous destination will most definitely be visited again. ■

2 Bde Adventure Race 2015

REPORT & PHOTOS BY CPL LEE COYLE

The 4th Annual 2 Bde Adventure Race took place in the Phoenix Park on 21st October 2015, with approx. 50 competitors taking part on the day from beginners to seasoned Triathletes.

The race is designed to challenge athletes through a number of stages, starting at the Magazine Fort in the park where the athletes assembled at the start/finish line. Their first challenge was to complete a 3km run up Khyber path and then left down past St Mary's Hospital out the gate onto Chapelizod Road finishing at the Defence Forces Boat Club. They quickly put on life vests and into 2-man Kayaks for a 2km row up the river Liffey. When they returned from their short boat trip it was a return run back the 3km to collect their bikes from the transition beside the Magazine Fort. With no time to rest it was back up Khyber path to complete a 12km looped bike course on closed roads around the football fields. The final leg took athletes from transition on foot towards the Defence Forces Army Grounds where they completed a 3km obstacle course, with the athletes overcoming several challenging obstacles laid out by 2 Bde CTIs.

It was a great day for all who took part, with next year's race being talked about already and hopefully becoming a full Defence Forces event.

The event was organised by Capt Ronan Lambe, BPEO 2 Bde and Cpl Karen Robinson, Gym Staff McKee Bks. They would like to thank the other McKee Bks Gym Staff, Air Corps Gym Staff, the CTIs from 27 Inf Bn - Sgt Mehan and Cpl Rea who set up the obstacle course, the DFAA for organising the use of the Kayaks, CQMS Casey McQuillan from the Equit Sch, the Catering Sch McKee Bks for providing the food, all those who took part in the event and importantly the Office of Public Works (OPW) for allowing them the use of the park. ■

Place	Rank/Name	Unit	Time
Male Category			
1st	Comdt Coffey	7 Inf Bn	1hr 35mins
2nd	Tpr McCarthy	2 Cav Res	1hr 37mins
3rd	Cpl Farrell	DFTC	1hr 40mins
Female Category			
1st	Cpl Whelan	Inf Sch, DFTC	1hr 51mins
2nd	Capt Mortimor	Mil Archives, DFHQ	1hr 54mins
O/40s			
1st	Sgt Sinnot	Air Corps HQ	1hr 41mins
O/50s			
1st	Sgt Buckley	403 Sqn, AC	1hr 43mins



Sports Roundup

BY SGT RENA KENNEDY, PR BRANCH



Sgt Brian Ankers, No 1 Ops Wing - Spartathlon 2015

Described as one of the world's most gruelling footraces, Spartathlon is 246km single stage run including 1,200m ascent of Mount Parthenio with a 36hr cut off. Since 1984, every September in 30° of heat, Spartathlon is in memory of Pheidippides, in 490BC at the Battle of Marathon was sent to Sparta to seek help in the war between the Greeks and Persians. Only 400 of the world's best ultra runners compete in the event. Entry to race requires a sub 18hr result in a 100-mile race within the previous 12 months. Brian's race went really well and of the 390 athletes only 40% finished. "It was easily the toughest thing I've ever done. I made it to Sparta with an hour to spare after continuous running for 35hrs".

Pte Gretta O'Connor, 27 Inf Bn - Ironman World Championships

This triathlon is a 3.8km Swim, 180.2km Cycle and 42.2km run, held annually in Kailua-Kona since 1978. Gretta felt the Kona swim went well and completed in just over 1hr. With temperatures soaring Gretta said the 6.5hrs cycle was the toughest part of the race, but she hydrated consistently to prepare for the run. With a marathon remaining she had to stick rigidly to her plan to complete the race, taking on two cups of water, using sponges to cool down and placing ice under her cap. She finished her marathon in 3hrs 49mins taking her total race time to 11hrs 41mins and was the first Irish lady home. "I really enjoyed the finish shoot with everyone cheering I grabbed the Irish flag off my mam and sister and crossed the line, such an amazing experience"



Sgts Terry & Sinead Wearen both DFTC - Polar Circle Marathon/ Polar Bear Challenge

This competition comprised a marathon on one day followed by a half marathon the next. It took place inside the Arctic Circle in Kangerlussuaq in Western Greenland. The first 7.5km of both the marathon and the half marathon take place on the ice caps presenting challenging and cold conditions. Their water had frozen within 10mins due to the gale force headwind of -30° and ground temperature of -18°. Running faster to get off the ice cap was the sensible thing to do. Sinead was delighted to cross the line in 4hrs 28mins to win the female race. Terry, undertaking this race as his first marathon bounced across the line in 5hrs 19mins - in apparent ease. The half marathon weather was kinder with a balmy temperature of -8°. Sinead finished 5th in the women's category in 2hrs 33mins while Terry was not too far behind in 2hrs 39mins.

Sgt Tara Kennedy, DFHQ, - Dublin City Marathon

Tara began 2015 with a set goal to run the Dublin City Marathon and to break her PB of 3hrs 8mins from Berlin the previous year. She started her training normally taking to the Phoenix Park and running hard for up to 60mins. She received a training programme from Capt James Ledingham, which took into account her daily routine, work life and family/kids. The programme totally changed her running, most weeks running up to 53-miles per week. "I was surprised that my running improved so much and I was breaking all my previous PBs. Having being selected for 51 Inf Gp, I was in a slight panic about pre deployment training as I would spend 3-weeks in Kilbride and the Glen of Imaal before the Dublin City Marathon." Tara finished 2nd O/40 and 4th Irish lady home in Dublin City Marathon in a time of 2:59:24. This was the icing on the cake for her in a year that saw her win DF 10-mile, half marathon and An Cosantóir 10km.

Sgt Robbie Byrne, Mil Col, DFTC - Dublin City Marathon

Last year Robbie heard about a number of soldiers/friends who are fighting cancer or are directly affected by cancer. "What do you say when another soldier tells you his child has cancer, I have 3 children and all I think is how lucky we are, BUT what can we do or how can we help?" It is difficult asking people to donate and sponsor, as there are lots of worthwhile causes. Robbie's answer was to do the Dublin City Marathon dressed for battle. "When you serve with someone for over 26-years at home and overseas and this knocks at the door, as a man and as a soldier all you can do sometimes is put your kit on and run... because that's what soldiers do. Running in kit and going through some pain for a few hours is nothing to what families who are affected go through."



NOTICEBOARD

Interested in a Military Themed Gala Ball?

Swan Batt had some great successful social nights over the past number of years. They are now organising a Military Themed Gala Ball (see advert on page 26). It will also be used to raise some much-needed funds for ONE's Brú na BhFiann (Home of the Brave), a homeless initiative for retired DF personnel at the same time. **Thanks for your support, Benny Hill, Swan Batt.**

New RBL Midlands Branch

A new branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) known as the Midlands Branch (Combined Services) was launched on 7th November 2015; it is the first new branch in the South since 1989, when the Limerick Branch reformed itself. The branch will uphold the traditions, principles, and morals of all true servicemen and women.

ONE XMAS GIFT DRIVE

A gift drive is being organised to support retired members of the Defence Forces who are resident in ONE Houses' in Dublin, Athlone and Letterkenny. You are asked to donate a practical gift or voucher that can be used in a personal fashion or to make life more comfortable for those veterans living in ONE houses'. Gifts can be donated to the following people/locations: Finner Camp - Sgt Charlie Haughey; Aiken Bks/Gormanston Camp - Cpl Valerie Young; Cathal Brugha Bks - Cpl Stevie Hardiman or Sgt RDF Hazel Brennan; McKee Bks/St Bricins - CQMS Paul Gifford; Custume Bks - Sgt Martin Purfield, 2 AR; DFTC - Sgt Amy O Connor CIS Gp; DFHQ Newbridge - Sgt Rena Kennedy; Casement Baldonnel - Sgt Leona Walsh. Gifts should be donated by 15th December.

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E	D	K	P	E	D	X	N	H	C	K	C	H	I	G
Z	O	C	N	J	P	N	C	A	A	I	D	G	T	V
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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was John Fitzpatrick, Co Westmeath. Closing date is 21st January 2016.

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COMPETITION



For a chance to win a Princeton Tec Charge MPLS Olive Drab Red LED worth €89.75, kindly sponsored by www.team-alpha.ie, answer the following question:

What shoe sizes are available in the 5.11 Range Master Boots on 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 by the 21st January 2015. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

Last month's winner was: Colin Young, Co Meath.

IRELAND'S CALL IRISH SPORTING HEROES WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR

Author: Stephen Walker

Publisher: Merrion Press

(September 2015)

<http://merrionpress.ie>

ISBN: 978-1785370182

Price: €19.99

Pages: 298



In *Ireland's Call* the author details the lives and deaths of Irish sportsmen, and chronicles their heart-breaking stories of the men who swapped the sportsfield for

the battlefield.

His poignant account features previously unpublished photographs, letters and archive documents. The stories of 40 Irishmen from GAA stars to international footballers, and includes rugby, hockey, cricket, athletics and a championship-winning golfer.

I found the following story to be a standout item on Ireland's lost Champion - Michael Moran from North Co. Dublin who had a difficult start in life. Born in 1886 in a cottage that stood close to the links at Royal County Dublin Golf Club. Spending his early years watching and playing the sport with a natural talent with a slight frame he putted well and was able to drive the ball down the fairway with impressive power. From the age of twenty-one up to the time of his death in 1918 he had been an Irish champion for five successive years and had been the first Irishman to win prize money for his performance in 1913. Had Michael Moran survived the war it is likely that he would have returned to the sport he loved.

This book is full of surprising detail; it reveals how the lives of Ireland's brightest sports stars ended prematurely on foreign soil. **SS**

BETWEEN TWO FLAGS: JOHN MITCHEL AND JENNY VERNER

Author: Anthony Russell

Publisher: Merrion Press (April 2015)

<http://merrionpress.ie>

ISBN: 978-1785370007

Price: €17.99 P/B €45.00 H/B

Pages: 222



Between Two Flags tells the story of two people who run away and get married because both their parents tried to prevent their relationship. This life-journey takes them from Ulster, through the rebellion of 1848, to Van

Diemen's Land, Paris, San Francisco and through the American Civil War. A remarkable marriage between John Mitchel a lawyer, journalist and nationalist and Jenny Verner his wife, she equally committed to Republicanism.

The family moved to Dublin, where Mitchel took up a position with 'The Nation' newspaper. John Mitchel's political views had developed over time and his articles encouraged rebellious action against the rule of the British Government. Mitchel would set up his own newspaper, 'The United Irishman' in which he would promote sedition. This action led to his arrest for treason, felony and his sentence was transportation to Tasmania for a fourteen-year prison sentence.

He escaped to America and in San Francisco was given a hero's welcome. While in America, Mitchel started up several newspapers, holding the position of editor with the 'Richmond Examiner' with equal support from his wife Jenny they gave enthusiastic support to the institution of slavery. The couple's deaths in different continents withstood the separation, heartbreak and upheaval through remarkable times. A truly epic tale that is both enjoyable and insightful of those times. **SS**

AVENGING ANGELS BAD TIMES #3

Author: Chuck Dixon

Publisher: Bruno Books

(September 2014)

www.dixonverse.net

ASIN: 00NK1TFJS

Price: €4.50

Pages: 335



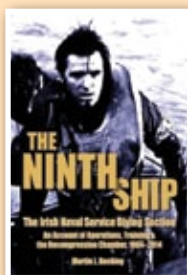
Chuck Dixon's new sci-fi series *Bad Times* continues with *Avenging Angels*, which follows the time travelling siblings Morris and Caroline Tauber and their ex-army Rangers going back in time again. Where to now? This time they go up against the might of the Roman Empire, which is at the height of its reign and try and stop another time traveller changing the past of a very famous slave.

The Rangers team has a few new additions, these new team members include a sea hardened US Navy Veteran and ancient warrior who is rewarded by being brought to the new world, these add more character and colour to the story. They take the fight to the Legion with sniper weapons against the spear, using shock and awe tactics to frighten and reduce their numbers, and plenty of explosions too. There is a great sub plot that sees Caroline hiding out in war torn Europe during an intense WWII siege. The *Bad Times* series has easy to follow story lines that jump between the past and the present with relative ease.

This is another great addition to the *Bad Times* series. **WF**

THE NINTH SHIP THE IRISH NAVAL DIVING SECTION – 1964-2014

Author: Martin Buckley CPO NS (Retd)
Publisher: Eva Books Ireland (November 2015)
ISBN: 978-993411007
Pages: 284



This is a chronological list of events surrounding the Naval Service Diving Section from its inception to becoming one of most highly trained and highly respected units in the Defence Forces. It starts off with an officer being detailed to go on a Torpedo Anti-Submarine course in the

UK, who had at the time no interest in diving to becoming a major driver in the establishment of the unit. The reader is brought on a journey of fighting with the chain of command and the bean counters in an effort to get the unit established. Eventually through hard work and perseverance won out in the end. A well-researched and written – a very enjoyable read, made all the better as I knew all the players involved and it brought back so many memories. This is a must read for anybody in the diving fraternity and especially for anybody who has served in the Naval Service. **KS**

On the 30th October 2015, Minister for Defence Simon Coveney TD launched Martin Buckley's 'The Ninth Ship' in Haulbowline Naval Base. In attendance were FOCNS Commodore Hugh Tully and COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, many serving and former Naval Divers, ARW personnel, along with family and guests. In opening FOCNS Commodore Tully said, "This book is very timely with the 50th Anniversary of the Naval Diving Section... and Bravo Zulu on a job well done!" The Minister, spoke of his own personal tragedy where he met the Naval Divers who recovered his father's body (Hugh Coveney TD, former Minister of Defence 1994-5) from Roberts Cove, outside Cork Harbour, after he had tragically fallen in on 14th March 1998 whilst walking his dog. He said, "I had a huge source of pride meeting the dive team, the professionalism was seen and filtered out to everyone." He finished by saying, "This is what you do, and this marks that journey, thank you to Martin for telling it... This book will bring back that knowledge to the Naval Service." **WF**

HELLDIVER: INTREPID #4

Author: Chris Allen
Publisher: Momentum Books
(November 2015)
www.momentumbooks.com.au
ISBN: 978-1760300616
Price: €4.25
Pages: 212

Helldiver, the fourth book in Chris Allen's bestselling Intrepid series, contains the best build up to the main story that I've read in years! From fast boats, to car chases and hard hitting gun battles on the streets of Honolulu, where former paratrooper Major Alex Morgan earns his title policeman, soldier and spy. Morgan now an agent of Interpol's 'black-ops' Intelligence, Recovery, Protection and Infiltration (Intrepid) Division is on his next mission. Following on from his last mission in *Avenger*, Morgan is taking a break from Intrepid and goes in search of some private work. He finds it providing security for eccentric billionaire Hedeon Zolner, aka *Helldiver* because he likes to dive shipwrecks. Morgan foils an attempt on Zolner's life, but Morgan suspects there's something not right about *Helldiver*. Morgan is called back in as Intrepid faces it hardest mission yet being attacked from the inside.

Chris Allen has signed a deal for a full Intrepid series to appear on the big and small screens hopefully in 2016. **WF**



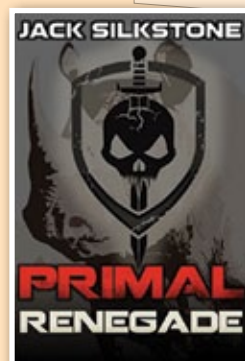
PRIMAL RENEGADE (THE PRIMAL SERIES #8)

Author: Jack Silkstone
Publisher: Amazon Digital Services, Inc. (November 2015)
www.primalunleashed.com
ASIN: B013AoZW3G
Price: €3.60
Pages: 200

In PRIMAL Redemption the CIA chased the PIRMAL team out of their secluded island base. PRIMAL are now staying off the radar and maintaining a minimum operation, the rest of the PRIMAL team disperse and try relax. Bishop and Saneh take sanction in a Zambia National Park where they are helping their friends with an animal reserve. Bishop is helping to train the rangers to help combat the continuous poaching treat of protected species, including the black rhino. Elephant and rhino tusks are in high demand from Asian backed poachers. In one instance the poachers need to get away with their highly profitable illegal cargo and anyone in their way will be killed by machete or bullet.

A ranger vehicle meets their bullets head on, and a pregnant Saneh takes a head wound that leaves her in a coma and their infant's life in danger.

Hot on the poachers heels and ignoring calls and advice is a renegade Bishop in search of his own brand of justice. Luckily he has his South African PRIMAL colleague Kruger along for the carnage, but it doesn't end well for Bishop as he faces his toughest albeit unofficial mission yet. PRIMAL Deception #9 is due out in 2016. **WF**



WHAT I DO

NAME

NOEL HICKEY

RANK

TROOPER (RETD)

UNIT

OBW CURRAGH
CAMP

After I finished school I joined FÁS in Newbridge and in 1992 I began a two-year diploma in mechanical engineering in Ballyfermot. After completing that course, I decided to join the Defence Forces, which is not really surprising as I grew up in a military house: my father served in the Cadet School and I also had two uncles in the 1 Cav Sqn.

I enlisted in Plunkett Bks, DFTC, on 11 April 1994, and after completing recruit and three-star training I was posted to 1 Tank Sqn, also in Plunkett Bks.

During my time in the DF I completed a number of courses, including a Basic AML gomm and a VTT Gunner Course in January 1995, which I really enjoyed as it gave me the opportunity to work with large combat vehicles.

I did my first overseas trip in 1995 with the BMR, 77 Inf Bn, UNIFIL. I really enjoyed being deployed in a foreign country and getting to see the world, so it wasn't long after my return before I decided to go back with 79 Inf Bn in 1996, serving again with the BMR.

Not long after I returned from my second tour to the Lebanon I completed a Cavalry Drivers course, which gave me the chance to move on to larger military vehicles like the Scorpion light reconnaissance vehicle.

I travelled overseas again in 1997, with Recce Section, C Coy, 81 Inf Bn, before completing a clerks course in April 1998.

This was the last course I completed in the DF as I left in June 1999 after five years service and got a job as a stock controller in a computer hardware company.

I decided to go back to college and got a diploma in English literature from Kilroys College, Dublin, and an ECDL cert from Kildare Computer Training School in 2000.

A few years later I saw an ad in FÁS for an engraver with the DF. I applied for the position and was successful, becoming an engraver in Ordnance Base Workshops (OBW) in the Curragh Camp in December 2007.

When I arrived in OBW, Cpl Séamus McGann took me under his wing and trained me in; showing me the ropes and what the job entailed. After Séamus retired in 2012 Cpl John Doyle took over.

One of our jobs as engravers in OBW is to number all items of DF ordnance and we have just finished numbering the Steyr model 14 upgrade. We also produce decals for vehicles and outdoor signs for military camps and barracks; and we make plaques for presentations to foreign dignitaries, for overseas trips, retirements, courses, etc.

It's a very busy area, with a lot of deadlines and targets to meet, but it's also very enjoyable and rewarding.

I'm a keen runner, which is something that remained with me from my time in the army, and I'm a member of Kildare Town Running Club and at the time of writing I'm in training to do the Dublin City marathon.

I also compete in triathlons and have done a tri-leaders course with Triathlon Ireland, which gives me the opportunity to train athletes.

I look forward to continuing to work for the DF as an engraver and to keep running and competing in triathlons. ■



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Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women



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Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen & Women

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THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR



*Merry Christmas
To all our Readers*



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*Le gach dea-ghuí don Nollag agus don Athbliain
With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year*

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Abyne Fitzgerald