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AN COSANTÓIR

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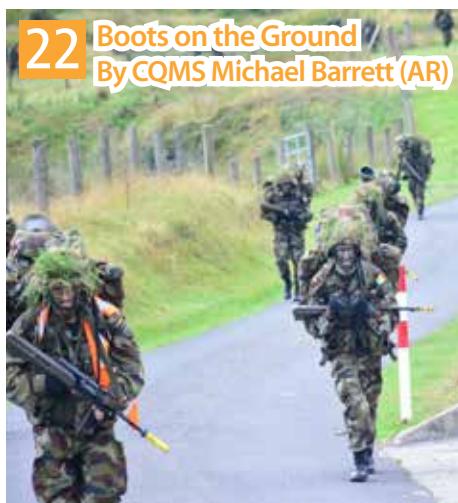


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Front Cover

Pictured is a student on the recent Military Static Line Jumpmaster and Young Entry Parachute courses. Photo by Sgt Karl Byrne

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

Editorial

Hello and welcome to our October issue. This month military parachuting is prominent with two feature articles. We also include pieces on the sinking of *RMS Leinster* 100 years ago, motorcycle training in the DF, a major EOD exercise, and RDF recruit training, to mention but a few.

As always, your photographs set the scene around the Defence Forces community in *On Parade*. *In Focus* this month has a short piece on a recent fundraiser run by members of 27 Inf Bn and the National Maritime Museum - the museum in Dun Laoghaire boasts a number of important exhibits, including artefacts from *RMS Leinster*, and also houses an impressive library.

Our first feature looks at the DF Parachute Team (*An Para-Chumann Mileata*) which was founded in 1972, and has been closely associated with parachute training in the DF, including advanced training for the ARW. In our other parachuting article we look at the recent Military Static Line Jumpmaster and Young Entry courses, run under the auspices of the Parachute Training School (PTS).

Getting our feet back on the ground, Cpl Lee Coyle's feature, *Defeating an Extremist Attack*, follows students on the EOD YOs and NCOs courses as they were put through their paces on a highly realistic anti-terrorism exercise. Next, Sgt Karl Byrne has a report on the 7th Motorcycle Operators course, conducted by the MP Group, DFTC. In 'Do Nothing' - A Short Story South African Air Force veteran AJ Vosse,

now living in Ireland, treats us to a military-related story from his 2017 collection of short stories 'The Lucky Thirteen'.

Next, in *Boots on the Ground*, our regular reservist writer and photographer, CQMS Michael Barrett (AR), 7 Inf Bn, tells us about the recent, two-week, full-time tactical training phase undertaken in the Kilbride training area by 7 Inf Bn's current batch of RDF recruits.

UNIFIL Battalion Commander's Challenge, by Capt Seán Maguire, reports on a challenge organised by the Finnish contingent that was designed to test both the mental and physical strength of participants from 118 IrishFinbatt.

In the first of our *History* features, *The Torpedoing of the RMS Leinster*, James Scannell paints a vivid picture of the fateful day in October 1918 when the Irish mail ship was sunk by a u-boat, with the loss of over 560 souls. This is followed by another World War I story, about the highly respected General Paul von Lettow Vorbeck, a German commander in East Africa who carried out a four-year guerrilla campaign against much larger opposing forces without suffering a single defeat.

Our *Sports* piece looks at a new initiative from the Defence Forces Physical Education School (DFPES) aimed at improving esprit de corps, promoting competition at unit level, and enhancing physical fitness throughout the Defence Forces. All this, plus our regular features, including *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Book Reviews* and our ever-popular *What I Do*.

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald

VETERAN HONOURED



Pictured in Ceannt Officers' Mess on 20th August 2018 when GOC DFTC, Brig Gen Joseph Mulligan presented 96-year-old Capt Luke Mullins (Retd) with his service medal and UN Peacekeepers Medal. Also present was Lt Col Colin MacNamee, Cav Sch Comdt and members of the Cavalry Club. Luke joined the army during the Emergency in 1941. He was commissioned into the Cavalry Corps on 13th June 1944 and served in 5 Mtr Sqn. He later served in 4 Mtr Sqn and Depot Cav as well as with Depot Engrs. Luke served overseas in Cyprus with the Armd Car Gp, 9 Inf Gp (Sept 1967 – Mar 1968). Photo: Joe O'Brien (Luke's son-in-law)



▲ FOND FAREWELL JEROME

Pictured is Coy Sgt Jerome DeLoughrey who retired from the Defence Forces after 41-years service. He is pictured with his family in the NCOs Mess, Sarsfield Bks, Limerick. *Photo: Pte Michael Rama Walsh, 12 Inf Bn*



▲ MVCI RAISED FUNDS FOR SOLDIERS AID

Pictured are Robin Payne and Sue Smith from Military Vehicle Club of Ireland (MVCI) who handed in a €200 cheque to Soldiers Aid Fund recently. The money was raised from the proceeds of recent shows that members of MVCI attended in 2018. *Photo: Jim Smith, MVCI*



▲ MAJOR GEN BEARY DSM PRESENTATION

On Tuesday 4th September, Major General Michael Beary was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) in Cathal Brugha Bks. The award was in recognition of his service and devotion to duty as Head of Mission and Force Commander of the United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL), and as Force Commander of the European Union Training Mission In Somalia (EUTM Somalia). *Photo: Armn Jamie Barrett*

150TH RECRUIT

PLATOON KILKENNY ▶

Pictured is new 2-star Private Sean Kershaw of 150th Recruit Platoon who passed out recently with the 3 Inf Bn in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny along with his father Flt Sgt John Kershaw, Air Corps. *Photo: John Kershaw*



◀ FOND

FAREWELL

MARTIN

Capt Martin Mulvey (AR) who retired earlier this year after 38-years-service in the CIS Corps. Capt Mulvey is pictured reading the Proclamation at the Royal College of Surgeons on Easter Monday 2016 – “a highlight of his career”. *Photo: Comdt Julian Ensor (AR), SSO 2 Bde CIS*



▲ SEA SUNDAY SERVICE

Reverend Paul Arbuthnot Rector of Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes is pictured on the occasion of his first Sea Sunday Service in Christ Church, Rushbrooke, Cobh. He finds himself surrounded by representatives from the following organisations: Irish Naval Service, Cobh branch of the ONE, Commander George Crosbie branch of ONE, Royal Naval Association, Royal British Legion and Cobh Tourism. *Photo: Domhnall Mac Cáरthaigh*



▲ WWI MEMORIAL SERVICE FORT MEAGHER

Photographed at the 1st World War Memorial Ceremony, under the auspices of Cork County Council, at Fort Meagher, Camden, Crosshaven, Co. Cork on Saturday 1st September 2018, are the following members of ONE. Representing John Lucey Branch; Albert Farrell, Director; Representing Cobh Branch Branch President, Domhnall Mac Cáirthaigh, Branch Secretary and SAC Chairman, Diarmuid Higgins. Representing Commander George Crosbie Branch Branch President, Peter Matthews, Patrick Lane, PJ Crowe, Paddy Hurley, Sidney Stephens together with former Irish Naval Service CPO Garry Mc Cabe. Photo: Domhnall Mac Cáirthaigh



◀ WEDDING BELLS

Congratulations to Sgt Tommy Sheahan (DFPES) serving with 112th BN in UNIFIL who married his new wife Hazel in Alvor, Portugal on the 9th July 2018. The 'best man' was Sgt Mark Dunne, No 3 Ops Wing, Air Corps. Photo: Cpl Timmy Doyle



▲ THE BLUE LINE

Pictured on the Blue Line is Capt Alan Kearny briefing the new UNIFIL Force Commander and Head of Mission Major General Stefano Del Col (Italy) along with UN staff members of the Tripartite Secretariat at UNP 1-32A, beside Ros Hanikra. There has been an Irish Aide de Camp (Captain) with the heads of Mission/Force Commanders of UNIFIL for most of its 40-years existence. Photo: Capt Alan Kearny

◀ GLEN OF IMAAL 'EX ASSESS'

The 10th All Arms Standard Course pictured with the 5th Potential NCOs Course in the Glen of Imaal after combined 'Ex Assess'. The NCO Training Wing of the Military College, DFTC conducted both courses. Photo: Sgt John Green, 1 Cn Cois



▲ CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL

Pictured L/R is Capt Eoghan Carton, Lt Cmd Clodagh McConnell and Comdt Patrick Ridge after receiving their Graduation Parchments in NUI Maynooth on 12th September 2018.

22 Students from the 74th Command & Staff Course and 51 students from the 29th and 30th Junior Command & Staff Courses received their military and academic honours at a joint graduation ceremony in the Military College and NUI Maynooth with their families and colleagues in attendance. Graduates of the C&S Course received an MA in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies, whilst graduates of the Jnr C&S Course received a Post-Graduate Diploma in Leadership, Defence and Contemporary Security. Photo: Armin Sam Gibney



▲ IIFA FIATA DIPLOMA IN FREIGHT FORWARDING

Pictured at their graduation in IT Carlow on the 12th September 2018 with their Irish International Freight Association (IIFA) and accredited by the International Federation of Freight Forwarders' Association (FIATA) Diploma in Freight Forwarding are: Back row l/r: Sgt Paul Maguire (NSRC), CQMS Eddie Cronin, CQMS Mark Coffey (J4), Sgt Ronan Stafford (NSRC), CQMS Ben Dunne (J4). Front Row: Sgt James Pearse (NSRC), Carlow IT staff along with the president of IIFA and Pte Jacqueline Graham (NSRC). Photo: Jacqueline Graham



Sniper Team Fundraiser

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS BY ARVN JAMIE BARRETT



A fundraising fun day was recently held by 27 Inf Bn to raise money for a sniper team that have been given the chance to represent the DF in a sniper competition in Canada in late September. The Canadian International Sniper Concentration will see teams from around the world come together to battle it out in this elite skill. Last year's event saw snipers from Canada, France, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United States competing.

The two-man 27 Inf Bn team of Cpl Alan Ferguson and Cpl Mark Fitzpatrick earned the opportunity to participate in the international event after their success at the Defence Forces International Marksmanship Skills Competition earlier this year, in which they were placed second in the team competition and Cpl Fitzpatrick won Best Overall Sniper.

The fundraising fun day was organised by Cpl John McGuigan and Cpl Patrick McDonald, who are also snipers. All funds raised will be spent on essential equipment that is not on issue, and will give the team a helping hand in the

competition. An example of such equipment is the light-weight Manfrotto hog saddle tripod that would give the team a great boost.

The fundraising day comprised two events. In the first, serving members of 27 Inf Bn paid €5 for the chance to take part in four challenges: an Airsoft pistol shoot; a football sniper competition; dartboard marksman; and a tyre flip. The winner of each of the first four challenges went forward to the final, a spicy chicken-wing eating contest, with the quickest time winning.

The second event held that evening was a quiz night in the NCOs Mess, with ex-soldiers and members of ONE invited. During the night a Dundalk FC jersey, signed by the team, was raffled.

The way 27 Inf Bn has shown great unit spirit in coming together to support their comrades embodies the values of the DF, and the staff of *An Cosantóir* wish Cpl Ferguson and Cpl Fitzpatrick all the best in the competition. ■

The National Maritime Museum

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY CPL LEE COYLE



"Few citizens appreciate that Ireland lays claim to a jurisdiction, which is almost three times the size of Germany. An area where the sovereignty and sovereign rights translates into the property rights of our citizens. Our land/sea interface offers one of the most spectacular and beautiful coastlines in the world." - Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, in a foreword to Sailing by ed. Markus Connaughton, 2014, quoted in the National Maritime Museum.

The National Maritime Museum is housed in a magnificent, 19th century, Church of Ireland, mariner's church that was built in 1836 in Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire). The church closed in 1972, opening as the Maritime Museum two years later. Previously, the museum had been housed in the former British Sailors Society Reading Rooms on St Michael's Wharf from 1959, until that building had to make way for the present day ferry passenger terminal.

The museum claims the building, which is one of only a few custom-built places of worship for seafarers intact in the world today, is its greatest artefact.

After visitors have taken in the building and moved on to the exhibitions, there is many a story awaiting them. Our experienced guide was Philip Lecane, a volunteer who works in the museum's library section, which has nearly 4,000 volumes in its unique collection. Philip met us with his guide's greeting: "We will bring you on a voyage of discovery, enthralling you with stories of heroism, war, and disasters at sea. You will learn about maritime history, exploration, navigation, radio, deep-sea cable technology, nature and wildlife, and view art inspired by the sea."

At the first exhibit Philip related the story of the Finnish ship *Palme*, which got into trouble in 1895. Civil Service 7, a rowed lifeboat with 15 seamen, was sent to help. Tragically, it capsized and all its crew were lost.

Another exhibition deals with the sinking in World War I of RMS (Royal Mail Ship) *Leinster*, one of four vessels (along with RMS *Ulster*, RMS *Munster* and RMS *Connaught*)



operated by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company to deliver mail and carry passengers. On 10th October 1918, *RMS Leinster*

was torpedoed by a u-boat off the Irish coast as she sailed for Holyhead. There is a large model of the ship on display in the museum, along with memorabilia from cabin boy Tom Connolly and mail worker John Higgins. Philip told us that with over 540 souls lost, this was the biggest loss of life in the Irish Sea, or aboard an Irish-owned ship. The centenary of the sinking will be marked by commemorative events in Dun Laoghaire, with the museum hosting many of them.

There is an exhibit on HMY (His Majesty's Yacht) *Helga*. Built as a fishery protection vessel in 1908, the *Helga* was used to bombard Dublin during the 1916 Rising, and later took part in the rescue of survivors from *RMS Leinster*. It was purchased by the Irish Free State's Coastal and Marine Service in 1923 and renamed *Muirchú*.

The museum is entirely run by volunteers, supported by people on a community employment scheme. Every Tuesday, librarian Brian Ellis, Joe Varley and Philip run the museum's library and research service, helping people and groups researching relatives or undertaking maritime history projects. We met one such researcher, Andy Arnold, who travelled from Australia to trace his relative, Peter Mills, who sailed with Capt Bligh in the 1700s.

There is no shortage of things to see and do in the museum, with many exhibits to view, and activity areas for younger historians. The Maritime Museum opens from 11am-5pm Mon/Sun. Admission is €6 (€3 for children under 12), with discounts for families and groups. See www.mariner.ie ■

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION OF NO. 13 PLATOON

Army Apprentice School, Naas 1968 - 2018

BY SGT MICHAEL COLEMAN RETD, DFHQ CIS COY
PHOTOS BY ARMN JAMIE BARRETT

The No. 13 Platoon returned to Devoy Barracks on 13th September 2018, 50-years after first walking through the historic archway. It is symbolic that the archway is the only part of the barracks remaining, as it has never been forgotten by the 56 young men who walked through it on their first day with no idea of the journey that lay ahead as part of the No. 13 Platoon. On 24th September 1968, the first apprentices arrived at Devoy Barracks to begin their careers as apprentice carpenters, electricians, fitters, motor mechanics and radio mechanics. The lives of these young men were irrevocably shaped during their time as apprentices as they formed lifelong friendships and a bond to No. 13 Platoon that could never be broken.

While some decided to buy themselves out for the sum of £200 after 5-years to transition to civilian life, others continued their career in the Defence Forces, with some spanning careers of over 40-years.

Regrettably, the majority of apprentices lost touch in the years that followed. However, last year in anticipation of our upcoming 50-year anniversary it was decided that efforts should be made to reconnect the No. 13 Platoon and celebrate this momentous occasion in the place it all began. Every surviving member was traced and contacted - sadly 12 former apprentices have passed away in intervening years.

This was the first reunion of the No. 13 platoon and it was remarkable that 39 former apprentices attended the reunion. Some travelled far and wide to be here, in particular Hugh Ryan who travelled from Australia. The date and venue was decided on and Lawlers Hotel in Naas was chosen as the venue to host this event beginning on Wednesday 12th September, where the group first gathered.

Thursday 13th September began with mass for deceased members in the Church of Our Lady & St. David. Undoubtedly, the highlight of the reunion was our visit to Devoy Barracks. The Barracks is now Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, the home of Kildare County Council (KCC). A presentation was delivered by historians Stan Hickey and Paddy Behan who provided an informative historical insight on Devoy Barracks - a huge thanks to both for

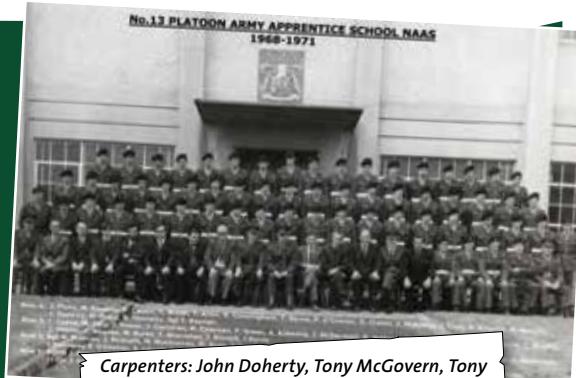
sharing their knowledge with us. Special thanks to Peter Carey (CEO, KCC) and Maura McIvor (KCC) for the generosity shown to us, with refreshments served on the day. Their continued support has allowed many former apprentices to reminisce about times gone by in the same location that these valued memories were created.

Thanks to Cllr. Seamie Moore (KCC) for organising the event in KCC, which allowed us return to the place where it all began. Thanks to Lawlers Hotel for hosting our reunion with a Gala Dinner on the Thursday evening with our guest Brig Gen James Saunderson Retd, who served as adjutant in our final year. We were delighted that he was able to spend the day regaling us with stories on behalf of the management team in Devoy Barracks and providing us with an interesting insight on the apprentices, which was very enlightening!

We would like to extend our thanks also to our other guests, training Cpl Pat O'Brien Retd and fitter instructor Sgt Tom Keenan Retd, for spending this special day with us. However, last but not least, this reunion would quite simply not have happened without John O'Dwyer and Michael Kinsella, who worked tirelessly over the last year to make this event a success. Despite only starting off with a dozen contacts they persevered and managed to track down all 56 apprentices with Frank Conroy located only days before the event but travelled from Wales to join us. So thank you Mike and John, as without your hard work and enthusiasm this event would not have been the huge success it was!

Like most things in life, all good things must come to an end. So after an emotional couple of days spent catching up and reminiscing with old friends we will take away new memories until we meet again!

We have always followed the mantra '*What happens in Devoy Barracks, stays in Devoy Barracks*' and this occasion was no different! ■



Carpenters: John Doherty, Tony McGovern, Tony Doyle, Martin Murphy, Peter O'Connor, John O'Dwyer and Tom Walsh



Electricians: Michael Kinsella, Hugh Ryan and Pat Kinsella.



Fitters MT: John Noonan, Stephen Carroll, Paddy Bradshaw, Martin Prout, Gerard Cunningham, Paddy Hayes, Pat Boggan and Dermot Doyle.



Fitter Armourers: Sgt Tom Keenan Instructor Retd, Jimmy Byrne, John Cox, Pat Molloy, Frank Conroy, Michael Daly, Paddy Cassin, Benedict Donnelly, Jimmy Cody and Michael Burke.



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New Heights for Parachute Team

Official opening of the Parachute Training School in the Sgt Paddy Mulcahy Centre

BY COMDT RORY ESLER, CHAIRMAN AN PARA-CHUMANN MÍLEATA

The DF Parachute Team (*An Para-Chumann Mileata, or PCM*) was founded in 1972, and annual static-line and advanced parachuting courses have been conducted since the foundation of the Army Ranger Wing (ARW) in 1980. Following the publication of TI 06/2011 (Parachuting in the Defence Forces), the Parachute Training School (PTS) was set up as an ex-establishment school of the Air Corps College to provide regulatory and technical oversight for all parachuting activities in the DF. Its main focus is on promoting parachuting as an adventure training activity, a competition sport, and a public relations tool.

On the sports side, PCM is an affiliate club of the US Parachute Association (USPA) and abides by USPA's 'Gold Standard' rules and regulations.

Drawing on PCM's technical expertise, the PTS also assists the ARW with their operational parachute training, as required; for example, by helping to draft SOPs and providing accelerated freefall instructors. Working in close co-operation with the ARW the PTS has helped to progress parachuting as an operational capability, for both high- and low-altitude deployment of special operations teams. As part of this partnership ARW and PTS instructors and jumpmasters conducted military static line jumpmaster and young entry courses for ARW candidates earlier this summer.

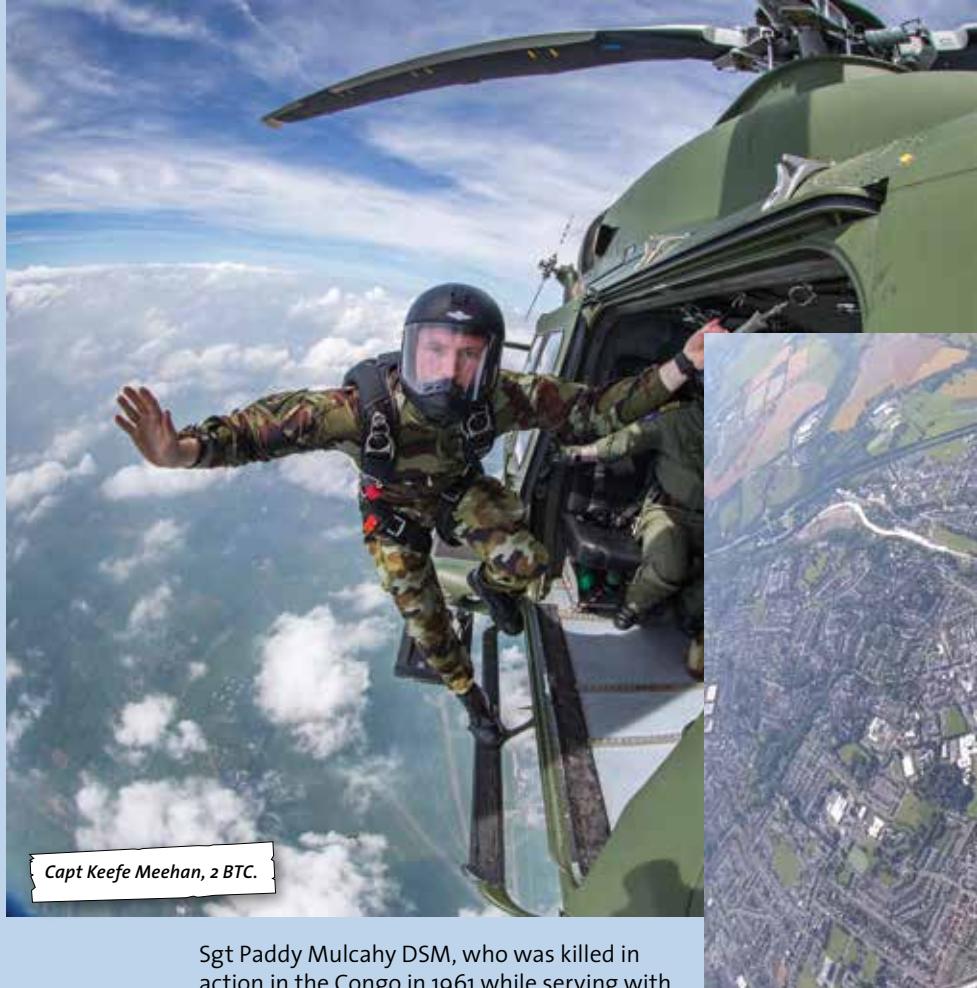
As an adventure training activity and a competitive sport, parachuting is open to all members of the DF (PDF and RDF).

Both PCM and PTS continue to be organised, trained and administered by a small, core group of dedicated individuals who possess the necessary skills and internationally recognised qualifications to conduct parachuting to the highest standards. Many of these individuals have competed internationally at the highest levels in formation and accuracy skydiving, often as the Irish national team. In addition, the Black Knights display team carries out a number of high profile displays annually as part of the DF's public relations effort. In the last number of years, this has included display jumps at the Bray and Shannon air shows, Farmleigh House, and other high profile venues.

PCM and the PTS have now taken up residence in Plunkett Barracks, DFTC, in the Sgt Paddy Mulcahy Centre.

The building that houses the Centre was built in the final years of the 19th century as the guardroom for Ponsonby Bks, and for many decades after independence it continued as the guardroom of the renamed Plunkett Bks, home of the Cavalry Corps. The three storerooms off the main corridor were the original guardroom cells.

The building was taken over by the Artillery Corps on the closure of Magee Bks, Kildare, in 1998 and the Air Defence Regiment kitted it out for use as an indoor RBS 70 training facility. Director of Artillery, Col Jim Prendergast, opened the refurbished building on St Barbara's Day, 4 December, 1999, naming it in memory of



Sgt Paddy Mulcahy DSM, who was killed in action in the Congo in 1961 while serving with ONUC, the first Artillery Corps member to lose his life in action with the UN.

The latest incarnation of the Centre was opened on 25th June 2018 by GOC DFTC Brig Gen Joe Mulligan and the Mulcahy family. Special guests on the day included Air Corps Chief of Air Staff (Operations), Col Rory O'Connor, and the ARW's chief instructor of static line parachuting (representing OC ARW). Although the PTS have occupied the building for a number of years now, the official opening was regarded as an opportunity to rededicate it once again to the memory of Sgt Mulcahy, an accomplished sportsman who excelled at Command and All-Army level boxing and was also active as a boxing referee. The PTS is proud to honour the name of this hero of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

The building, which has been completely renovated, for the most part by PCM members, with excellent support from DFTC engineers and logs staff, now comprises a lecture/briefing room with full audio-visual facilities, a climate-controlled rigging room (where parachutes are stored, inspected, packed and maintained), a rigger's store, an office/archive and a display/PR store.

The opening was attended by many past and present parachutists, including founding members of PCM retired colonels Connie MacNamara and Des Travers; former chief instructors Comdt John Walsh (retd) and Capt Billy Halliden (retd); and AR Lt Richard Hodson (retd), who was the first RDF member to parachute from an Air Corps

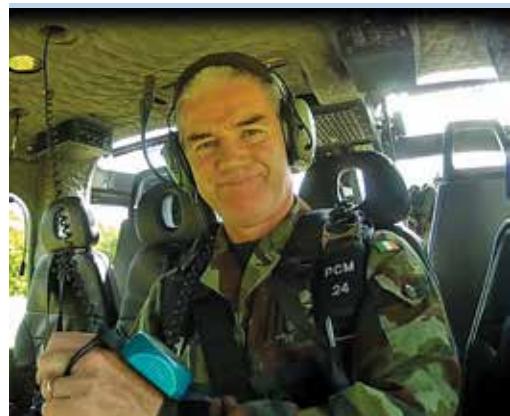
aircraft, and whose brother Col Tom Hodson (retd) was also a founder member.

Though PTS School Commandant Lt Col Gary Gartland was unavoidably absent on the day, his leading role in bringing PCM and the PTS to where they are today was acknowledged by President DF Parachuting, Col Adrian Ó Murchú.

Presentations of engraved PCM mirrors, traditionally made to former members of the parachute team, were made to Des Travers, first chairman of the PCM, and Mr Tom Colley, who was one of a number of civilian parachute instructor/jump-masters that trained members of the DF to instructor level in the early 1970s, thus enabling the establishment of PCM.

A special, joint presentation of Club Member of the Year was made by Col Ó Murchú to Cpl Paul 'Butch' Halpin (NSRC) and his wife Marita, in recognition of their bravery and resilience since Butch's parachute accident in 2015, and in recognition of his outstanding contribution to PCM over the last year, not least in the renovation of the Centre. Thankfully Butch has made a remarkable recovery, has qualified as a parachute rigger in the interim, and did a huge amount with clubhouse manager Coy Sgt 'Doc' O'Connell and others to bring the building up to standard for the GOC's inspection and opening.

Looking forward, PTS will run a military static line young entry course for DF ap-



SGT PAUDIE COSTELLO REMEMBERED

An Para-Chumann Míleata recently lost one of its most senior instructors and display team members, after a long illness bravely borne. Army Reserve Sgt Paudie Costello, 12 Inf Bn, who lost his battle with cancer in July, had been a key leader of the Black Knights for decades and had instructed countless members of the DF on both freefall and static line parachute courses.

Paudie's involvement in PCM was diverse, ranging from instructor and tandem master to military static line jumpmaster. He was a senior member of the display team and had trusted technical knowledge to offer on ground and air recce prior to any display jump request. Regardless of rank, Paudie would give an honest answer if asked a question and that answer would be given with a knowing smile!

Knowing Paudie was on the team gave members of the display panel confidence, whether it was an air recce of a potential display jump location or an actual display jump into a tight landing area.

But more than all of this, Paudie was a good friend to all the members of PCM and the members of the various units he served in during his career in the RDF.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Tracey, his children, Joshua, Seán, Clodagh and Fionn, and his other family members and friends.

Along with the sadness, there is also a great sense of pride among PCM members in having had the honour of knowing and working with Paudie over many years. Rest in peace, our friend and comrade.



GOC DFTC Brig Gen Joe Mulligan cuts the ribbon accompanied by the Mulcahy family.

plicants in 2019, and PCM will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2022. In the meantime, PDF and RDF members who are interested in joining PCM are advised to undergo an accelerated freefall course in their own time, after which they can join the team and progress to jumping from Air Corps aircraft. Once members have completed five jumps from an Air Corps aircraft (either on a formal course or as part of routine PCM training), they qualify for parachute wings.

For more information on DF parachuting, check out the PCM page on IKON. ■



The Mulcahy family: Daughter Margaret and sons Paul and Danny, retired Sgt Armourer and BQMS respectively.



The Mulcahy family along with GOC DFTC Brig Gen Joe Mulligan, President DF Parachuting Col Adrian Ó Murchú accompanied with PCM members past and present in front of the Paddy Mulcahy Centre.

The Sky's the Limit for DF Parachutists

BY CAPT (AR) GEROME DONNELLY – INSTRUCTOR, PARACHUTE TRAINING SCHOOL
PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE

July saw the culmination of several months of planning and co-ordination, with the start of both the Military Static Line Jumpmaster and Young Entry parachute courses, run under the auspices of the Parachute Training School (PTS), an ex-establishment school of the Air Corps College, with instructor staff drawn from across the Defence Forces.

The purpose of the jumpmaster course was to qualify selected, experienced jumpers from the ARW and PTS as military jumpmasters, whose role is critical to any airborne training or operation. Jumpmasters can be employed on a variety of tasks, including selection and reconnaissance of drop zones (DZs), planning of release points, pre-jump safety inspections, control of the troop compartment of the aircraft, and the safe dispatch of jumpers.

Under the ever watchful eye of the chief instructor, students completed the initial one-week instructional phase of the course, which included lessons on aircraft release methods, calculation of release points, and DZ surveys and management, as well as conducting live aircraft drills and spotting exercises.

While the AW 139 helicopter is the primary static line aircraft currently employed, the drills and procedures used are NATO standard, so the skills taught to the student jumpmasters are easily transferrable to larger, fixed-wing platforms that may be encountered both at home and overseas. It is also hoped that on completion of the CASA replacement programme the platform selected will be suitable for static line operations, which will greatly enhance capacity to drop a larger number of troops.

Week two of the course saw the arrival of over 30 young entry students, the majority from the ARW. Although a small number had some jump experience, the majority never jumped before. The students eagerly began their ground school, which would equip them with the necessary skills to make their five jumps and earn their much-coveted military jump wings.

This intensive phase saw the students receive instruction in areas such as equipment orientation, aircraft drills, canopy flight, parachute landing rolls (the all-important 'how to land!') and a variety of emergency procedures. Unlike most other militaries, Irish static line students are also taught to pack their own parachutes, albeit under the close scrutiny of the course staff. This allows students to become more familiar with, and boost their confidence in, the equipment used.

They spent considerable time honing their skills on the ground before being cleared to progress on to the jump phase of the course. Military static line parachuting



is a means of delivering both personnel and equipment into an operational area and as such students are taught how to jump with their kit, including rucksacks and weapons. Students must complete three 'Hollywood' jumps, without equipment, before progressing on to complete two combat equipment jumps. Carrying equipment adds to the technical nature of the jumps, with students being required to lower their equipment under canopy before landing.

The ARW students will later progress to conducting combat equipment night jumps to ensure that this airborne capability can be fully utilised by those employed in operational roles in the unit.

Student jumpmasters were busily employed throughout the jump phase of the Young Entry course gaining valuable experience in DZ configuration, weather monitoring, and conducting revision training before each day's jumping.

As jump operations commence, each parachutist must undergo a full JMPI (jumpmaster personnel inspection) before they approach the aircraft. Once onboard, the flight time to 1,500ft takes only a matter of minutes, with the jumpers eagerly awaiting the 'go' from their jumpmaster to exit the aircraft and begin the descent to the DZ.

Over the course of the jump phase, and despite some inclement weather, the students managed to safely make their required qualification jumps and earn their military wings.

The successful conclusion of these courses has added to the pool of military jumpmasters within the DF and the number of qualified operational parachutists within the ARW. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the support of the highly professional aircrew from No 3 Ops Wing in the Air Corps.

Looking forward, the PTS, in partnership with the ARW, intends to run another static line jumpmasters course in 2019, to be followed once again by a young entry course. While priority for places on the YE course will remain with the ARW, other available slots will be open to all DF members, with priority of selection to personnel who have already completed parachute jumps with other militaries or with civilian centres.

Notifications on how to apply will be circulated in the New Year. ■



Vox Pops



CAPT KEEFE MEEHAN, 2 BTC (200+ JUMPS, FREEFALL COACH)

"My experience and jumps to date have been freefall and within a sports environment. The jumpmaster course is a great opportunity to shift focus to the military application of the discipline. In addition to maintaining an operational capability, these courses exercise personnel in confidence and adventure training. There are relatively few other training activities that can replicate the degree to which the student must overcome fear in an environment of controlled risk."



COY SGT DECLAN 'DOC' O'CONNELL, CADET SCHOOL (400+ JUMPS)

"I completed a Military Static Line (MSL) course in the DFTC in 2004 and also one in Belgium with the Cadet School in 2008 and have had an interest in parachuting ever since. I am currently a student on the Jumpmaster (JM) course and am finding the course content very beneficial and interesting. The JM dictates the aircraft direction and line of flight during the jump run and has sole responsibility for corrections and the release point of all jumpers onboard the aircraft. I found this course very enjoyable, as I enjoy working at a high tempo."



PTE COLIN CURRAN, ORD SCH (2,500+ JUMPS)

"I competed on the Defence Forces and Irish national teams internationally for four years in world championships and at CISM. I am an accelerated freefall (AFF) instructor, tandem instructor, jumpmaster, freefall coach, senior rigger, and a member of the DF parachute display team. I completed the basic MSL course in 2009 and have since completed advanced parachute courses within the DF."



SGT CIARAN MCCARTNEY (AR), 7 INF BN (900+ JUMPS)

"I previously completed the YE course and I am currently on the SLJM course. I have been a member of the Black Knights parachute display team for several years and have completed display jumps into the DFTC, Farmleigh and the Bray air show, to name a few, and I currently hold tandem instructor and freefall coach ratings. The SLJM course has given me an excellent overview of the safety requirements and actions necessary to deploy operational soldiers via parachute."



DEFATING AN EXTREMIST ATTACK

EOD YOs and NCOs courses put through their paces

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS BY ARMN JAMIE BARRETT

Conducting exercises that are realistic and challenging is an important part of training in the DF. These exercises can range from ordinary green-on-green, wartime scenarios, to complex, multi-faceted scenarios involving multiple agencies and multiple threats. To come up with new, challenging exercise scenarios the DF has looked to real incidents that have happened at home and abroad, and threats faced by militaries and other government agencies in recent times.

As a result, an exercise involving the current Ordnance Young Officer and DFTC Potential NCOs courses took place in May of this year with the aim of putting both courses through their paces in an extremist attack scenario.

Stage one of this joint exercise began with a brief on the exercise scenario, which was that the An Garda Síochána (GS) had asked for assistance in securing a quarry close to the Curragh Camp after receiving 'intel' that criminal activity was taking place in the vicinity. The intelligence had suggested a possible bomb-making factory, so the GS had also requested that a DF EOD team would be on standby.

The Pot NCO course was the first DF element to be deployed on scene and was tasked with setting up OPs around the quarry to watch for any activity. The personnel manning the OPs soon observed suspicious activity that was consistent with the intelligence the GS had received.

The next part of the exercise scenario consisted of setting up a cordon and snatch inside the quarry. However, as the snatch troops entered the quarry they found the suspect had managed

to slip through the net (as per the scenario).

Now in control of the quarry, it quickly became apparent to the Pot NCOs that the location might be being used for some type of terrorist activity, with chemical bottles being found along with a suspicious suitcase.

With the possible threat posed by unknown chemicals and the suitcase, the EOD team was called in. On their arrival the team received a quick brief on what had been found and immediately deployed a HOBO bomb disposal robot to inspect the find and gather more details in order to quickly come up with a plan to deal with the threat.

The HOBO was equipped with a variety of CBRN detectors that were in view of one of its on-board cameras so that the scene could be checked remotely for hazardous fumes or chemicals without having to put any of the team in danger.

With nothing showing up on the detectors, the suitcase was the team's next target of interest. Using HOBO again they manipulated the suitcase and were able to open it. Inside the case they found a respirator and chemicals used for the manufacture of crude explosives, along with other bomb-making materials.

With the initial threat nullified, one of the EOD officers went forward in full-protection bomb suit to conduct a final inspection of the contents. This inspection found materials capable of making a 'dirty bomb' and also a worrying amount of details regarding a local shopping centre, including a site plan of the buildings with locations marked and timings noted.

The suitcase and other materials were then secured so that



they could be checked later for any clues about the person or persons responsible.

The establishment of a new threat and location ushered in the second part of the exercise.

A plan was quickly formed to deal with this new threat and personnel from the Pot NCO course were trucked to the suspected target. On the way to the shopping centre all personnel kitted out in NBC suits, dress CAT4 Romeo, which was going to make this an even more challenging exercise for all involved.

On scene were members of the GS, the HSE, and other government bodies who had been invited to view the exercise to see what an operation of this nature would entail and give them an idea of how to deal with such an incident if required.

In order to add to the realism of the exercise, other DF personnel were inside the shopping centre acting as civilian shoppers going about their business.

Outside, the Pot NCO course approached the entrances to the centre, using the building for cover as they moved into position.

Each section took up positions outside a different entrance and waited for the signal to enter the building. After a tense few minutes the signal was given and the troops quickly entered to secure the building and its occupants.

The section that entered at the rear of the premises spotted the suspect from the quarry, who appeared to be holding a detonator and had a package sitting on the ground beside him. Weapons were instantly trained on the suspected terrorist and when he suddenly made a move to press the detonator he was immediately neutralised.

Once the initial threat had been removed, the Pot NCOs quickly sealed all the exits and began to take control of the centre, gathering all the civilians inside and segregating them so they could be searched and detained to ensure they were not accomplices in the incident.

With the scene secure, the YO EOD team had the task of assessing the device that the terrorist had intended to use and making it safe. A two-person EOD team, also wearing full NBC suits with respirators, entered the centre, and approached the suspect package.

Outside, the Pot NCO course set up a perimeter around the shopping centre, and in the car park a flurry of activity took place as an incident control point (ICP) HQ and decontamination area were set up, with the latter having clearly designated 'hot' and 'cold' zones for the decontamination process, with showers and rest areas.

Back inside the centre the EOD team from the YO course was running detector tests to check the area and the device for any airborne chemicals or other hazardous materials. The EOD team

members moved with the precision of surgeons as they dealt with the device, and their organisational skills really highlighted their professionalism.

Securing the package to the ground, they were able to access the bag containing the device and examine its inner workings. This allowed them to reverse engineer the device and disarm it. As they disassembled each part of the device, it was marked and secured for removal from the scene.

While the EOD team was dealing with the device, the watching members of the GS and HSE were given the chance to ask questions and to see the equipment that the DF personnel were using. There was a lot of interest in the NBC suit and respirator, with questions about its effectiveness and the length of time it could be worn for. They were then given a tour of the ICP and the decontamination area, which included a walk-through of how the decontamination area would be run.

The clean-up operation in such a scenario is a lengthy process, with so many items that could have been contaminated. Accordingly, for the next few hours the EOD teams operated in shifts, going through the many items to be decontaminated and making them safe for removal from the area. The exercise ended early the following morning having run for almost 12 hours, with new skills honed and areas that may need improvement established.

It is challenging exercises like these that push our troops to work hard, and test their skills in difficult environments. As they are based on actual events that have taken place around the world, these exercises are very realistic and contribute to making the DF a highly professional and dependable force that is ready to deploy whenever needed to protect and serve the nation or on UN peacekeeping operations overseas. ■



7th Motorcycle Operators Course

REPORT & PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE

“There are old bikers and there are bold bikers, but there are no old, bold bikers.”

Evel Knievel

With that quote in mind, getting on a motorcycle isn't for the faint hearted. You need your wits about you, you need concentration and nerve, and you need not only the knowledge of what it takes to make the two-wheeled vehicle move forward, but to move forward safely, so as to become an 'old' biker and not a 'bold' one.

Starting back on 2nd July the 7th Motorcycle Operators course, the second to be conducted by the MP GP DFTC since the last DF re-org, ran for six weeks. Eight students from 2 Cav Sqn, 2 Bde MP Coy and MP GP DFTC, started the course under the tutorship of five instructors from 2 Bde MP Coy and MP GP DFTC, one of whom had instructed on six previous courses. Two of the students had no previous experience on a motorcycle, a daunting prospect considering the skills they had to master in such a short period.

The course predominantly used the Honda CBF 600 to learn their trade and also used the Honda NC750X, which is the operational bike they will use in their units.

Being a basic course and with a couple of complete beginners on it, the course started with the very basics of starting and stopping the engine, moving on to taking the bike on and off its stand, and then taking off in first gear.

From the very start of the course the students were drilled in the 'lifesaver' procedure, which involves checking both mirrors and then physically looking back over each shoulder to check blind spots. Lifesaver is a vital procedure to be carried out before a motorcyclist moves off from the kerb, turns left or right, changes lanes, or begins an overtaking manoeuvre, and can literally be a life saver.



Once the students had mastered these skills they moved onto banking and cornering, and the use of brakes, including using the front brake only, the back brake only and then both brakes together. Using both brakes together shows the student how the ABS (anti-lock braking system) works. This very important lesson, 'The System of Motorcycle Control', also incorporates correct road positioning, using the correct speed for various road and weather conditions, acceleration and deceleration, avoiding hazards, and generally learning how to ride in a safe and correct manner.

As well as learning how to ride a motorcycle, it is also important to know how it runs and how to maintain it. To this end, the students were taught how to carry out a BOS (before operation service), which ensures that the bike is in a good state and safe to ride, and an AOS (after operation service), which makes sure there are no issues with the bike after use. They were also taught general maintenance by army mechanics, and how to fault-find in order to reduce the risk of unnecessary damage or accidents.

Another important part of the course is learning how to night drive. This happens towards the later stages of the course, after the students have proven their competence on the bike. Driving at night for the first time can be a very surreal experience even in a car, but doing it on a bike, while exposed to the elements, is a totally different experience for novices. On the positive side, night driving helps the students become more aware of their senses; makes them more aware of wildlife they may encounter; enhances their awareness of other road users, weather, and road conditions; and to be aware that other road users might think that their single headlight is a car with only one light working. ■



WE SPOKE TO ONE OF THE NOVICE DRIVERS, CPL KIM TURNER, WHO HAS 13 YEARS' SERVICE IN THE DF AND HAS BEEN IN THE MP CORPS SINCE 2011.



“Before this course I had never been on a bike before,” Kim told us, “and the thoughts of it was both exciting and nerve wracking. I’ve wanted to do this course since I first joined 1 ACS 13 years ago, so finally getting it was more than welcome.

“My favourite aspect of the course was learning the system of motorbike control, as it teaches you the most important aspects of riding a bike. The hardest part of the course, for me, was the risk factor of riding a bike, cornering, and the psychological aspect of applying the system of motorbike control.

“I really enjoyed the course and the challenges it presented and I’m delighted I passed all the tests. I’m looking forward to being more of an asset to my unit, whether it is doing escorts or putting what I’ve learned from the course into practice in my day-to-day job.”



HONDA CBF 600

- 76 BHP (brake horse power)
- Four-stroke, fuel-injected, liquid-cooled engine
- Chain driven
- Six-speed gearbox
- Double-disc front brakes, single-disc back brakes
- Range: 317km
- Weight: 222kg
- Top Speed: 225kph



HONDA NC750X

- 54 BHP
- Four-stroke, fuel-injected, liquid-cooled engine
- Chain driven
- Six-speed gearbox
- Single-disc front and back brakes
- Range: 337km
- Weight: 220kg
- Top speed: 201kph

'Do Nothing'

A SHORT STORY

BY AJ VOSSE

"Sgt, what exactly is that soldier doing?"

"Nothing, Sir..."

He'd expected the startled expression. Here in the military, men aren't supposed to do nothing, so when an officer sees nothing being done it spells trouble. The Sgt purposely allowed the pause to drag on, allowing the tension to mount until it became almost tangible. He allowed the oppressively hot, humid, heavy air to add to the drama of the moment, as if the smoke of 20 cannons expelling their toxic vapour suffocated any thoughts of reality.



Sgt Ross glanced at the rosy-cheeked man beside him. He'd planned the familiarisation walk to end in the tree's shade about 15 meters from where the young soldier was sitting. The soldier was dressed only in a pair of shorts and a stained, sun parched shirt. Nondescript, hardly visible against the background of the surrounding thicket of woodland, part of the land.

The Sgt's thoughts returned to the new arrival. The uniform crisp, only months old, unlike his faded combat dress that although neat, was well past their best days. Damn, why can't they stop sending him these kids? Soldiering is not for babies.

They're making them younger each year, he mused. He reflected on the seemingly insane process of sending children fresh out of secondary school on officer's course. Conscription was so cruel, getting good school grades meant you'll likely end up at officer's college before your molars were out of their sockets. Then, next stop? War. In a faraway, forsaken edge of the continent, light-years away from the comforts of home and mommy's cooking and care.

How many years more will he have to lead these kids into battle, how many more years will the warlords continue demanding more death from their nation? How many more years will the politicians throw the youth of the country at the enemy's guns?

He cut short his mental ramblings, glancing at Lt Pendleton. His gaze was again drawn to the mere smudge of a moustache. So

young, a fresh-faced boy, yet now he was supposed to understand what he was seeing. How the blazes can any man understand what they were witnessing?

"We've left him to his own devices while we wait for the Medics to make up their minds. He lives out here beneath the trees."

Sgt Ross gestured at the lush green world at the edge of the base camp. Here, many miles away from the dangers of the frontline, it was easy to close one's eyes and imagine oneself enjoying the luxuries of a subtropical safari camp.



He fixed his eyes on the shell of the man-boy seemingly relaxing in the old tree's shade. Just months ago, that young man had been an eager, fresh-faced soldier arriving at the front, ready for his own conquest of destiny.

"Sir... the lad's not responding to any human interaction. He shuns all contact, yet... there he is, existing only meters away from his peers."

Again, the Sgt let the heat-laden billows of silence waft into the mental spaces, seeping into every dark crevice of their minds. His was battle weary; the young LT's dazed and disorientated by his first brushes with the reality that was war.

Sgt Ross turned slightly, for a better look at the young man standing beside him. The rosiness was gone, replaced by an ashen likeness of what minutes before was the innocent, fresh brightness of an eager young officer.

Maybe this one will learn quickly, thought Sgt Ross. Maybe he'll learn and realise there is no glory in war; there are no hero's, dead or alive. Maybe he'll learn that Hemingway's words were true, no matter how just war was, it was ultimately still crime. Maybe the LT will soon grasp that one's own kin bleed and die like the enemy.

The Sgt was used to seeing blood, to seeing the remains of his troops scattered on the red earth... and in the trees. He'd watched men lance the enemy with blunt bayonets. He'd seen hate, love... longing... lust for life... depravity. Is that not the lack of love? De-

pravity? He'd seen almost all there is to see.

Or, had he? Had he yet another new frontier to see? The intangible barrier, the divide between the rational and the dim, dingy dark distance of derange.

"Is he reacting to anything... anything in the slightest?"

"No Sir. No... he's totally withdrawn. Like a tortoise that's pulled its head into its shell, still alive but not functioning. He's there... he eats what's put out for him. He drinks... no beer, no soft drinks, only water. He even controls his hygiene... sneaks into the ablutions at night. Primeval... yet, he somehow knows to stick to basics."

The young Lt turned toward Sgt Ross, imploring eyes demanding a better explanation. He held the Sgt's gaze as best he could even as the bitter bile of revulsion crept its way into his parched mouth.

"Sgt, I see the shell of a man who's most likely not many months older than me. I see dead eyes, I sense an aura of death all around, well, I think that's what I sense, please help me here. They speak of death at the college but how is a man, fresh off the transport, supposed to ever be ready for seeing something like this?"

LT Pendleton gasped, as if the stale air enveloping them was choking him.

Just how could he be ready? No, thought Sgt Ross, no books or

guessed, are his brother's blood stains."

Sgt Ross fell silent; he'd no more to add to the sad story.

"Sgt, what's the man's name?"

"Tom, Infantryman Thomas James Barker. His brother was Infantryman Jeremy William Barker. Yes, they were as inseparable as the cartoon characters, until Jerry stepped on the landmine."

"Tom?" The LT's lingering pause turned to a semi plea... "Tom?"

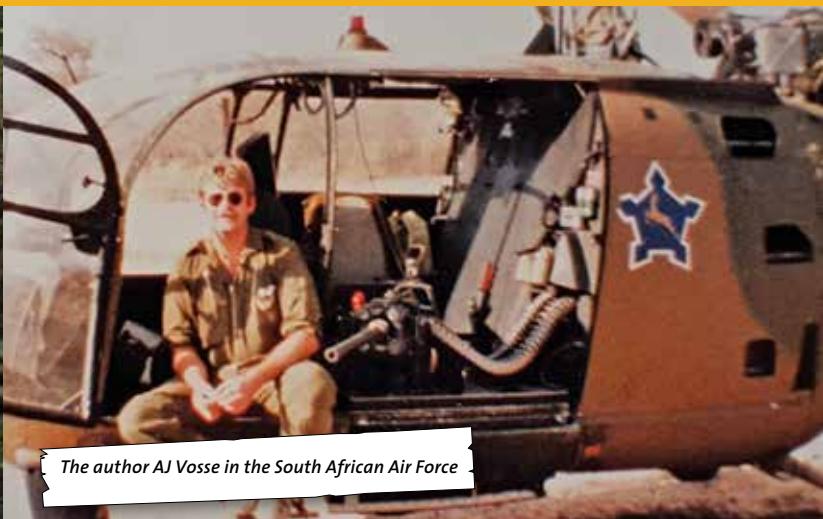
"Don't bother Sir, just don't. Tom's spirit was blown totally out of his core during that ambush. Only the physical form returned. Tom... he's long gone. Gone with his twin brother who was blown into a million bits. I saw it happen... the lad walked out of the ambush... covered with the remains of his brother. Tom walked out, blood-stained, as if in a mist of red death..."

"What shall we do for him?"

"Nothing Sir... we do nothing... for now."

Sgt Ross stood... ramrod, rigid, straight. He stood, wondering when he'd ever walk out from beneath the cloud of his own brother's death. A death too long ago to remember, yet raw in his mind. His own brother, his baby brother, shot by a sniper as they entered the safety of their forward command post.

"Nothing Sir. For Tom, you do nothing. No, all you need do is send two letters home... let the parents mourn once. One shock for them



The author AJ Vosse in the South African Air Force

words could ever school anyone in the effects of war's death and destruction. Never.

This time it was the young LT who let the pause linger. Sgt Ross didn't break the silence. He respected the young officer's attempts at coming to terms with what he was experiencing.

"Sgt, we're standing here talking about a person. Yes, I'm having my difficulties dealing with the situation, but he is after all still a human, not so?"

He glanced at Sgt Ross for reassurance. Yes, the nod was slow but strong, the greying soldier affirming his agreement.

"Why has he chosen this spot to live? Is there any likely reason or did it just happen?"

"Live? We're not really sure... he was housed in the sickbay after returning from the front."

Sgt Ross turned and pointed at the neat white buildings at the edge of the woodland. He swung his arm from the direction of the buildings to the woodland,

"The lad soon began climbing through windows at night, to wander around in this thicket. Searching for his soul or maybe as if searching for his brother? Who knows?"

He paused again, just long enough to catch his breath.

"See that shirt. The stains? He wouldn't allow medics to take the shirt. He would scream and perform so much that he'd upset the others around, so he still wears it. The stains, as you may have

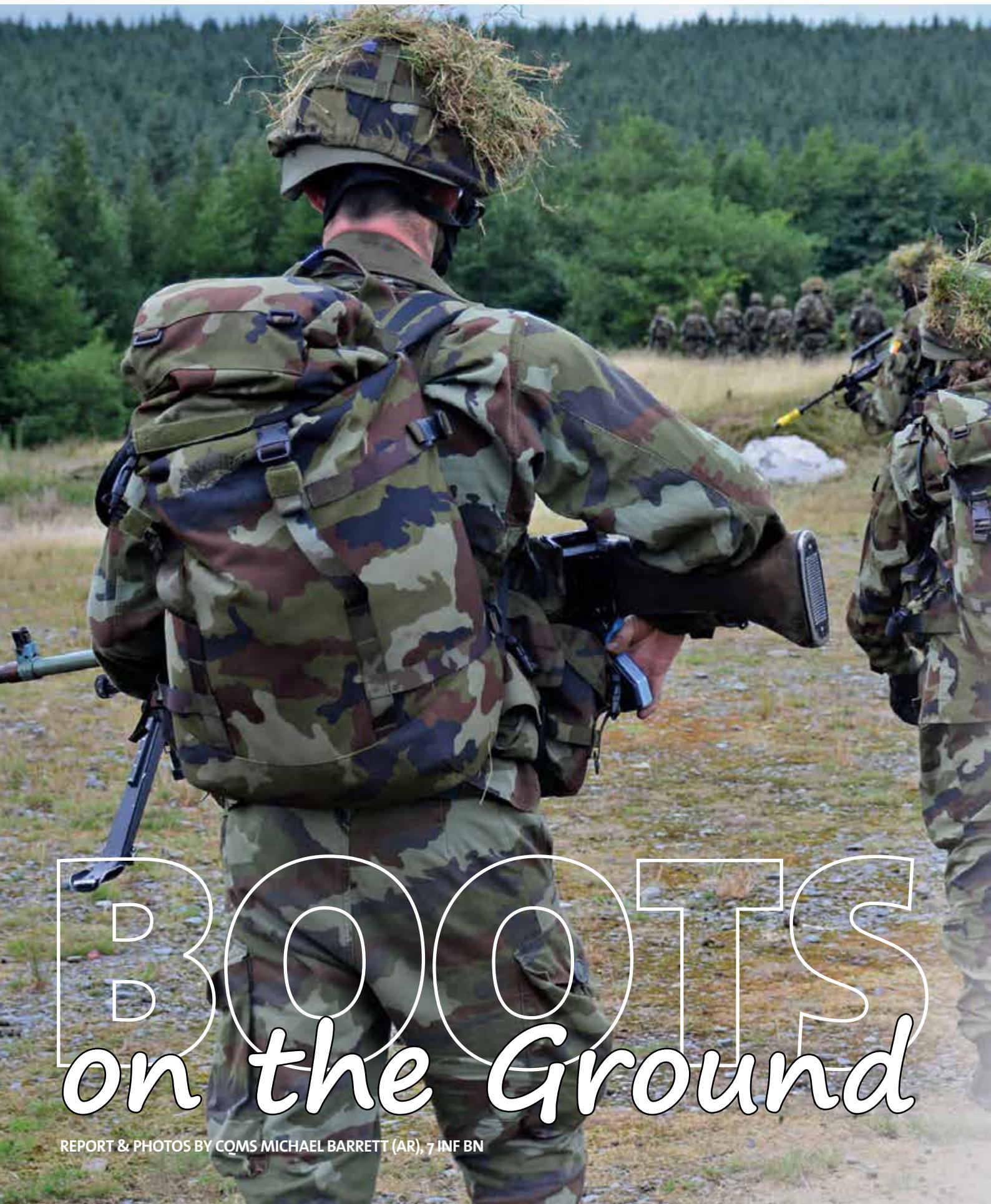
is more than enough..."

LT Templeton whispered as he turned to walk away,

"Nothing Tom, for you we'll do nothing." ■

About the Author: AJ Vosse joined the South African Air Force as a fresh-faced lad straight out of school. He completed his apprenticeship in 1980, qualifying on Impala jet trainers (Aermacchi MB326 aircraft). He always wanted to fly so he applied for and was selected to do Flight Engineer's training on Alouette III helicopters. Based at a maritime squadron and accumulating more than 1,400hrs on type, serving in many different roles, including sea and mountain rescue, maritime operations, pilot and flight engineers training and operational hot and heavy flying in conflict environments. AJ left the SAAF in 1993 and relocated to Ireland in early 2001 along with his family. AJ has self published his first collection of short stories 'The Lucky Thirteen' in 2017, and is hoping to release the second collection at the end of the year.





BOOTS on the Ground

REPORT & PHOTOS BY COMS MICHAEL BARRETT (AR), 7 INF BN



Located in the Wicklow Mountains, Kilbride Military Camp, well known to many members of the Defence Forces, offers a wide range of training options with its varied terrain of forest, marshy bog, and hills, and, of course, the firing ranges.

It was here that the latest group of 7 Inf Bn RDF recruits undertook the tactical phase of their recruit training course, spending six days in the camp in early August on full-time training (FTT).

The course comprised of 18 recruits, who had begun their FTT in Cathal Brugha Bks the previous week, where they spent four days preparing for, and passing, other elements of their training syllabus, including the all-important foot and arms drill tests.

These ten days of FTT were conducted under the auspices of C Coy (AR), 7 Inf Bn, one of the few RDF units conducting recruit training.

The training in Kilbride commenced with a 24 hour exercise that began with a 5km route march in full battle order. With the sun shining the scenery was fantastic, but unfortunately the recruits had neither the time nor the chance to notice, as a route march in full kit and carrying a weapon leaves little time for any admiration of your surroundings.

At the end of the march the course moved into a forested area to establish a platoon harbour area and begin their routine.

This was the first time the recruits were to experience the delicacies of the Defence Forces 24-hour ration pack, and the use of hexamine, or 'hexi', cookers.

The warm weather necessitated the frequent resupply of water by the support staff, as the recruits began on-site field craft lessons with their platoon NCOs.

After 24 hours 'Endex' was declared and the recruits returned their weapons and other ordnance to stores before resting off and cleaning their kit.

For the remainder of the week the course was introduced to, and practiced, section attack tactics. They were assisted in this by some of C Coy's two-star soldiers, who provided GPMG teams and an enemy party.

Being Kilbride, the training terrain was a combination of broken ground, some with long, hard grass. The recent spell of long hot weather had dried out much of the soil, making it collapsible underfoot and sometimes difficult to move over, and this was where each recruit's level of fitness began to make itself evident.

The role of the Infantry Corps, the Defence Forces' prime combat arm, is to 'destroy the enemy and to hold ground by day or night on any terrain.'

Small, section-level, infantry drills, even in peacetime training, are physically demanding and exhaustive, and infantry soldiers, by the very nature of their assigned combat role, must be physically fit, fit enough to get the job done, again and again.

They must be able to move over all types of terrain, carrying their personal weapons, ammunition and water, helmets and body armour, and items of personal kit.

As the training days passed large amounts of blank 5.56mm and 7.62mm ammunition was expended by the platoon, and tactical skills were gradually honed and refined as the recruits changed section appointments for each section attack.

At the end of this tactical phase, the platoon returned to Cathal Brugha Bks.

Several more months of training lie ahead of the course before they can pass out as two-star privates and finally become qualified members of 7 Inf Bn, enabling them to assist their PDF comrades as required. ■

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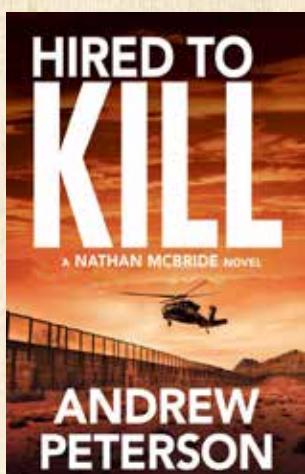
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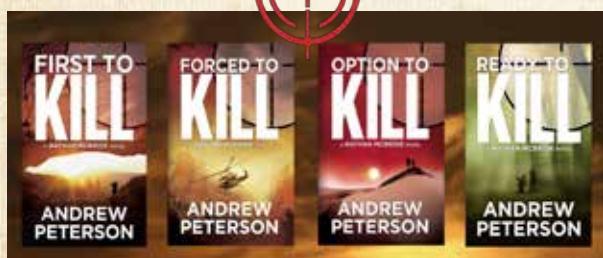
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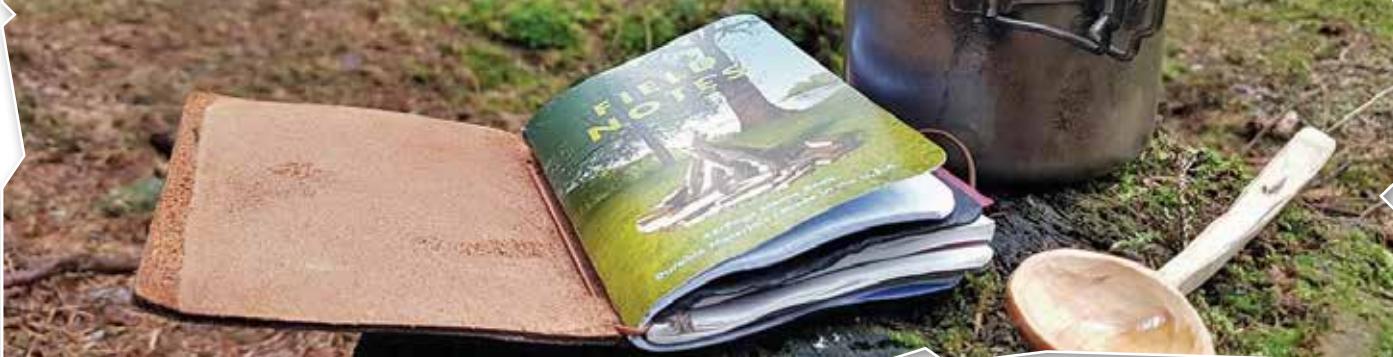
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ISRAELI SUTURES

BY JOE PRICE



It's good to be back in Ireland and writing again for this great magazine. I have been away in Sweden these past few weeks attending a survival course at The Pathfinder School based in Scandinavia. Courses like this are always an asset to building up your core set of skills. One thing I learned and wanted to share with you all is how to suture a wound without puncturing the skin and also allow for irrigation. This is a last ditch effort and a great one to know should the necessary kit not be to hand.

After an initial triage assessment you may need some further help stopping or stemming the flow of bleeding. Start by cutting or ripping strips of duct tape to the required length. These can either be 1-inch strips or a large strip. The larger strips are easier if performing self-aid.

Next you will need to fold the top section of these strips over a piece of cordage creating a channel but also leaving a sticky tail to adhere to the skin. This cordage should be double the size of the affected area.

Carefully place the strips of duct tape on either side of the wound making sure to leave a good gap. You want to be able to pull the wound closed without the duct tape touching. This will allow for constant irrigation.

Next you want to suture or boot lace stitch the pieces together working underneath your main cord but never piercing the skin. This is one of the best things about this method, as it doesn't cause any more immediate trauma to the skin.

Tightening it down the whole way up just finish simply with a strong knot.

As always methods like this will never replace conventional methods of first-aid. But we practice these things for when we find ourselves stuck in those situations where convention isn't prevalent and speed dictates results.



Joe Price is one of the co-founders of the "Living to Learn" Bushcraft Community, a member of the Irish Bushcraft Club and an Irish Ambassador for Mora Knives.

He works in The Camo Shop www.thecamoshop.ie and you can follow the 'Living to Learn' community online:

www.facebook.com/groups/livingtolearn/

UNIFIL BATTALION COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

BY CAPT SEÁN MAGUIRE, PIO 112 INF BN, UNIFIL

On the 11th August 2018, 118 IRISHFINBATT held a Battalion Commander's challenge in UNP 2-45. The challenge was organised by the Finnish contingent and was designed to test both physical and mental strength. Six teams entered the competition which was set out over seven stages. With three Irish teams, two Finnish teams and one Estonian team the competition was set. Each team was not only representing their sub unit, but their home nation too, with bragging rights on the line.



THE COMPETITION CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING STAGES:

Stage one was a modified "Murph Test". Each team had to complete 100 pull ups, 200 push ups and 300 body weight squats. There were additional points up for grabs at this stand if one member of the team was able to climb from the top of a Finnish SISU APC, underneath it to the other side and then back to the top without touching the ground, an extremely difficult task.

Stage two was a distance judging stand. The teams stood at an OP and had to judge distance to set landmarks visible from that point. The overall challenge gave additional points for the fastest team to complete it, so teams ran between stands in extreme heat. These factors combined with the fatigue from stage 1 increased the difficulty for this task, which was completed with a high level of accuracy by all teams.

Stage three involved each team being given matches, kindling and wood. The task was to build a fire big enough that it would sever a rope suspended a foot off the ground. Points were given based on how quickly the teams accomplished this task, an additional minute was added on for every match used. Tactics and planning were important for this task and several teams lost out on valuable time and points due to rushing into the task without a set strategy.

Stage four tested each team in grenade throwing ability. Teams threw mock grenades a distance of twenty feet into a crate. Once each team had landed five grenades into the crate they were able

to move on to the next stand. The Irish teams in particular excelled at this task, gaining valuable time in the overall competition.

Stage five had each team tested in observation and threat analysis. The teams had to observe a ten foot square grid from a distance and record what they saw. The square contained various items from anti-personnel mines to artillery shells. The teams had to locate and identify the items and then assess the threat that it posed.

Stage six was a medical and CASEVAC stand. The teams came across a casualty that had to be triaged, treated and then evacuated. This stand was both mentally and physically challenging as the casualty had to be evacuated to the top of "Snake Hill", anyone who has been to UNP 2-45 knows well that this is no easy feat.

Stage seven: At the beginning of the competition each team was shown a picture of six flags, at the finish line they then had to identify the six flags and the order they came in. With body and mind exhausted at this stage, this memory test proved harder for the teams than anyone predicted.

Six teams from 118 IRISHFINBATT took part in the competition. The winning team was made up of Recce Coy personnel Capt Ralph, Cpl Leonard, Tpr Thoms, Tpr Kelly and Tpr Brennan. The Estonian team came second. The heat on the day had a significant impact on the competition, but all teams persevered and made it to the finish. The competition was well run by the Finnish contingent and received a lot of support from the members of 118 IRISHFINBATT. ■



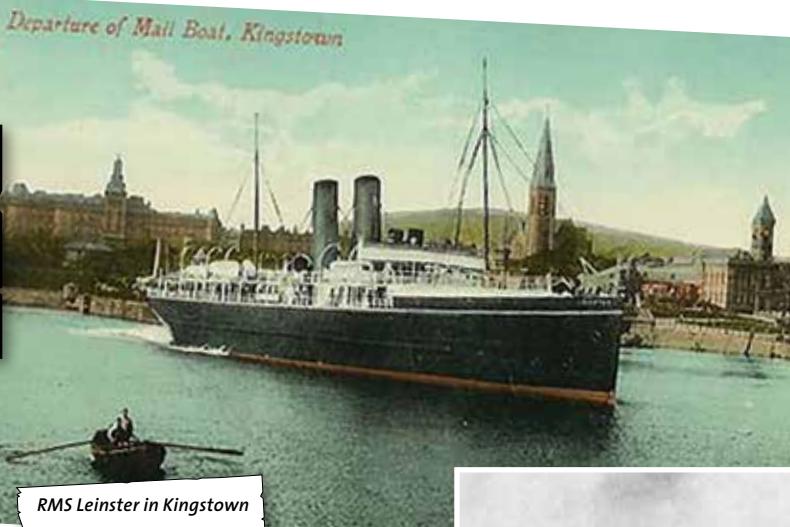
THE TORPEDOING OF THE RMS LEINSTER 10TH OCTOBER 1918

BY JAMES SCANNELL

In October 1918 with Germany facing certain defeat from the Allies, it initiated contacts with the Allies to arrange an armistice. Although there was still stalemate on the Western Front, German submarines continued to actively pursue the war against the Allies attacking ships in and around Ireland and Britain. On 26th September 1918, the German submarine *UB-123*, under Commander Robert Ramm, left Heligoland, on her second patrol destined for the Irish Sea and made her way down the West Coast of Ireland, along the South Coast and then up into the Irish Sea eventually arriving in the vicinity of the Kish Bank on 10th October 1918.

UB-123 was a Type UBII submarine, launched on 2nd March 1918, 183ft long, a beam of 19 feet, and could dive to depth of 165 feet. 2 x four-stroke 6-cylinder engines and 2 x electric motors enabled her to run at 16 mph on the surface and 8 mph submerged. She was equipped with 4 x 19½ in. bow firing torpedo tubes and 1 x 19½ in. stern torpedo tube, carried 10 torpedoes, and a 4 in. deck gun. Her crew consisted of three officers and thirty-one men.

The City of Dublin Steam Packet Company (CoDSPC), established in 1823 by Charles Wye Williams, won the Post Office Holyhead-Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) mail contract in 1890 in the face of stiff competition and to fulfil its terms introduced a fleet of four twin-screw steamers, built by Laird Bros of Birkenhead, costing £96,000 each. Constructed of pickled [mild] steel plate, each ship was 378ft long, 75ft in width and 42ft in height, powered by a single eight-cylinder triple-expansion steam engine which gave them a maximum speed of 30 mph. Built for speed, they could accommodate 1400 passengers, later reduced to 1000. RMS *Ulster* was launched in June 1896, RMS *Leinster* in September 1896, RMS *Munster* in October 1896 and RMS *Connaught* in June 1897, and



RMS Leinster in Kingstown

all gave excellent service, enabling the company to meet the terms of the Post Office mail contract.

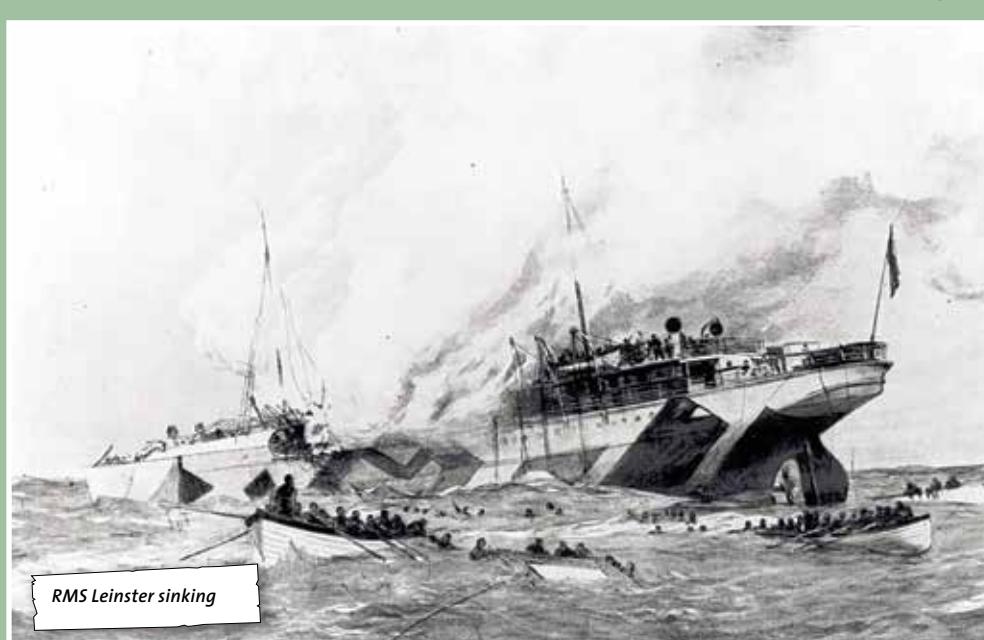
At the outbreak of war in August 1914, these ships maintained their normal schedules but in 1915 were withdrawn from service and armed by the Admiralty with a stern mounted 12-pounder gun, manned by three gunners, and two signal guns, as an anti-submarine measure, without any discussion with the company.

In 1916 RMS *Connaught* was requisitioned for use as a troop transport but was sunk by *U-48* on 3rd March 1917 while returning to Southampton from Le Havre.

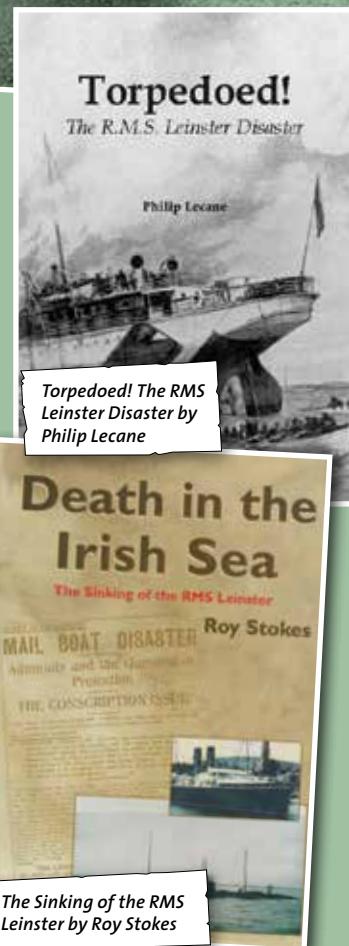
By September 1918 RMS *Leinster* and RMS *Ulster* were carrying large numbers of military personnel and 'war like' stores between Britain and Ireland with a destroyer or aerial escort being provided sometimes. Painted in camouflage colours to break up their outline, it was not uncommon for sailings and disembarkations to be delayed by the authorities

for identity and document checks but this war work meaning that both were considered legitimate targets in German eyes.

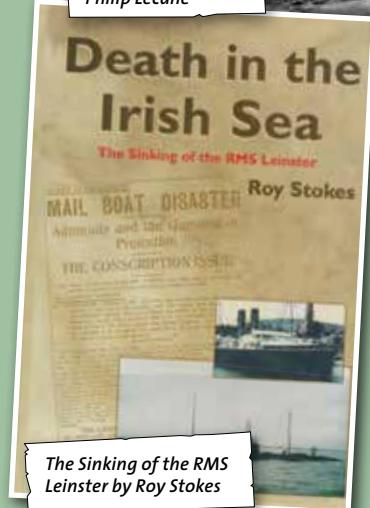
Advancing to the morning of 10th October 1918, the master of the RMS *Leinster*, Captain Birch, was informed that no escort was available for that morning's sailing even though several warships were berthed in Kingstown Harbour nor would there be airship cover as the only available one had been damaged the previous evening. As the absence of escorts were not sufficient grounds not to sail under the mail contract, Captain Birch had no option but to sail and at his pre-departure briefing with his officers said that they would have to



RMS Leinster sinking



The Sinking of the RMS Leinster by Roy Stokes





rely on speed and zigzagging to avoid attack.

By 8.50 a.m. with the last of mail sacks and passengers on board, around 8.54 a.m. RMS *Leinster* then embarked on the Day sailing to Holyhead. On board were 77 crew including Captain Birch, 22 Post Office sorters, 3 gunners, 489+ military personnel and 180+ civilians. While passengers settled down to reading the morning newspapers, the Ship's Adjutant, Lt L.T. Parker went around advising military personnel which parts of the ship were out of bounds.

Near the Kish lighthouse lay the *UB-123* but Commander Ramm was unable to mount an attack against the inbound *RMS Ulster* as she was zigzagging but when he saw the outward bound *RMS Leinster* which had yet to commence this technique, he manoeuvred his submarine into an attack position.

Around 9.37am the two mail boats passed each other and about eight minutes later when the *RMS Leinster* was about 5 miles east of the present day Kish lighthouse, Commander Ramm fired his first torpedo, which passed in front of her and although not spotted by the look-outs, was seen by several passengers on deck. Almost immediately another approaching torpedo was seen by the lookouts and Captain Birch immediately initiated evasive action but before this manoeuvre could be completed, this torpedo struck the port side, penetrated the mailroom, exploded, and also blew a hole in the starboard side as well. 19 of the postal sorters were killed, 3 survived, but 2 were later lost before rescue. As the *RMS Leinster* started to go down by the bow and was now facing Kingstown, Captain Birch ordered the lifeboats swung out and to commence their launching. Nearly stopped dead in the water, *RMS Leinster* was an ideal sitting target and minutes after the first torpedo impact,

Commander Ramm fired his third torpedo which struck her boiler room resulting in a massive explosion which accelerated the vessel's demise and blew many of those on deck into the rough sea. Within 18 minutes after the initial torpedo impact, the *RMS Leinster* lay on the seabed with survivors clinging on to life in the freezing sea with those in lifeboats and on life rafts faring better.

Although the *RMS Ulster* saw the attack on her sister, she did not come to her aid in accordance with 'War Instructions for British Merchant Ships' issued by the Admiralty in 1917 and reported the incident on docking in Kingstown. Two hours elapsed before the first of the rescue vessels, *HMS Lively*, followed by *HMS Seal*, subsequently joined by *HMS Mallard*, *HMS P56*, and a flotilla of other ships, including the *HMY Helga*, arrived at the sinking site and began the task of pulling survivors and bodies from the freezing sea. This part of the operation went badly wrong due to a combination of the rough sea, poor craft handing and personnel untrained in the recovery of people from the sea, many of whom were exhausted and unable to respond to directions, with Captain Birch one of those lost during the rescue operation.

Survivors were landed in Kingstown with those needing hospitalisation being sent to a number of hospitals in the area. Initially the official death toll was 501 but over the past decade research by Philip Lecane, Roy Stokes, and others has brought this figure up to over 565+.

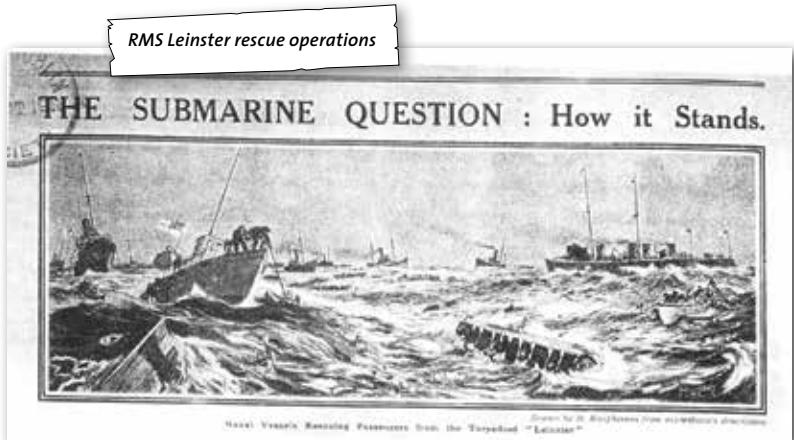
News of the sinking was tightly controlled in the press and this event, which resulted in great public outrage, impeded German attempts to try and arrange an armistice until they gave an undertaking on 20th October that such attacks would cease.

Only two inquest were held – at one Mr. Shaw Jones, an auditor for the Ministry of Munitions, a verdict of 'death by drowning' was returned, but at the far more lengthy one on Miss Georgina O'Brien, returning to London, a similar verdict was returned but the jury also blamed the responsible authorities for failing to provide the *RMS Leinster* with an escort. All the other victims had 'death by drowning' recorded as their cause of death.

The remains of the deceased victims were buried in local cemeteries such as Monkstown and Deansgrange while military personnel were interred in Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin.

Despite calls for an official inquiry, none was ever held. The CoDSPC never recovered from the loss of two of their mail boats. In 1919 the *B & I Line* acquired control of its Dublin to Liverpool services and in 1920 its great rival, the *London & Northern Western Railway Company*, won the mail contract. On 20th November 1920 *RMS Munster* made her last crossing of the Irish Sea and joined her sister *RMS Ulster* in Holyhead where they remained until 1924 when they towed away for scrapping, the same year that the company was wound up.

UB-123 was lost in the North Sea anti-submarine mine field on 19th October 1918 during the return journey to her home base. ■



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MAJOR GENERAL PAUL VON LETTOW VORBECK HISTORY'S MOST SUCCESSFUL GUERRILLA COMMANDER

BY SEÁN EGAN

Major General Paul von Lettow Vorbeck was descended from a famous Prussian military family. He saw action in the Boxer Rebellion in China and served in South West Africa from 1904 to 1908. But it is his exploits in East Africa during World War I, where he never lost a battle, for which he became renowned.

At the outbreak of the Great War von Lettow Vorbeck was a colonel serving with the Imperial German Army in East Africa, with 218 white officers and 2,500 askaris (native troops) under his command. Taking the initiative, he decided to use hit-and-run tactics to tie down the much larger British East African forces, comprising 150,000 to 200,000 troops, and prevent them joining the fighting in Europe.

While the British put an embargo on all information coming out of East Africa, news got back to Ireland through the network of Irish missionaries in the region, and Irish republican leaders such as Liam Lynch, Ernie O'Malley, and Ginger O'Connell were able to tell their men about von Lettow's exploits and his guerrilla tactics.

The campaign began with a series of effective raids against British railways in Kenya in which 20 trains and miles of track were destroyed over a two-year period.

The Battle of Tanga on the night of 3rd November 1914, is the most famous battle of the early years of the campaign, when, despite being outnumbered by more than eight to one, von Lettow's force repelled a British Indian amphibious assault with devastating effect, inflicting more than 4,000 casualties with the loss of only 15 Germans and 54 askaris.

The German commander had communications with Germany by radio, and three attempts were made to supply him, two by sea and one by airship.

The first ship was intercepted by the British navy and sank close to shore. Later, when von Lettow took control of the area, he successfully raised part of the arms cargo, which was so carefully packed and greased that it could still be used after cleaning.

The second ship got through undetected, which von Lettow regarded as the major mistake of his British opponents in the conflict.

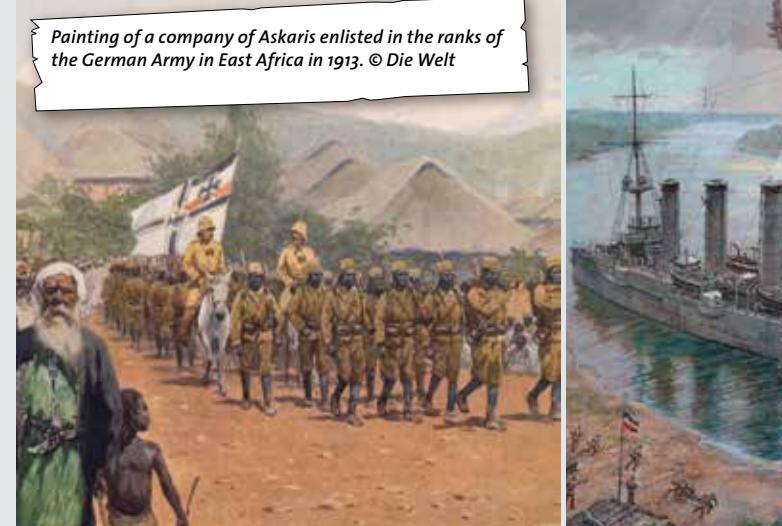
The Airship, L59, was brought from Germany to Bulgaria where it was loaded with supplies; even its external fabric was intended to be used if it completed its mission. It reached Africa, travelling over 4,000 miles (the first ever inter-continental flight), but had to return without completing its mission.

For more than four years von Lettow fought without pause,

covering, mostly on foot, an area larger than the eastern United States, and faced 130 different generals during the course of the war. He never had more than 12,000 troops at his disposal, and had great admiration for his askaris, who were fanatically loyal to him.



General Paul von Lettow Vorbeck



Painting of a company of Askaris enlisted in the ranks of the German Army in East Africa in 1913. © Die Welt

In turn, he treated them with fairness and shared their hardships. The one luxury he permitted himself was a bicycle, on which he often led marches and even performed his own patrols.

A German light cruiser, *SMS Königsberg*, commanded by Capt Max Looff, was operating off the East African coast. The warship's success in sinking ships off the African coast led to the British dispatching two destroyers to deal with her. When the *Königsberg* took refuge in the Rufiji Delta, which was too shallow for the destroyers, the British had to send to England for two Monitors, shallow-draft ships with heavy artillery.

The ships arrived 12 months later, and after they entered the delta and disabled the *Königsberg* Capt Looff and his crew assisted von Lettow's troops in dismounting her naval guns, which they mounted on gun carriages in the railway works at Dar es Salaam.

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The German's force was resourceful and self-sufficient. A large herd of cattle was collected by the askaris and accompanied the guerrilla force. They camouflaged themselves with leaves and branches, made bandages out of bark, boots out of animal hide, and a type of quinine from other bark.

One thing that distinguished the East African War was chivalry. From the start von Lettow adopted the unprecedented policy of freeing any European prisoners, even officers, once they gave their word of honour not to fight against Imperial Germany during the remainder of the war. In 1916 the British marched out under a white flag to tell von Lettow that the German government had awarded him the Pour Merite, the supreme German decoration for valour. Von Lettow replied to the British commander, Jan Smuts, by letter, stating that he was sure there had been some mistake as he did not deserve such an exalted decoration.

The last big battle of the campaign was at Mahiva, in October 1917. Once again the British forces were badly bloodied with more than 50% casualties (2,700 out of 4,900), while only 95 of von Lettow's guerrillas were killed.

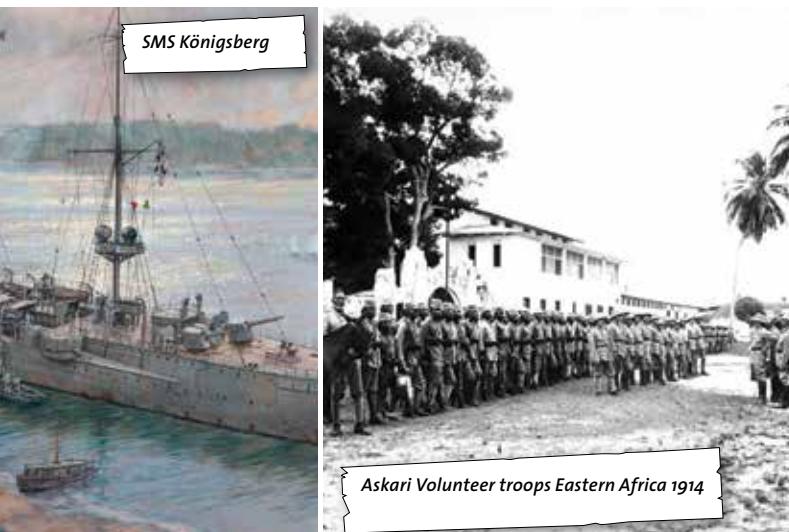
In autumn 1918 von Lettow invaded Rhodesia and on 11 Novem-

more askaris (3,000) than he had started the war with. He had not suffered a single defeat, inflicting 60,000 Allied casualties, including 20,000 British and Indian dead.

Maj Gen Paul von Lettow Vorbeck returned to Germany in 1919 and marched in triumph with his officers and the German colony's former governor. He entered politics and served 10 years in the Reichstag, where he opposed the National Socialists. When offered an ambassadorial post, he refused.

With the start of World War II in 1939, both his sons were called up; both later being killed in action. Twice bombed out of his home in air raids, von Lettow survived his second war, dying in 1964 aged 94. Full military honours were rendered at his funeral in northern Germany.

Years later some of his von Lettow's personal effects (his personal seal and the official ship's document stamp from SMS *Königsberg*) came on the market through a renowned American dealer in Imperial German militaria, and were purchased by the family of a Irish volunteer who fought with the Boland's Mill garrison during the 1916 Rising, and in the Irish War of Independence. The items are honoured keepsakes to this day. ■



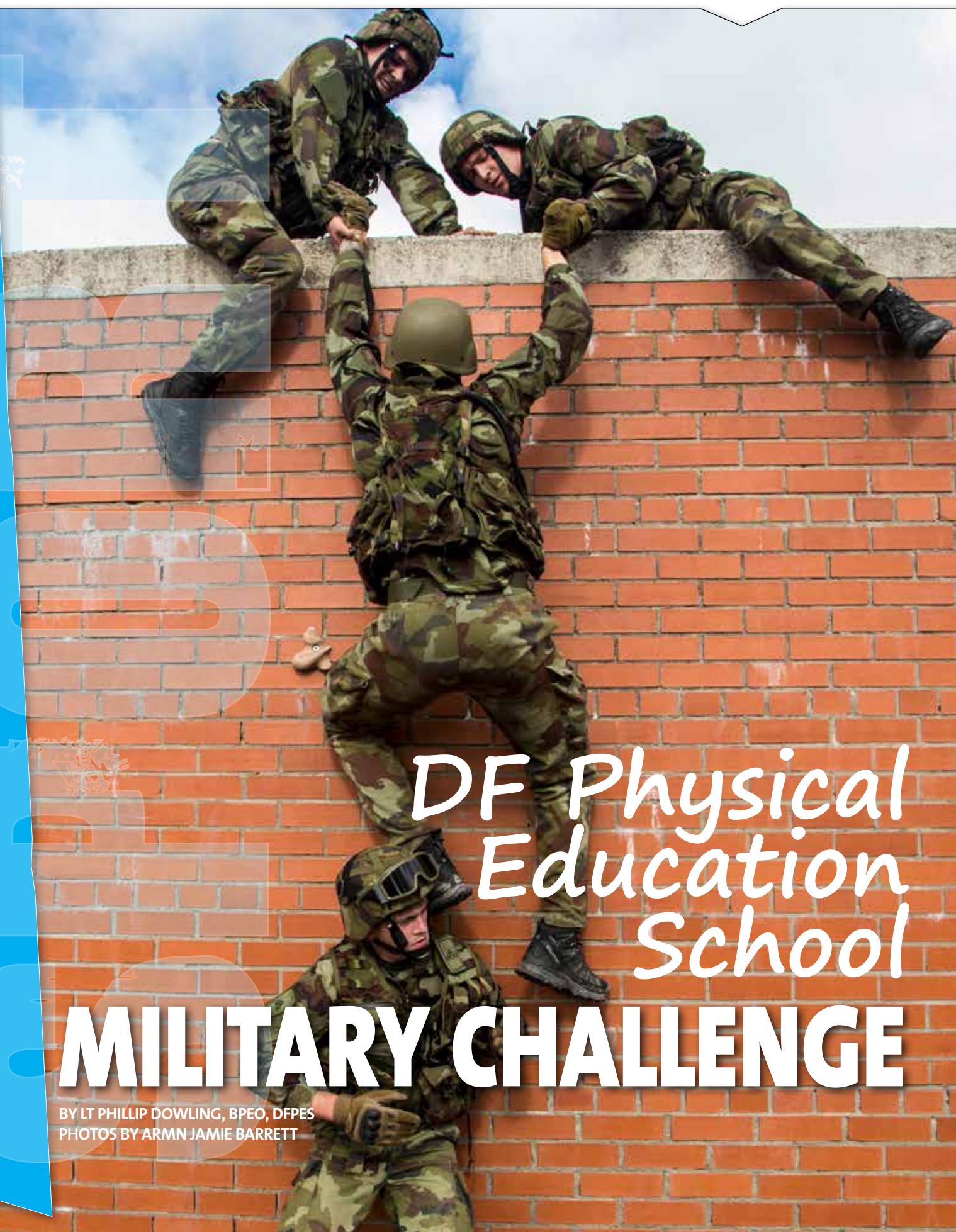
ber captured the town of Kasama, one of the only occasions when a German commander occupied British territory during the WWI. He then launched a series of hard marches into Mozambique where he routed the Portuguese forces and requisitioned war supplies from their supply dumps.

It was from a British POW that von Lettow eventually learned of the armistice that had been signed on 11th November 1918. He could have continued the war indefinitely, and indeed his first impulse was to fight his way from Rhodesia across the Congo and retire into Angola, where he would have been impregnable. However, he decided that as a German soldier faithful to the fatherland he must honour the armistice, which he did on 23rd November 1918, although not by surrendering but merely disbanding his troops.

He ended his campaign with 155 European officers and even



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BY LT PHILLIP DOWLING, BPEO, DFPEs
PHOTOS BY ARMN JAMIE BARRETT

Over the past number of years, the Defence Forces Physical Education School (DFPES) has accrued a great deal of expertise and national recognition through its work in assisting high performance teams, national and international, in preparing for competitions. Within the past 12 months alone the DFPES has assisted Connaught RFC, Ireland and Leinster under-20s, and, most recently, the Irish ladies hockey team, as well as a host of inter-county football and hurling teams.

With our increased knowledge gained through this experience the school now prides itself on being a centre of excellence in the areas of physical preparation, mental conditioning, and team dynamics.

In order to utilise our academic and experiential skillset, the DFPES decided to launch the inaugural DFPES Military Challenge in March 2018. The challenge tests participating teams in a number of key areas: military fitness, communication, teamwork and leadership.

From an administrative and logistical perspective, the DFPES have made this challenge as user friendly as possible by providing the obstacle course, the replica weapons, the changing and shower facilities; units just need to provide a team of ten members.

The course simulates the robust environment of the combat soldier and for its duration teams must always remain disciplined, decisive, and physically able. Losing personal discipline is met with time penalties, so it is imperative that the leader continually motivates and refocuses his troops from start to finish.

Our objectives are both short and long term. In the short term this military challenge will allow young soldiers and junior leaders to get back to doing what they enjoy best, which is competitive soldiering, and it is hoped that the competition will enhance unit *esprit de corps* and reignite unit rivalries as it progresses.

In the long term it is hoped that the challenge will give junior leaders within the organisation regular opportunities to improve their leadership skills in a robust, competitive environment. It is also hoped that it will give the individual soldier the opportunity to maintain and improve his or her levels of fitness as well as perfecting the military skills of teamwork, fieldcraft and communication in a competitive environment.

The competition runs throughout the year and concludes in early December when the winning team – the one that completes the challenge in the lowest time – are invited to the School for the presentation of the DFPES Military Challenge Cup. ■



Pictured are members of the 1 MIC, DFTC who took part the DFPES Military Challenge trial run in August 2018.

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"He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother

*The road is long
With many a winding turn
That leads us to
Who knows where
Who knows when
But I'm strong
Strong enough to carry him
He ain't heavy, he's my brother*



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The main compartment is secured by dual YKK zipper flap, which reveals a removable tote/carry bag. It is open top, functioning as a storage divider when in the main bag, with the added functionality of coming with you if needed! Measuring in at 6" x 16" x 7", the tote is divided into three sections (customisable thanks to the removable partitions), and has a zip pocket on either side running the entire length, ensuring you have everything you need without the stuff you don't. In addition, you have the removable mesh bag for picking up brass - just clip it to the outside when finished, and avoid all the sand/dirt/grit stuck to the shells from going everywhere!

Surrounding the bag is a satellite of pockets; one general purpose pocket at either end (as well as a water-bottle holder), and two more generously sized all-purpose pockets on the front. On the far side is a utility pouch designed for pistols and magazines, with it all held securely in place.

Constructed out of high quality 600D nylon, with a total capacity of 43 litres, this bag holds everything you need...but that doesn't do it justice, because for a bag like this the devil is in the detail. The more you use it, the more you love it - it becomes integral to your range



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CAROLINE DAWSON, CO. KILKENNY



BOOKS BOOKS

NORTHERN IRELAND, THE TROUBLES: FROM THE PROVOS TO THE DET, 1968-1998

Author: Kenneth Lesley-Dixon
Publisher: Pen and Sword Military (July 2018) www.pen-and-sword.co.uk
ISBN: 978-1526729170
Pages: 128
Price: €11.79

It is no secret that during the Troubles Britain employed a number of Special Forces and intelligence agencies in Northern Ireland to combat Republican and Loyalist paramilitary organisations.

Northern Ireland, The Troubles: From the Provos to the Det, 1968-1998 takes an in-depth look at those special units and their deployment in the region.

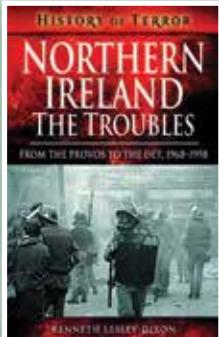
Divided into three sections, the work takes in Nationalist Paramilitary Organisations such as the IRA and the INLA. Part two examines Loyalist Paramilitary groups such as the UDA, UVF and Red Hand Commando to name but a few.

However, what I found interesting about this work is part three which covers British Security Forces.

While we know of the RUC and Special Branch and regular British Army Units in the region, the book delves into the work of units such as the SAS, MRF, the Special Reconnaissance Unit, 14 Field Security & Intelligence Company and the Force Research Unit and MI5.

While there are a number of these types of books on the market, this book is unique as it delves into the recruitment for these units, how they operated, what their mandate was and what they actually did. The author uses previously unpublished information that provides unique records of surveillance, reconnaissance, intelligence gathering, collusion, undercover work, combat and murder.

A good read and highly recommended work that also has excellent maps as well as a number of black and white photographs. **P O' B**



WAR & REVOLUTION IN THE WEST OF IRELAND; GALWAY 1913 – 1923

Author: Conor McNamara
Publisher: Irish Academic Press (April 2018) <http://irishacademicpress.ie>
ISBN: 978-1785371608
Pages: 220
Price: €16.99 PB, €44.99 HB

This, the fourth work by renowned historian Conor McNamara provides a fascinating insight into the revolutionary activities of those involved in the struggle for Irish independence in County Galway from 1913 to 1923. Rural communities found themselves on the front line of a guerrilla campaign and often suffered at the hands of crown forces as they retaliated for attacks against their numbers.

The book consists of a number of essays that consist of agrarian agitation, rural society and the outbreak of World War One, Liam Mellows and the 1916 Rising, the rise of Sinn Féin, three chapters covering the various periods during the War of Independence and the aftermath of the conflict.

Of particular interest are the appendixes that consist lists of names of those involved in the West Connemara Flying Column, North Galway Flying Column and South Galway Flying Column as well as those killed in County Galway during the period of January to July 1921.

The author captures not only the revolutionary activities of the men and women of Galway but unravels the complex web of identity and allegiance that has characterised the west of the country during this turbulent period in our history.

Though this is an academic work it is well written and an easy and very informative read. **PC**



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MR. JOSEPH SOAP

Author: Thomas Martin
Publisher: Green Thread Press (June 2018) <http://thomasmartin.ie/>
ISBN: 978-1999962012
Pages: 406
Price: €12.89 PB, €5.98 eBook

This fictional debut book of wit, wisdom and blinkered logic that will forever exist within the spirit of one of nature's finest ever creations..... the auld Irish granddad, is the work of serving DF member MP Cpl Thomas Martin.

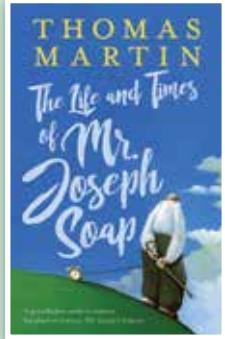
While on a UN peacekeeping mission in the Middle East, Tommy used his free time in what proved to be the most enjoyable and gratifying of ways. Hidden from prying eyes beneath a patched-up mosquito net and armed only with his trusted laptop, he set about freeing *The Life and Times of Mr. Joseph Soap* from his imagination.

'Inspired by the late arrival of his sixth grandchild, Joseph Soap realises that his advancing age will prevent him experiencing the same depth of relationship he presently enjoys with his older grandchildren, so he decides to write his autobiography in the hope of forging a lasting bond.

Joseph uses each milestone in his life as a means of passing on advice to his grandson and from each bump in the road he manages to produce practical guidance on a whole host of subjects, including the importance of standing up to bullies, the benefits of an appeasing white lie and the belief in one's own self-worth.

The decades unfold as Joseph recounts an ever-changing life amid an ever-changing world. As a S.O.A.P. — or Senior Old Age Pensioner, as he refers to himself in an attempt to rebel against a seemingly ageist and shallow society — Joseph takes us on the journey of his lifetime, proving that even 'everyday people' live lives worth documenting for future generations to come.'

The book is available to download on Kindle and Apple. Paperback editions can be purchased through Amazon, Alan Hanna's Bookshop and from Age Action shops nationwide - with 20% of the proceeds being donated to Age Action Ireland. **WF**



NOTICEBOARD

MILITARY HISTORY LECTURES FOR OCTOBER 2018

THURSDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2018

AT 8PM

The Mount Merrion Historical Society will hold an illustrated talk by John Murphy, 'Lt Gen Seán MacEoin: Blacksmith of Ballinalee' in the Community Centre, Mount Merrion.

All welcome – admission Members no charge, Non-members: €4.00 (Students €2.00) – Season 2018-19 Membership €20 per person / €30 per couple. Email: mountmerrionhistoricalsociety@gmail.com www.mountmerrionhistorical.com

SUNDAY 7TH OCTOBER AT 2PM

Deansgrange Cemetery, Deansgrange, Co Dublin.
John McCann will lead a 'Tour of the RMS Leinster associated graves' in the Cemetery. All welcome – admission free.

SUNDAY 7TH OCTOBER AT 3PM

Phoenix Park Visitors Centre, Dublin 7, Guy Warner will present 'The Sinking of the R.M.S. Leinster – the war at sea around Ireland 1914 – 1918'

SUNDAY 14TH OCTOBER AT 3PM

Philip Lecane will present 'The Sinking of the RMS Leinster'. Sunday 21st October at 3pm - OPW staff will present 'The Sinking of the RMS Leinster – what happened to the mail and packages and the impact of the sinking on the soldiers and their families morale'. Admission to these lectures is free.

WEDNESDAY 10TH OCTOBER AT 6PM

Old Dublin Society, James Scannell will present 'The Torpedoing of the RMS Leinster – 10th October 1918' in the Conference Room of Dublin City Library & Archive, 138 – 144 Pearse St, D2. All welcome – admission free.

FRIDAY 12TH OCTOBER AT 8PM

Military History Society of Ireland, Ms. Jane Leonard will present 'War, fraternity and Irish rugby, 1899 - 1923: the three VC's of Wanderers FC', in Griffith College, South Circular Road, D8. All welcome – wheelchair access available.

THURSDAY 18TH OCTOBER AT 8PM

Bray Cualann Historical Society, James Scannell will present 'The Sinking of the RMS Leinster and the last days of the War' in the Royal Hotel, Main St, Bray, Co Wicklow.
All welcome – admission €5.

SATURDAY 20TH OCTOBER AT 2.30PM

Western Front Association (Dublin Branch), Denis Kirby will present 'The 2nd Leinsters in the Battle for Vimy Ridge', in the Museum of Decorative Arts & History Lecture Theatre, Collins Barracks, Dublin 7.
All welcome - €3 donation appreciated.



COMPETITION €50 VOUCHER

Q. HOW MUCH IS A MILITARY MAP STENCIL ON WW.PROTAC.IE?

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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Paul Sheehan, Co Kilkenny. Closing date is 19th October 2018.

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.

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

ANNIVERSARY
HISTORY
LEINSTER
MAIL
ROYAL
SHIP
TORPEDO
UBOAT
WAR
WORLD

NAME

THOMAS MARTIN

RANK

CORPORAL

UNIT

2 BDE MP / AIDE-DE-CAMP'S OFFICE,
ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN

BY CPL LEE COYLE MAIN PHOTO ARMN JAMIE BARRETT



My interest for joining the Defence Forces came from two places, first was a family connection with my father serving for a short time and also my uncle and cousin are currently serving. Secondly was a group of my school friends wanted to serve in the military.

Initially my friends and I decided to join the FCÁ, so we enlisted with the 8 Inf Bn that was based in Aiken Bks, Dundalk in 1997. It was a great experience serving in the reserves and it made me want to join the PDF even more. So in August 1998, I enlisted with the 54th Recruit Platoon, CTD in Cathal Brugha Bks.

When I completed my training in early 1999 I was posted to the A Coy, 5 Inf Bn, which was stationed in McKee Bks and after only a few short weeks I was posted to B Coy, 5 Inf Bn in Gormanston Camp.

Later that year I managed to get a transfer to the 27 Inf Bn, in Monaghan, which was closer to home. In May of 2000, I travelled overseas for the first time with the 87 Inf Bn, UNIFIL, which was a great experience. I returned back to the 27 Inf Bn and I completed a number of courses including a signals course in February 2002. Serving in a unit near the border during those years' was a busy time with the unit's duties being frequent and also the foot and mouth epidemics during that period.

In June 2002 I underwent a Military Police (MP) Probationers Course. It was a very interesting course, and on completion I was posted to the 2 Bde MP Detachment in Government Buildings. Our role in Government Buildings was to assist An Garda Síochána in the security of the building and also carrying out ceremonial duties. Over the next few years I completed a lot of MP courses, including MP investigators, MP photography and MP Drugs course.

I returned back to Lebanon in 2013 with the 42 Inf Gp, which was interesting to see the changes in the country since my last tour 13 years previous. When I returned home the re-org had changed the 2 Bde MP unit structure and I was sent to McKee Bks for a short time as Detachment Commander. After this I went to Cathal Brugha Bks where I was part of the investigation section.

In 2015 I got the opportunity to take up a temp role in Áras an Uachtaráin as part of the Aide-de-Camp for the President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins. In February 2017 I took up the role on a full time basis.

I am one of two military policemen assigned to the Aide-de-Camp's office in Áras an Uachtaráin, the current Aide-de-Camp is Col Liam Condon and he has three officers on his staff. My role in the Aide-de-Camp's office is to provide assistance to the president and his family. Our office liaises closely

with the various departments involved in the running of the Aras, such as the Department of Foreign Affairs, Protocol, An Garda Síochána and Office of Public Works (OPW).

There is a ceremonial element within the role, and we take part in events such as State Visits, Credential Ceremonies and Garden Parties. I also MC certain events within the Aras, compereing at events such as State Receptions - where I welcome the guests, announce the President's arrival and introduce the entertainment programme.

I have recently published a book about an elderly man who gets a surprise of another grandchild, but he realises that with his advanced age he might not get to know this child, so he decides to write a biography in order to pass it on to the child so he can get to know his grandfather – 'The Life and Times of Mr. Joseph Soap' is reviewed on page 36.

I'm really enjoying my role in Áras an Uachtaráin, it's really interesting with the interaction with diplomats, media, politicians and even famous people. In the future I also plan on writing another book. ■

Cpl Thomas Martin presenting President Michael D. Higgins with a copy of his debut book, 'The Life and Times of Mr. Joseph Soap'.



Cpl Martin on duty for the recent royal visit.



Timings:

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