



THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR

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JUNE 2013

MEDIA
PIONEER
AWARDS

SHORTLIST 2013

108 IRISHFINN BN
MRE & REVIEW

AIR CORPS
PRESERVE THE PAST

RANGER WING
QUALIFICATION

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Front Cover

Naval Service FORST Exercise.
Photo By: A/Sea David Jones.

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

Editorial

Hello, well we didn't win the Specialist Media Pioneer Awards 2013, the overall winner was *Football Week*, but after seeing the competition we are very happy to be just shortlisted. We will continue to make this magazine better. As ever your photos are *On Parade*. The opening of Duncannon Fort Museum and the final shoot of the AML 90 feature *In Focus*. Cpl Paul Millar introduces us to a pictorial look at the *Army Ranger Wing Qualification* with Armn Jason Byrne's photos. In *Preserving the Past*, Wesley Bourke talks to the Air Corps about their recent archives project. Our *Lebanon* feature this month focuses on the MRE of both Irish and Finns. In our *Def-Tec* centre spread Lt William Halpin tells us about the Fort Davis Training Facility along with some excellent photos from A/Sea Davy Jones. In *Strategic Review* Wesley Bourke reports on the Naval Services FORST Exercise which took place recently. James Wims tells us about the stand-down of the 54 Res Arty Regt in our *In Reserve* section. In *History*, JP Powell continues his Famous Irish Regiments features with Butler's Irish Regiment. Our *Sport* pages feature the DF Indoor Rowing Competition and the results of the DF Half Marathon. Plus we have our other regular features – *World Strategic Picture*, *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews* and *What I Do*. I would also like to thank Photographer Cpl Column Lawlor for his excellent work while standing in for Armn Neville Coughlan.

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor

Can You
Help?



We have had a request to find the rightful owner or family of this medal found about 1988 in Annacotty, Co Limerick. The medal belonged to 284981 Grnr Michael Patterson (DOB: 1885) of the Royal Garrison Artillery. Any information please contact: limerickslife@gmail.com - www.limerickslife.com

Congratulations to Lt Gearóid Ó Briain, Air Corps who completed the Great Limerick Run in a time of 3hrs 16mins, carrying a 20lbs back pack. This is a new world record, beating the last record of 3hrs 25 mins being set two weeks ago in the London Marathon. Training Photo: DF Press Office



Well done to all the Air Corps members who pushed the plane from Casement Aerodrome, Co Dublin to Salthill in Galway in order to raise awareness of Organ Donation. The event took 40hrs to complete as they handed out donor cards on their 200+Km walk, I did my bit (26Km)!

108 Inf
Bn UNIFIL
review



Pictured are members of the Patrick Sarsfield Br of ONE with members of the General Staff, who attended the 108 Inf Bn UNIFIL review at Sarsfield's Bks, Limerick on Mon 25th of April 2013.
Photo: Eddie Lillis

Record Breaker
Plane Push
for Donor
Awareness



◀ NAVY PROMOTION

On the 8 May, Comdr Brian Fitzgerald presented PO Jerome McCarthy with his PO stripes for his promotion. *Photo: A/Sea Davy Jones*



NEW ENGINE ROOM ARTIFICERS ▲

Pictured at Haulbowline Naval Base are the latest Direct Entry Engine Room Artificers (ERA) class who completed 16 weeks of military training including leadership, PST, DC and FF. ERA are an essential part of a ships company, they are responsible for the maintenance and repair of all mechanical elements of a ship. *Photo: A/Sea David Jones*



◀ IN MEMORY OF 'BEANO'

Pictured are members of the DFTC who handed over a cheque for €1,130 to St Brigid's Hospice. The money was raised from a recent 5km fun run in memory of Sgt Brian 'Beano' Carey (RIP). *Photo: Sgt JJ Ryan (HQ DFTC)*



◀ FAIRWELL 'GLEN'

CQMS Glen Murry's presentation took place in the NCO'S Mess, McKee Bks on the 26 April 2013. Glen served 27 years in the DF. Making the presentation is Col A Hanlon (J4). Glen's brothers also served in the DF: Cpl George Murray (2 Grn MP Coy) (RIP UNIFIL 1984) and Sgt Alan Murray (Band W Bde). Glen's family would like to thank all who attended. *Photo: Sgt Anthony Byrne (7 Inf Bn) & Courtesy of Sgt Mick Doyle (EPMO)*



FRENCH DEFENCE ATTACHE ▲ VISITS BALDONNEL

Pictured during the visit of the French Defence Attaché Colonel Alain Bayle to the Air Corps. He was received by GOC Air Corps Brigadier General Paul Fry, and was briefed at various locations on the operational roles within the Air Corps. *Photo courtesy: Capt Mark Hegarty (PSO to GOC Air Corps)*

ANZAC DAY ▶ REMEMBERED

Pictured are members of the United Irish Ex Services Association of Australia (UIESAA), taken in Sydney on 25 April 2013, gathered for the annual Anzac Day march. For more info: <http://uiesaawordpress.com> Photo: Paddy Armstrong



Members of ONE attending "ANZAC Day Dawn Service" on Thursday 25th of April 2013 at Grangegorman Military Cemetery presided over by Monsignor Eoin Thynne Head Chaplain to the Defence Forces. *Photo: Desmond B O'Hara*





UNIFIL'S ITALAIR TASK GROUP ▲

ITALAIR flown more than 372hrs and 4 medical evacuations for UNIFIL in the last six months. Over the past 34 years, ITALAIR has provided support activities for UNIFIL. The Italian Inter-Force Unit of UNIFIL is composed of a fleet of Task Force AB212 helicopters from the Italian Aviation Army based on 2nd Regt AVES "SIRIO" reinforced by Italian Air Force and Navy crews. Photo: Lt Col Andrea Martorana PIO Chief, UNIFIL Sector West.



CLIMBING NEW HEIGHTS ▲

Members of 2 Arty Regt set high standards and "climbed" the ladder in the 2 BDE Orienteering Final recently at the Rock of Dunamase, Portlaoise. Pictured (L/R) are: Gunners' Greg Mulligan, Ray Cassidy, Liam Greene, Damien Barnicle, David Fitzpatrick, Michael Connell and Alan O'Neill. Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan (2 Arty Regt)

FOR THE CHILDREN ▼

Pte Stephen Byrne, B Coy, 6 Inf Bn Athlone raised €4,000 in aid of Our Lady's Children's Hospital Dublin for a climb he did last Christmas day. He is pictured here handing over the cheque with his support group. Photo: Stephen Byrne



UNIFIL SOLDIERS ► REMEMBERED

Pictured is ONE National President Peter A Byrne with members of INUVA at the Tibnin Monument with Comdt Ger O'Grady (107 Inf Bn). They are Peter Byrne (President ONE), Patsy Dineen, William O'Brien, Kathleen O'Brien, Paddy Bourke, John Kelleher, Theresa Kelleher, Dan Clancy, Joan O'Shea, Bobby Raymond, Timmy Buckley and Don Noonan. Photo: Capt Mark Conway (108 Inf Bn)



24 JUNIOR C&S COURSE ▲

Pictured are members of 24 Junior C&S Course on their Counter Insurgency Instruction Block - 17 May 13 (L/R): Lt Col Stephen Ryan (Instr), Capt John Tynan (Student), Dr David Murphy (NUI Maynooth), Capt Patrick Bury Retd (Guest lecturer - Afghanistan Veteran), CSM James Kearns Retd (Guest lecturer - Aden Veteran), Capt John Kenny (Class President) and Capt Donal Burke (Instr). Photo Sgt Mick Burke

AML 90S GO OUT WITH A BANG!

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

PHOTOS ARMN JASON BYRNE (105 SQN)

The Defence Forces' Panhard fleet of AML 90s and AML 20s have now reached the end of their operational life as they have been replaced by the latest AFV investment in the Cavalry Corps, the MOWAG Piranha Mk III, with two variants the close-reconnaissance vehicle (CRV) and the medium reconnaissance vehicle (MRV), both of which entered service in 2008. To mark this occasion the Cavalry Corps held the last Panhard AML 90 shoot on April 29th/30th in the Glen of Imaal.

The Panhard AML is a light armoured car with a 4x4 drive system and armed originally with either a 90mm quick-firing, low-pressure gun (AML 90) or a 60mm breech-loading mortar (AML 60). In the Defence Forces the AML 60 armament was replaced with a 20mm cannon (AML 20) in recent years. An upgrade programme in the 1990s, which included dieselisation and returretting, extended the operational life of the vehicles.

The AML's ancestor, the Panhard-Genty armoured car, was produced in 1904 for the French Army. Panhard started production of the AML in 1960, and since then over 4,000 vehicles have been made. In the intervening

decades Panhards have been involved in military operations around the world. The Lebanese Armed Forces bought 50+ AML 90s in the early 1970s and these vehicles saw action throughout the various conflicts that occurred Lebanon from 1975 to 1990. Also, the Argentinean Army deployed 12 AML 90s during the Falklands War in 1982.

Panhard armoured vehicles were first introduced into service with the Defence Forces in 1964 and, soon after, the AML 60 saw overseas service with our troops serving in Cyprus with UNFICYP. Since then the Panhard armoured fleet has provided dedicated service to the Defence Forces at home and overseas. Memorable incidents involving the Panhard include firing in action in the Battle of At Tiri in Lebanon (1980), providing a quick reaction force (QRF) to assist injured civilians during the 'Grapes of Wrath' offensive in Lebanon (1996) and being used in an armoured reconnaissance role in Monrovia, Liberia when intensive rioting began (2004).

Now the Defence Forces fleet of Panhards has finally reached the end of the road and all of the vehicles were withdrawn from service on May 1st, the day after their final shoot. ■

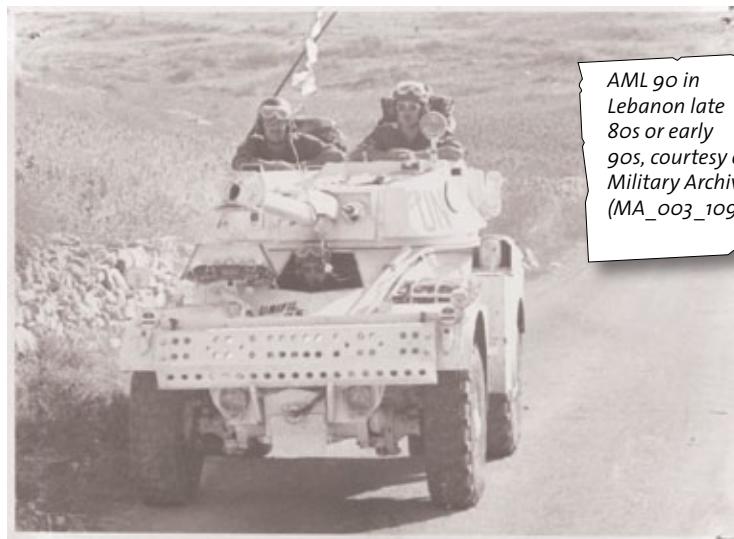
Panhard AML 90/20 Specifications

Dimensions

Length:	5.110m
Width:	1.970m
Height:	2.070m (without antenna)
Wheelbase:	2.500m
Track:	1.620m
Ground clearance:	0.330m

Mechanical Characteristics

Engine:	4 cylinder 4HD
Bore stroke:	85x88
Displacement:	1.997 L
Maximum engine governed speed:	4,700 tr/min
Power:	90 CV
Compression ratio:	7.25-1
Clutch:	no clutch pedal (centrifugal type with electro-magnetic automatic control)
Gear box:	selective sliding gear



AML 90 in Lebanon late 80s or early 90s, courtesy of Military Archives (MA_003_109)



THE TRENCH EXPERIENCE

DUNCANNON FORT

REPORT & PHOTOS BY CPL PAUL MILLAR



Crossing a drawbridge over a massive dry moat must be one of the most impressive ways to get to a museum. The World at War Museum in Duncannon Fort, Co Wexford, which was opened on 19th April by Minister of State for Defence, Paul Kehoe TD, has such an entrance. Its location and setting alone are worthy of a visit. Add in a top-class war display and you have a must-see destination.

Walking down the steps to the basement feels like descending into a bunker. Upon entry you are immediately immersed in an atmospheric set of panoramic displays. The first shows a German position in a French farmhouse at the start of the confusion that followed D-Day. The artefacts, many of which are original, are not displayed in a window but in an authentic setting, showing how they were used. The small details, like the casings on the floor, are what jump out. Everything is well thought out and gives the impression that you're walking through a WWII film set.

The Trench Experience is an audio-visual treat. The reconstruction of the various aspects of the horror of the trenches is incredibly realistic and makes you think twice about sticking your head over the parapet. As you walk through the snaking trenches, with the sounds of a barrage in the distance and explosions illuminating the horizon, you realise what it must have

been like for the thousands that went 'over the top'.

There's also a main museum that covers warfare through the ages. The impressive Roman Room depicts both military and civilian life in Roman times and the journey continues through the ages right up to Soviet and NATO equipment of recent times.

However, the museum hasn't stopped evolving yet and a second floor, dedicated to the Irish soldier, will be opened by June. Starting with the pikemen of 1798, this display will take you through the Irish War of Independence and Civil War to the present day domestic and overseas operations of Óglaigh na hÉireann, while also focusing on the Northern Ireland Troubles and the peace process.

The museum is the work of Duncannon Fort manager Marion Coady, Capt Joe O'Toole (1 Bde MP Res Coy) and Capt Noel McCarthy (1 Bde Res HQ), who spent a lot of time sourcing, storing and displaying the collection. Several of the artefacts and weapons were kindly loaned by Sgt Walsh and Comdt Moore of the Curragh Museum.

Since the Defence Forces left Duncannon Fort in 1993, it has been developed into a focal point for tourism in Wexford and is ideal for a day out. In addition to the museum the fort contains shops, galleries, a cafe and a photography studio, while the town itself has a great beach and numerous restaurants where you can reflect on your experiences of the museum.

At the opening ceremony Minister Kehoe said, "If the walls of this fort could talk ...their stories would be epic." The World at War Museum gives these stories a loud voice.

To find out more about the museum contact Joe O'Toole at jjotoole@eircom.net, visit www.duncannonfort.com, or keep up to date on the fort's Facebook site. ■





EUROPE



Although not recognising its claim to independence in a breakthrough deal Serbia did concede Kosovo's control of Serb areas in northern Kosovo. The European Commission proposed that membership talks should begin with Serbia after it partly normalised relations with Kosovo.

The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the arrest and imprisonment of Ukraine's former Prime Minister, Yulia Tymoshenko, was illegal and politically motivated. However the ruling may not oblige the present Ukrainian government under, President Viktor Yanukovych, to free her.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) detained Ryan Fogle a US embassy staff member in Moscow for "provocative ac-

tions". Fogle believed to be a CIA agent was wearing a blond wig and reportedly carrying a large sum of money, technical devices and written instructions for the Russian agent he had tried to recruit. The incident did not contribute to "strengthening mutual trust between Russia and the US", a spokesman for President Putin said. Fogle has been declared "persona non grata" and told to leave the country. The US State Dept confirmed the arrest.

Libya's proto-parliament passed a law banning any senior official who served under Muammar Qaddafi from holding office for the next ten years.

In Nigeria some 200 fighters from the extreme Islamist militia, Boko Haram, launched a series of co-ordinated attacks on army barracks, a prison and a police station in the north-eastern town Bama. 55 people were killed and over 100 prisoners freed.



Chad's president, Idriss Déby, said that his country's troops in Mali, now numbering around 2,000, would soon be withdrawn rather than face a protracted war against rebels. This may require France to keep its forces there longer than it had anticipated.

ASIA

In Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, hundreds of people are believed killed after security forces cracked down on members of an extreme Islamist group, Hefezat, who were demonstrating for stricter Islamic policies. The city is also reeling from the collapse of a clothing factory that killed 900.



A tribunal in Pakistan disqualified the country's former military president, Pervez Musharraf, from standing for election in May. The next day another court ordered his arrest on separate charges.

North Korea sentenced Kenneth Bae, an American citizen who entered the country as a tourist, to 15 years hard

labour after convicting him of trying to overthrow the government.

Taiwanese authorities admitted a man was in hospital with the H7N9 bird flu virus. This is the first case to be reported outside mainland China where it has killed 22 people since March.

After India accused the Chinese army of erecting tents on India's side of the border the government warned China that it would take "every possible step" to defend its interests in their disputed Himalayan border in Ladakh.

After eight Chinese ships sailed near disputed islands in the East China Sea, Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, warned that he would respond with force if any Chinese people attempted to land on the islands.

The conflict in Syria escalated with Israel launching airstrikes on Syria's capital Damascus. It targeted chemical research facilities and weapons en route from Iran to Hezbollah, Lebanon's Shia party-cum-militia. Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, hinted that he and his group's Iranian sponsors would strengthen their support of President Bashar al-Assad.

In Syria's north-west coastal region at least 100 were killed in two massacres. The region is home

to the Alawites, the Shia offshoot to which President Bashar al-Assad belongs. At a meeting in Moscow, Russia's leaders and America's Secretary of State, John Kerry, agreed to set up an international peace-conference on Syria. On state television President Assad accused the West of supporting al-Qaeda in his country, and warned that it would pay a heavy price.

Days ahead of national elections, the first since US troops withdrew; a series of bombings across Iraq killed at least 60 people.

THE AMERICAS

A report by the Pentagon accused China's government and armed forces of cyber-espionage by targeting American government computers. The Chinese authorities called the accusations "groundless" speculation.

Haitian lawyers are demanding \$100,000 in compensation off the UN for victims of the country's cholera epidemic. The UN admitted that the disease probably originated from its Nepali peacekeepers in 2010.

Three friends of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the surviving Boston Marathon bomber, were arrested for aiding him after the attack and helping dispose of evidence.



Canadian police arrested two suspected terrorists for planning to derail a passenger train. Police say the men had received instructions from elements of al-Qaeda in Iran, though not supported by the Iranian government.



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PROUD TO WORK WITH THE DEFENCE FORCES

PRESERVING THE PAST

The Air Corps Museum and Heritage Project

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN, ARWN DEBBIE KEATING & ARMN PADDY REILLY



The collection will be made available in the near future.

The Defence Forces, along with other public sector agencies, has opened up internship vacancies in various sections to candidates via JobBridge, the national internship scheme, which is designed to give people seeking employment greater skills and experience to better place them on the jobs market. One such scheme is the Air Corps Museum and Heritage Project.

Many of our readers will be familiar with Armn Mick Whelan (historian and curator of the

Air Corps museum) who, with his volunteers, maintains and preserves the nation's only military aviation museum. He is delighted that the Air Corps' archives are finally going to receive the attention he believes they deserve. "Although the archives are out of sight in storage the information, both in print and in photographs, is extensive, going right back to the foundation of the state," Armn Whelan says.

"Through JobBridge we now have four archivists working for us," explained Comdt Ronan Verling, Civilian Employment Officer. "We as an organisation benefit with the skill set these interns bring to us, especially on this archival and records project. They



in turn benefit by the experience they gain here, which will add to their CVs and hopefully assist them in getting employment afterwards."

Decades upon decades of material has built up of which it is both a legal requirement and a moral responsibility for the organisation to record and preserve. "We actually don't know what is here," said Armn Whelan, "and our aim is to create a database to catalogue all the records, material,

The Air Corps Museum and Heritage Project recently presented Military Archives with over 1,000 primary source historical documents relating to the beginning and early development of Irish military aviation. The material includes log books and flying records, beginning with the first aircraft purchased by the state, 'The Big Fella' of Michael Collins fame, and ending with post-Emergency types including the Spitfire, Seafire and Hurricane etc.

This project owes its success to a small team of civilian archivists who have worked tirelessly to catalogue and database this unique collection, and to the GOC and members of the Irish Air Corps for making it possible.



and artefacts that we have here in the museum and in storage."

Colin Campbell and Ela Dillane are working on the printed documents and artefacts in the museum. These include technical and maintenance log books, pilots' log books, diaries, manuals, letters, official and personal documents, and museum pieces. For preservation purposes most of the printed documents will be sent to Military Archives in Cathal Brugha Bks.

Linda Jane Byrne and Orla McCartney are working on the photographic archives in Photographic Section. In addition to their Air Corps tasks photographers from Photographic Section are routinely assigned to take photographs at events that happen throughout the Defence Forces. Therefore, the images Linda and Orla are working through range from maritime patrols to exercises, ceremonies and a wide range of other Defence Forces events. "At the end of the process our aim is that all documents and material will be clearly archived and a proper records management system will be in place," Armn Whelan told us. "If someone is researching for a project we will be able to type in what they are looking for and the system will tell us exactly where that document, artefact or photograph is located."

Thanks to the work of the Job-Bridge team the Air Corps now have logbooks and records of aircraft from the Bristol fighter all the way up to the Supermarine Seafire. One outstanding record, dating back to the founding of the state, is the logbook of the Martinsyde Type A Mk II, codenamed 'the Big Fella', which was purchased by the provisional government to rescue Michael Collins in London if the Treaty talks went bad. ■

Linda Jane Byrne

I have a bachelor's degree in history from Trinity College. Before coming here I did a FAS archival project with the Christian Brothers, which was very interesting. In the Brother Allen Library they have loads of material relating to the Fenians, the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence, and the Civil War, as the Christian Brothers were a recruitment ground for the republican movement. Afterwards many of the volunteers gave in their personal records to Brother Allen. I've also been volunteering in the National Archives for the past two years helping Dr Brian Trainer put together a list of 40,000 wills from 1811-57. That's a massive project.

We are cataloguing all the material in Photographic Section. Our first job is to rehouse photographs in acid-free folders as they are not stored correctly. Then we are going to give them new numbers and add them into a database. We are also scanning glass-plate negatives, of which some 600 have survived.

We can't touch the vertical film as they need conservation work: if we opened them up they would fall apart.

The amount of images we are finding is unreal. With the 90th anniversary of the handing over of barracks we are getting a lot of enquiries for relevant photos. Once the database is complete we will immediately be able to say "Yes, that's there," or "No, we don't have that," rather than having to go trawling through boxes.

Orla McCartney

I did biblical and theological studies in Trinity, and I have a master's degree in archival studies from UCD. I worked for a number of years with Eneclann, an archival and records management consultancy. Through them I did some work for the Heritage Council in Kilkenny, and the Irish Church Missions. I then worked for Diageo who have quite an extensive archive in Scotland. That was my first big job getting into the nitty-gritty of archival records. I then went onto do disaster recovery for the Rathmines College for Further Education, setting up an archival and records management database for them after they had experienced some bad flooding.

Photographic Section is fascinating and we are starting to get used to the different aircraft at last. I love it. You can look at a document but there is something magical about looking at an old image: a snapshot in time. It's an amazing resource for the Air Corps and the nation. Our main priority is the long term preservation of the material.

The next step is to get people to understand that today's material is as historically important as older material, so we have to teach the staff to archive things as they are going along. It's no good having all the material if you can't access it.

(Orla has now got a full-time job with Irish Genealogy and History Research Services. She won't be travelling too far, however, as her first project is with the Pensions Board in Cathal Brugha Bks.)

Colin Campbell

I did a bachelor's degree in history in UCD and a master's degree in defence studies in Kings College London. I then served as an officer with the Royal Irish Regiment. On leaving the British Army I retrained as a commercial pilot. So this internship for me combined my historical, military and aviation backgrounds.

The first stage is taking all the log books and documents that have been acquired by the Air Corps, correlating them, putting them onto a database, and then carrying out any repairs needed before submitting them to Military Archives.

In stage two we are going to move on to the museum itself where we will catalogue all the items and artefacts. These range from very rare airframes, such as the Avro Cadet, to the more recent Fouga Magister. Then there are engines, parts, maintenance equipment, weapons, and personal memorabilia that have been, and are still being, handed in. Captain Mick Liddy, for example, recently handed in a set of goggles and other memorabilia from his grandfather, Comdt James Liddy, who died on active service.

It's an extremely invaluable experience to be involved on this project. The subject matter is unique and the range of skills we are being called upon to use is extensive. So we are really enjoying the work.

Ela Dillane

I am originally from Podlaskie in East Poland and I have an MA in archiving/library studies from Nicholas Copernicus University in Torun.

Prior to working here I was on the team that established the archive for the Irish Scout Centre, Mount Mellory. This was a major collection that I catalogued between 2007 and 2009.

Since beginning work with the rest of the team on the Irish Air Corps Museum and Heritage Project in March last year, I have been cataloguing logbooks, manuals, and other manuscript material, and setting up a major database for historical Irish military aviation artefacts.

I am happy working here because it's nice to help preserve and save heritage. It's a great environment to work in.



Birthdays and Halloween Lebanon: A Short Story

BY ARVN MICHAEL J. WHELAN (CURATOR, AIR CORPS MUSEUM AND HERITAGE PROJECT)
MAIN PHOTO CPL COLUMN LAWLER, ALL OTHER IMAGES AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Bunker South Lebanon, 1994.

It was the early hours of November 1st, it always was. He could still hear fireworks in the distance as he tried to sleep, but the vibrations crept up, they always did. He drifted, he was there again.

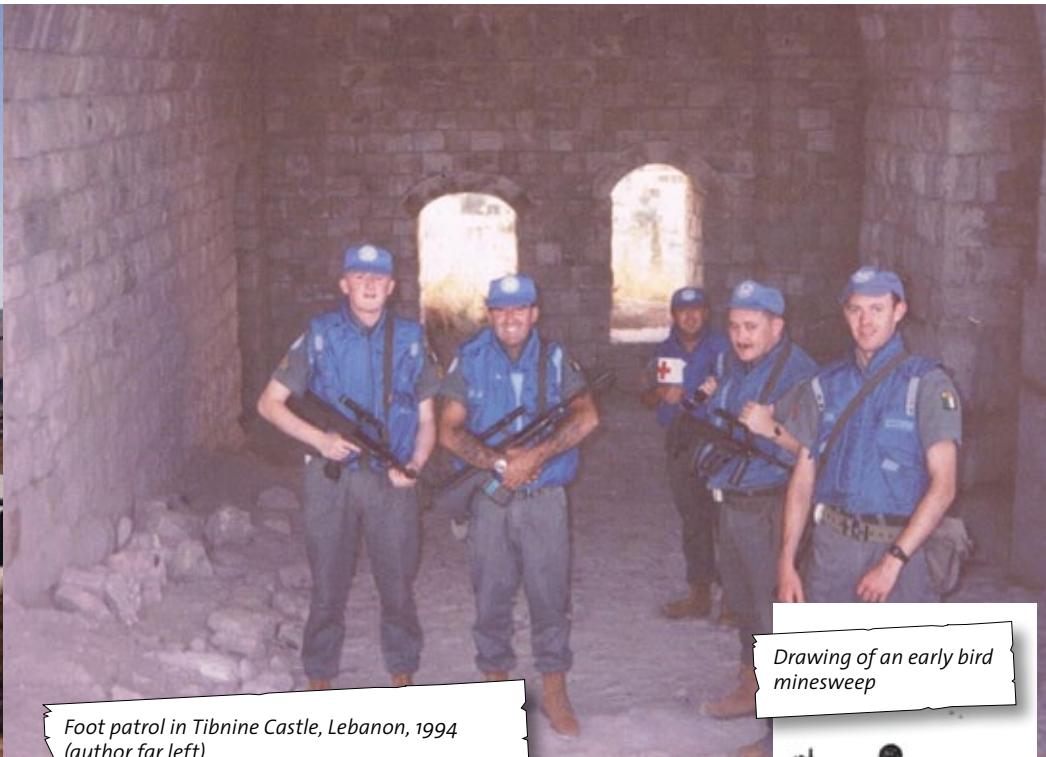
Sean lay in his room; face down on the bed under a mozzie net, his hand reaching towards a cup of water he had strategically placed on the floor earlier. Lamplight shone in over the high T-walls through a scabby net curtain on the window and rested on the ancient lino. He had only been there an hour but it felt much longer. The vibrations felt closer, louder, the hair on his back was awake now, water rings expanded to the edge of the cup. His mouth was dry and he could hear the buzzing of the mosquito fall silent, it was feeding but Sean's head hurt too much to care. The grey colour of the room changed and looking up to the light he could see the glaring reflection of two red flares on the glass, travelling between the gap at the top of the concrete T-wall and the window frame. He remembered that the room had been a replacement section to the prefab accommodation billet that his platoon called home. It had been hit by an Israeli tank-round some years before and the guy inside was injured, hence the T-walls. His room was always a little more modern in that respect, but he was always aware of the shrapnel damage around the edges.

He dragged himself off the bed and put on his boots, helmet and flack-jacket, slung the rifle over his shoulder and rolled his uniform and ammunition pouches under his arm and grabbed a last gulp of water. Outside it was dark and cold as he stood at the bunker with some of the others lads from his platoon. Gerry stood on the sandbags like a white powdered statue in the night, naked except for a towel he held behind himself, opened out by both arms. His body was silhouetted by a series

of bright flashes and streaming lights in the distance. You didn't need much imagination to see he had been drinking. Gerry and Sean had been on a run to the battalion rubbish dump a week before and hadn't seen each other since. They had both been a little upset that day at the sight of children living off the dump and rushing for the slops and trash they had just discarded. A filthy looking old lady with about three teeth in her head sat eating a rotten potato; like it was an apple and a young pretty girl looking after smaller ones sucked cream from the grease proof paper that had once wrapped the remains of the birthday cake the lads had made for Sean, two days before. Then, on the way back, the dump truck they were travelling in lost its brakes and almost drove over the side of a cliff. Gerry hadn't eaten or come out of his room for a week after that and Sean hadn't stopped eating and getting drunk at any opportunity when off duty. Crazy the way you react to things. But then lots of crazy things happen on these missions.

The vibrations were stronger now and the stillness of the night was being torn by a thunderous noise from across the wadis. Silhouetted by the transparent towel covering Gerry's legs they could see red and green flares popping into the sky from all over the place and orange tracer zipping back and forwards with a constant bup, bup, bup, bup. Sean still hadn't got his head together when a giant explosion of thousands of multicoloured sparkles burst out of the distant wadi and great phosphorous lights illuminated the horizon, followed seconds later by a tremendous bang that almost knocked him to the ground. The vibration waved up the hill and rushed over them.

'What's happening lads,' Sean asked in a wimpish voice.



Drawing of an early bird minesweep

Gerry replied matter of factly, as he wrapped the towel around his waist, he had been to Lebanon many time before. 'C Company HQ is under fire boy, that's a tank-round gone in from Hill 880's side. I bet them sparkles are from fleschettes peppering their T-walls. We just got word over the radio that their billets are on fire and some of the boys are trapped between them and the bunkers.'

Sean was scared then. He could see lines of tracer bouncing of the spot where the flashes were coming from and shooting skyward. They all had friends down there and they could do nothing to help them. The Hizbollah and DFF were beating the hell out of each other and the Irish lads were caught in the middle, catching all

the lead. Red flares meant FIRING CLOSE ON OR NEAR UNITED NATIONS POSITIONS but they weren't going to stop. The noise and sky was like Halloween in Ireland. It dawned on Sean then that less than two hours earlier he had been down there with the lads enjoying the craic over a few beers. He had been offered a bed for the night

as he had missed his lift but managed to beg a ride in an armoured car with the Battalion Mobile Reserve patrol, the last one out of the camp.

Next morning, they found the billets, medical post and canteen destroyed. The T-walls had been cut in half and peppered with thousands of long shards of shrapnel, sticking out in all directions like a giant bleak hedgehog.

Birthdays and Halloween always brought him back to that night.

Glossary:

DFF = De Facto Forces (South Lebanese Army/Christian Militia)

Hizbollah = Resistance Fighters (Muslim)

Waddii = Valley/dried up river bed

T-Walls =Fabricated reinforced concrete blast-walls placed upside down on the ground like an inverted capital T to protect UN positions

HQ = Head Quarters

Lino = Linoleum floor covering



About the author: Michael is an award winning Poet, Historian & Author. 2nd Place Winner of the Patrick Kavanagh International Poetry Award 2011. 3rd Place Winner of Jonathan Swift Creative Writing Awards (poetry) 2012. Author of 'The Battle of Jadotville: Irish Soldiers in Combat in the Congo, 1961' & 'Allegiances Compromised: Ex British Soldiers in the Irish Army 1913-24'. Michael served as Irish Defence Forces Peacekeeper with UNIFIL in Lebanon & with KFOR in Kosovo. This story was previously published in the 'Tallaght Express' Newspaper, Issue 15, Nov' 2011.

ARMY RANGER WING QUALIFICATION

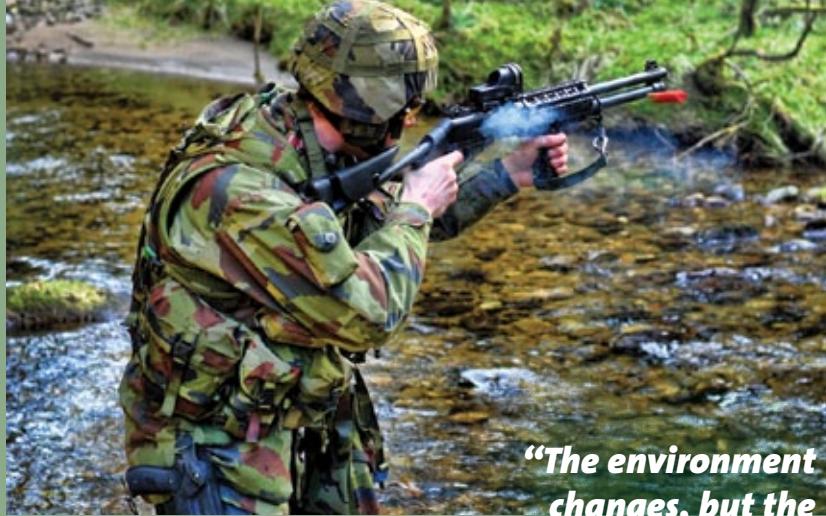
To become a member of Ireland's Special Operations Forces (SOF) unit, The Army Ranger Wing, candidates will have to demonstrate the necessary attributes to become a SOF operator. The ARW are looking for candidates to demonstrate mental and physical robustness, intelligence, a high level of physical fitness and the ability to assimilate information. Candidates will receive the necessary specialist training which is amongst the most challenging and rewarding in the world. Successful candidates will be awarded the coveted Green Beret and will join the ranks of Ireland's Elite SOF Unit.

If you have what it takes contact your Unit/Formation HQ for further details.

“Every angle has to be covered”



“One of the most tense moments before an assault”



The environment changes, but the principles don't

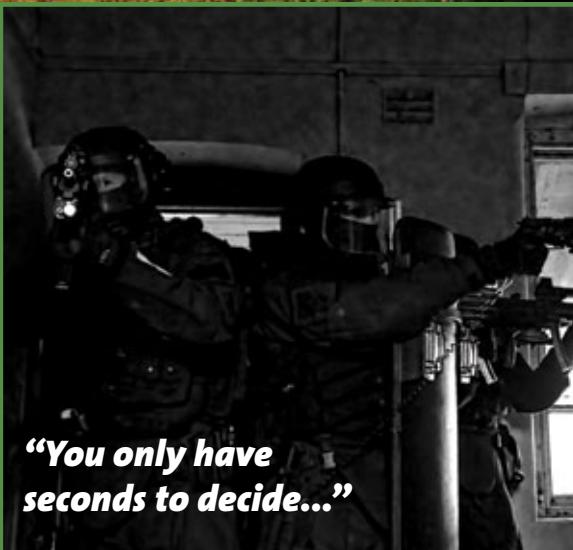


No matter what I'm getting through that door



9/10 of what we do is preparation and briefing

Even though you're the first man over the top, there's always somebody right behind you



You only have seconds to decide...





108 BN Troops are MISSION READY

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS
ARMN JASON BYRNE (105 SQN)

In mid-April, 332 Defence Forces troops from 108 IrishFinn Battalion carried out their mission readiness exercise (MRE) in preparation for their deployment to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in May.

The MRE put the unit's commanders and soldiers through a demanding series of scenarios based on the current situation in Lebanon and potential threats that may be encountered in the volatile mission area. Scenarios involved simulated explosive strikes, helicopter drills, anti-ambush tactics, detailed operational planning and medical evacuation exercises.

Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) Maj Gen Ralph James who was visiting the exercise said: *"This mission readiness exercise is testing our troops across a spectrum of realistic simulated peace support scenarios. This training has been realistic and thoroughly robust. I am confident that this unit will maintain the excellent reputation of the Irish Defence Forces in this troubled region and I wish them well on their forthcoming tour of duty."*

The OC of 108 IrishFinn Battalion is Lt Col Anthony McKenna, from Cahir, Co Tipperary, who is currently OC 12 Inf Bn. Lt Col McKenna, who has over 32 years'

service with the Defence Forces, has previously served overseas in Somalia, Syria, Chad and Afghanistan. At the MRE he said: *"I am looking forward to the honour of taking command of this combined Irish-Finnish unit on overseas service. This volatile mission area will always test peacekeepers but I know this unit is up to the challenge."* ■



SARSFIELD BKS SEND-OFF FOR 108 BN

BY WESLEY BOURKE
PHOTOS ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN

The Minister of State at the Dept of Defence, Paul Kehoe TD, recently reviewed the 332 Irish personnel of 108 IrishFinn Bn prior to the unit's deployment to Lebanon to replace 107 IrishFinn Bn.

Over the past several months the peacekeepers of 108 IrishFinn Bn have been trained in civil-military co-operation (CIMIC), humanitarian assistance, armoured patrolling, and counter-improvised explosive device (CIED) detection, just to name a few. The training culminated with the unit's MRE in the Glen of Imaal.

The unit, which began its deployment to South Lebanon on May 9th, will be headquartered in Camp 2-45 close to the village of At Tiri area.

While for 76 of the soldiers this is their first time overseas, others have multiple trips, such as Coy Sgt Patrick Ryan for whom this will be his 21st trip overseas. Coy Sgt Ryan first deployed to South Lebanon in 1978 with 43 Inf Bn, Ireland's first battalion to serve with UNIFIL.

Minister Kehoe wished the troops a safe tour of duty and told them that they are "carrying on a proud tradition of bringing peace and security to the world". ■



Brother and sister Sgt Darren Nolan and Pte Amy Nolan from Kilkenny.



Brothers Ptes Barry and Murtagh Pennefather.

Finnish MRE

BY CAPT EMMETT HARNEY (B COY, 7 INF BN).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CAPT JANNE-MATTI PELTOLA (PSO TRG C, FINNISH DEFENCE FORCES)

Three officers who served with 106 IrishFinn Bn attended mission readiness exercise (MRE) for the Finnish contingent of 108 IrishFinn Bn. The MRE was conducted by the Peace Support Operations Training Centre (PSO Trg C), Pori Brigade, in Säkylä. The three Irish officers attended the MRE to offer debrief points and also to point out any procedures being used that differed from their experience in Lebanon.

PSO Trg C is located approximately three hours north of Helsinki, where the Finnish armed forces have access to a large training area, which they told us was their version of the Glen of Imaal.

Within this training area they have built a position similar to Post 2-45, with a permanent tactical operations centre (TOC), and with force protection measures and accommodation similar to the IrishFinn HQ. They also constructed a temporary installation to replicate Post 6-50 using ballistic protection kit that has the capability to take a direct hit from a .5" calibre round. In addition, there is also a FIBUA training area.

Many of the exercise and evaluating staff had either served recently with UNIFIL or had been brought back from Lebanon for the MRE.

The MRE began on Saturday with two days of training that included stands on checkpoint procedures, reporting procedures and patrolling. All platoons also took part in a live-fire exercise that involved a withdrawal using APCs and dismounted troops after an ambush.

On Monday at 0600hrs the exercise element began. Each squad was faced with nine scenarios to deal with, along with routine framework patrols and tasks. The scenarios included crowd/riot control, escorts, area domination patrols, counter-rocket launch operations, combined activities with the LAF, key leader engagement, and forward operating base drills.

Conscripts, former military personnel and PSO Trg C staff were used as role players during the MRE, performing roles such as armed elements, LAF personnel, international military police, local key leaders, and Lebanese civilians in the various scenarios, and interacting with the exercise troops.

As part of one scenario, local Finnish schoolchildren were employed to simulate an angry group of locals surrounding a security section who were accompanying the company commander on a visit to a school. The schoolchildren enthusiastically used tomatoes and shaving foam to exercise the section commander in reacting to heated situations.

Another scenario involved a local leader (played by a retired officer) inviting checkpoint commanders into his establishment for tea, where they were engaged in conversation about local politics, family and religion. The section commanders attempted to gather any relevant information and were also practiced in engaging with the local population in a positive manner.

The Finn HQ elements were tasked with providing debriefs on the day's events to the Irish officers in order to practice them in their use of English and military terminology.

The exercise culminated with a company-level scenario based on the annual Nakba Day ceremony. This scenario culminated in violent protests in the area of Post 6-50, hostile activity around the Blue Line and the deployment of crowd/riot control elements.

Overall the MRE was extremely beneficial to the troops due to deploy to South Lebanon. The scenarios were realistic and challenging and the training reflected the daily activities of the IrishFinn battalion and offered first-hand knowledge for conscripts due to partake in their first overseas mission. The Finnish DCO, who will take over as OC 109 FinnIrish Bn in six months, expressed his eagerness to continue the successful working relationship that exists between the two contingents.



FORT DAVIS

Defence Forces Training Facility

BY LT WILLIAM HALPIN (1 CAV SQN) PHOTOS BY A/SEA DAVID JONES



Fort Davis is a training facility in 1 Bde that affords the Defence Forces a unique environment to conduct a variety of training and has been heavily used by the Army, Naval Service and Air Corps over the last number of years.

At a demonstration day held to outline the scope of training opportunities available at Fort Davis, unit 2i/cs, ops officers and ops NCOs turned up from throughout the Defence Forces. The day focused on the fort's primary training opportunities, including boat insertion and pier landing using Naval Service RIBs; NVE, CTI, C-IED/IEDD, and FIBUA stands; and the airlift of an infantry assault bridge.

This was a substantial operation, with equipment and personnel provided by 1 Cav Sqn, 4 Inf Bn, 3 Inf Bn, 12 Inf Bn, 1 Fd Eng Coy, 1 Mp Coy, Med Coy 1 LSB, Ord Coy 1 LSB, and 1 CIS Coy, with additional support provided by the Artillery School, the Air Corps and the Naval Service. Fort Davis staff and personnel from 1 Maintenance Engineers were also instrumental in preparing the fort for the day.

The boat insertion and pier landing, conducted from LE Ciara, gave a good demonstration of the fort's potential to be used in joint service training and gives training staff an alternative to overland insertions.

The fort's tunnel network provides ample opportunities to train individuals in the use of NVE and TI in clearance operations in an enclosed environment. The visiting training personnel were provided with NVE and rotated through the tunnels where different scenarios had been set up for them to view.

Fort Davis is also excellent for confidence training, with good op-



portunities for exercising personnel in abseiling, climbing and bouldering.

A very topical display was the C-IED stand provided by Ordnance Coy, 1 LSB. Given that C-IED training has become integral to the Defence Forces and that the majority of units now have C-IED instructors, it was important to demonstrate that the fort is an effective exercise area in this regard due to the mixture of training spaces it offers.

The demonstration day concluded with a major display in which an Air Corps AW-139 airlifted an infantry assault bridge from the Naval Base to the fort (which offers two heli-landing areas). An engineering section then assembled the bridge to span the gap between the moat and the outer walls of the fort.

Next, an infantry platoon used the bridge to assault the fort, gaining entry through a hole blown in the outer wall. Once inside, the sections were tasked with clearing the subterranean tunnel network prior to gaining access to the buildings on the upper level where the platoon was exercised in FIBUA, employing a range of drills, including crossing open ground, methods of entry into buildings, and room clearance.

It was evident to all by the end of the day that as a train-

ing facility Fort Davis can provide excellent opportunities for everything

from combined arms training, to joint service training, to section-level exercises.

The Defence Forces Audio Visual Section was on hand on the day to capture the action as it happened. A short video clip of the day can be viewed on YouTube on the DFMagazine Channel or accessed through this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wewe1NFAWI>

Pictures show students from the 3rd All Arms Standard NCO course conducting a FIBUA (Fighting in Built up Areas) exercise in Fort Davis, April 2013. The course consisted of thirty nine students representing the Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineer, Ordnance, CIS and Air Corps.

Standards under the Microscope

BY WESLEY BOURKE
PHOTOS BY A/SEA DAVID JONES



Imagine yourself in a corridor so dark you can't even see your hand, there is a taste of salt on your lips and the smell of burning is assaulting your nostrils. Added to this, a rolling and pitching motion begins to hasten the onset of claustrophobia and disorientation. With a fire spreading and killing the electrical power for the lights, the dark interior of a ship is no place to be. A crackle from the intercom is followed by a clear voice that instead of bringing relief announces: "Bandit red! Bandit red!" the code for 'intruder onboard'.

Thankfully for this journalist this was a Fleet Operational Readiness Standards and Training (FORST) exercise and not a real situation.

Naval Service ships patrol far out into the Atlantic and occasionally undertake foreign trips as far as the southern hemisphere. Consequently, NS crew members have to be prepared for every eventuality they might face arising from an operational tasking or from the elements. Possibilities range through everything from hostile action during a drugs interdiction operation, damage caused by hitting a semi-submerged drifting container, a fire in the galley, or civil disorder while alongside in a civilian port.

FORST, which comes under Naval Operations Command, is responsible for assessing and ensuring the required standards are in place for all operational tasks, and that all ships are ready to respond to any tasking they may receive.



With a team of twelve officers and NCOs from the Naval Service's four branches (Communications, Engineering, Logistics, and Seaman's), FORST helps maintain and evaluate essential skills. The evaluation and training for each ship takes place in four stages throughout the year: training; sea-safety and readiness checks in harbour (SSARC Harbour); sea evaluation; and random threat assessment.

"Through a series of assessments, evaluations and exercises, we check core mariner skills," said Cdr Peter Twomey, OIC FORST. "We make sure that Naval Service vessels meet operational standards with regards to legislation and SOPs. We make sure they are maintained in good order, that all the rigging is in date, that all the equipment is fit for purpose, that the crews are properly trained and that they meet all the required educational and professional standards."

An important requirement for any NS ship is the ability to change roles seamlessly. A ship heading out on a routine four-week patrol could find itself involved in fishing trawler inspections, a search-and-rescue mission and a drugs interdiction operation, all on its first day out.

Of all the dangers faced by ships at sea, fires are probably the most feared as they can take hold of a ship in a matter of minutes if not dealt with extremely quickly. In a barracks ashore, if a fire is discovered the building can be evacuated and the fire brigade called. However, if a Naval Service ship goes on fire 200 miles off the West Coast of Ireland there's no fire-brigade to call and the only places to evacuate to are the lifeboats, which would mean abandoning the ship. Understandably, therefore, fire-fighting training is a high priority for the Naval Service.

Along with their everyday duties, everyone onboard a Naval Service vessel double-jobs, be it as a gunner, a member of an armed boarding party, or as a fire-fighter, for example. This means that in the event of a fire breaking

out there is a team of highly trained fire-fighters on hand to act immediately. It is not surprising, then, that checking, evaluating and assessing crews' fire-fighting standards and ships' fire-fighting equipment are among FORST's priorities.

The training stage, which comes first, is approached differently to the three later stages. "Training is very important for ships' captains and crews," Cdr Twomey explained. "Nobody will be disciplined for getting anything wrong during our training assessment and it is at this stage that any crew member can ask questions. Also, if they want training in a particular area they haven't practised in a while, that's no problem at all; the FORST team are here to guide and mentor."

The scenario on the ship we were on involved a fire starting in the garbage compartment. Fire extinguishers were used initially but as the fire spread a fire-fighting team was assembled. The FORST team, armed with stopwatches, monitored the response. One of them told us: "You have six minutes, max, to get your fire-fighting equipment on and get the fire under control; these guys are now into minute number nine. They're trying to help each other whereas they should be able to suit up individually." As this was the training phase the FORST team pointed out these defects and instructed the crew in what they needed to do.

The next stage, SSARC Harbour evaluation is carried out to see if the ship is at the required standard to undergo sea evaluation. During this stage, which takes place in harbour, the FORST team make sure the ship has all of the correct paperwork, such as up-to-date certificates for all lifejackets, rigging, and life-rafts; certificates for load tests on ropes and wires; fit-for-firing certificates for the main and secondary armament; and so on.

"During this phase we categorise things as 'critical', 'significant', or 'minor'. If something is deemed 'critical' we

have the power to stop that ship from going to sea. 'Significant' means we give them a certain number of days to amend the defect, and 'minor' means they can carry on but have to be aware of the issue and get it sorted as soon as possible," Cdr Twomey explained to us.

During sea evaluation the FORST team spend ten days at sea with the ship being checked. Every ship's captain knows when his ship's sea evaluation is to take place and other assessments and training revolve around that date. During sea evaluation the ship and its crew are tested and assessed in almost every conceivable scenario; from how they deal with bad weather right down to how they deal with an aggressive attack from an external agent that may be using weapons or IEDs.

Anti-aircraft shoots, damage control, fire-fighting, man-overboard drills, heli-ops, scheme-of-defence, replenishment-at-sea, and towing, are just a number of scenarios that can be exercised, and to pile additional pressure on the crew the FORST team often throw in multiple scenarios for them to deal with.

"Because we are assessing core mariner skills a lot of the exercises overlap," said Cdr Twomey. "For example, 80% of fire-fighting procedures also apply to damage-control. There's no point carrying out a fire-fighting exercise in the morning and a damage-control exercise in the afternoon and watching the same mistakes being made, so after each exercise we pass on the information to the ship's captain and allow him, or her, the time to pass it on to the crew. We've come to the realisation that for an exercise to be of benefit we have to have a proper pre-exercise brief, a post-exercise assessment and a debrief for ourselves, followed by a debrief of the ship's officers and heads of department so that benefit of the exercise is passed on."

All members of the FORST team agree that standards cannot be allowed to slip. As one of the team told me: "These are essential skill. For example, a fire at sea has to be put out as quickly as possible because if it spreads you may lose the ship and the crew." Therefore, if any exercise is failed it must be redone.

In the 'Bandit red' scenario that took place at the same time as the fire-fighting exercise on our ship, a drunken civilian armed with a knife had forced his way on board. The vessel was berthed in port and most of the crew were away on R&R. All that remained onboard was the eight-person duty watch. All of a sudden the naval patrol vessel becomes a huge maze for the armed response team that has been mustered. As the exercise develops, the FORST team assesses the crew's response time, their application of COD 6, and how they clear the ship.

While intruders carrying out harm on a naval vessel may not seem a very likely scenario, it is far from unheard of. In September 1990 the Provisional IRA boarded the Royal Fleet Auxiliary replenishment ship, Fort Victoria, while it was docked in Belfast and planted two IEDs, one of which went off in the engine room, putting the ship out of action for nearly two years. In October 2000



the USS Cole was attacked by a suicide bomber while being refuelled in the Yemeni port of Aden, killing 17 US sailors and injuring 39. And only last December an intruder broke into the Coonawarra Naval Base, in Darwin, Australia, boarded a moored patrol boat, overwhelmed the duty watch, broke into the armoury and stole a cache of weapons. "Scenarios like this, thankfully, have never happened to us," Cdr Twomey told us, "but we have to be prepared for every eventuality. Our mission profile may change or we could simply be replenishing our troops on an overseas mission and a belligerent that dislikes our presence sees an opportunity. As for criminals, well at home or abroad if they want something bad enough they'll try anything."

Passing sea evaluation is not the same as getting your car through the NCT. It doesn't mean the captain and crew can relax until the next year as the FORST team can arrive unannounced at any time to carry out a threat assessment exercise.

"We can arrive to carry out an exercise as a ship is coming in or heading out of port, or while it's out on patrol," Cdr Twomey said. "We then forward the assessment of the exercise to OC Naval Operations Command. However, the point of these exercises is not to catch people out but rather to motivate ships' captains to invest in training over the full twelve-month period."

These exercises certainly test ship's captains and crew members to the limit as could be seen clearly in the relieved faces we saw when the announcement "End ex: stand easy!" came over the intercom. With the training phase coming to an end our ship's crew are now gearing up to prepare themselves and their ship for the SSARC Harbour stage. ■

IN RESERVE

MULLINGAR'S reserve artillery unit stands down



Members of 54 Res Art Regt who attended the stand-down ceremonies at Carnagh Range, Athlone.



Pictured are six members of 54 Res Art Regt who attended the stand-down parade: (L/R) Sgt Ted Nugent, Cpl Fran Baker, Sgt Robert Cordial, Sgt John Duncan, Sgt Brian Jones and Cpl Barry Byrne.



A Family Affair: Comdt Séamus Brennan (Retd), former OC 9 Fd Art Regt, and his son, Comdt John Brennan, who is now OC C Coy (RDF), 6 Inf Bn, Mullingar.



Fr Robert McCabe CF blesses 54 Res Art Regt's colours at the end of the stand-down ceremonies. On the left are members of the 2 Bde Band and right is Capt Shane Dooley (MC for the occasion).

April 21st 2013 was a sad occasion for Mullingar and the Midlands, with 54 Reserve Artillery Regiment, the last artillery regiment from Columb Barracks, Mullingar, being stood down at a ceremony at Carnagh Range, Co Westmeath.

A year ago last April saw the closure of Columb Barracks, Mullingar and the last remaining artillery barracks in Ireland. This was followed last November by the stand-down of 4 Fd Art Regt, based in Mullingar for almost 70 years.

On April 21st this year the stand-down ceremonies for 54 Res Art Regt (the successor of 9 Fd Art Regt FCÁ), also headquartered at Columb Barracks, took place at Carnagh Range, Co Westmeath.

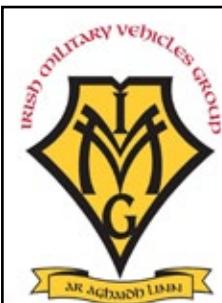
The officers, NCOs and gunners of 54 Res Art Regt, under the command of Comdt Niall

Verling (now with 2 Art Regt), were joined for the ceremonies by former members of the unit and former members of 9 Fd Art Regt.

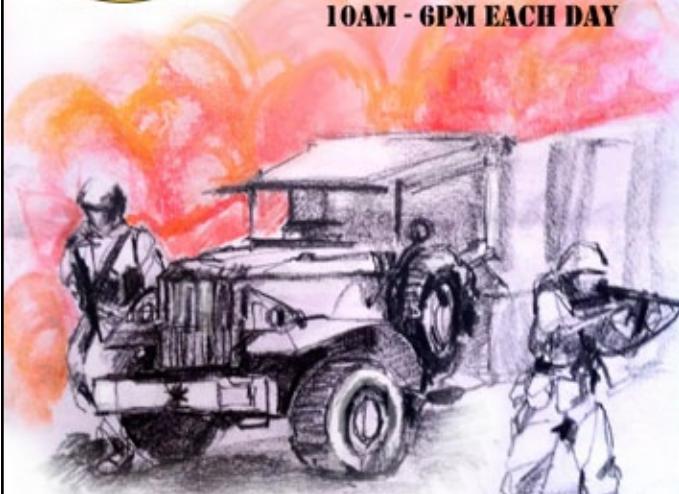
Also present was Lt Col Ray Yorke, OC 2 Art Regt, which was established in Custume Bks, Athlone, following the disestablishment of 4 Fd Art Regt.

Although Columb Bks and the artillery are gone from Mullingar, there is still a military presence as C Coy, 6 Inf Bn (a Reserve company) is operating in the town from rented accommodation.

BY JAMES WIMS



IMVG 5TH ANNUAL
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RE-ENACTORS SHOW**
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**RUNNING IS PART AND PARCEL
OF MILITARY LIFE!**

PLEASE SUPPORT

Sergeant Gerry Duff (Cadet School, Mil Col), with 16yrs in the Defence Forces is running three marathons in full battle gear carrying 45lbs.

He has completed the 1st marathon – Kildare, next is Waterford on June 29th and then the Wicklow Way nonstop on 1st Aug.



iDONATE

If you can, please sponsor me:

www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/11102_gerard-duff-s-fundraising-page.html

many thanks, Gerry Duff

Aoibheann's Pink Tie (APT)

Gerry has chosen to complete this challenge for this charity as a work colleague has a young daughter who is going through treatment for cancer at the moment and Aoibheann's Pink Tie has helped his family during this time.

Thanks very much for all the support so far - I'm 1/3 of the way towards my goal of raising €3,000.

100% raised goes to the charity.
For more info on Aoibheann's Pink Tie please visit:

www.aoibheannspinktie.com



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In this Tac Aide, we will be looking at common **NATO designations and abbreviations**. They are gradually replacing the more generic terms we use in the Defence Forces, bringing us in line with an internationally accepted standard. Where you will see these, is not just on overseas missions in a HQ, but at home in correspondance, letters of instruction and when you will be searching for information on the new Sharepoint network.

Most NATO countries have adopted the continental staff system (also known as the general staff system) in structuring their militaries' staff functions. This system is based on one originally employed by the French Army in the 19th century. Each staff position in a headquarters or unit is assigned a letter-prefix corresponding to the formation's element and one or more numbers specifying a role.

**THE STAFF NUMBERS ARE ASSIGNED ACCORDING TO CUSTOM NOT HIERARCHY; I.E. 1 IS NOT 'HIGHER RANKING' THAN 2.**

Designation Letter	Number	Appointment/Function
Battalion: "S"	1:	Personnel Administration / Adjudant
	2:	Intelligence
	3:	Operations
Brigade: "G"	4:	Logistics
	5:	Planning
	6:	CIS (Communications)
Division: "J"	7:	Training & Education
	8:	Finance & Contracts
	9:	CIMIC

For example, what you will see is "S1" which is Battalion Adjudant/Administration, "G2" which is Brigade Int.

COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

These are just some of the official NATO abbreviations that you will encounter at some stage in your career.

CIMIC:	<i>Civil Military Cooperation</i>	IED:	<i>Improvised Explosive Device</i>
CIS:	<i>Communication and Information Systems</i>	Obj:	<i>Objective</i>
CS:	<i>Close Support -or- Combat Support</i>	ORBAT:	<i>Order of Battle</i>
CSS:	<i>Combat Service Support</i>	PSO:	<i>Peace Support Operation</i>
DF:	<i>Defensive Fire</i>	ROE:	<i>Rules of Engagement</i>
EW:	<i>Early Warning -or- Electronic Warfare</i>	SAR:	<i>Search and Rescue</i>
FC:	<i>Fire Control</i>	STANAG:	<i>NATO Standardisation Agreement</i>
FP:	<i>Force Protection</i>	TF:	<i>Task Force</i>
FRAGO:	<i>Fragmentary Order</i>	TO&E:	<i>Table of Organisation and Equipment</i>
HUMINT:	<i>Human Intelligence</i>	UXO:	<i>Unexploded Explosive Ordnance</i>

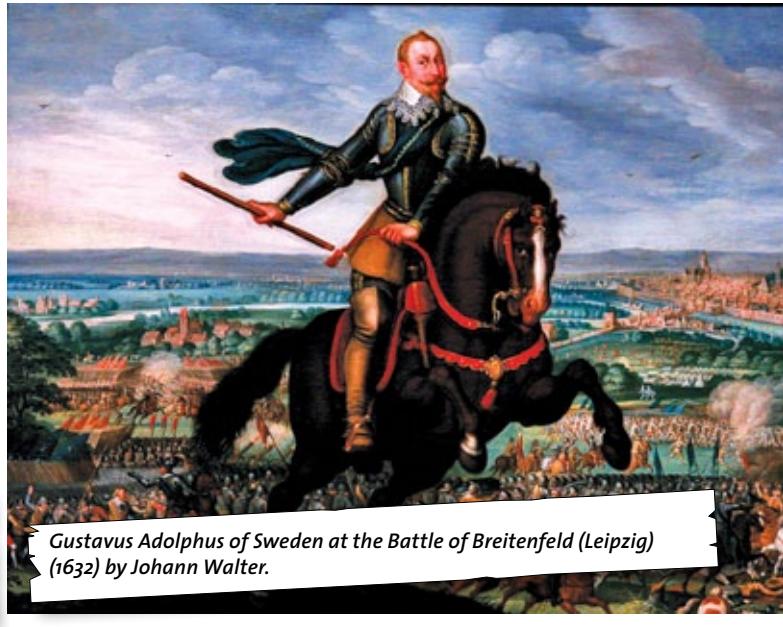
HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

Famous Irish Regiments: Butler's Irish Regiment

REPORT BY JP POWELL FRGS



Cavalry making a Sortie from a Fort on a Hill (1646) by Philips Wouwermans
One of the largest battle paintings by Wouwermans, the scene seems to be entirely imaginary as neither the colours of the troops nor the buildings point to any particular historical event.



Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden at the Battle of Breitenfeld (Leipzig) (1632) by Johann Walter.

The Thirty Years War of 1618-1648 started as a religious revolt of Protestants in Prague and, although the sectarian element was always present in the conflict, gradually developed into a struggle between the Austrian Habsburgs, France, various German states, Denmark and Sweden with Spain and The Netherlands also being drawn into the fighting.

A battalion of Irish musketeers, led by Colonel Walter Butler from Roscrea, County Tipperary, formed part of the Austrian Imperial Guard and another regiment of Irish dragoons was led by his brother, James Butler.

In 1630 Sweden, led by their martial king Gustavus Adolphus, entered the war against the Habsburgs (thanks to subsidies from Cardinal Richelieu) and made steady progress against the Imperial armies. The Catholic cardinal backed the Protestant king as he feared that an extension of Habsburg power would harm France, while Gustavus's main aim was to dominate the Baltic region as well as to aid German Protestants.

In 1631 Butler's Irish regiment helped to defend Frankfurt-on-the-Oder against the Swedes. Gustavus led 18,000 men with 200 cannon, aided by a pontoon bridge, against the

city as part of an overall Swedish strategy to raise the siege of Magdeburg, under attack by General Tilly.

Butler was given the weakest sector of the city fortifications to defend, due to jealousy on the part of other Austrian commanders. His plea to launch a pre-emptive strike on the Swedes was brushed aside.

Gustavus Adolphus himself led an assault of handpicked Swedish troops and Scottish mercenaries against the city and while they broke through in other sectors the Irish stood firm against the attack.

A captured Irish soldier was asked by the king: "What soldiers are here?" On receiving the reply "Colonel Butler's Irish regiment" Gustavus broke off the attack and switched the assault to a German-held position nearby. (The Swedish king also had Irish mercenaries serving with him and presumably knew of the fighting qualities of Irish troops.)

The Swedish attacks were eventually successful and the Irish were the last to bear the brunt of fresh Swedish assaults. Three Irish lieutenant generals were killed along with hundreds of soldiers. Butler was in the thick of the fight and was wounded in the shoulder by a musket ball before the unequal contest came to an end.

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

While the Austrians blamed the defeat of the Imperial army on Butler, King Gustavus Adolphus told his officers: "I will not eat a morsel until I have seen this brave Irishman of whom we hear so much." The wounded Butler was brought before the king who insisted the Irish officer dined with him. As they dined Butler heard about the rumours that he and his regiment were to blame for the fall of the city. However, the Swedish king agreed to sign a unique document exonerating Butler and his men from blame. He wrote: "If the imperial generals, instead of acting as poltroons, had performed but a fifth part of what this gallant Irishman had done, I should never have been master of Frankfurt, but after an obstinate siege alone." Butler was then released and presented the document to the Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand II.

The main participants in the drama had mixed fortunes. Gustavus Adolphus died a hero's death when he was shot down when leading a cavalry charge against the Imperial army, led by Wallenstein, at the Battle of Lützen in 1632. Butler raised another regiment in Poland and ended up as a pillar of the Austrian court. His brother James gained historical notoriety as one of the plotters who engineered the assassination of Wallenstein in 1634 at Cheb in Bohemia. ■



Musketeers from 'Exercise of Arms' (1607) by Jacques de Gheyn II
© The Trustees of the British Museum – www.britishmuseum.org



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY



Wallenstein: A Scene of the Thirty Years War (1884) by Ernest Crofts
Crofts was a British painter of historical and military scenes (1847-1911).



Death of King Gustav II at the Battle of Lützen (1855) by Carl Wahlbom
Wahlbom was a Swedish military artist, born in Kalmar and died in London (1810-1858).



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

DF INDOOR Rowing Competition

BY CAPT PADRAIG DUGGAN PHOTOS SGT KARL BYRNE

On Thursday 2nd May 2013, the Defence Forces Indoor Rowing competition took place in the Defence Forces Physical Education School (DFPES). This is the second year of this event and it fell to members of the current PTI Course to organise as part of their 'Event Management' module as they near the end of the 16-week course.

The competition was over 2,000 metres for each participant; with seven categories in total and prizes awarded for each category winner.

THE CATEGORY WINNERS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

Male:

18-29 <70kg – Lt Collins (7 Inf Bn)
18-29 >70kg – Cpl Woods (27 Inf Bn)
30-39 <70kg – Cpl O'Neill (Mech Coy)
30-39 >70kg – Sgt Sheahan (DFPES)
40+ – Comdt Taylor (DFAA)

Female:

Lt Mc Donagh (DFHQ)

Elite:

Lt Williams
(B Coy, 12 Inf Bn)

There was an additional highlight of the day with Sgt Jim Maguire (DFPES) breaking an Irish Record. He spent a gruelling 2 hours 45.04 minutes completing a full marathon of 42,195 metres on an indoor rowing machine. This fantastic time posted meant he beat the previous record set 2 years ago by a full 11 minutes to make him the Irish 'over 40' Category Concept 2 Indoor Marathon Rowing record holder.

The course and staff of the DFPES would like to thank all participants who made the day a success with over 80 entrants. We would also like to extend our thanks to the DFAA who provided generous prizes for the winners.



SPORT

SPORTS ROUND-UP

DF HALF MARATHON 2013

PHOTOS SGT BRIAN GUILFOYLE (DFHQ CIS COY) & SGT STEVE MCSHERRY (MCKEE BKS COY)

DF Half Marathon took place on the 24th April in Clonbur, Co Galway.

Winner Results:

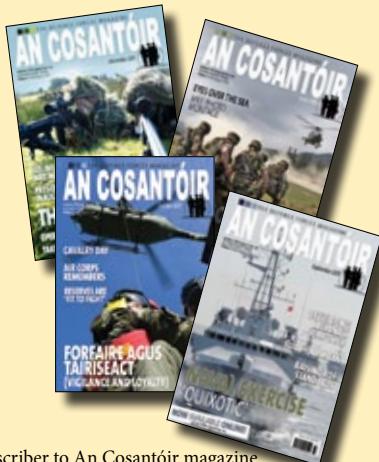
Category	Place	Name	Chip Time
Senior Men:	1st	John Boylan	1:18:48
	2nd	Darren Molloy	1:19:15
	3rd	Daniel Hannigan	1:19:22
Senior Female:	1st	Maeve Fenton	1:34:44
	2nd	Lisa McMahon	1:43:56
	3rd	Lorraine Carr	1:47:17
Over 35 Female:	1st	Sgt Sinead Wearen	1:43:16
	2nd	Sgt Siobhan Boyle	1:56:59
	3rd	Sgt Anne-Marie Larkin	1:59:29
Over 40s:	1st	Sgt Eamon Casey	1:26:56
	2nd	Sgt Michael Daly	1:32:42
	3rd	Tpr Patrick McCarthy	1:33:10
Over 45s:	1st	Declan Madden	1:24:49
	2nd	Mark Bulman	1:25:13
	3rd	Tom Thompson	1:28:49
Over 50s:	1st	Sgt Tom Bishop	1:22:53
	2nd	John Murray	1:26:48
Over 55s:	1st	Thomas Burns	1:32:55
Team Prize:	2 Bde	Pte Daniel Hannigan	1:19:22
		Pte Anto Devaney	1:20:09
		Pte Niall Kelly	1:20:28
		Sgt Tom Bishop	1:22:53



Subscribers Competition

We are looking for our subscribers to choose a front cover from our list of back issues of An Cosantóir Magazine, that will be made into an iPhone cover.

The Front Cover that's chosen the most by our subscribers will be deemed the winning cover. All subscribers who choose the winning cover will receive a FREE iPhone cover with the winning cover on it.



How to Enter:

1. You must be a current subscriber to An Cosantóir magazine
2. Go to www.dfmagazine.ie/backissues
3. Select the Front Cover that you think would make an ideal iPhone Cover
4. Send the name of the cover i.e Year and Month to subs@military.ie
5. Closing date for this competition is 20th June 2013.

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GEAR REVIEW

ESS (EYE SAFETY SYSTEMS) CROSSHAIR

3 LENS SERIES

COLOUR: BLACK FRAME WITH 3 COLOURED REPLACEMENT

LENSSES: CLEAR, SMOKE GREY & HI DEF YELLOW

PRICE: €68.00

The manufacturer says...

At ESS, superior function comes standard; the ESS Crosshair™ exceeds ANSI Z87.1 optical standards and U.S. Military impact requirements while providing all-day comfort and a universal fit. This entry-level eyeshield

goes well beyond the basic necessities of eye protection: with a baseline of advanced performance and superb adaptability, the Crosshair™ benefits from complete compatibility with the ESS Cross-Series eyeshield platform.

Experience the Tri-Tech Fit™ frame

that achieves an amazing universal fit with max comfort and zero pressure points. Optimal stability is attained by balancing weight evenly throughout the frame.

When you're ready to switch lenses, the innovative DedBolt™ Lens Lock pivots up for easy release, then clamps down for rock solid retention under impact.

As you stare down your objective through ESSOPTICS™, you'll experience distortion-free optical precision throughout the entire field of view. The ESS Cross-Series is a revolutionary new systems approach to ballistic eye protection. This fully cross-compatible eyeshield platform includes three products: the entry-level Crosshair with core performance, the elite Crossbow with premium anti-fog/anti-scratch lenses, and the adaptable Suppressor for use with hearing protection. All Cross-Series™ components and accessories can be interchanged between these three eyeshields. Engage. Adapt. Excel.

Clear: For use indoors or at night, has no influence on contrast or colour.

Smoke gray: For medium to bright light, an all-purpose daytime lens with unbiased influence on colour.

Hi-def yellow: For flat to very low light, a high contrast lens for overcast or extremely low light conditions.

Our reviewer Sgt Terry Wearen (DFTC) says...

Overall, I liked these glasses. The fit is very comfortable and, as a wearer of spectacles, this is very important for me. The interchangeable lens system was simple to use and, after the first time, was not something I had to be concerned about when a lens change was required. For people with an active lifestyle these glasses will provide lots of use in a variety of situations.

Comfort & Fit 9 - DedBolt™ Lens Lock 9 - Durability 8 - Lenses 8

COMPETITION

This month Team-Alpha are offering a €100 Voucher to be used on their website www.team-alpha.ie. For a chance to win this month's prize answer the following question: How much is a pair of 5.11

• Taclite Pro Pants – Black on the team-alpha website?

• Answers on a postcard to An Cosantóir's regular address or by email to subs@military.ie, closing date 21st June 2013. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

• **Last month's winner of a €100 voucher for Team-Alpha.ie was Oliver Byrne, Lucan.**

Sponsored by Team Alpha.ie

5.11 TACTICAL SERIES TACLITE SHORTS

COLOUR: KHAKI

PRICE: €49.95

The manufacturer says...

5.11 Tactical has done it again; our new Taclite® Pro Shorts are ready for wear. Fashioned after our traditional 5.11 Taclite Pro Pant, the shorts feature a lightweight poly-cotton ripstop fabric and a fully gusseted crotch that allows for full range of movement. The shorts have pockets located for easy access to all of your gear. An external knife pocket on the right front side gives you easy access to a knife. Two cargo pockets are located on both thighs and a magazine/cell phone pocket is located over the left cargo pocket for quick access with your off-hand. The magazine and new knife pocket are reinforced with 100% Cordura® nylon. We have kept our signature slash pockets in the rear along with the strap found on our 5.11 Tactical Pants.

Made of lightweight 65% polyester and 35% non-fading polycotton ripstop, you have shorts that are extremely functional and maintain a neat, clean and professional look. We've also treated the Taclite Pants with HT Teflon® wear resistant finish for stain and soil resistance to maintain that good look no matter what the daily activity. The belt loops are thick enough to support a large belt to carry the weight of a sidearm, cuffs or other equipment. We use only YKK® zippers, Prym® snaps and Horn® buttons so that you can rest assured that these Taclite Pro Shorts will last. We've also included our traditional clip loop on the front of the shorts for our great traditional 5.11 Tactical look.



Our reviewer Cpl Paul Millar (PR Branch) says...

I've used the Taclite Pro Shorts for some time now. They straddle the thin line between comfort and durability very well, it's a difficult mix to get right but they succeeded. The shorts fit well and look presentable. The stain resistant material isn't as lightweight as the company make out, but you don't notice that when you wear them. The material and construction seems rock solid and well thought out with details such as the zippers, snaps, belt loops and buttons, which are normally the first things to break, being built to last. There's a multitude of pockets on the shorts. If you filled them all, they'd weigh a ton. But it also means you have a number of options to carry your kit. The pockets can handle magazines and maps with ease, as well as having specially designed pockets for phones and folding knives. At €49.50, they're not cheap, but still good value for money for anybody that will be doing outdoor work this summer.

**Lightweight 8 - Durability 9 - Zipper Strength 9 - Value 8
Easy Access 9**



NOTICEBOARD

This page is designed to give our readers an easy-to-follow list of upcoming events or notices for our wider Defence Forces Family. Readers who want to submit notices that may be of interest to others should keep their notices to the point, include contact details and send by email to: magazine@military.ie or by post to: Editor An Cosantóir, DFHQ, Block 5, Ceannt Bks, DFTC, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Ireland. PS. Our old noticeboard will still be made available on www.dfmagazine.ie

Up Coming Events

IUNVA Post 1, Arbour Hill, will have their deceased member's mass on Sunday 23rd June at 11:00hrs in Arbour Hill Church.

Royal British Legion's annual wreath laying ceremony takes place on Saturday 13th July at 15:00hrs at the National War Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge.

The National Day of Commemoration takes place in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham on Sunday 14th July, guests to be seated for 10:15hrs. This is an organised event by the Dept of An Taoiseach.

Update on moving payment date of DF pensions

The military pensions payroll payment date will be moving to the end-of-month, the earliest this is proposed to start will likely be after the summer period. This includes the move to fully electronic EFT by the summer, taking on the LPT deductions in June (details awaited from Revenue), issuing of annual Pension Declaration forms; and revised public service pension reductions from 1 July 2013. (Subject to ongoing Croke Park Agreement 2 developments).

More info on O.N.E.T. Website www.oneconnect.ie/latest-news.html

Uniform Services

Medal Mounting Service: Competitive prices, contact

Murty Quinn 087 9394680

Lanyards made to order: Competitive prices, contact Brian on 087 2971982

Sam Browne Belts: Custom made to measure by Declan Clancy on 045 432606 or visit www.declanclancysaddlery.ie

Military Police Photographic Exhibition

Sgt Mick McGrath (Office of the PM & D MP) is currently finishing a BA in Photographic Media in Griffith College, Dublin. He will be displaying a Photographic Exhibition based around the Military Police Corps. There will be a book to accompany the exhibition containing some prints on sale. It will run in Griffith College from: Wednesday 29 May - Tues 4 Jun 2013.

Word Search

Cross off the words in the list as you find them.

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

Infantry

R	E	I	R	R	A	C	J	K	Q	P	I	U	B	Z
E	M	M	U	E	B	R	X	M	L	W	W	F	A	O
M	C	V	Z	N	I	L	E	V	A	J	W	V	A	M
B	G	S	C	U	Q	K	U	C	D	Q	H	K	Z	H
N	B	B	V	L	S	D	Y	V	X	S	H	R	H	X
C	G	E	G	E	B	I	M	F	K	T	B	X	O	P
L	C	D	L	N	Y	A	N	T	I	T	A	N	K	Y
V	A	P	W	N	I	S	T	M	O	R	T	A	R	D
F	R	C	F	O	V	N	A	T	U	T	B	E	G	M
S	M	V	O	S	U	O	I	W	A	V	P	B	O	B
J	O	K	Y	R	R	P	O	A	Q	L	B	L	N	Q
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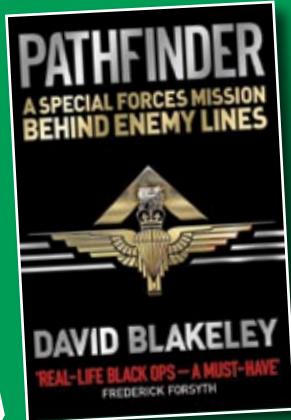
ANTITANK
ARMoured
BATTALION
BRIGADE
CARRIER
JAVELIN
MORTAR
PERSONNEL
TRAINING
WEAPONS

JUNE Q&A COMPETITION

1. What year did the AML go enter service with the DF (this issue)?

Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email subs@military.ie for a chance to win **Pathfinder: A Special Forces Mission Behind Enemy Lines** by Capt David Blakeley (reviewed Apr 13).

Last month's winner of two Osprey books: *Dambusters - Operation Chastise 1943* by Douglas C Dildy & *Nimitz-Class Aircraft Carriers* by Brad Elward was Paddy Kelly, Waterford. Closing date 21 June 2013



BOOK

TERROR IN IRELAND

1916-1923

Edited by David Fitzpatrick

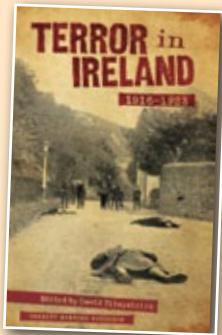
Publisher: Lilliput Press (April 2012)

www.lilliputpress.ie

Price: €15.00

ISBN: 9781843511991

Pages: 248 paperback



THIS BOOK, ALTHOUGH the chapters appear bite sized in the contents, is a comprehensive and detailed look at acts that constituted terror during our struggle for independence and the Civil War. It breaks down these times through painstaking research, figures and testimonies and relates them to the result of terror. It focuses not just on the numbers of dead or money lost, but also on the very real emotional impact the fighting had on both sides and the people caught in between. A number of contributors were specially commissioned for the book, so no one author is responsible for the entire set of chapters. That means this turbulent time in our history is examined from a number of angles and written in different styles.

However one thing that is consistent throughout is the academic nature of the book. It contains many facts and figures and is enhanced by illustrations, maps and charts.

A great book if you intend to study this period or have an already good knowledge of it.

David Fitzpatrick is Professor of Modern History at Trinity College, Dublin. His most recent book is Solitary and Wild: Frederick MacNeice and the Salvation of Ireland, also published by The Lilliput Press in 2012.

THE PEACEMAKERS OF NIEMBA

By Tom McCaughren

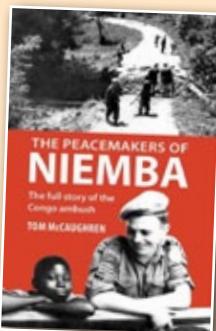
Publisher: Sommerville Press (1966, republished March 2013)

<http://sommervillepress.com>

Price: €11.99

ISBN: 978-0-9573461-6

Pages: 160



I READ THIS book not knowing a whole lot about what actually happened in the Congo before, on or after that faithful day of November 8th, 1960. The book slowly builds you up to what happened, Tom brings you back not only to the ambush but gives you almost a day to day account of what the mission entailed and the daily lives of the soldiers involved. The detailed research leaves very few rocks unturned as to exactly how the ambush came about and those responsible - who denied this tragic event. The ambush itself is written very graphically and holds no punches to what these brave Irish soldiers suffered, 9 of them lost their lives serving for the UN for the first time - the UN's first big loss of life in the Congo. Reading about these events brings out a sense of pride in the troops that served on this mission, and brings home the sad and unnecessary loss of life. 'The Peacemakers of Niemba' is an excellent and easy read, and for anyone like me that didn't know the full story, you'll have no doubts about the faith of that brave patrol.

Tom McCaughren wrote The Peacemakers of Niemba when Defence Correspondent of The Irish Times. He later joined RTE for which he covered the troubles in Northern Ireland and related violence in the republic. As Security Correspondent of RTE, he also covered the peacekeeping operations of Irish troops in the Middle East and the Balkans. www.tommccaughren.net



DVD

JACK REACHER

Director: Christopher McQuarrie

Starring: Tom Cruise, Rosamund Pike, David Oyelowo, Joseph Sikora, Richard Jenkins, Werner Herzog and Robert Duvall

Certification: 15

Runtime: 2 hours 10 minutes

Released: 19 Apr 2013

CHRISTOPHER MCQUARRIE'S ADAPTATION of Lee Child's No 1 Best Selling novel series featuring Jack Reacher. This mystery crime drama is adapted from 'One Shot', #9 of 17. As an ex-military policeman turned vigilante drifter is called in to help investigate after an expert sniper takes the lives of five random victims. The prime suspect Barr (Sikora) insists upon his innocence and believes he's been set up and asks for Jack Reacher (Cruise). Barr's lawyer (Pike) asks Reacher to investigate the shootings, Reacher is led to believe there is an unseen force pulling the strings of the investigation and he's determined to get to the truth.

Fans of the Reacher series have voiced their dislike of Cruise playing Reacher, who is a bigger, broader and taller character in Lee Child's books. But Lee himself has said, "Cruise doesn't soften the character and will grow with the film adaptations."



GAME

STEEL BATTALION HEAVY ARMOR

CAPCOM

KINECT

18



SET IN 2082, Steel Battalion Heavy Armor depicts a world devoid of semiconductors, where war is waged with rudimentary weapons as new superpowers struggle for dominance. In a twist of fate, the US army has been forced to begin major landing operations on what was once its own soil. In this lowtech era, there is one weapon class that will determine the course of the war - the Vertical Tank (VT). Playing as pilot Lt Powers, you control one such VT as you embark on a mission that will see the action shift from North America to battlefields and war-torn streets across the globe. VT movement, aiming and firing of the main guns are undertaken using the Xbox 360 controller. A wide variety of other combat-crucial actions are done through Kinect for Xbox 360 with upper body gestures - from starting the engine to operating the scope or manning the turret-mounted machine gun.

Genre: FPS - Platform: Xbox 360 - PEGI: 18 - Price: €19.98 (gamestop.ie).

Release: 22 June 2012. © Capcom USA, Inc. & Ascaron Entertainment UK Ltd - All Rights Reserved.



NAME RANK UNIT

JOHN MCPHILLIPS
CQMS
D ENG, DFHQ, MCKEE BKS

For the past ten years I've worked in the Barrack Service Procurement Section within the Director of Engineers office. We look after every location that the Defence Forces operates out of, from Finner Camp in Donegal to the Naval Base in Cork. We also look after the barrack service needs of the different missions deployed overseas.

Every year we are allocated a budget for barrack services and utilities. This budget has to cover all the utilities, such as electricity, gas, oil, waste disposal, and water. We also place the contracts for the individual barrack service officers and NCOs to purchase off. This would include a broad range of things from lockers and beds to utility items such as light fittings and power sockets.

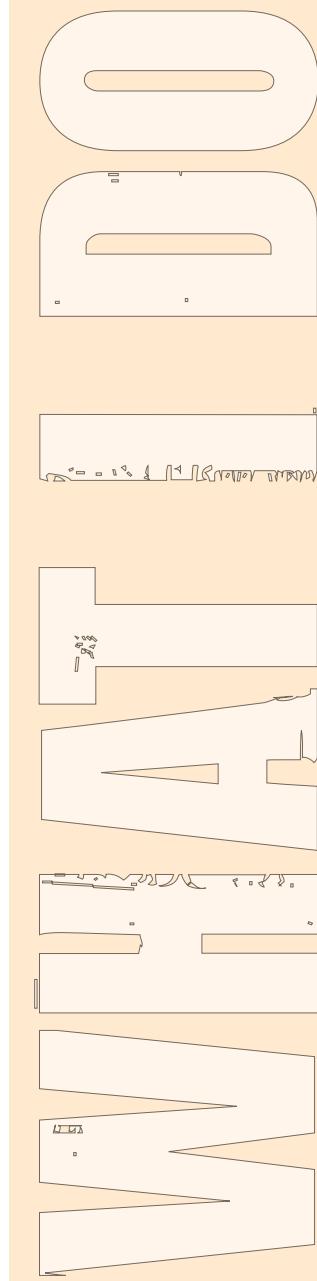
I have just graduated from the Institute of Public Administration where I was awarded a diploma in Public Procurement. Students on this course had to have at least five years' experience plus several certificates in this field. The course essentially teaches you how to manage your budget. For us this includes the Defence Forces estimates and the corporate procurement plan, which is not easy as we have so many locations to deal with. At the start of the year you put in place your annual plans, which include your procurement and financial plans, and you also have to plan how to get best value for money out of the resources and budget available to you. It was a very interesting and demanding course.

The job does take me out of the office, as we are required to carry out inspections with units, barrack accountants, and barrack service officers and NCOs. We also go out and visit sites where work is being carried out, such as a refurbishment of an accommodation block. We check to make sure the money that has been allocated is being spent correctly. Or, if needed, we can advise on the best, value-for-money equipment we feel would suit their purpose.

There are plenty of opportunities for service. The last time I deployed overseas to EUFOR BiH in Sarajevo in 2009/2010 where I was a customs compliance officer. Basically, this involved monitoring the imports and exports coming in and out of camp, especially duty-free items. We also had to carry out inspections to make sure the PXs were selling to whom they are supposed to.

I enjoy my job, as we are constantly busy, juggling money and reviewing our contracts and tenders. We are always on the go, planning not just for today and tomorrow but for 12 months' time.

"We are always on the go, planning not just for today and tomorrow but for 12 months' time".





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