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AN COSANTÓIR

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OCTOBER 2013

**MEDIA
PIONEER
AWARDS**

SHORTLIST 2013

COMICS AT WAR
**THE GREEN
KNIGHTS**

ESSC TRAINING

**RDF SENIOR
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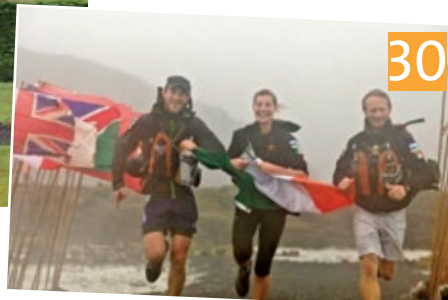
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Front Cover

Sgt Clive Dunne during UNDOF Mission Readiness Exercise
Photo by: Cpl Neville Coughlan

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

Hello and welcome to another special issue where we have just been announced as the winner of the 'Best Article' award from this year's European Military Publication Association (EMPA) conference in Helsinki, Finland. The article that won it for us was *At the gates of hell* [Mali] by author and military historian Paul O'Brien – well done Paul!

In this issue your photos are ever present in our *On Parade* gallery. *In Focus* features many mini stories from around the DF with S/Lt Shane Mulcahy who underwent the Mine Clearance Diver course with the Royal Canadian Navy, then IUNVA Post 27 officially opened its offices in Mill View, Portlaoise, and finally the Salute! *Military and Re-enactment Show 2013*, held in the National Show Centre, Swords, Co Dublin. Our main feature is an update on *Mission Readiness Training* of the 43 Inf Gp who recently deployed to UNDOF and then we find out who the Green Knights are both by Wesley Bourke and the follow up to last month's interesting piece *Comics at War* by Aidan Courtney. Capt Ronan Kavanagh tells us about some recent Engineer Specialist Search and Clearance (ESSC) Training. In our *Strategic Review*, Paul Shanahan (NMCI) writes about SMACs - Small Craft Emergency Response and Survival Training for Arctic Conditions. Our *In Reserve* features the recent RDF Senior NCOs Course by student Sgt Steve Conran. In our *History* pages we have two small pieces; Memorial to General Collins and the Cavalry Corps Memorial's 50th Anniversary. In *Sport* we have the Icelandic Race by Capt John Murphy and small pieces on the sports of Equine and Skydiving. Plus our other regular features – *World Strategic Picture*, *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews* and *What I Do*.

"I would like to express my apologies to the newly promoted Corporal Neville Coughlan, who I accidentally demoted in last month's issue - congratulations 'Corporal' - now get back out there!"

Wayne Fitzgerald

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor

JFK Commemoration

Aidan Synnott poses with Brig Gen Paul Fry (GOC Air Corps) and Lt Col Sean Cosden (USAF), Defence Attaché to Ireland), on the quayside during the recent JFK Commemoration event in New Ross, Co Wexford on June 2013. Photo: Aidan's Dad, through Brig Gen P. Fry



Better late than never

Former member of the DF, Mr Jack Kelly, achieved a long standing wish to revisit Cathal Brugha Bks, some 68 years after he left the forces. Jack, who will be 91 in November, joined the DF during 'The Emergency' in May 1941 and served until November 1945. Jack was a keen soccer player, having played League of Ireland soccer with both Bohemians and Drumcondra. During his service he played for the DF and the E Comd teams. He played in the Cunningham Cup final vs. the Curragh Comd in 1943, but never received a winner's medal. However, this was rectified at this year's Cunningham Cup final in Tolka Park on 25th July 2013 when, at half time, Uachtarán na hÉireann, Michael D Higgins, presented Jack with his winners medal, 70 years after the match. Pictured on the 8th August 2013, are (L/R) Comdt Brian Donagh (A/OC of Cathal Brugha Bks), Comdt Robert Kiely (Sec DF Soccer), Mr Jack Kelly and Col Brian Reid (EO & 2 I/C of 2 Bde). Photo: Comdt Kiely

Air Corps 42nd Apprentice Class 35th year reunion



Pictured are the Air Corps 42nd Apprentice Class (September 1978) who held a 35th year reunion on 20th September 2013 in Baldonnel. Our day started with mass, said by Fr Jerry Carroll CF, assisted by sacristan Armn Robert Walsh. A special reason for the mass was the recent passing of one of our class, Kevin Sheridan and also remembering: John O'Sullivan, Harry Roberts and Sean Molloy who had passed on in the intervening years. After a plentiful lunch we went on a tour of the museum, the new apprentice hostel and the Pilatus hanger. Later we spent time chatting about the past and present in the NCOs mess to finish the evening. All in all a super 35th year get together made all the better by everyone in Baldonnel. Photo: Tom O'Doherty

SHINNING GOLD



Pictured putting the finishing touches to a new coat of paint on the railings around the Michael Collins monument at Béal na mBláth, West Cork in time for the annual commemoration that took place on 25th August were: Pte Billy Lanigan and Denis McSweeney, engineers from the Collins Bks, Cork. *Photo: Cpl Denis Boyle (5 Bty army reserve)*

JUMPING HIGH



Pictured is Capt Michael Kelly (Equit Sch) at the Millstreet Horse Show that took place in the Green Glens Arena from 13th - 18th August. Millstreet Horse Show is Ireland's largest annual equestrian event and the only CSI*** to be held in Ireland. *Photo: John Delea*

TEAM IRELAND



Defence Forces members in Triathlon World Championships that took place in London in September 2013. Five DF members have been selected as part of the Ireland team (L/R): Pte John Dillon, Cpl Gavin Crawford, Comdt Máirtín Coffey, Capt Dave Sweeney and Pte Mark O'Sullivan is missing from photo. *Photo: Lt Col Noel Murphy (DFTC)*

Pictured are the Defence Forces Canoe Polo Team taken at a recent national competition in Phibsboro, Dublin. This was the first outing for the team, who finished a respectable 5th place in their division, out of a total of 12 teams competing. (L/R): Pte Warren Curtin, Cpl Michael O'Neil, Pte Stephen Happe, Comdt Ian Burke and Pte David Feehan. *Photo: Comdt Ian Burke*

DF CANOE POLO TEAM



Chief of Staff Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle called in on Gnr Joe O'Meara on duty in the bks barber shop during his recent visit to Collins Bks Cork. Pictured (L/R): Sgt Major Dinneen, Lt Col Coleman (OC Collins Bks), Gnr O'Meara, Lt Gen O'Boyle (COS), Brig Gen Fitzgerald (GOC 1 Bde). *Photo: Sgt Eamonn Casey (HQ 1 Bde)*

BARBER SHOP



Members of 4 and 5 Bty Res, 2 Arty Regt displayed their marksmanship skills in Kilbride Camp during the 2 Bde Small Arms Competition. They won 1st place in the rifle competition, 2nd place in the pistol and 2nd by a moustache hair in the falling plates. All teams will represent the Regiment in the upcoming Small Arms Competition in Kilworth this year. Pictured are: Comdt Shane Bradley (2 I/C 2 Arty Regt), Comdt Fred Duggan, Lt Avril O'Rourke, RSM Noel O'Callaghan, Gnr's Cormac O'Flinn, Greg Mulligan, Dean O'Farrell, Sgt Eamon Gaffney, Comdt Denis Horan, Capt Shane Dooley and Sgt Stephen Mather.

Rifle Team: Lt Liam Creagan, Sgt Jimmy Jessop, Gnr's Stephen Jessop, Sean McAnaney, Cormac McCabe, Cpl Janine Anderson and Gnr Emma Carlin. **Pistol Team:** Lt Anthony Glynn, Sgt's Conn Gilespie, John Warde, Dave Hession and David Fleming. **Plates Team:** Sgt Jimmy Jessop, Gnr's Lorna Cummins, Tamara Keegan, Sean Turner, Cormac McCabe, Stephen Jessop, Glenn Jessop and Sean McAnaney. *Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan*

WITH THANKS



Pictured handing over a cheque for €5,209 to the Irish Cancer Society are RSM Mick Dillon (SM of 106 Inf Bn, UNIFIL), Sgt Ann-Marie Larkin (DFHQ) to Matt Lewis (Irish Cancer Society). The money was raised from fundraising during the year while competing in 100 Mile run (11 Aug 2012) and 10 Marathons in 10 Days (04 - 13 Jul 2013). *Photo: Sgt Ann-Marie Larkin (DFHQ)*

4 & 5 BTY RES, 2 ARTY REGT





Pictured on his last RDF camp, BSM Tom Walsh, who enlisted in the FCA on 17th March 1968, with A Coy 15 Inf Bn Tralee – as a matter of respect Tom was given a march past by his unit. Tom completed many courses at all levels and attained many promotions; Cpl ('71), Sgt ('78), Coy Sgt ('96), BQMS ('97) and BSM in 2012 with 32 Inf Bn. He is currently serving in the 12 Inf Bn after the recent reorganisation. Tom has overseen many and varied changes during his extensive 45 year career. Tom is due to retire in March 2014. *Photo: Sgt Ian Sims (C Coy, 12 Inf Bn)*

Pictured at the RDF shooting competition at Kilworth on Sunday 8th September where members of F Coy (Skibbereen), 12 Inf Bn won in every discipline with CS Paddy Galvin, runner up pistol competition, Denis O'Donovan Winner Falling Plates, Chris Fehilly, William McSweeney and Owen Murnane rifle team winners. Kneeling Gavin Collins and John Murphy won the GPMG competition and finally 14 time rifle veteran winner Ger McCarthy, has won 14 'all army' rifle team medals the most for any soldier since the shield was first presented in 1947. *Photo: Denis Boyle*



ON TARGET

CAVALRY CLUB



Pictured at the Cavalry Club Elders Lunch, which was held in the Officers Mess, The Military College on Thursday 29th August 2013. The Elders were joined at the lunch by senior Cavalry Corps officers and members of the committee. *Photo: Capt John Power*

IN REMEMBRANCE



FR. JAMES GILMORE BRANCH



Pictured are some members of the Fr. James Gilmore Branch of ONE, who held their Lá na bhFiann remembrance day and mass recently. *Photo: Sean Shinnors*

The Imokilly Branch of ONE commemorated and honoured their deceased comrades during the branch's 'Lá na bhFiann' (Warriors' Day). Held at Killeagh, Co Cork on Sunday 25th August 2013. Colleagues from the following ONE branches also attended: Ballincollig, Cobh and Limerick. *Photo: Domhnall Mac Cárthaigh FS (PRO SAC ONE)*

MINE CLEARING *in the Pacific*

BY LT CDR PATRICIA BUTLER

Over the past 12 months S/Lt Shane Mulcahy became the first Naval Service officer to undergo the Mine Clearance Diver course with the Royal Canadian Navy at their Fleet Diving Unit Pacific. Not only that but he also received the Best Student award on the course.

There were nine students (seven leading hands and two junior officers) on the course, all with previous naval diving qualifications. Each Canadian student had to pass a gruelling two-week selection course during which they faced huge physical and mental stress and sleep deprivation. The failure rate at that stage is over 70%.

The 12-month course is hugely demanding both physically and mentally, with PT twice daily (not including diving) and exams every week. The year is broken down into a number of diving and non-diving phases at different military bases around Canada.

The first phase included all aspects of SCUBA diving, the physics and physiology of diving, dive medicine and hyperbaric oxygen therapy. This phase lasted until mid-October and was similar in many ways to the Naval Service Diving Course run annually at the Naval Base.

The next phase, shallow water rebreather training, was the most physically challenging. Using the Canadian Clearance Diving Apparatus (CCDA) mixed-gas rebreather, S/Lt Mulcahy and his class conducted underwater swims lasting up to three hours in depths ranging from 2m to 42m. Students had to have

their equipment prepared by 0630 each morning, and conducted night dives twice a week, many of which would continue past midnight. This phase also included an introduction to explosives and conventional munitions disposal on land.

In January the students transferred to Canada's largest military training facility in Gagetown, New Brunswick, for more explosives training. This included improvised explosive device disposal (IEDD) and taught the students how to use a number of tools and techniques to make-safe a suspicious or home-made explosive devices. The training took place mostly outdoors where the average air temperature was -36 degrees Celsius. The phase finished with a five-week mine warfare course in Quebec, which covered the theories and techniques used in mine warfare.

The following phase brought the students back to Vancouver Island for deep diving, using the Canadian Underwater Mine Apparatus (CUMA) rebreather. Using helium mixed with oxygen, the students dived to 81m and practised the techniques used for approaching a live mine underwater. They learned various methods for making-safe different types of mines, including deploying from a helicopter to approach a mine floating at the surface.

As summer approached the students moved onto surface supplied diving. This involved breathing mixed gas fed through a hose from the surface down to the diver at depths of up to 100m. This was a very technical phase and required a lot of teamwork and trust between fellow divers. During this training the students conducted underwater welding and cutting, practiced the use of hydraulic tools, and ended with a salvage project, recovering a sunken 40-foot fishing vessel.





The final weeks of the course included underwater demolitions and allowed the students to put their new skills to the test. In a specially designed underwater range, they practised placing explosives on mine-shaped objects, beach obstructions, bridge and pier supports, and underwater chains and cables.

The course finished mid-August, and each of the nine students was awarded the clearance diver dolphin badge at a graduation ceremony held at the fleet diving unit. S/Lt Mulcahy was awarded top student on the course and received his award from Deputy Commander Canadian Fleet Pacific, Captain Bradley Peats. Serving and retired clearance divers were present at the ceremony, and welcomed the nine students into the trade in the traditional way, by having them take their newly pinned dolphins for a swim!

S/Lt Mulcahy, who says he found the 12-month course exhausting but a fantastic experience, has returned to the Naval Base where he looks forward to using his newly learned skills in the Naval Service Diving Section. He is

part of a unique team whose main roles include search and recovery, underwater survey, EOD, underwater engineering and military diving training. ■



IUNVA POST 27 NEWS UPDATE

BY MICHAEL TRACEY PHOTOS BY TIM KANE

POST 27 of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) reached another milestone with the official opening of its offices in Mill View, Portlaoise, recently.

The offices, which are leased from Laois County Council, were officially open by the national IUNVA president, Michael Butler, and Post 27 president, Archie Raeside. The event was attended by over 200 people.

Since Post 27 was established in 2004 by Billy Colbert and Paddy Harding it had held its meetings in a variety of venues. As Post 27 chairperson, Denis Farrell, explained: "Firstly we had our meetings in John Egan's restaurant. After that, we had them in the RDF hall beside the Garda barracks. Then we had our meetings in the Birchwood Community Centre in Knockmay."

Before moving into the new premises Post 27 had renovations carried out and it now contains a canteen, large meeting room and private offices. The meeting room is covered with old photos from UN missions abroad, giving a snapshot of the veterans' experiences.

To raise money for the offices, the Post carried out church gate collections, flag days and their own lotto, as well as gratefully receiving donations. Laois County Council and the national executive of IUNVA also offered financial help.

Mr Raeside spoke of the benefits the Post enjoyed from having a permanent base. "Being based at this location is proving beneficial in making Post 27 more easily contactable by those in need of our support," he says. "We can now better achieve our primary objective of providing advice and counselling to those affected by service with the United Nations."

From its new offices the Post offers counselling to veterans suffering post-traumatic stress, with a trained counsellor among its members. It has also held a gatekeeper course for mental health and suicide prevention. The new offices also serve as a social outlet, operating as a drop-in centre where veterans can call in for a cup of tea and a chat.

Tourists are also welcome to drop in and find out about Irish involvement with the UN. The offices also host Post 27's monthly meeting. There are currently around 47 members in Post 27, and two of its members, Charlie Mott and Michael Thompson, are on IUNVA's national executive.

The offices, which are managed by Michelle Kane, are generally open until 5pm Monday to Friday.

On the day of the launch, there were several military vehicles on display in Fitzmaurice Square, including a Defence Forces Mowag as well as other vehicles from the Military Vehicles Association. There was also a display of medals and military paraphernalia provided by 'Murty' Quinn. Music was provided by St Conleth's ONE Pipe Band.

Post 27 expressed its gratitude to all individuals and groups who have given their support, in particular County Manager Peter Carey, Supt Yvonne Lundon, Garda Gerry Dillon, OIC RDF Portlaoise, John Egan and the Birchwood Community Centre committee. For more information about Post 27, contact the offices on 8666055 or call in.

This article previously appeared in the Laois Nationalist on 6 August 2013 and is reprinted here with their kind permission. ■



SALUTE!

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD
PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE

On 31st of August, An Cosantóir visited the 'Salute! Military and Re-enactment Show 2013', held in the National Show Centre, Swords, Co Dublin. The show, hosted by the Association of Irish Military Enthusiasts (AIME), is in its 7th year and is building on the success of previous years. Salute! is the highlight of AIME's calendar, providing a themed and interesting military history display with re-enactors, trade stalls, plastic models and, of course, the armour: on your way into the show you cannot miss the 63-ton Chieftain tank and the 16-ton 432 and 434 APCs on display as part of the show's living history displays.

Seán Curtis of AIME told us: "Our main aim is to preserve Defence Forces' and other army's equipment and memorabilia. We have everything from a heavy tank to a jeep. Our members include gardaí, doctors and retired Defence Forces personnel. Many members don't have their own military vehicle but just like to help out and be around them."

AIME have seven pieces of armour on show, including land-rovers, ACMATs and a Fox APC, which has the same hull and turret as the Defence Forces' Scorpion recce vehicle, only with wheels instead of tracks.

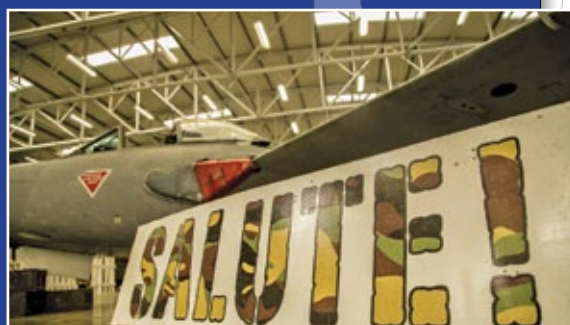
Seán told us some interesting facts about the collection of military vehicles on display. One of the ACMATs was part of the original 14 that the Defence Forces sold in 1999. The de Havilland Venom fighter-bomber on display was only purchased the day before the show on condition it was transported and re-assembled for the show. "We used to own another plane, a Canberra bomber, that was sold to an RAF museum in Germany, where it used to fly from," continued Seán.

Contributors to the show included the Irish Plastic Model Society (IPMS), the Irish Associa-

tion of Blood Bikes, dog handlers, and re-enactors, and there were stalls with militaria, toys and magazines.

With the proceeds of this event being donated to the Leopardstown Park Hospital, which has been looking after military veterans since 1917, here's wishing them another successful event for 2013.

www.aime.ie by email info@aime.ie or visit them on Facebook www.facebook.com/pages/AIME-Association-of-Irish-Military-Enthusiasts/160989397295056





THE MIDDLE EAST



How to deal with the Syrian Civil War became the centre of international debate after the Bashar Assad regime used chemical weapons against rebel held suburbs of Damascus on August 21st. Sources claim killing over a thousand people, it was the first use of chemical weapons since Saddam Hussein killed 5,000 Kurds in a poison-gas attack on the town of Halabja in 1988. Assad, Russia and Iran initially denied that the regime had been responsible. In reaction the American administration signalled that it would bomb Syrian military facilities.

Barack Obama said the regime crossed a "red line", the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted, by 10-7, to support a limited strike and John Boehner, the Speaker of the House, and other Republican heavyweights gave their backing. But many in Congress want America to leave Syria to its fate. At a G20 summit in St Petersburg Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, insisted that any response should not be taken without UN approval.

France president, François Hollande, declared that France was "ready to punish" those who "took the decision to gas innocents"; however Britain will not be taking part in any action, after the government was defeated on the issue in Parliament. It is the first time a British government did not secure support for a military operation since 1782.

Russia since proposed that Syrian chemical weapons should be placed under the supervision of international inspectors. The plan has been given a cautious welcome by America, France and Britain.

Muhammad Morsi, the Egyptian Islamist president deposed by the army in July, will stand trial for inciting the murder of protesters at a demonstration against his government last December, according to Egypt's prosecutor. Mr Morsi has been held by the authorities in an undisclosed location since losing power.

Iraq saw several more sectarian bombings with at least 70 people reported to have been killed in a series of attacks, mostly in Shia areas of Baghdad on August 28th.



Africa

Kenya's vice-president, William Ruto, pleaded not guilty before the International Criminal Court in The Hague to the charge of committing crimes against humanity in early 2008. Kenya's parliament voted to remove the country from the jurisdiction of the ICC, where President Uhuru Kenyatta is also due to stand trial, in November.

In conjunction with the Democratic Republic of Congo's armed forces, the UN launched operations against rebels from the M23, a group thought to be backed by Rwanda. Pushing them back from positions around Goma,

a city near the Congo-Rwanda border. The UN's special envoy for the region said that now would be a good time to resume peace talks.

Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta was sworn in as Mali's president. He called for a period of national reconciliation following the routing of separatists and Islamists.

Ten people were killed during fighting in Bangui, the Central African Republic's capital, between members of the rebel group that took over the country five months ago and fighters loyal to its overthrown president, François Bozizé.



THE AMERICAS

A military court sentenced Nidal Malik Hasan to death for the killing of 13 people at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009. This will be the first time the American military will have executed someone since 1961. Hasan was an army psychiatrist at the time with the rank of Major. He turned against the war in Afghanistan. His trial found he had tried to shoot as many soldiers as he could and had earlier contacted a

radical cleric in Yemen for advice on what American Muslims could do to wage jihad.

Media reports claim that the United States' National Security Agency (NSA) may have spied on Petrobras, the Brazilian national oil company. The report was based on a document provided by Edward Snowden. Brazil's president Dilma Rousseff, who is due to make a state visit to Washington next month, demanded an explanation for the

apparent spying.

Aaron Alexis a former sailor with a "pattern of misconduct" was shot dead in the Washington Navy yard incident after he shot dead 12 people and injured 8 others. Two law enforcement sources say Alexis recently made contact with two Veteran Hospitals. His contact is initially believed to be for psychological issues, the sources said.



EUROPE

In Catalonia, hundreds of thousands of people formed a human chain across the region in support of independence from Spain. The Catalan government plans to hold a referendum next year.

Turkish police and opposition protesters scuffled in Istanbul after a peaceful rally against the killing of other demonstrators during a summer of unrest. The demonstration had been organised by members of the same groups that protested in May, June and July over government plans to demolish the city's Gezi Park. The protesters are demanding justice from security forces accused of contributing to the deaths of six demonstrators in those turbulent weeks.



ASIA

South Korea and North Korea agreed to reopen the joint Kaesong industrial zone closed earlier this year. South Korea's President, Park Geun-hye, claimed the breakthrough as proof of the value of her "trustpolitik".

Philippine military helicopters fired rockets at Muslim rebels who were holed up in areas of a major city on the southern island of Mindanao. The rebels have been holding scores of people hostage in Zamboanga City in a crisis that authorities estimate has left as many as 61 people dead and more than 150 wounded.

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Knights of the Road

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN

This summer we met up with one of the 'coolest' clubs in the Defence Forces, the Green Knights Military Motorcycle Association. The association brings off-road and road bikers together through education, safety, knowledge, and the shared joy of riding.

The Green Knights are an International motorbike organisation and are part of the International Knights of the Round Table, which is made up of several uniformed motorbike associations. The Green Knights are for military personnel, the Red Knights for fire-fighters, the Blue Knights for law enforcement personnel, and the White Knights for the medical profession.

The Green Knights are organised in chapters and the Defence Forces' riders come together as Chapter 59. The association is open to all members of the Defence Forces, permanent and reserve, serving and retired personnel.

These are no Hell's Angels or Sons of Anarchy but simply guys and girls whose hobby involves two-wheeled machines. All you have to do is talk to these guys to see just how passionate they are.

You don't have to be in any specific corps to be a member of the Green Knights and members come from all over the Defence Forces. The president is Ollie Barbour OC PSS and John Enright from the Cavalry School is the vice-president. Each area (North, South, East and West) has a road captain who is responsible for organising events in their area and are also available to help new members to join up.

Throughout the year each road captain organises events for all the Chapter's Knights to attend, such as road tours or safety days. At least once a year a group of Knights travel abroad on tour, either meeting up with other Knights from the Round Table or heading off on their own. Over the years they've been all over Europe, from Germany to Portugal, from Scotland to Italy. Come to think of it, riding a motorbike through French vineyards or Alpine valleys doesn't exactly sound like a bad way to spend a summer's vacation.

We all know from the Grand Prix or the off-road, dirt-track competitions that motorbikes can be fast, powerful, and extreme. They can also be dangerous in the hands of an amateur. Military rank doesn't come into the association at all. Thomas O'Connell (Ord GP 2 Bde) told us that the aim of the group is to promote safe motorbike riding within the Defence Forces while at the same time bringing together people who have an enthusiasm for motorbikes. The more experienced guys mentor the new members and when on the road the more experienced riders will take the lead.

As the Green Knights' ride director, Peter Cox (MP and motorbike instructor), is responsible for the safety of all the riders. Since he is an instructor with the MP Corps he is well in tune with road safety and safe-riding techniques. He pointed out: "You will



find most of the guys are very experienced, but when young lads join they are not used to having powerful bikes under them. The weather can also affect how bikes handle so it's very important to give advice and safety briefs if necessary."

A tour can consist of anything from ten to 40 bikes and international meets can have hundreds of riders. That's a lot of machines, powerful engines, and enthusiastic riders. To keep everyone safe the guys employ a seniority structure. Steven Clarke is the group's sergeant-in-arms, which is basically the organiser. He gives out timings, ferry tickets and that type of thing, and, very importantly, keeps discipline amongst the group wherever they go. On the road he monitors everything to make sure everyone is riding safely and nobody is getting left behind.

John Enright explained to us how the group controls so many bikes on the road, especially with many different types of bikes with different speeds. "You have a designated lead man, a back-marker, and a drop-off man," John says. "When the lead man, who is always at the head of the group, comes to a turn he signals to his drop-off man who stops and directs everyone to make the correct turn. He knows when everyone is through because the back-marker always takes up the rear position."

"The front and rear of the group can break up to be ten minutes or more apart," added Paul Gaughran (Road Captain, East), "but we know that everyone will be accounted for: it's a simple system but it works and everyone is safe,"

Sport or touring bikes aren't cheap and the Green Knights are very aware of this and don't want cost to discourage potential new members from coming along. "Anyone is welcome to come and meet up with us," said Thomas O'Connell. "We can help people get started. By no means do you have to go out and spend thousands on your first bike: we'll guide you in the right direction."

Financially, there is also the added benefit of a member's discount on motorbike insurance that the Green Knights have in place with Carole Nash Insurance and Aon Insurance.

For more information on the Green Knights visit: www.gkimma.com ■



Peter Cox (2 Bde MP Coy)

"My bike is a brand new BMW R1200GS; a new model only launched in Ireland on March 2nd. It is liquid-cooled (a new step for BMW) by two radiators filled with a glycol gel. This model is up from 110bhp to 125bhp and improvements have been made all over. I have the touring edition with a full luggage system, satnav, engine bars, a tank bag, and a Scala Rider Bluetooth system that allows you to get directions from the satnav and take or make phone-calls, or listen to the radio or MP3."

Wes Walsh (ex 2 Inf Bn now 2 Cav Sqn RDF)

"I have a Ducati Multistrada 1200 with 150bhp and full anti-lock braking system (ABS). It has four riding modes: Sport, Touring, Rain, and Duro. I completed a Dispatch Riders course in the cavalry but even still having the riding modes is very handy as different conditions can catch you out."

"I'm a customs officer now and I've been away for a few years working in Portugal so this is only my second run since I came back and I'm looking forward to getting back on the road with the guys. They're a great group: several of them came over to Portugal when I was there and we toured around on our bikes. It was fantastic."



Marty Clarke (1 Cn Cois)



"I have a Kawasaki 1400GTR, which is basically the touring version of one of the fastest bikes in the world. This one is shaft-drive instead of a chain and has electric windscreens that can move up and down to suite the conditions, heated seats, and ABS traction control: it has it all. Its counterpart is the fastest legal road bike, capable of a top speed of 200mph. This model is detuned and is specifically designed for touring but it can still reach a speed of 150mph."

"The Green Knights is a great group to be in. You get to travel all over the country and the continent."

Paul Gaughran (rtd)

"I have a Honda Valkyrie 1520cc. It is a flat six custom, which means it has a six-cylinder, flat engine and is custom built. They started making them in 1997 and discontinued them in 2003. I'm not the tallest person in the world but this bike has a low centre of gravity, which makes it very easy for handling and manoeuvring. I have sports bikes at home but this one is perfect for cruising."

"The Green Knights is a great way of keeping connected with the Defence Forces and all the guys I served with."



Steve Clarke (rtd)

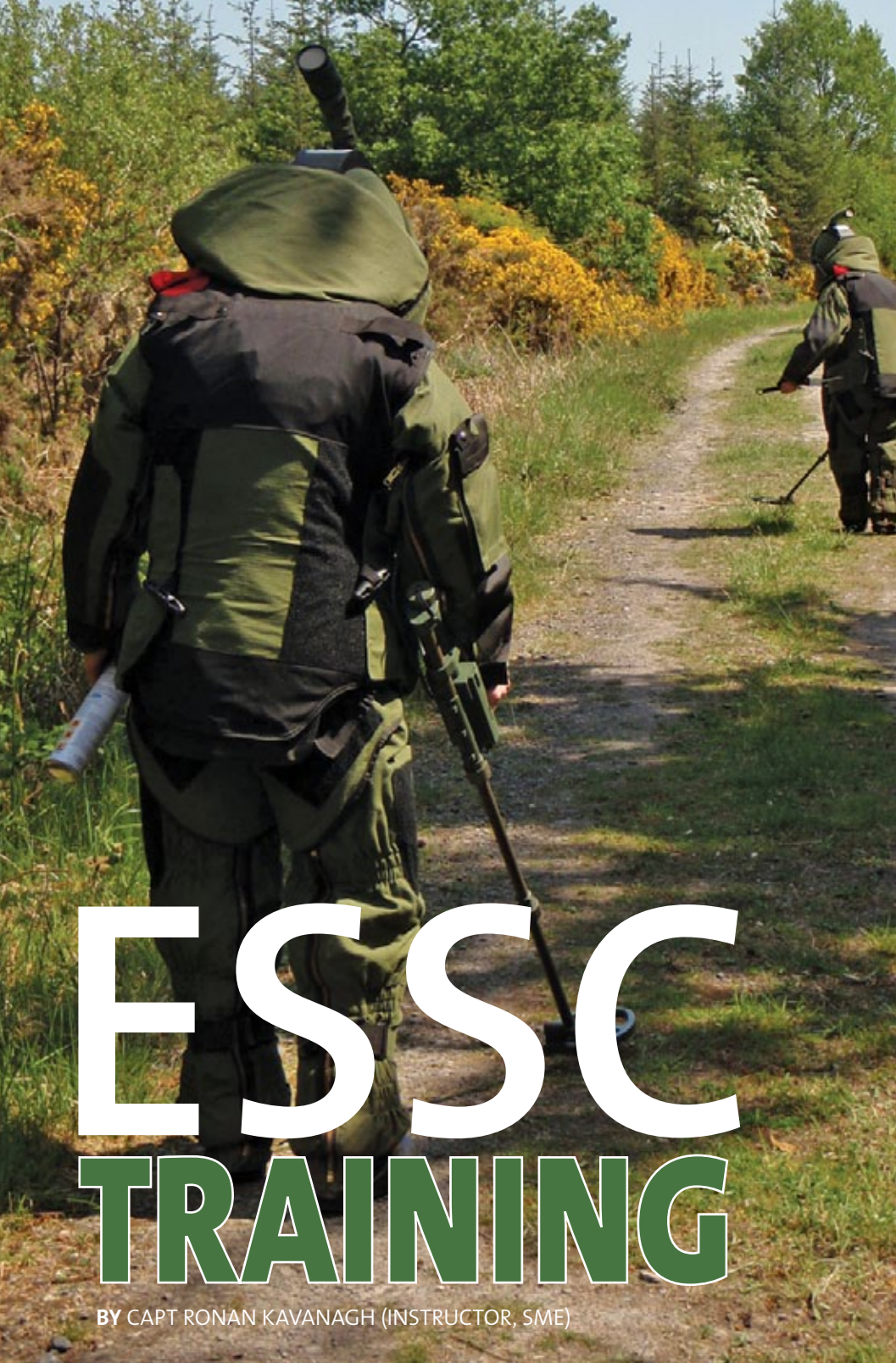
"I have a real bike, a Harley Davidson Fat Boy; an American bike that is very well recognised from the TV. It's perfect for cruising as it's belt-driven, low maintenance, and trouble free: you just sit back and relax. It has a vintage look and vintage sound to it and when you are on the open road you will turn heads. The 1450cc engine is very big, with a lot of pulling power. With some smaller bikes, when you put bags on the back you know it, whereas with this you can load anything onto it. Believe it or not this is a 2004 bike. Harley Davidson hasn't changed the design since the 1950s."



Kevin Ayres (rtd)

"My day job is an accountant but my part-time job is a driving and motorbike instructor. I have several bikes and this is my BMW GT K1200. This would be classed as a sports tourer and will hopefully take the place of the sports tourers I had before, such as the Yamaha FJR1300 or the Honda Pan-European. It has computer-controlled suspension, cruise control, VS, heated seats, and heated grips: has virtually all the mod cons of a modern apartment. "The computer allows me to change settings from one rider to rider and passenger and to allow for various weather conditions as well. "While this bike can do around 150mph with high comfort, like most motorbike guys I get more of a buzz from cruising around twisty, country roads where you get a good lean."





ESSC TRAINING

BY CAPT RONAN KAVANAGH (INSTRUCTOR, SME)

Countering the improvised explosive device threat (C-IED) is an important role for all arms of the Defence Forces and an essential facet of overseas pre-deployment training as well as on courses at home. While all soldiers need to be C-IED trained, the task of searching for IEDs and other subversive arms and ammunition in high-threat environments, or where a high assurance of success is needed, is left to the engineer specialist search and clearance (ESSC) teams of the Corps of Engineers.

ESSC provides the capability to locate specific targets using intelligence assessments, systematic procedures and appropriate detection techniques. ESSC operations can be divided into three categories: offensive searches, which are conducted to gain intelligence, deny resources and opportunity, and to gain evidence for prosecution; defensive searches, which are conducted to provide force protection to deployed forces, or protection for pre-planned events, such as where a VIP may be the target of a subversive group; and incident search, which is where an ESSC team is deployed to isolate a suspected device from potential firing points and clear a path to the device in order to allow render-safe procedures be carried out by Ordnance Corps EOD teams.

The most important aspect of each operation is the threat assessment. This dictates the priority of work as well as the level of personal protective equipment (PPE) at different stages of the operation and the requirement for, and locations of, other arms support in the form of infantry cordons and security, EOD teams or ISTAR assets such as the Artillery Corps UAV.

The latest ESSC Team course was recently conducted in the School of Military Engineering, DFTC. This seven-week course is designed to train Engineer Corps privates and NCOs in the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) and equipment required to operate in a high-risk environment. All students must have already successfully completed a Combat Engineer course and so will already be trained in

mine warfare and mine clearance as well as explosive demolitions.

Over recent years a procurement programme has significantly increased the level of detection equipment available and ESSC teams are equipped with a range of metal and ferromagnetic detectors as well as ground-penetrating radars. The Multi-Mode Threat Detector (MMTD) enables the detection of explosives, narcotics, toxic industrial chemicals, and chemical warfare agents. The new MineWolf MW240 mechanical mine flail was also utilised on the course as teams must be aware of procedures for battlefield area clearance in both the military and humanitarian role.

Team members are protected during operations by a number of levels of PPE, ranging from combat body armour and helmet to light-weight de-mining suits, up to the maximum protection level of the EOD 8 suit. Learning to operate and carry out arduous tasks in PPE is all part of the course.

The course culminated in a two-week exercise where the teams were tasked on a daily basis to carry out different types of operations. The exercise began with low-risk, offensive searches such as vehicle checkpoints, and building and area searches. Information gathered during these searches led to the suspicion that a VIP would be the target of an IED attack during a conference held in the DFTC and consequently a defensive search of the venue was conducted.

From this point onwards the exercise entered the high-threat phase where the subversive group had issued a direct threat against DF personnel. The two teams were tasked with conducting a route clearance operation along a route where a number of IEDs had been buried to target DF patrols. They also responded to several incidents where requests had been received from EOD teams to isolate and clear paths to suspected devices. One of these incidents occurred near the 'border' of a neighbouring country, which required the team to liaise with security forces on the opposite side of the border while carrying out their search operation procedures.

Overall, the consensus was that the exercise was a physically and mentally challenging, but rewarding, end to the course as the students were given the opportunity to put into practice the TTPs that had been taught over the previous five weeks and were able to see that the techniques and equipment worked well in realistic scenarios.

The students will now return to their units where they will form part of the unit ESSC Team, ready to deploy when called on in the ATPC role at home, or overseas protecting our troops from the IED threat. The newly search qualified personnel will get an opportunity in early autumn to hone their skills at the biannual search exercise conducted by the Corps of Engineers for ESSC teams in all formations. ■



COMICS at War Part 2

BY AIDAN COURTNEY

ALL IMAGES ARE COPYRIGHTED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS

Following on from our 'Comics at War' feature in last month's issue, Aidan continues the story by looking at comics with an Irish artist or connection.

Comics in Ireland have been influenced by international comics that have been available in Ireland for decades. British comics like 'Victor' were found regularly in newsagents across the island, while American comics were often sent home by emigrants even before US publishers started distributing here.

Ireland has produced many highly talented people who have worked in comics in the US and the UK. Dubliner Paddy Brennan worked for the 'Beano' on a comic strip called 'General Jumbo'. The title character was a boy who controlled an army of toy soldiers by remote control and used them to defeat criminals and help people in his community. Although this strip, which first appeared in 1953, was not strictly 'military' it used many military vehicles, aircraft and personnel at a time that many children were fanatical about Airfix military models or toy soldiers. Brennan later moved on to other comic strips while 'General Jumbo' was continued by other artists.

Garth Ennis is a comic writer from Northern Ireland who has written for many publishers over the years. He first wrote for Fleetway, a UK publisher, before moving to the US. Ennis, who created many critically acclaimed titles, including 'Preacher', 'The Boys' and 'Battlefields', has said that he is a military history enthusiast, citing his love of Second World War history in particular.

He also wrote a few military related comics for Vertigo Comics, like 'Unknown Soldier', 'Adventures of the Rifle Brigade' and 'Garth Ennis's War Stories'. More recently, he has explored aspects of action and warfare with Dynamite Entertainment, a comic publishing company based in the US.

Ennis's best known title is probably 'Battlefields'. His first story in the series, 'The Night Witches', was about a female pilot with the all-female 599th Bomber Regiment of the Soviet

Air Forces. While this is a fictional tale the Night Witches was the nickname of a real all-female regiment formed by the Soviets when German forces were pushing forward on the Eastern Front. 'Tankies' was about a crew of inexperienced men in a tank being led by a seasoned veteran as they try to survive the Battle of Normandy. 'Dear Billy' focused on a nurse in Singapore during the Japanese invasion.

The 'Battlefields' series is still running, with more tales from World War II and beyond.

While there are many other Irish creators working in comics worldwide, there has been a growth in domestic comic publishing in both Northern Ireland and the Republic over the past few years. Irish comics and graphic novels on several themes including the military are now being produced by Irish based creators and publishers.

O'Brien Press ventured into the publishing of graphic novels with the non-fiction 'Blood Upon the Rose' by Gerry Hunt, a historical tale of the 1916 Rising.

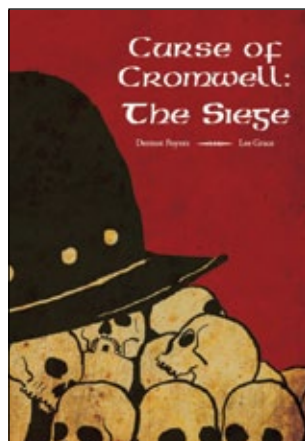
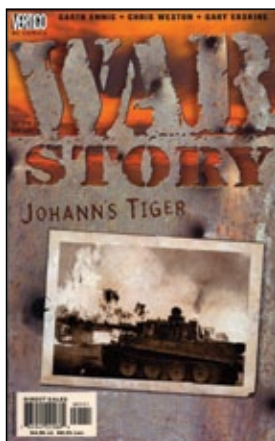
Hunt followed this up with 'At War with the Empire: Ireland's Fight for Independence', which highlights the Irish War of Independence.

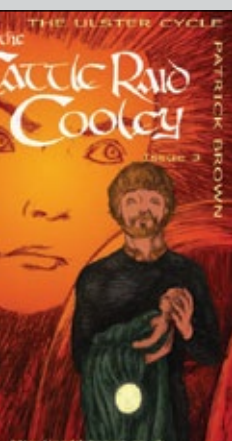
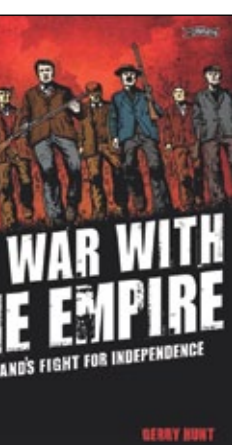
In 2013 O'Brien Press also brought out 'Celtic Warrior: The Legend of Cú Chulainn' by Irish comic artist Will Sliney. However, this is not the only comic about Ireland's greatest warrior as Patrick Brown in Belfast has been drawing and posting pages from his comic 'The Battle Raid of Cooley' since 2008 on his website paddybrown.co.uk. Brown's comic features tales from the Irish epic Táin Bó Cúailnge, starting with Medb invading Ulster and meeting a young border guard, Cú Chulainn, who opposes her oncoming army. The comics have also been made available in print editions.

Irish language graphic novel publisher Cló Mhaigh Eo has also published comics that focus on Cú Chulainn and Ancient Ireland's military through the myths and legends of An Táin, An Toraíocht and Deirdre agus Mic Uisnigh.

Cú Chulainn has featured in many comics made by Irish creators over the years.

Moccu Press has focused on graphic novels that deal with different periods of conflict in Irish history. Writer





Dermot Poyntz, the founder of the publishing company, has published three titles, 'Curse of Cromwell: The Siege', 'War of The Two Kings' and 'Plight of The Wild Geese'. The series is drawn by Lee Grace.

Rob Curley's Atomic Diner Comics has published a number of comics with a military slant, such as 'Black Scorpion', 'Crimson Blade', 'The Glimmer Man' and 'League of Volunteers'. The latter title focuses on Irish superheroes in Ireland during the Emergency. Even though the country is neutral it still has to be protected from many dark terrors as well as potential dangers from the war that rages beyond its shores. Although pure fantasy, these titles draw upon different aspects of the military in history.

This is just a small sample of the Irish comic artists, writers and publishers who use military based themes to tell their tales. Some do it through the Irish language, some tell military based fiction and others describe factual aspects of military history but all use the medium of comics to highlight their themes.

Special Mention: 'Dougie's War' is a graphic novel, written by Rodge Glass and drawn by Dave Turbitt, that tells the fictional story of Dougie Campbell, who has left the British Army after returning to Scotland from Afghanistan but whose experiences of his time there continue to haunt him.

The novel deals with Dougie's post-traumatic stress disorder and his response to his environment as he deals with civilian life. Adrian Searle follows the initial fictional comic with a very interesting article on the condition that also features interviews with veterans of different conflicts who give their points of view. The third part of the book is an essay that talks about the 'Charley's War' comic strip that appeared in 'Battle' in the late 1970s and 1980s and how it highlighted PTSD, or 'shellshock' as it was known in World War I.

While very entertaining this book also highlights issues and aspects of military service that need to be addressed as well as understood. ■

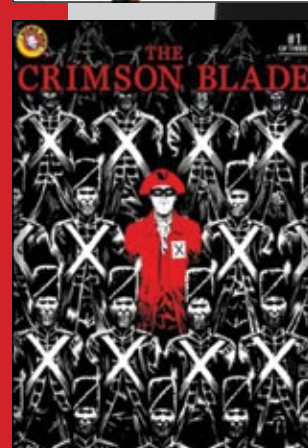
Recommended Reading:

IRISH BASED COMICS:

- **'At War with the Empire'** by Gerry Hunt, ISBN: 9781847172600. Published by O'Brien Press €14.99 www.obrien.ie/graphic-novel
- **'Curse of Cromwell'** by Dermot Poyntz and Lee Grace, ISBN: 9780956655806. Published by Moccu Press €10.00 (hard-copy) €2.00 (Ebook) www.moccupress.com
- **'League of Volunteers'** by Rob Curley and Barry Keegan €5.00 can be bought in Sub City Comics, Dublin, or from www.atomicdiner.com
- **'Battle Raid of Cooley'** by Paddy Brown can be bought at www.comicsy.co.uk/paddybrown/
- **'An Táin'** by Colman Ó Raghallaigh and Barry Reynolds, ISBN: 9781899922284. €10.00 www.leabhar.com/comics.htm

INTERNATIONAL BASED COMICS:

- **'Commando Tank Attack'** edited by Calum Laird, ISBN: 9781853758935. Published by Carlton Books £5.99 www.carltonbooks.co.uk/
- **'Charley's War'**, Volume 1: 2nd June - 1 August 1916, by Pat Mills and Joe Colquhoun, ISBN: 9781840236279. Published by Titan Books, £14.99. <http://titanbooks.com/>
- **'The 'Nam'**, Volume 1, by Doug Murray and Mike Golden, ISBN: 9780785137504. Published by Marvel, £22.50.
- **'Showcase Presents Sgt Rock'**, Volume 4, by Roger Kanigher and Joe Kubert, ISBN: 9781401238117. Published by DC Comics £14.99. www.dccomics.com/talent/joe-kubert
- **'Fax from Sarajevo'** by Joe Kubert, ISBN: 978156713464. £12.99
- **'Journalism'** by Joe Sacco, ISBN: 9780224097321. £18.99 <http://us.macmillan.com/Metropolitan.aspx>
- **'The PS: The Preventive Maintenance Monthly'** by Will Eisner, ISBN: 9780810997486. £13.99. Published by Abrams. www.abramsbooks.com
- **'Beetle Bailey - The Daily and Sunday Strips 1965'**, by Mort Walker, ISBN: 9781848567061. Published by Titan Books. £14.99 <http://titanbooks.com/>
- **'Dougie's War'** by Rodge Glass and Dave Turbitt, ISBN: 9780954402488. Published by Freight Books. £14.95 www.freightbooks.co.uk
- **'Garth Ennis's Complete Battlefields'**, Volume 1 Trade Paperback, by Garth Ennis, ISBN: 9781606902554. Published by Dynamite Entertainment. \$24.99/£18.99 www.dynamite.com



Irish Troops Deploy to UNDOF

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY CPL NEVILLE COUGHLAN

Subsequent to approval by government earlier this summer 43 Inf Gp was established with the requirement to be ready to deploy to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights by September.

Following the 1973 War between Israel and Syria and Egypt, UNDOF was established by Security Council Resolution 350 on May 31st 1974 to: maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria; supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces; and supervise the areas of separation and limitation, as provided in the May 1974 Agreement on Disengagement. It is a Chapter VI mission.

In order to carry out its mandate, UNDOF maintains an area of separation, which is over 75kms long and approximately 10kms deep in the centre. The terrain is hilly and is dominated in the north by Mount Hermon, which is the location of the highest permanently manned UN position at an altitude of 2,814m.

While the Area of Separation is inhabited, governed and policed by the Syrian authorities, no military forces other than UNDOF are permitted within it. The UN mission is entirely deployed within and close to the Area of Separation, with two base camps, a headquarters at Camp Faouar, 20 permanently manned positions, eight outposts manned during daylight hours, and 11 observation posts.

UNDOF currently consists of 1,250 personnel, under the command of Maj Gen Iqbal Singh Singha from India, and troops are provided by Fiji, the Philippines, India, Nepal, and Ireland. There are also 78 personnel from UNTSO's (United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation) Observer Group Golan under the direct command of Force Commander UNDOF.

This is the first time Ireland has deployed a full contingent

to UNDOF but our involvement in the mission goes back to 1997/98 when Lt Gen Dave Stapleton (Retd) served as Force Commander.

43 Inf Gp is commanded by Lt Col Brendan Delaney, who has served in the region on two tours with UNIFIL and 18 months' service with UNTSO, six of which were spent in Syria. Speaking to An Cosantóir at the mission readiness exercise (MRE) Lt Col Delaney said: "We will be based in Camp Faouar and our primary role will be as the Force Reserve Coy. As well as carrying out routine patrols quite similar to the patrols Irish personnel conduct in South Lebanon, we will also be available to assist in an area where the situation may have escalated. The Syrian civil war is still ongoing and has presented challenges to UNDOF. We are there to maintain the peace under UNSC Resolution 350 and must remain impartial."

Regarding difficulties posed by the current Syrian conflict, troops from several contingents have been detained by rebel factions and several peacekeepers have been wounded by rounds landing in UN posts. With the apparent use of chemical weapons in Damascus taking place recently, UNDOF personnel now have to be even more vigilant.

"Like any mission, our peacekeepers train for every eventuality," DCO Comdt Timothy O'Brien told us. "Dur-



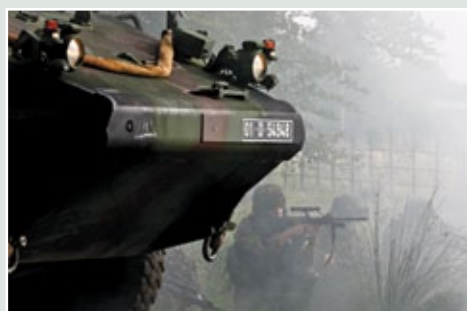
ing the MRE personnel revise and upskill themselves in the areas of mine awareness, counter-IED, ambush drills, CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) drills, casualty evacuation, and many more. These are skills all troops learn in basic training and continue to perfect as they continue their careers. Well trained soldiers who are operationally alert are the best defence against any challenge they may face."



At the ministerial review at Cathal Brugha Bks on September 3rd Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr Alan Shatter TD, spoke of the horrendous casualties among the civilian population due to the civil war. To date nearly one-third of the 22 million population of which seven million have been displaced since the uprising began in March 2011; over 100,000 have lost their lives; and an estimated two million refugees are seeking shelter in neighbouring Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt, leading to increased instability in the region. The refugee crisis has been described by experts as the largest since the Second World War.

Addressing the peacekeepers of 43 Inf Gp Minister Shatter said: "The continued support of troop contributing countries such as Ireland to the UNDOF mission is vital to allow the mission to continue the implementation of its mandate in a safe and secure manner. Helping to maintain the 40 year old ceasefire between Israel and Syria represents an important contribution to preventing further instability in the region." ■

Chalks 1 & 2 both arrived safely in UNDOF on 21st and 28th September.



CQMS Tony Fitzgerald (7 Inf Bn)

"This will be my 11th overseas trip. My first was to Sinai with 26 Inf Gp in 1974 and since then I went on to serve seven times in South Lebanon, once in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and once in Liberia. My job will essentially be logistical support for the troops: providing them with everything they need from their food to spare parts for their weapons. Everything we need we will be bringing with us and before we even arrive we have already sent away for a month's supply of rations. Due to the civil war re-supply may become problematic but we will overcome that. We have a great team going over and I'm really looking forward to the trip."



Pte Shane Egan (6 Inf Bn)

"This is my first trip overseas. I'm with 1 Sec, 2 Pl. There's a lot of hype going on over our deployment because of the civil war but to be honest I'm trying not to think about it until I get over there. I'm excited because it's my first trip: my family, however, have mixed views. Emma, my girlfriend, is a bit apprehensive. She'll have to look after Tommy our four-month-old son and I'll miss them like mad. When I come back Tommy will be walking. We will be conducting armoured patrols and as a scout I'll have to watch out for any IED threats and vulnerable points. My platoon are mainly from 6 Inf Bn. I didn't know them that well as I'm not long in the unit, but we've developed a great team. The section and troop commanders are great and I think we'll have a good trip."



Lt Graham Towell (7 Inf Bn)

"This is my first trip overseas. I am 1 Pl Comd. We are essentially acting as the Force Mobile Reserve. Each platoon consists of 32 personnel operating out of four Mowag Piranha APCs. I'm anxious and excited at the same time. I'm anxious because I don't want to let anybody down. Nearly all the guys in my platoon are from my home unit, 7 Inf Bn. The only person not from our unit is our communications operator who's from the Naval Service. He's mixing in well and we have developed a good rapport over the summer's training. I'm very confident that we will work very well overseas and have a safe trip."

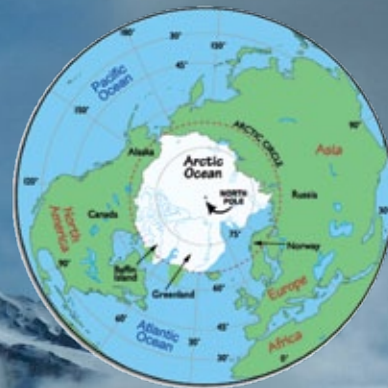


Cpl Clare Powell (7 Inf Bn)

"This is my fourth trip overseas. I've served in Liberia, Kosovo, and Lebanon. On this trip I will be a section commander with 1 Pl. We have a good few first-timers on this trip.

Over the summer we've been training together conducting drills in the APCs, working on CBRN, C-IED and mine awareness drills and so on. I've also conducted a Military First Responders course and the Critical Incident and Stress Management course. The latter course teaches you how to look after the mental health of the personnel under your command. A few of us have this course done. Being overseas away from family is a stressful time. We have several people with small children or young babies; one guy in my section has a seven-week-old. With the re-org this year we are still getting to know each other in the battalion but over the last few weeks we've got to know each other very well. My 2i/c Cpl Brian Buckley is very good."

A matter of SURVIVAL



BY PAUL SHANAHAN, MARITIME TRAINING DEVELOPER HALPIN
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND INOVATION AT NMCI



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SMACs - **S**mall Craft Emergency Response and **S**urvival Training for **A**rctic **C**onditions - is a Northern Periphery Programme-funded, collaborative, international project. (The west coast of Ireland is designated part of the Northern Periphery region by the EU.) Its primary objective is the development of a safety and survival training programme focused on the needs of small-craft mariners on commercial, fishing and leisure vessels operating in the harsh Arctic maritime regions.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) is the lead partner on the project through the Nimbus Centre for Embedded Technology and the Halpin Centre for Research and Innovation at the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI). CIT is developing a portion of the training as well as co-ordinating the efforts of the other teams in Sweden, Iceland, Greenland and Norway.

The Arctic consists of the vast, ice-covered Arctic Ocean, surrounded by treeless permafrost. The area can be defined as north of the Arctic Circle (66° 33'N), the approximate limit of the midnight sun and the polar night. Rapidly changing climate there brings new challenges in maritime safety for both indigenous and non-indigenous small-craft crew. Indigenous maritime safety practices built up over many generations must be quickly adapted to climate change. Large ships can now pass through previously impassable routes, with Arctic sea ice approximately 3.6 million km² smaller than the 1980s' average for the same time of year. This difference is an area 42 times the area of Ireland!

For non-indigenous mariners, the apparently more benign Arctic climate still holds many dangers of which they often have little experience. Many sailors are now drawn to explore the previously inaccessible

Arctic regions, but run into trouble with inadequate preparation and training for the extreme conditions that still exist.

In turn, Arctic search-and-rescue (SAR) services must deal with a greater number and diversity of small-craft emergencies over a much wider geographic range.

Our international team is currently making connections with anyone who travels to the Arctic region to obtain input into the planned training programme. A link to the survey is shown here (scan with your smartphone) or visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HHBSD35>



The Nimbus and Halpin centres, under the guidance of project leader Dr John Barrett, will produce a library of training modules that cover topics such as weather and meteorology, safety and survival, Arctic seamanship and communications. There will also be a module on being a good Arctic citizen, to learn about life in the Arctic and having respect for the environment.

SMACs' international partners are the Maritime Safety and Survival Training Centre of Iceland (MSSTC), the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue (NSSR), the Swedish Society for Sea Rescue (SSRS), and Chalmers University in Sweden. The sea rescue societies in Sweden and Norway are voluntary services similar to the RNLI and train their own volunteers. MSSTC provide all of the maritime safety training in Iceland. Chalmers University and CIT/NMCI are also maritime training providers.

One of our new connections is the Killary Adventure Co, based in Leenane, Co Galway. A group of adven-



Killary Flyer (photo: Daragh Muldowney)



Iceland meeting (L/R): Cormac Gebruers (Halpin Centre) Joern Spetalen and Jesper Jensen (both Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue)



The SMACs Team (photo: Cormac Gebruers)

turers from the Killary Adventure Centre set sail for the west coast of Greenland on the 14th of June fully laden with stores and equipment to carry out the three main goals of their expedition: to sail to Greenland, complete a 250km sea kayak, carry out an 850m climbing challenge over four days.

The expedition was led by Jamie Young, who previously sailed single-handed across the Atlantic and kayaked around Cape Horn in 1989. He also made various other trips all over the globe and was a member of the South Aris sailing and mountaineering team that re-enacted Shackleton's epic boat trip from

Aasiaat on the west coast of Greenland the following evening. From there they headed north to Disko Bay where they disembarked the climbers with all their equipment and food. The crew then proceeded to Upernavik where they had a little celebration, Irish style (a drop of whiskey).

The arrival in Upernavik coincided with confirmation ceremonies. In local tradition the home of the person being confirmed is open to the entire community - including the crew of the Killary Flyer in this case.

It is important that visitors to the Arctic understand the local culture and interact well with the indigenous population: the crew of the Killary Flyer seem to have done this expertly and were well received and their experiences will educate future visitors on local life.

The women and girls in the family were dressed in their colourful sealskin and beaded traditional costumes and the men and boys in their crisp white and black outfits. First stop at each house was the dinner buffet table, lined up outside the front door. The crew were treated to helpings of seal, walrus, dried whale meat, whale skin, polar bear meat and whale and shrimp salad – none of which are common at Irish Confirmations! There were soups and seabird casseroles, sushi and pickled fish and dried strips of halibut. After all that food there was still the small matter of a table laden with cakes pastries and tarts that were begging to be eaten.

It was then time for the kayakers to begin their voyage to Uummannaq, 250km away, laden down with equipment and food to last the journey that would take them only 12 days. While waiting to be picked up by the yacht the kayakers took part in a 19km race around the island of Uummannaq and although their kayaks were not designed for racing they finished a very creditable 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th.

Groups like this make up part of the target audience of the SMACs project along with the fishing industry, the leisure industry, the exploration industry, search and rescue services and the indigenous population. Our course will fill training gaps that would otherwise make it foolhardy to attempt a voyage to the Arctic, and will be available to all.

The Killary Flyer crew are not the only modern Irish Arctic mariners - in 2011 John Gore Grimes became the first person to sail a small boat, the 44ft Arctic Fern, to Franz Joseph Land north of Russia. Gore-Grimes previously voyaged to the Norwegian Jan Mayen island and the Novaya Zemlya archipelago, Greenland, Iceland, Siberia, Alaska and the Antarctic.

In 2001 Jarlath Cunnane sailed the North West Passage and in 2004 sailed the North East Passage.

Paddy Barry, who was also on the North East Passage voyage, has sailed a Galway hooker to Svalbard.

LE Niamh was the first Naval Service vessel to go above the Arctic Circle when it visited the Norwegian port of Narvik in 2009 (68°26' N). We are certain that many many more will follow in their wake, and our Arctic safety training will prove invaluable to anyone planning to travel there in a small boat. The SMACs project is funded by the Northern Periphery Programme of the EU and is supported by the European Regional Development Fund. Follow training development progress on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/SMACS-A-Safer-Arctic-for-small-craft-mariners/627806620564264?fref=ts> ■

Elephant Island to South Georgia and a subsequent traverse of South Georgia.

The rest of the crew was made up of experienced people from the worlds of sailing, climbing and kayaking and included a photographer and a film maker, who documented the expedition. Dr Des Moran was the medical officer.

The expedition was called 'North of Disko' as its most northerly point is Upernavik, an island just north of Disko Bay. At 72°47' North it is well above the Arctic Circle.

After much preparation the Killary flyer, a 49ft ex-Admiral's Cup yacht with the relevant alterations, sailed for the Arctic. SMAC's training provided information on preparing vessels before visiting the Arctic.

After setting out in good weather conditions the north Atlantic then bared its teeth, and after four storms and 14 days the crew got their first sight of icebergs; huge and majestic sculptures. SMACs also produces a module on ice navigation, enabling mariners to safely navigate in the Arctic.

After being delayed by the storms the Killary Flyer finally crossed the Arctic Circle on Wednesday 3rd July and arrived in

RDF Senior NCO Training

BY SGT STEVE CONRAN (RES TRP, 2 CAV SQN) PHOTOS SGT STEPHEN CONRAN, COY SGT ALAN LOWRY. GROUP PHOTO: SGT KARL BYRNE



This year's all-army RDF Senior NCOs course was the second run since the RDF was established in 2005 and the first since the recent DF reorganisation.

The course ran from May through July and was comprised of several weekends and two weeks of full-time training. There were 11 students, representing companies, squadrons and batteries from both brigades, as well as the DFTC and RDF Training Element (RDFTE).

The course was conducted under the auspices of the NCO Training Wing, Military College, and had a mixture of PDF and RDF instructing staff. The result was a very successful, demanding and practical course that, by all accounts, left the students feeling prepared for additional responsibility, and with a greater understanding and appreciation of the roles and functions of a senior NCO.

The aim of the course was not only to qualify people for promotion, but to focus and concentrate on the role of a senior NCO in peacetime, as well as in an operational capacity, thus enabling them to be better resourced NCOs within their current rank and appointment.

The course was comprehensive in its scope, covering areas as varied as logistical resupply of munitions, BCR (battle casualty replacements) management, types of replenishment, sighting casualty extraction and collection points, the echelon system, personal navigation skills, the intelligence cycle, ISTAR, casevac drills, CBRN, roles of a senior NCO in combat, functions of a senior NCO in an orderly room, ceremonial drill and composition of guards, military law, leadership principles, range management, military writing, TLPP, the 7-question estimate, the '9-liner' reporting system and the (AT)MIST casualty card.

There was great emphasis placed on the necessity for parity of training and sharing of knowledge and doctrine across the organisation as a whole. Given the forecasted increased interoperability between reservists and their full time counterparts under the new Defence Forces structure, there will undoubtedly be increased expectation for reservists to fulfil their role and perform in their rank when called upon. Consequently, this and other courses are being designed and conducted with that as an important consideration.

The students reported that they found the course to be varied in content, non-repetitive, practical and enjoyable, and that the instruction, reception, organisation and professionalism of all staff were second-to-none.

While it is hard to pick out exactly what were the best and most enjoyable aspects of the course, there seems to be a consensus amongst the students that the CBRN exercise, casevac drills and CIS equipment demo (C1 & C2 containers and DC trailer & comms suite) were particular highlights. Some of the most noted and memorable lectures were those delivered by the guest speakers from the CIS, Transport, Ordnance, and Cavalry corps, as well as representatives from the legal office, DFPEs, PSS, Press Office, MPs, medics and the Curragh military museum.

From my own point of view, this was my first interaction with the NCO Training Wing, having completed my other promotional courses (Pot NCO and Std NCO) with the BTCs (AR). I was very impressed with all aspects of this course, from instruction and expertise, through to organisation and delivery. It was particularly refreshing to see that both the PDF and RDF staff were very consistent and complementary



in their subject matter, and were very familiar with current military doctrine and training.


On behalf of the class, I wish to extend a final thanks to all instructors and individuals involved from both the RDFTE and the NCO Training Wing for their involvement in this year's course. I highly recommend it to any aspiring NCO. ■



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ROUTINE PIPES

Increasingly more and more Defence Forces exercises are integrated between the Army, Air Corps and Naval Service. Life onboard a ship or a plane can be totally alien to a soldier used to having his feet on the ground. Onboard a Naval vessel you will regularly hear what are known as Pipes over the ships intercom. Here are some of the routine pipes you may hear.

Pipes are preceded by a blast from the bosun/seaman's whistle. All pipes are repeated twice after a short pause.

Anchoring:	Clear away / weigh anchors x2, cable party & special sea duty men close up, assume damage control state 3 condition yankee. Rig for cable party...
Harbour Stations:	Harbour stations x2, fore & after party and special sea duty men close up, assume damage control state 3 condition yankee. Rig for fore & after parties...
Boarding Stations:	Boarding stations x2, delta crew & special sea duty men close up, assume damage control state 3 condition yankee.
Cruising Stations:	Cruising stations x2, revert to damage control state 3 condition x-ray.
Prep for Heli- Operations:	Prepare for Heli-Ops. Flight deck/aft deck out of bounds to personnel not involved. No smoking or ditching of gash on the upper decks. Fire-fighting party close up on the port/star board waist. Special sea duty men close up assume damage control state 3 condition yankee.
At Heli-Ops:	Ship at Heli-Ops stations x2 (DC may be heightened by MEO).
Man Aloft:	Man aloft x2, all ships company to obey ship's radhaz (radiation hazard) warnings in all ships compartments.
Divers Down:	Divers down x2, all ships company to obey ship's radhaz in all ships compartments. No machinery to be started without the express permission of the officer of the day (OOD/MEO), no gash to be ditched.
Refuelling:	Ship refuelling x2, strictly no smoking onboard while ship is being refuelled, all ships company to obey ship's radhaz in all ships compartments. Designated smoking area is... (repeat pipe every 15 minutes)
Shore Leave:	Shore leave has been granted to the off duty watches from... hrs until... hrs. Shore leave is confined to the precincts of the port. Ship on sailing order, ship on 4 hours notice. Divisions at... hrs. Ship sails at... hrs.
Call the Hands:	Call the hands x2 "Glaoch Ar Complacht Na Loinge"



CEREMONIAL

Colours: Preparative for colours
"ullmhaigh le haghaidh na bratacha"

Attention on the upper decks – colours
"aire ar na léibhinn uachtair, na bratacha"

Sunset: Preparative for sunset
"ullmhaigh le haghaidh luí na gréine"
Attention on the upper decks – sunset
"aire ar na léibhinn uachtair, luí na gréine"

Attention on the Upper-decks "aire ar na leibhinn uachtair, í dtreo an chlébhoird / deasbhoird – iom-paig. (Ships name – LE ...)"
- Face to port
/stbd:

Harbour time	Sea time	Call or duty
0730	0700	Call the Hands
0800	0730	Hands to Breakfast
0850	0755	Divisions
0800	Preparative 5 minutes before	Morning Colours (Summer Time)
0900	Preparative 5 minutes before	Morning Colours (Winter Time)
1030	1000	Stand Easy
1045	1015	Hands Carry On
1220	1150	Secure
1230	1200	Hands to Lunch
1345	1315	Hands Carry On
1500	1445	Stand Easy
1515	1500	Hands Carry On
1620	1550	Secure
1730	1700	Hands To Dinner
2030	As Detailed	Hands Clean Up for OOD Rounds
2100	As Detailed	Hands Standby For OOD Rounds
2330	2300	Pipe Down

COMMEMORATING THE 'BIG FELLA'

BY PTE NOEL MCDONNELL, BARBER (7 INF BN) PHOTOS ARMN ADAM MURPHY (105 SQN)

Monday August 22nd 2011 was just the start of another week in the barber shop at Cathal Brugha Bks: the BSM had obviously been busy on parade as there were a few young soldiers waiting for haircuts. One of them remarked on the photograph of General Michael Collins, which is the central display in my barber's shop. It is the iconic photograph of a purposeful-looking Collins in uniform striding through Cathal Brugha Bks, followed by a young boy dressed in a kilted pipe-band uniform looking on admiringly.

When I remarked that not only was it the 89th anniversary of General Collins's death at Béal na Bláth, but that he had also lived and worked in the Brugha – then named Portobello Barracks – and had set out on his ill-fated tour of the south-west from the barracks, there was an expectant quiet. I went on to explain that General Collins, the first commander-in-chief of Óglaigh na hÉireann, had occupied the house that is now the headquarters of the Defence Forces School of Music; that his former office is now that of OC 2 Brigade Training Centre; and that the photograph had reputedly been taken as General Collins was making his way back to his quarters having attended Mass in Saint Patrick's Garrison Church in the barracks.

Where exactly the photograph had been taken had exercised many a customer in my barber's chair over the years and that day was no different. Later that morning, I reflected that it should be possible to identify the date

and occasion and locate the

exact spot where the photograph had been taken. At the same time, the idea of a memorial in the barracks to commemorate General Collins was hatching in the back of my mind.

I approached Coy Sgt Aidan Power and BSM Andrew Murphy of 2 Inf Bn and both senior NCOs offered their full support and encouragement for the project. Consequently the idea of a memorial to General Collins took a step closer to becoming a reality.

Research into the likely date and occasion was greatly assisted

by Pte Ronnie Daly of McKee Bks, CQMS Chris Nally of the School of Music, Pte Paul Thompson, and Ms Noelle Grothier of Military Archives. Mr Jim Wilson in the Drawing Office of the Brigade Engineer Section produced maps and drawings of Portobello Barracks from the 1920s and as a result, to our delight, it was possible to identify the exact spot where General Collins had been when the photograph was taken.

The date was August 7th 1922 and General Collins had been attending a funeral Mass in the Garrison Church for National Army soldiers from Portobello Bks killed in the ongoing civil war. Their bodies had been laid out in the recreational hall cum cinema, the building in the background of the photograph.

The boy in the photograph was identified as 14-year-old Alphonse Culleton, a member of a civilian pipe band that had rendered honours at the funeral ceremony.

I felt there was a touch of serendipity in that the spot where General Collins is pictured is just to the left of the main entrance to the Privates' Mess where I am honoured to currently serve as Mess president.

The decision as to the form of memorial to be erected was greatly assisted by Mr Robbie McGowan of Glasnevin Monuments. The cost of the memorial was a hurdle that Coy Sgt Matt Masterson of 2 Bde Trg Centre cleared through the Barrack Welfare Fund, and Brigade EO Col JJ O'Reilly translated my proposed inscription into Irish.

The memorial will also have the words "Funded by the Soldiers of Cathal Brugha Barracks" inscribed on the base of the stone.

With the permission of Lt Col B Delaney, OC 7 Inf Bn and Cathal Brugha Bks, the memorial was unveiled on August 22nd 2013. With the generous assistance of the BFW, the memorial will be illuminated throughout the hours of darkness. The bollards protecting the memorial stone are provided by Mr Brendan Dunne of Castit Ireland.

The memorial will remind all who pass by of our first commander-in-chief and his role in our struggle for independence.

Special thanks are due to many individuals. Chief among those not already mentioned are the members of the Privates' Mess, Col Brian Reade, Lt Col John O'Loughlin, Comdt D Noone, Capt James Burke, Lt Jane O'Neill, Sgt Maj Michael Dillon, Sgt Tony Maher, Cpl Jim Brien, Mr Jim Halpin and the BFW staff, the engineering staff of Cathal Brugha Bks and Mr Patrick Brennan of the Military Service Pensions Project. ■



The memorial, paid for by the soldiers of Cathal Brugha Barracks



Pte Noel McDonnell, the Cathal Brugha Bks barber



Helen Collins, grand niece of Michael Collins, laying a wreath



Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle (COS) addresses the guests

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

Cavalry Memorial's 50th Anniversary

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

On Saturday 7th September 2013 on the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Cavalry Memorial in Plunkett Bks a special commemorative plate was unveiled by Lt Col John McKeown (Retd), son of the late COS Lt Gen Seán McKeown, who originally opened the garden in 1963. The memorial garden at Plunkett Bks, Curragh Camp, to honour cavalry personnel who lost their lives under the flag of the United Nations, was opened on Sunday 6th October 1963 when the central monument was unveiled by Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán McKeown.

Construction of the garden was carried out after normal duty hours under the direction of Comdt Joe Foley and Capt Tommy Roche and was undertaken by volunteers from the units in the barracks. As work progressed, Mr George Spiers, a landscape designer of Spiers Nurseries, Burtstown, Athy, was engaged.

The cromlech design of the memorial is based on the megalithic monuments at Moytura Conga in County Mayo, where, according to mythology, a great battle took place between the Fir Bolg and the Tuatha Dé Danann three thousand years ago, and the capstone is shaped like a cavalryman's Glengarry.

The inscription on the gate into the garden reads "In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum", a motto given to the Irish troops in the Spanish army by Phillip V of Spain in the sixteenth century which means "Their fame has gone throughout the world".

During his address at the unveiling ceremony, Lt Gen McKeown said: "The memory of your dead comrades, perpetuated here in this memorial, will be a source of inspiration for future generations of Irish soldiers and future generations of Irishmen in all walks of life. I hope too that it may provide some small consolation for the families and loved ones."

The memorial was funded by voluntary subscriptions from personnel in cavalry regular and reserve units, Cavalry Workshops and Technical Stores and individuals, along with grants from Plunkett Officers' Mess, the Cavalry Club and the 11th Cavalry Association. The initial cost for materials, lighting, shrubs and plaques amounted to £1,851-8s-6d.

On Saturday November 5th 1966 the inaugural Remembrance Day for cavalry personnel killed while serving with the United Nations in the Congo and Cyprus took place and since then it has been held on the first Saturday in September.

In recent years the Cavalry Club has provided funds for the maintenance of the memorial. The Club's Rule 2.4 is "To provide for, and when deemed necessary to expend funds on, the maintenance of the Cavalry Corps Memorial Garden in Plunkett Barracks, Curragh Camp, Co Kildare." ■

Lt Gen McKeown opening the Memorial Garden 1963.



Members of the Cavalry Corps, IUNVA and ONE with the DF No 1 Band parade at the memorial garden.



Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle (COS) and Col Anthony Bracken (Dir of Combat Sp & ISTAR) laid wreaths at the memorial.



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

The Long March

BY CAPT JOHN MURPHY (108 IRISHFINN BN)

With 250km of Icelandic wilderness lying before us, Capt Rory Arnott (12 Inf Bn), a shivering Heather Irvine (journalist with the Sunday Times, co-editor of Outsider magazine, and former fashion model) and I stood together in the freezing wind and rain. We had met Heather only a handful of times and now, here we were representing Ireland as a team in a world-renowned international endurance race. None of us was sure how this would turn out.

'Racing The Planet: Iceland 2013' would turn out to be a tough footslog, with 278 competitors beginning the race and only 234 crossing the finish line into the Blue Lagoon. The race was from Sunday 4th to Saturday 10th of August. This is the mildest weather of the Icelandic year and daylight lasts for up to 21 hours, making sleep feel unnatural for most competitors. The race format itself is the same as that of the infamous 'Marathon de Sables', with competitors covering ultra-marathon distances over six stages to cover the 250km course. Temperatures were much different, however, and reached as low as -2° C at night inside the campsite tents.

Due to the high costs involved we sought sponsorship from several organisations, and 'Bold Puppy', an Irish-based film and TV production company, were delighted to come onboard. As well as individual runners, we were one of five teams from five different countries that would start the event. We also had the disadvantage of having only three members, meaning we would have no redundancy if one of us had to withdraw from the race through injury, as the rules state that three members of the team must complete the entire course, staying never more than 100m apart or they would be disqualified for the team category of the event. Most racers agree that racing as a team is mentally tougher than as an individual, as during your weak moments you need to push on harder and during your strong moments you may have to go slower.

As it turned out, the race for the teams ended up being closer than the individual for four solid days with team 'Bold Puppy' (us) playing cat-and-mouse with the Chinese team 'CEIBS'.

Stage 1: The race kicked off at the Kerlingarfjoll mountain range amidst high winds and a temperature of just 1°C. The first stage began between two glaciers and lasted 44.9km. A bitterly cold wind made this stage very difficult for many racers and it was a tight race all day with CEIBS crossing the finish line 16mins 41s before 'Bold Puppy' and Guatemalan team 'Hombres de Maiz' finishing 5mins later.

Stage 2: 'Langjökull' (meaning 'long glacier' in Icelandic) brought yet more unrelenting weather conditions as the competitors faced hills and rocky terrain while being swept by the incessant winds. This stage of the race treated competitors to a breath-taking view of a glacial waterfall back-dropped with icy glacier. During this 47km stage

CEIBS and ourselves were again neck-and-neck, fighting through the aches and pains. In the end we crossed the finish line just a few minutes ahead of them. By the end of stage 2 the number of competitors was down from 278 to 258.

Stage 3: 'The Black Sand Desert' saw weather conditions improve greatly. This 43.5km stage started on a dirt path that wound through lava fields where Icelandic folklore says elves and trolls originated. The

landscape became increasingly surreal as the battle between the Irish and Chinese teams raged on, with each taking the lead for periods. Although we managed to finish ahead, Heather was suffering from a seriously cut-up and blistered foot. Most competitors including the

entire Irish team were now carrying injuries: throbbing knees, swollen ankles, blisters and painful Achilles tendons were the norm at this point due to the harsh and hard rocky landscape, which was more suited to boots than trail runners.

Stage 4: Through The Lava Tube, began with a 2km sprint to a single-file section winding underground through a 400m lava tube. As the Irish and Chinese teams emerged outside together we were battling hard, overtaking and then being passed again and again for the next 25km. It was a battle of wits that mentally pushed both teams. Then we hit a hilly section where we finally took the lead and held it. We passed through Olkelduhals, a geothermal hotspot where locals had boiled eggs in the hot springs, as is Icelandic tradition. This 40.2km stage saw us establish a two-hour lead in the team section of the race. The Chinese team had hit the wall at the hilly section and two of them were badly injured after four days of hard racing. Heather having what she described as a "shark bite" on one of her heels was also badly hurting but ran through the pain to finish the stage. Camp 5 was a welcome sight to the competitors and was pitched beside an icy cold river. Rory and I took advantage of this and used it as an ice bath to reduce our swollen limbs. Heather's now infected foot was tended again by the medical team.

Stage 5: Competitors awoke to cold and wet conditions on the morning of the gruelling 64km penultimate stage, aptly-named 'The Long March'. The route took the 234 remaining competitors through beach terrain and lava cliffs in unyielding rain and high winds. Heather pushed herself beyond any concept of a normal pain barrier and we secured another win, crossing the finish line after 9hrs 25min. The Chinese team suffering incredible pain but working as a solid unit crossed the finish line some 8hrs later. Just as the race appeared to be in the bag with 10km to go, medical staff pulled Heather aside as her foot infection was spreading up her leg. As already mentioned we had to finish with all three people or the team would be disqualified. However, Heather responded well to the antibiotics the doctors gave her and her signs of recovery the next morning were such that the race doctor gave the go-ahead for the team to continue in the race.

Stage 6: 'The Final Footsteps' was a short stage to the Blue Lagoon with everyone giving it their best for the promise of a hot shower and real food: a week of freeze-dried dehydrated meals is much worse than army-issue ration packs. We completed this 10km stage in 54min, solidifying our victory in the team division. Our overall time was 34hrs 50min 11s placing us all joint-43rd as individuals and placing Heather as the winner of the under-29 female category also. The Guatemalan team came in second, despite being the pre-race favourites, having previously won the Atacama Crossing 250km race.

The finish line landed us at the stunning Blue Lagoon. The natural, geothermal, mineral rich spa was full to the brim with RacingThePlanet competitors by the afternoon and was the perfect end to the indescribably painful but utterly thrilling race across the wonderful island of Iceland. ■



SPORT

SPORTS ROUND-UP

FLYING HIGH

At this year's Dublin International Horse Show Comdt Derek McConnell (Tpt Gp, DFTC) represented Ireland in one of the most iconic and prestigious classes of the show - when he jumped Oakpark High Flyer in the Puissance. Owned by Mr Kieran Cahill, of Oakpark, Co Carlow, the 18 hands high giant had first shown prominence in the Puissance when jumping at Cavan International Horse Show in November 2012, where the horse finished 3rd.

Dublin Horse Show, like any major championship requires qualification. There were three Puissance Qualifiers, the first in Aglish, Co Waterford, the second at Mullingar International Horse Show and the third at Omagh Horse Show, Co Tyrone. Based on your performance in these qualifiers, the RDS would accept six Irish Riders.

Comdt McConnell was joint winner of two qualifiers, jumping 2.05 meters at Aglish.

In the Puissance Competition at the RDS, Comdt McConnell finished 7th along with Capt Michael Kelly (Equit Sch).

"I was a little disappointed that I did not get a little further in the class, as the horse had jumped bigger before. He was well clear in front and unfortunately dragged his back end a little to take it down!" Comdt McConnell told us. "After the first round, I changed my tactic a little and came inside the water enroute to the wall, as if this horse has too much time to think about the task, he will become excited and become a hassle to ride down to the fence!"

Comdt McConnell explained that it was a very enjoyable experience. The commentator had the capacity crowd in a friendly. "It was like riding into a rock concert!" Jumping on grass meant that full size studs were required to be screwed into the horse's shoes. In addition, the horse was fitted with ear plugs to help kill the sound and not distract the horse from the task at hand.

"High Flyer is a H1, so it just shows the long term benefits of double hearing protection!" Comdt McConnell explained. ■



Oakpark High Flyer - Puissance Dublin International



Oakpark High Flyer - Winner Puissance_Aglish

Skydiving Championships

BY CAPT RORY ESLER (DFHQ)



The Irish National 4 Way Skydiving Championships took place in Clonbulloge on 10th and 11th August 2013. The two Defence Forces teams Fast Air and Rapid Fire both took awards. The competition was held at the Irish Parachute Club, which is the home club for most (if not all) of the PCM guys involved in parachuting.

The DF 'first' team Fast Air took gold in the AAA category, which is the top international category. This is their fourth year in a row to take the gold in this category. The team consists of; Capt Stephen O'Sullivan (2 Bde Ord Gp), Lt Dennis Gowran (7 Inf Bn), CS Graham Nuttall (DFTC), Pte Colin Curran (3 Inf Bn) and cameraman Capt Ruarigh McDermott (Arty Sch).

This year, for the first time, the DF had two teams in the competition. The DF 'second' team Rapid Air were narrowly beaten by 1 point over 7 rounds of competition skydiving to take third place in the 'Rookie' category. This category is designed for teams who are developing their skills and is an excellent progression category. The team consists of; Capt Rory Esler (DFHQ), Capt Brian Cahill (Mil Col), Lt Gerome Donnelly (RDF), 2/Lt Kevin Farrell (RDF) and cameraman Capt Ruarigh McDermott (Arth Sch).

All members of both teams have been involved in Display Parachute Jumps for the Defence Forces, most recently in Bray for the Air show in July 2013. ■





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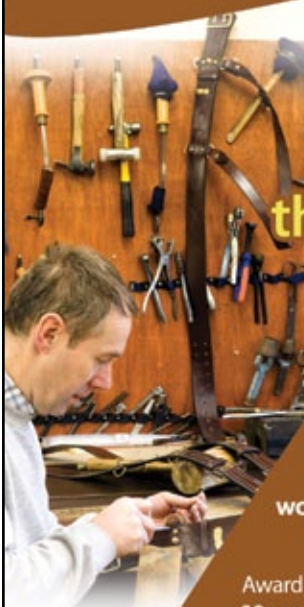
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Contact - info@duncannonfort.com

GEAR REVIEW

5.11 TACTICAL SERIES - ATAC PLUV TACTICAL FLASHLIGHT

COLOUR: BLUE

PRICE: €27.99



The manufacturer says...

The 5.11 ATAC Flashlights are built for longevity and durability. Our All Terrain All Conditions Flashlights are powered by either lithium batteries or alkaline batteries for your convenience. The ATAC PLUV is compact and lightweight and stores conveniently just about anywhere. Its 375 nm wavelength output is ideal for verifying the authenticity of driver's licenses, IDs, and even searching for deadly scorpions. The ATAC PLUV is a great addition to the 5.11 ATAC flashlight line. The ATAC PLUV is compact and lightweight and stores conveniently anywhere. Its 375 nm wavelength output is ideal for verifying the authenticity of driver's licenses, IDs, and, yes, you can see scorpions in the dark with the ATAC PLUV! The seven hour runtime on a single AAA battery means you can get through a whole shift on just one battery!

Features/Benefits: Tested To ANSI FL1 Standard, Aerospace Grade Aluminium Construction, (1) AAA Alkaline battery included, Regulated Circuit for maximum output, 375 nm wavelength output, 7 hour runtime, 3 Meter impact resistance, IPX4 Water Resistance Rating, Momentary and Steady On Tailcap Switch, Steel Pocket Clip, Polycarbonate lens, Textured Reflector.

Our reviewer Cpl Paddy Power (Inv Sec MP GP, DFTC) says...

The Atac 5.11 tactical light is a 3 inch pen type torch with a clip for easy access from shirt or sleeve pocket. It has two light functions: constant on and a momentary on. Battery life is 7 hours using 1 AAA battery (included), it is weather proof with a 3m light beam.

From a Military Police point of view it is best suited in a security aspect i.e. the marking of ordnance when issued from a store, this could be numbered prior to issue with a ultra violet pen (not included) in a area that can then be checked using the UV light. It is NOT suited to cover a large area. It is referred to as tactical light so again this may be best used in the area of night exercise's for the purpose of reading of maps, etc as there is the momentary switch for quick on and off light. Overall, one in your battle vest would be used.

Durability 9 - Run time/battery life 8 - Impact Resistance 8 - Water Resistance 9

OTIS TECHNOLOGY SHOTGUN MICRO CLEANING SYSTEM

MODEL: FG-400

PRICE: €11.60



The manufacturer says...

Otis Technology cleaning kits are the primary focus of this popular weapons maintenance company. In operation since 1985, Otis Technology has been striving to create the highest quality cleaning tools on the market for over two decades, and they've largely succeeded. Otis Tech cleaning kits use the unique Breech-to-Muzzle cleaning methodology to methodically scour every aspect of your favorite firearms with several different components. With these cleaning tools, you can remove dirt and fouling by cleaning toward the muzzle and away from your weapon's action. With the 400 Micro Cleaning Kit, you can clean .410 through 12/10 gauge shotguns without disassembling it. This shotgun kit contains a 36" Memory-Flex® cleaning rod, an internal thread solid brass slotted tip, large and small Patch Savers®, .50z. Otis O85® Ultra Bore® Solvent, all-caliber patches, and a 12/10 gauge bore brush.

Coy Sgt John Keenan (Cadet Sch, Mil Col) says...

According to OTIS this kit is in service with the US armed forces, law enforcement professionals and the world's best hunters. The kit consists of a plastic coated steel cable pull through, bore brush and special bore patches. It comes with full instructions on the proper procedure of gun cleaning. Rather than a daily or after shoot kit this for me will form part of my maintenance / servicing kit. The pull through swab is a new and sound device and does a very efficient job. The kit includes all the basic parts for cleaning but there are add-ons which would enhance the kit and be very useful in gun maintenance.

The kit's full set of instructions would need to be studied and mastered before use or the gun could be damaged. There are sufficient parts to get the task done but the kit could have included a T-bar for the pull-through for use with cold or oily hands (it is available in an add on kit). The cleaning rod is a plastic coated steel cable and would need to be kept away from the rim of the muzzle as it is being pulled through, as prolonged incorrect use would cause damage to the muzzle rim. The kit includes a guide to the different kit add-ons available, so it could be used for work or sport. With slight changes in procedure this kit is suitable for any gauge shotgun. I like the kit, it is compact so it can be carried in a pouch or pocket and thus can be used immediately after shooting which is important with shotguns. I recommend this kit and the scraper set which is available as an add-on kit.

Easy assembly 9 - Fit (Thread, barrel on all shotguns) 10

Effectiveness 9 - Price 10

COMPETITION



This month Team-Alpha is offering a €100 Voucher to be used on their website www.team-alpha.ie.

For a chance to win this prize please answer the following question:

How much is a pair of 5.11 Tactical RECON Trainers (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 21 October 2013. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

Last month's winner of a €100 voucher for Team-Alpha.ie was Adam Brannigan, Curragh Camp.

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, Ceann Bks, DFCC, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Ireland. PS. Our old noticeboard will still be made available on www.dfmagazine.ie

Defence Forces Pensions Update

The DoD are now in the process of moving all Defence Forces pensions back to end-of-month (instead of the 20th). This will help optimise payroll processes while also reducing payroll administration costs in line with the Public Service Reform Plan. The move is scheduled to commence in November 2013 and will be phased in over 6 months to conclude in April 2014. Proposed dates, which are subject to payroll operational considerations, are as follows:

September 2013 - Friday 20th
October 2013 - Friday 18th (the 20th falls on a Sunday)
November 2013 - Friday 22nd (instead of 20th)
December 2013 - Wednesday 18th
January 2014 - Wednesday 22nd
February 2014 - Monday 24th
March 2014 - Friday 28th
April 2014 onwards - 30th of month

NOTE: Where someone currently has direct debits / standing orders for mortgage repayments, household bills (electricity, insurance, phone etc) organised around the 20th, may wish to make revised arrangements with their bank/building society and service providers. This is of course a matter for each pensioner themselves. For more info please contact: Breffni O'Rourke Pensions Section, Finance Branch, Department of Defence on 091-743820.

50th Anniversary

The 50th Anniversary of **Military Helicopter Aviation in Ireland**, will be held in No 3 Ops Wing, Baldonnell on 22nd November at 14.15hrs. Retired members of No 3 Ops Wing who would like to attend please contact Sgt Elaine Fitzgerald @ 01-4037595 or 50heliyears@gmail.com before 14th October 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.

CIS

X	J	L	V	S	L	H	T	N	N	A	L	A	C	U
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A	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	S
R	Q	F	P	S	A	C	S	U	N	S	Z	T	M	W
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OCTOBER Q&A COMPETITION

1. What year was the Cavalry Memorial first opened (this issue)?

Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email subs@military.ie for a chance to win a copy of Irish graphic novel 'Blood Upon the Rose – Easter 1916' by Gerry Hunt (reviewed April 2012).

Last month's winner of Irish Aviators of World War I: Volume 1, Irish Aces by Joe Gleeson was Gerry Little. Closing date 21 October 2013.



REVIEWS

BOOK

THE DISAVOWED - THE RAZOR'S EDGE [KINDLE EDITION]

Author David Leadbeater
Sold by: Amazon Digital Services, Inc.
ASIN: B00DMHDIRA
Price: €1.20
Pages: 195



DAVID LEADBEATER BETTER known for his Matt Drake action adventure series is now starting a new action adventure series The Disavowed. The story starts off as we meet a recently disavowed group of CIA agents who were known in the agency as the 'Razors Edge', because

of how successful they were. Although we don't find out how and why they were disavowed we do know they were set up.

Our main operatives are Trent, Silk and Radford who make up the Razor's Edge. Working on the fringes of the law they make a living and continue to operate covertly in the spy business. Although now working mainly in the US for domestic employers in what could be described as the 'A' Team with the skills and expertise of Mission Impossible without the face masks.

Their mission is to help find Monika Sobieski, an exotic dance girl who was abducted in front of her 8-year-old son. After the police have given up on her, the team use all their skills to hunt down the gang and end up confronting ex MMA champion and Polish mob boss Oleg Roth. Can they work their way through the Las Vegas underworld to reunite mother and son?

Matt Drake 6 'The Swords of Babylon', is out now. David lives in York, UK, and is married with two daughters.

DVD

DEAD MAN DOWN

Director: Niels Arden Oplev
Featuring: Colin Farrell, Dominic Cooper, Isabelle Huppert, John Cenatiempo, Terrence Howard and Noomi Rapace
Runtime: 1hr 57mins
Release Date: 3 May 2013



FROM THE DIRECTOR of *the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2009), Niels Arden Oplev and the writer of *The Mexican* (2001) J.H. Wyman, comes a tough revenge thriller not seen since *Taken* (2008).

Ruthless crime boss Alphonse (Howard) discovers a few dead henchmen and has a few unforeseen setbacks while trying to expand his empire. His trusted henchman Victor (Farrell) has penetrated the gang and made himself invisible as he slowly weaves his own plans on revenge. Unbeknownst to Alphonse, he had previously killed Victor's family as a favour for another crime boss. To complicate Victor's plans his neighbour Beatrice (Rapace), who starts out with an offer of friendship ends up seeking help in her own revenge plans. Can Victor avoid detection and extract his revenge on Alphonse and also help Beatrice. The film climaxes in a final showdown that may kill them both.

GAME

METRO: LAST LIGHT



A GRIPPING STORY driven first person shooter, *Metro: Last Light* is the hugely anticipated sequel to 2010's critically acclaimed classic *Metro 2033*. It is now the year 2034 and beneath the ruins of post-apocalyptic Moscow, in the tunnels of the Metro, the remnants of mankind are besieged by deadly threats from outside - and within. Mutants stalk the catacombs beneath the desolate surface, and hunt amidst the poisoned skies above. A civil war is stirring that could wipe humanity from the face of the earth forever. You hold the key to our survival - the last light in our darkest hour...

The network of underground tunnels and above-ground wastelands conjure up a dilapidated city you won't have seen before. 4A Games delivers an artistic master class on how to build atmosphere, you'll see skeletons abandoned in stairwells and the remnants of children's toys lying abandoned near where their owners fell. <http://enterthemetrometro.com>

Genre: Action - **Platform:** Xbox 360, PS3 & PC - **PEGI:** Age 16+ - **Release:** 17/05/2013 - **Price:** €47.97. (PC €39.97). © Copyright 2013 Deep Silver Inc., and 4A Games. All rights reserved.



NAME
RANK
UNIT

SHANE HACKETT
LEADING HAND/ENGINE ROOM
ARTIFICER (L/ERA)
LÉ CIARA

After completing a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cork IT, I applied for the engine room artificer (ERA) direct-entry competition and joined the Naval Service in January this year.

We completed an initial 17-weeks of basic training including seamanship, damage control, fire-fighting, and sea survival. Since we will be leading hands we also underwent leadership training. After a leave bloc we then went to the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI)

for an introductory ERA course, which gave us an understanding of all the ship's mechanical equipment. There's a lot to learn: engines, the pitch propeller, sewage plant, oil purifiers, sea water pumps, fresh water pumps, and water treatment plant. Then you have the emergency equipment such as the backup generators.

"It's a great job although I'm still finding my sea legs!"

The next stage, which I'm currently on, involves going to sea for 18 weeks. As part of this training block we act as understudies to the ship's ERA and Mech as we are still learning how the machinery works and how guys do their job at sea. As part of this training we have to complete an ERA task book and a watchkeeping task book. These are checked and signed off by the ship's CPO/ERA and the Marine Engineering Officer. CPO/ERA Mick Laffen in the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) will go through everything with us when we have all completed.

We also do the Mech and ERA watches. The ERA watch is carried out in the Machine Control Room (MCR) where all the control panels for the ship's mechanical equipment are located. If

anything is wrong it will be indicated on the screen.

When the ship is alongside we get any maintenance done on the ship's mechanical equipment, so we are busy both at sea and alongside.

The L/ERA is in charge of fire-fighting and damage control and as part of our training we are carrying out Duty Petty Officer (DPO) duties so we can learn the ropes. If a fire alarm goes off when you are DPO you are the first responder.

Even though we already have a qualification we are constantly learning, especially how a ship actually functions.

When we are finished our 18-weeks at sea we then have to go back to the NMCI for an eight-week professional ERA course. Hopefully by November I will be fully qualified.

It's a great job although I'm still finding my sea legs! The career prospects with the Naval Service are endless. ■





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