

THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR

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October 2012



**L/S QUINN DSM
REMEMBERED**

EX ARDUOUS SERPENT

**RDF ANNUAL
ASSESSMENTS**

**COMBINED OPERATIONS
IN LEBANON**

ISSN 0010-9460



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VOLUME 72
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Front Cover:

A member of the 106 IRISHFINN Bn -
Photo By: Armn Neville Coughlan

Welcome to our October issue, where have the months gone! This month our *On Parade* pages feature some colourful images. In *Focus* features a heart warming story about how an RDF Cpl reads An Cosantóir to retired PDF gentlemen, and we have the 27 Inf Bn completing a marathon for charity. In our cover story Cpl Jason McBride tells how he made it 'From Longford to Lebanon'. Our second feature is about how a few infantry soldiers made the transition to grooms in 'From 400 Horsepower to 1'. In 'A Drogheda Hero Remembered' where the President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins unveils a memorial stone to L/S Michael Quinn DSM, some 22 years after he tragically lost his life. Wesley Bourke visited the Glen of Imaal to speak to members of the 33 Res Inf Bn during the RDF assessments. Our centre spread features a report by Cpl Darren Mc Dade on how our medics got on during Exercise Arduous Serpent in the UK. On page 21 we have a short report from this year's RDFRA ADC held in Ceannt Bks recently. Our *History* article is on the Vickers Helmet by Gnr Terence O'Reilly. In Sports we have the DF Triathlon held in Mullingar by Capt Andrew Shinnick and a sports round up on page 20, along with our regular features – World Strategic Picture, Gear Review, Noticeboard, Tac-Aide, Reviews and What I Do.

Wayne Fitzgerald

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor



Pictured are former members of PR Section who have left the section recently (L/R): Capt Pat O'Connor, Cpl Finola Lafferty, Col Tom Ahern and Capt Rory Esler. We would like to wish them every success in their next appointments and or postings. Photo by: Armn Neville Coughlan



Sgt Michael Devaney (pictured above left) from Mullingar is competing in a special event this Oct, one that is very close to his heart, if you can spare €2 please support this worthwhile cause. Text N4RUN to 57802 or www.n4autismrun.com for more info.

ON PARADE



LOOK AT ME DAD ▲

Picture shows (L/R): Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Martin E. Dempsey (USA), Cian Chung Gore and Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán McCann at the Notre Dame v Navy AFL game at the Aviva Stadium, Dublin. Cian Chung Gore is the grandson of Comdt Paddy Gore (Retd). Cian's Father is a serving member of the US Armed Forces stationed in Fort Meade. *Photo: Paddy Gore*



◀ ROSE OF TRALEE

These photos were taken on Board the L.E. Niamh when she was in Fenit Harbour during the Rose of Tralee. Giving the Roses a warm welcome (L/R): L/S Kevin Heade, Waterford Rose Lorna Ferncombe, Kilkenny Rose Aoibhin Murphy and Lt Eric Ward.

Photo by: Denis Walsh (Photographer) (32 Res Inf Bn Tralee) www.deniswalshphotography.com

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ▲

Foreign Students undergoing the 69th Snr C&S Cse were given a 3 week "On Island Familiarisation" of DF installations and equipment. They are pictured here in Cathal Brugha Bks (L/R): Lt Col Bos Bostigan (Slovenia), Maj Demetrius Georgiu (Cyprus), Maj Chris Xuereb (Malta), Maj Dennie Young (USA) and Maj Michael Geef (Germany) being briefed by Cpl Hall and Capt O'Donnell (2 ISTAR Coy) on the Personal Ground Control Station (PDCS) of the UAV. *Photo: Capt D Gallagher (No 2 ISTAR Coy)*

GONE TO THE DOGS ▼

Pictured (L/R) are: Cpl's Dean Jackson (2 Inf Bn), Karl Johnston (2 E Bde HQ) and Andrew Lawlor (2 Inf Bn attached to Mil Archives), who recently completed their Standard NCO's Course in the NCOTW. They now hope to complete the Dingle Marathon in full tactical equipment in under 4hrs in aid of Dogs Trust, a charity that rehabilitates and re-homes stray, abandoned and abused dogs. *Photo: Capt Donal Gallagher (No 2 ISTAR Coy)*



IN RESERVE ▲

Col Tom Ahern, EO 4 W Bde was pictured on a recent visit with members of 54 Res CIS Coy, Sligo, who were attending their Annual Training Camp in Stephens Bks, Kilkenny. *Photo: Capt Fergal Conway (54 Res CIS Coy)*



◀ KNOWLEDGE IS KEY

Pictured is Lt James Ledingham (3 Inf Bn) who was conferred with a BSc in Physical Education and Cpl Michelle Lynch (6 Inf Bn) who graduated with a First Class Honours Certificate in Exercise and Health at the University of Limerick. *Photo by: Cpl John Tiernan (BTC West)*

UN VETS HONoured ▼

A special medal ceremony was held in Stockholm recently when men of Sweden's Defence Force who were wounded while serving the United Nations were honoured. The Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) was invited to send representatives to attend. Two Congo veterans (33rd Inf Bn), Walter Rafferty and Johnny Brady attended. They are pictured here meeting Sweden's Prince Carl Philip and supreme Commander General Sverker Göransson.





FOR CHARITY ▼

RDFRA presented two cheques for €1,000 each from their recent 2012 Dermot Early Claret Golf competition to two different charities. Photo shows members of RDFRA with: Mrs Mary Early accepting the cheque on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society along with Society representatives Patsy Rice and Michael O'Neill and Lt Gen Seán McCann accepted the cheque on behalf of the Army Benevolent Fund. *Photos by: Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald*



INTERNATIONAL MPS

The State Pathologist, Professor Marie Cassidy, with students of the 9th International Military Police Course (11 countries represented), which took place at the Military Police School. Her presentation covered major crime scenes in an International environment, i.e. Recovery of bodies, Identification, Cause and Collection of Trace Evidence, specifically in relation to Bosnia, where many of the students have served. *Photo by: Cpl Mick McGrath*



US VIP VISIT ▲

US General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was pictured arriving in Baldonnel on his recent visit to Ireland, he is seen here with the COS Lt Gen Seán McCann and GOC Air Corps, Brig Gen Paul Fry. *Photo by: Armn Neville Coughlan*

DFSM RECRUITS 2012 ▼

Members of the 4th Defence Forces School of Music Instrumentalists Recruit Platoon march in Cathal Brugha Bks, at their passing out parade recently. Well done to all involved and best of luck with your careers in the Defence Forces. *Photo by: Armn Neville Coughlan*

NAVAL SERVICE CADETS ▼

The seven young officers of the 50th Naval Cadet Class received their commissions from the Minister at a formal ceremony to mark the completion of two years intensive officer training. They are pictured here with Maj Gen Conor O'Boyle (D COS Sp), Paul Keogh T.D. Minister of State at Defence and Commodore Mark Mellott DSM (FOCNS). *Photo by: A/S David Jones (NS)*



VETERANS RECALL HAPPY MEMORIES

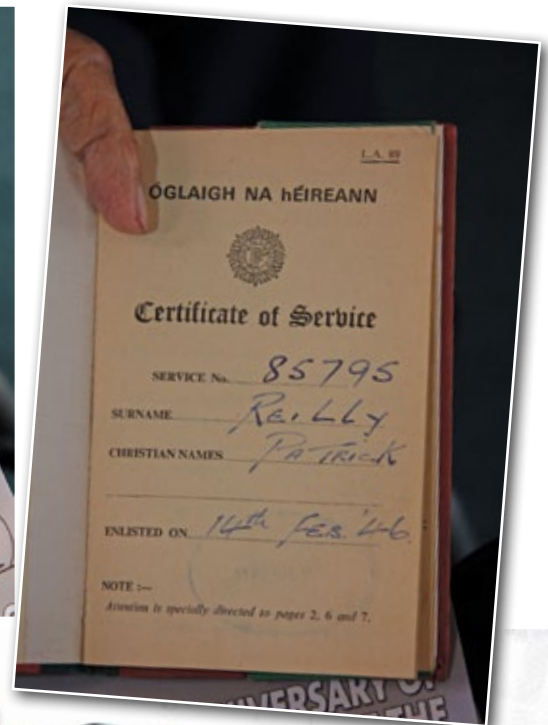
BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD
PHOTOS CPL NOEL COSS

On August 2nd staff from An Cosantóir visited Hamilton Park Residential Facility in Balrothery, Co Dublin. The centre looks after people with a range of health problems, including Alzheimer's illness and brain injuries and provides pre- and post-transplant convalescent care, as well as day care and respite care. Two of the facility's residents are retired Defence Forces personnel, Pte Oliver Reilly and Sgt Patrick Reilly (no relation).

Oliver (aged 76), from Stamullen, Co Meath, served in Gormanston Camp with Tpt Pl, Air Corps Admin Coy, from 1957-1980. Oliver is a veteran of 37 Inf Gp ONUC, Congo, and also served with UNICYP, Cyprus, in 1973. Patrick (aged 86) from Granard, Co Longford, served 25 years and also finished his service in Gormanston Camp, although he had a long career prior to that with 5 Inf Bn in Collins Bks, Dublin.

The two former soldiers' behavioural therapist in the centre is a serving RDF member, Cpl Gillian Dunne of A Coy, 65 Inf Bn, based in Swords. Gillian, who has served six years in the RDF, had contacted us to let us know about the two retirees who still enjoy having the Cosantóir read out to them. Director of Nursing, Debra Lynch, said that along with family visits, seeing us in uniform and hearing stories from An Cosantóir will help Patrick and Oliver to relive their old soldiering memories, which also helps the residence with their care.

We hope our two former colleagues will enjoy this article and we send them our best wishes. ■



Pictured (L/R): Debra Lynch, Patrick Reilly, Oliver Reilly and Gillian Dunne



27 Inf Bn Challenge

In aid of St. Brigid's Special Needs School and Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann (ONE)

BY JIM MCENEANEY (ONE DUNDALK) PHOTOS FR BERNARD MCKAY MORRISSY (CHAPLIN 27 INF BN)

40 Soldiers from the 27 Inf Bn carrying the Unit Pennant completed a relay marathon from Aiken Bks, Dundalk to Clairmount cairn in 3 man teams. Starting at 0900hrs their route took them through Bellurgan, Jenkinstown, over Long Women's Grave and finally up to the RTE mast on Claremount cairn.

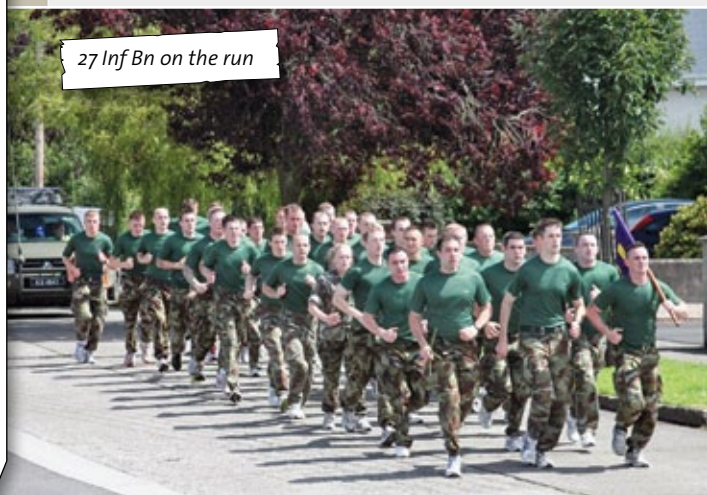
Children from the local school at St Brigid's were bussed up to Clairmount cairn along with their teachers where they released balloons, and the School principal, Patrica Ward handed over a Saint Brigids cross to

the runners which was then carried all the way back to St Brigids School. Taking a different route back via Eden Tobber, Old Newry Rd, Dundalk, Castletown Rd. up Echo Rd arriving at the school at 1300hrs, completing the 46km Marathon in 3hrs 58mins.

The 40 runners were then piped into the school by Vinny Murray 27 Inf Bn Piper and cheered and clapped by the children and all present. St Brigids School have been awarded the green flag as part of the Eco Schools Program, and Officer Commanding 27 Inf Bn, Lt Col Mick

Dawson raised the green flag at the school after the charity event.

Lt Col Mick Dawson accepted a presentation on behalf of the Officers and Men of the 27 Inf Bn from School Principal Patrica Ward and Jim Mc Eneaney, Chairman of Michael Mc Neela Branch of ONE. St Brigids and ONE would like to give our sincere thanks to Lt Col Mick Dawson and the Officers, NCOs and Men of the 27 Inf Bn and who took part in the charity event and all those that worked hard to make the day a great success. ■



27 Inf Bn on the run



Half way mark - Clairmount Cairn



Group photo at St. Brigids School



Patrica Ward, Lt Col Mick Dawson and Jim McEneaney

WORLD STRATEGIC PICTURE



EUROPE

After 19 years of negotiation **Russia** has finally entered the World Trade Organisation. Economists predict a 3% rise in Russian GDP.

At least eight **Turkish** police officers and four soldiers were killed in two separate ambushes in south eastern Turkey. The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) promptly claimed responsibility for both attacks.



A diplomatic uproar erupted after **Azerbaijan** pardoned an army officer who was serving sentence after hacking an American counterpart to death in a military base in Hungary. He had been serving his sentence in Hungary who released him to Azerbaijani authorities on the premise that he would finish his term. Instead he was given a hero's welcome and a promotion.

Italy's highest appeals court has upheld the guilty verdicts of 23 Americans in absentia, they include one Air Force pilot and 22 CIA agents. The case related to the abduction of Egyptian cleric Abu Omar in Milan in 2003.



THE AMERICAS



One of **Colombia's** most notorious drug traffickers has been captured in Venezuela.

Daniel Barrera, aka 'El Loco Barrera', was captured in San Cristobal across the border from Colombia with the help of Venezuelan, British and US intelligence agencies.

A massive manhunt is under way after 132 prisoners escaped from a **Mexican** prison in the city of Piedras Negras, which borders Eagle Pass in Texas to the north. The prison director and two other employees are being held over the incident, after a tunnel measuring 2.9m (9.5 ft) deep and 7m long was discovered.

AFRICA



In Brussels the **Ethiopian** authoritarian prime minister, Meles Zenawi died after a long illness. Zenawi had been one of Africa's most dominant figures and a prominent ally of the West.

In more than two decades **Somalia's** parliament met in an inaugural meeting in Mogadishu. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, a civil rights activist, was elected the country's new president promoting a new wave of hope.

Kismayo, the largest **Somali** town still held by the Shabab, an Islamic group linked to al-Qaeda, was shelled by the Kenyan navy.

Over 112 people have been killed in **Kenya** in ethnic clashes over grazing land and water in the south east. It was the worst violence the country had seen since the 2008 disputed election.

In Marikana in northern **South Africa**, police killed 34 striking workers at platinum mine. Police say the miners instigated the violence. South Africa's president Jacob Zuma, has launched an inquiry.



MIDDLE EAST

In Tripoli, a coastal city in **Lebanon**, clashes over the fighting in Syria resulted in at least ten deaths.

Syrian government forces shelled parts of the city of Aleppo, killing at least 19 people. In Cairo, at an Arab League summit, Egypt's president, Muhammad Morsi, called on his Syrian counterpart, Bashar al-Assad, to step down. Turkish media has reported that Syrian rebels seized a crossing at the Turkish border. Heavy fighting continues throughout the country.

An amateur film produced in America that insulted the Prophet Muhammad sparked off protests across the Muslim world. In **Libya** a group burned down the American consulate in Benghazi, killing the ambassador and three of his colleagues. In **Egypt** protesters stoned the American embassy in Cairo while in **Yemen** protesters broke into the embassy grounds.

In Sana, **Yemen's** capital the defence minister survived an assassination attempt.



Tareq al-Hashemi, **Iraq's** vice president, who had fled from Baghdad last winter, was sentenced to death in absentia for murder.



ASIA

Putting differences aside **China** and India agreed to resume joint military exercises, including operations against pirates in the Indian Ocean.



New police recruitment was halted in **Afghanistan**, while hundreds of soldiers were purged from the Afghan army. Some 45 NATO coalition soldiers have been killed this year by fellow Afghan counterparts. There are fears of Taliban infiltration.

Japan bought two disputed islands from a private owner in the East China Sea. China dispatched two patrol vessels to the area and warned Japan that it was 'playing with fire'.

FROM LONGFORD TO LEBANON



In this feature Cpl Jason McBride tells us about his background and the experiences that led to his current position working with 106 IRISHFINN Bn in Lebanon. ►



My name is Jason McBride and I am a corporal with 4 Cavalry Squadron, currently based in Custume Bks, Athlone. I'm a Longford man and attended secondary school in my home village of Newtownforbes. My father also served with the squadron for over twenty years and my uncle still serves there. It was from their stories and from being immersed in the sport and social side of army life in Connolly Bks that shaped my future.

I was accepted into 13 Rec Pl in 4 BTC Athlone and started my training on March 28 1997. After training I was posted to 1 Inf Bn, Galway, where I completed my first infantry qualification courses. However, I served as an infantryman for just short of a year before I pursued my goal of following in my family's footsteps and transferred to 4 Cav Sqn, where I have served with pride since.

In my haste to become a soldier I hadn't got as far as sitting my leaving cert exams and this was a constant irritation to me. Thankfully, the army provided the solution and I was accepted on to the Back to Education course in 1999 to complete two years schooling and sit my leaving cert exams. This gave me a taste for continuing to pursue further education.

On return to my unit I quickly integrated with cavalry life, completing all my cavalry driving and gunnery courses. This presented me with my first opportunity to serve overseas, as a SISU driver with Recce Coy, 88 Inf Bn, UNIFIL. I thoroughly enjoyed that trip, patrolling the Blue Line between Lebanon and Israel and providing humanitarian aid to the local villages in our Area of Operations (AO); experiences with the potential to shape any man. Thankfully, it would not be my only visit to Lebanon.

My cavalry life progressed with further courses and I served overseas again, this time with 88 Tpt Coy, KFOR. It was there I decided how I wanted to further my education and upon completion of that tour I applied for and was granted a four-year leave of absence and was accepted into DCU to study sports science and health. This course provided me with knowledge on everything from sports psychology, physiology and injury rehabilitation, to sociology, coaching, science and nutrition. As part of my work experience during the course I coached football in California for eight months before graduating in 2007.

When my contract was reactivated after those four years I was immediately sent on a potential NCO course. There I learned the skills I would need to become a junior leader in the Defence Forces and soon got the chance to hone my new skills training two recruit platoons. These skills, combined with becoming an instructor in the new cavalry remote weapons, presented me with the opportunity to serve overseas again, firstly with Recce Coy, 100 Inf Bn, in Chad, and then this time serving as a MOWAG car commander with 106 IRISH-FINN Bn.

Our role out here is to patrol our AO, taking in the local towns and villages and the Blue line as well. These combined patrols of Irish/Finnish troops, carried out in conjunction with our Lebanese army colleagues, show a strong presence to the local population and provide an element of safety and security for them during these troubled times.

A lot has changed for the good since my first trip to South Lebanon. The same friendly people greet us,



undoubtedly remembering old bonds created from the countless trips of years passed. However, now there is a vastly improved infrastructure and financial stability. This is evident where prosperous towns have grown out of rubble, roads are now properly surfaced and shops and banks frequent every second corner. These are all heartening signs from my memory of my first trip.

I return home in mid-November to a Defence Forces in the process of radical restructuring and where my unit, 4 Cavalry Squadron, will have ceased to exist. As a proud 4th Cav man I am greatly saddened by this, but I know that wherever we are posted next, we will receive the same excellent training and experience the same comradeship that we always have done, and which we experience every day here in South Lebanon with 106 IRISHFINN Bn. ■



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A DROGHEDA HERO REMEMBERED

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY SGT DAMIEN FAULKNER (105 SQN) AND A/SEA DAVID JONES (NS)

On the night of Tuesday, January 30th 1990, LÉ Deirdre, under the command of Lt Cdr Noel Goulding, lay at anchor in the shelter of Lawrence Cove, between Bere Island and the mainland. Around 2100 hrs Spanish fishing vessel de Gardtoza, (Our Lady of Gardtoza), with 16 crew onboard, went aground on rocks off Roanecarrigmore Light, northeast of Bere Island in Bantry Bay. Her mayday distress call was picked up by Valentia Coastal Radio Station and by LÉ Deirdre.

Amid gale force winds, shoals and rocky outcrops LÉ Deirdre positioned itself to attempt a rescue of the Spanish crew. As part of the rescue attempt a Gemini was launched, crewed by L/Sea Michael Quinn and A/Sea Paul Kellett. The appalling conditions made boarding of the Nuestra Señora de Gardtoza impossible and this attempt was abandoned. On its return to LÉ Deirdre the Gemini capsized and the two sailors were thrown into the water and separated.

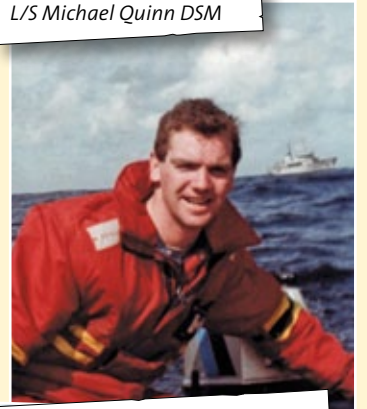
A/Sea Kellett was eventually swept ashore but L/Sea Quinn was nowhere to be found. Air Corps helicopters, assisted by the RAF and other fishing vessels, carried out a search operation. Sadly, L/Sea Quinn's body was found three miles away early the next day. For displaying leadership, devotion to duty and courage (in the

case of L/Sea Quinn to the extent of losing his own life) L/Sea Quinn and A/Sea Kellett were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) with Merit, and the Spanish Cross of Naval Merit awarded by the King of Spain.

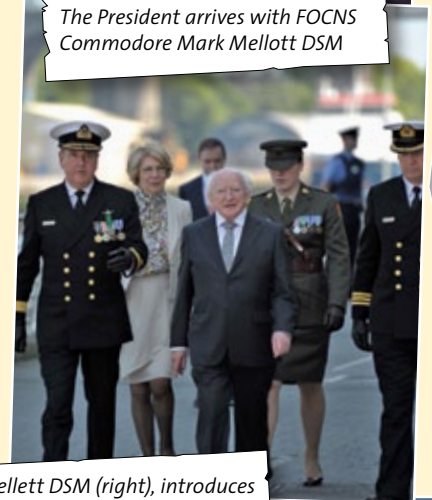
On May 27th, 22 years on from the tragic events, a large granite memorial, commissioned by the Naval Service Association, paying tribute to L/Sea Quinn was unveiled by President Michael D Higgins. The memorial is sited beside DeLacy Bridge in Drogheda, L/Sea Quinn's home town.

Unveiling the memorial's plaque, President Higgins applauded the selfless efforts of L/Sea Quinn and A/Sea Kellett: "The name of Leading Seaman Michael Quinn on this plaque we are unveiling today should serve to remind us of the courage shown by members of the Defence Forces as they carry out their duties. Of course this plaque also serves to remind us of the great loss suffered by Michael's family, comrades and friends, a great many of whom are here with us today. I hope that this occasion in Michael's honour, this testimony to his courage and determined efforts to help others in distress and danger, the unveiling of this plaque in his honour, and the knowledge that Michael's sacrifice will not be forgotten, will bring you comfort and peace." ■

L/Sea Michael Quinn DSM



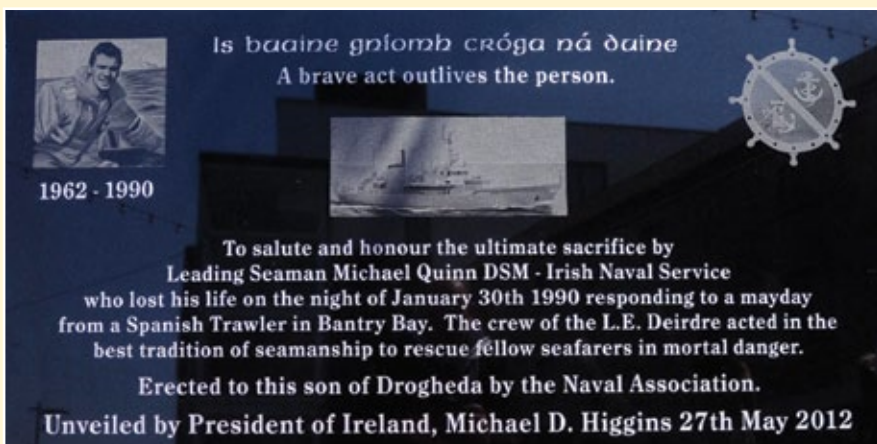
The President arrives with FOCNS Commodore Mark Mellott DSM



Paul Kellett DSM (right), introduces invited guests to the president



The ceremony also saw the first ever combined Naval Service/Naval Service Reserve guard of honour.



From 400 Horsepower TO ONE



BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

PHOTOS JIM O'CONNOR & ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN



Riders from the Army Equitation School, founded in 1926, have represented Ireland and the Defence Forces at European-, World- and Olympic-level.

They have also assisted in Irish team wins in many Aga Khan Trophy successes in the RDS in Dublin. The School's mission is to advertise the Irish competition horse through participation in international events at the highest level. This they have done remarkably well for nearly 90 years. But what of the backroom staff of any award-winning team? In the equestrian sport/discipline a horse and jockey both rely on the 'Groom' to that end.

Grooms have come to the equitation school from all corners of Ireland, and from many different walks of life. The Equitation School have run two grooms courses of six weeks duration this year so far. The course climaxed with the students completing a general test (GT), a riding test and a lunging test – lunging is walking the horse around in a circle which exercises a particular side of the animal. Students are assigned two horses, one to ride and one for lunging; everything is taken into consideration when being assigned a horse, like injuries and size. Then the Grooms had to present themselves and their respective horse for a Commanding Officers (COs) Inspection – which includes getting the horses hair platted and making sure the Tack i.e. Saddle and Bridle are in pristine

condition and that's before they get their own No1 Uniforms ready.

This year's courses have attracted a small group of infantry soldiers from Cavan and Cathal Brugha Barracks. These are their stories on how they made the transition from infantry soldier to groom in six weeks.



1st Grooms Course (13/02/12 to 24/03/12)

Pte Seán Davidson from Termonfeckin came from 2 Inf Bn with 12yrs service and three trips overseas to Lebanon (x2) and Liberia. "I have never had any experience with horses," he says. "I just fancied a change and haven't regretted it once ... now we are looking forward to travelling to international shows."

Pte Patrick Hessin from Cootehill has 8yrs service and one overseas trip with 100 Inf Bn in Chad. "I started out in 27 Inf Bn in Monaghan," he told us, "but on the closure of that barracks I was posted to 6 Inf Bn in Cavan. Then with Cavan closing I saw this course advertised in routine orders. I have no prior experience with horses but I've found it great so far."

Pte Gerard McCaffrey from Cavan Town has 13yrs service and has served overseas three times in Lebanon, Liberia and Chad. "I was a chef in Cavan Bks for seven years and when the barracks closed I fancied a change," he says. "I have some prior experience having completed a Certificate in Equestrian Studies and Business Management prior to joining the Defence Forces and I ride for my local club Red Hills Equestrian Centre. I had applied for the grooms course as far back as 2000, but my unit was unable to release me at the time."

2nd Grooms Course (16/04/12 – 23/05/12)

Cpl Ritchie Costello from Cavan Town has 25yrs service and four trips overseas to Lebanon (x3) and Liberia. "I joined up in 1987," he says, "and was posted to 29 Inf Bn in the old Cavan Bks before we moved to the new barracks on the Dublin Road. When that closed we were posted to 6 Inf Bn, Athlone. Having worked with horses prior to joining up I applied for this course. You know, a lot of people think we just shovel you-know-what but they don't know the half of it; we were taught about veterinarian medicine, the horse's digestion system and its psychology, among other things."

Pte Francie Lane from Laragh, Co. Cavan has 25 yrs service with five trips overseas to Lebanon (x2), Kosovo (x2) and Chad. "I trained in Gormonstown before being posted to 29 Inf Bn in Cootehill," he told us. "That closed in 1990 and then in 1998 we were posted to 6 Inf Bn in Cavan and now that's closed. I worked with horses before joining the DF; that's why I applied for the course."

Cpl Thomas Craig from Ballyhaise has 9yrs service and two trips overseas to Liberia and Lebanon. "I trained in Gormonstown and was posted to 2 Fd Arty Regt in McKee Bks for four years before I transferred to 27 Inf Bn in Monaghan. When that barracks closed I went to Cavan Bks, but that's closed now and here I am back in McKee: I've come full circle. I have no prior experience with horses but I like animals. Six weeks ago I knew nothing about horses but now we can all ride and jump fences. I've gone from being a car commander of a 400-horsepower Mowag APC to looking after a one-horsepower animal; and believe me the one-horsepower is more high maintenance. Still, I'm definitely happy I made the move."

Pte Keith Costello from Cavan Town has 5yrs service and served overseas with 104 Inf Bn in Lebanon. "I trained in Cavan Bks with 6 Inf Bn and was overseas with Cpl Craig when the barracks was closing. On returning home we both applied for the grooms course and were successful. I had no experience with horses before this, although I have an uncle who works in the Equitation School, so that did help my decision to apply."

The course commander was Lt David Power and the chief instructor was Sgt Elaine Price. There are no plans to recruit any more grooms this year, but they do intend to run an advanced grooms course later in the year. ■





ARDUOUS SERPENT

BY CPL DARREN MCDADE

Exercise 'Arduous Serpent' is a British Army Medical Service dynamic competition with a format that not only facilitates but develops the attributes of leadership, command-and-control, military and medical skills in a challenging but enjoyable environment.

When volunteers were sought for a team from the Defence Forces to compete it presented a great opportunity for members of the Medical Corps to work alongside British Army medical personnel who have gained valuable knowledge from their experiences in Afghanistan and other high conflict missions.

It would be fair to say that the British Army (BA) represent the gold standard in training, education and the introduction of new practices in combat medical skills, so any exposure to their training methods could only be of benefit to Irish Medical Corps personnel.

Competing teams were required to be comprised of ten, with two substitutes. Further, each team must include both sexes and at least seven of the team had to be Medical Corps personnel, the remaining three could be drawn from other arms or services.

The Defence Forces team selected from those who volunteered comprised Lt Steven Keane (1 Arm Cav Sqn) and nine medics: Cpl Darren McDade (2 LSB), Cpl Brian Corrigan (2 LSB), Cpl Eddie McNerney (1 LSB), Cpl Martin Moules (5 Sp Wg), Cpl Sue Brennan (DMC), Pte Stephen O'Hanlon (2 LSB), Pte Gary Doyle (2 LSB), Pte Adam Boland (LBH), Pte Stephen Leonard (LBH), with Lt Col Anthony Corcoran (DMC) and Coy Sgt David O'Connor (2 LSB) as the two subs.

In preparation for the competition the team concentrated its training on a wide range of topics including: the orders process



(extraction and delivery); weapon handling (Steyr); personal fitness (this was important as the team would be required to travel approximately 28kms in 36 hours); personal and team assault course skills; BCDT, BATLS, and Casevac procedures (including care under fire); general medical tactics; familiarisation with foreign weapons (including AK 47, RPG 7, PKM, AR 15, Marakov pistol); basic field craft; infantry platoon tactics; mine-handling and awareness; patrolling; radio communication skills; CBRN; Navigation (day and night); and counter-IED.

We were greatly assisted in our training by the ARW, 1 Arm Cav Sqn, the Medical School and the Cadet School. For example, ARW personnel briefed and trained us on weapon systems that we may encounter, such as SA80, AK 47 and the M16 (our proficiency in weapons handling was subsequently remarked on during the exercise), and members of 1 Arm Cav Sqn trained us in mounting and dismounting from soft-skinned and armoured vehicles, as well as tactical formations and contact drills. The Medical School assisted us in our medical training

and provided us with a HQ for our administration.

Before taking part in the competition we set ourselves a number of goals. One was to represent the Defence Forces and the Medical Corps in a highly motivated, competent and professional manner. We also wanted to observe the BA's training methods. Our last goal was to make contacts for future training and knowledge-sharing opportunities, as military medicine is dynamic and constantly changing.

The exercise began with equipment checks and briefings before receiving specific deployment instructions. Once released, teams deployed to STANTA (Stanford Training Area) into harbour areas under tactical field conditions. At a given time, teams moved from their harbour area to a grid reference to carry out an appointed military task, which was assessed and scored. On completion of the task teams received a new grid reference and another task, which had to be completed by a cut-off time. This continued over a distance of approximately 18kms and the tasks included: assault course; constructing a 12x 12 tent; dealing with a 'dirty' bomb; setting up a treatment facility; extracting a casualty from a minefield; conducting a recce of potential MTF and HLS sites.

After this phase teams moved to a second harbour area where the exercise concluded with an endurance march, which culminated in an obstacle course.

At the end of the competition we were pleased to have finished eighth out of 19 teams, and third of the regular units). The position we achieved reflected the amount of training we had put in and our drills and efforts were positively commented on through feedback we received from other teams and exercise directing staff.

We made a number of observations and conclusions after participating in this exercise. One conclusion is that a strong emphasis should be put on scenario-based training, as this enhances the sense of realism that is required to gain the best performance from the medic. It would also allow medics to be exposed to a wide variety of incidents, allowing them a better understanding and knowledge if they encountered them for real.

During the exercise communications to higher HQ was vital. Information at each stand had to be passed on accurately using the correct request form. Good voice procedure is fundamental to this process, which allows for a rapid deployment of emergency resources in a prompt manner and allows other services to prepare for the possibility of incoming casualties. In addition, in the BA all personnel carry a MIST report card behind the front plate of their body armour. This allows for accurate information to be passed quickly if the individual becomes a casualty.



The BA has learned through missions such as Afghanistan that the use of helicopters and highly trained medical personnel has proven to deliver outstanding frontline care on the battlefield, and also reassures the troops that if injured in the field the expertise is there on call. However, working with any equipment or machinery requires training and practice. With that in mind medical personnel of all ranks should be familiar and confident working with all kinds of vehicles, helicopters and, moreover, should be competent in setting up a landing zone and marshalling an approaching helicopter, by day and by night.

The BA's Medical Services put a large emphasis on tentage and all medical personnel are trained in tent erection. This allows them to become self-sufficient and highly proficient in the setting up of field hospitals.

Overall, while Exercise 'Arduous Serpent' was mentally and physically challenging, it was a great learning experience and I would recommend participation to anyone with an interest in developing their career in the Medical Corps. The opportunity to work alongside experienced BA medical personnel in a learning environment can only be a positive step forward for Medical Corps personnel. ■

INTER BRIGADE CAMOGIE COMPETITION

REPORT BY 2/LT EMER KELLY

This year's annual, inter-brigade, seven-a-side camogie competition was hosted by 4W Bde on Wednesday 29th August 2012. The competition took place in Páirc Chiarán and saw teams from 1 S Bde, 2 E Bde, 4 W Bde and DFTC competing for the title.

In their first match, 2 E Bde lost to a very strong team from 1 S Bde. They competed against 4 W Bde in their second game but despite scores from Capt Louise Conlon and 2/Lt Emer Kelly, the Western Brigade team won comfortably. 2 E Bde then faced DFTC in the Shield Final. This was a much closer fought match with both teams improving on earlier performances, with DFTC running out winners by a narrow margin.

The main Cup final saw 1 S Bde take on 4 W Bde in a match that displayed a high level of skill and effort. In the end 1 S Bde held out to win the competition for the fourth year in a row.

During the presentation ceremony Col Tom Ahern (EO 4 W Bde) thanked all who had made the day possible.

Pte Orlaith Keily (2 E Bde) was presented with an award for the most improved player of the day.

Pictured are the West (below) and South (above) ladies Camogie teams from the All Army championships held in Athlone. Both the south and the west made it into the final with the south yet again beating the West. This is the last ever picture of the 4 W Bde Camogie team. Photo: Capt Gillian Martin (Tpt Coy, 4 LSB)



LADIES FOOTBALL

Comdt Neil Taylor (DFAA) and Capt Gillian Martin (DF Ladies Football Chairperson) are pictured with the DFTC team who won this year's All Army Ladies Football Competition in July. Photo: Capt Gillian Martin (Tpt Coy, 4 LSB)



HANDBALL CHAMPS

Pictured at the recent S Bde Handball Championship in Fermoy, where Pte Greene (3 Inf Bn) won the senior title and Pte Hurley (1 Eng Coy) won the Junior title. Pictured back row (L/R): Pte Colm Jordan (1 Eng Coy), Lt Oliver Byrne (1 LSB), Cpl Eddie Clifford (3 Inf Bn), Pte Chris Hurley (1 Eng Coy), Pte Denis "Poncho" Dowd (3 Inf Bn), Capt Claire Quinn (BPEO 1 S Bde). Front row (L/R): Pte Tommy Dillon (1 LSB), Pte Kirk Greene (3 Inf Bn), Pte JP Ryan (1 LSB). Photo: Cpl Eric O'Brien (USAC)





RDFRA ADC 2012

REPORT & PHOTOS BY Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald

On Saturday September 8th over 50 delegates from Reserve Defence Forces (RDF) units around the country gathered in Ceannt Officers' Mess in the DFTC for the 2012 Reserve Defence Forces Representative Association (RDFRA) Annual Delegate Conference.

RDFRA President Charlie Bradley and General Secretary Tom Walsh welcomed the Minister of State for Defence Paul Keogh TD, the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Lt Gen Seán McCann, Brig Gen Séamus O'Giollain (GOC DFTC) and other senior members from both the PDF and RDF.

In his address to the delegates Minister Keogh acknowledged the concerns of reservists regarding the restructuring of the Defence Forces. He told his audience that the RDF must dovetail the PDF restructure and that the value-for-money review on the RDF would be completed by the end of this month. He finished by saying: "I visited the Glen of Imaal recently to see RDF members in training and I have to say I was very impressed at their professionalism and commitment".

In his address, RDFRA General Secretary Tom Walsh said that while RDFRA's view was that "400 recruits are not enough to maintain units" he was "happy to report that a limited amount of promotions have happened". He also thanked the minister, the chief of staff, and C&A Section, "for their continued commitment".

In his speech to conference Lt Gen Seán McCann said: "The loyalty and dedication of members of the RDF gives me great confidence in going forward and for the future."

Some of the other main points Lt Gen McCann spoke of were that: 3,000 reservists received seven days full-time training and recruits were given 14 days training; over 400 reservists took part in the RDF assessments; 322 new recruits were sanctioned in 2012; and 258 promotions were sanctioned with some still being processed.

In the final address to the conference Charlie Bradley, RDFRA president, included a call on the minister to remove the moratorium on recruitment to the reserve, "the only volunteer body in the country to have it".

For more info on RDFRA visit their revamped website on www.rdfra.ie or www.facebook.com/RDFRA. ■



33 RES INF BN 'ON THE GROUND'

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN

D COS Ops, Maj Gen Ralph James, and Government Chief Whip and Minister of State for Defence, Paul Kehoe TD, recently visited the Glen of Imaal where he observed reservists from the mainly Wexford-based 33 Inf Bn in training for the 1 S Bde reserve infantry tactical assessment. After watching a platoon-in-attack exercise Minister Kehoe commented: "You can clearly see the commitment and training that goes into an exercise like this; very impressive. What really strikes me here today is the commitment and enthusiasm of the reservists."

For some the reserve has been their life. On his last camp this year was Pl Sgt Billy Dermody, C Coy, who is retiring this summer after 43 years service. "I joined E Coy, 10 Inf Bn FCA, in Loughlin Bridge," he says. "I remember it clearly. Sgt Willy Haynes from Borris, Co Carlow, was our instructor during recruit training. By the way he is still alive and well and into his 90s now."

Ireland of course was a different place back in the '70s and '80s. The Defence Forces had units permanently stationed along the border and the FCA were regularly called upon to provide personnel to augment PDF units. For a period Sgt Dermody was stationed in Castleblayney, Co Monaghan. "Most of the time we took over barrack duties to release the regular guys," Sgt Dermody reminisces. "On occasion we also went on patrol with PDF units, and on more than one occasion I clearly remember the barracks being called to 'stand-to'. Different times for the reservist back then."

Just like its permanent counterpart, everything in the reserve has changed over the years; training, equipment, organisation and personnel. "I first trained on the .303 Lee-Enfield and the Bren Gun, then the 7.62mm FN, and now the GPMG and Steyr," says Sgt Dermody. "Over the years I've met a lot of great people and had some great times; I'll really miss it." ■

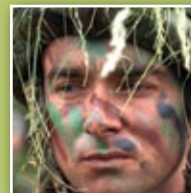


Sgt Billy Dermody

Vox Pops

2/Lt Aiden Douglas (A Coy)

"I was platoon commander during the exercise. The platoon comprised members from all the companies in the battalion, which ranges from Carlow in the north to Wexford in the south. In getting ready for the assessment we have had to train regularly throughout the year, culminating in this week-long training block. I was very happy with our training this week."



Cpl Damian Drought (A Coy)

"Today I was section commander with 2 Section. We provided the initial firebase once we came under attack allowing the fire support group to set up. We then forded the river and set up another firebase to allow 1 Section to assault the enemy position."



Cpl Edel Dunne (B Coy)

"I was 2i/c of 3 Section. My section provided fire support while the other two sections assaulted the enemy position during the platoon-in-attack. We've been in the Glen now for a week carrying out our tactical drills. It was an excellent week and we hope to do well in the corps assessment."



Pte Emma O'Connor (A Coy)

"I was No 2 scout, Alpha Group, with 1 Section, so we were the first group to advance onto the enemy position. We did a recce of the position and reported back to our section commander before advancing along the river bank to take the enemy position. It was a great week."



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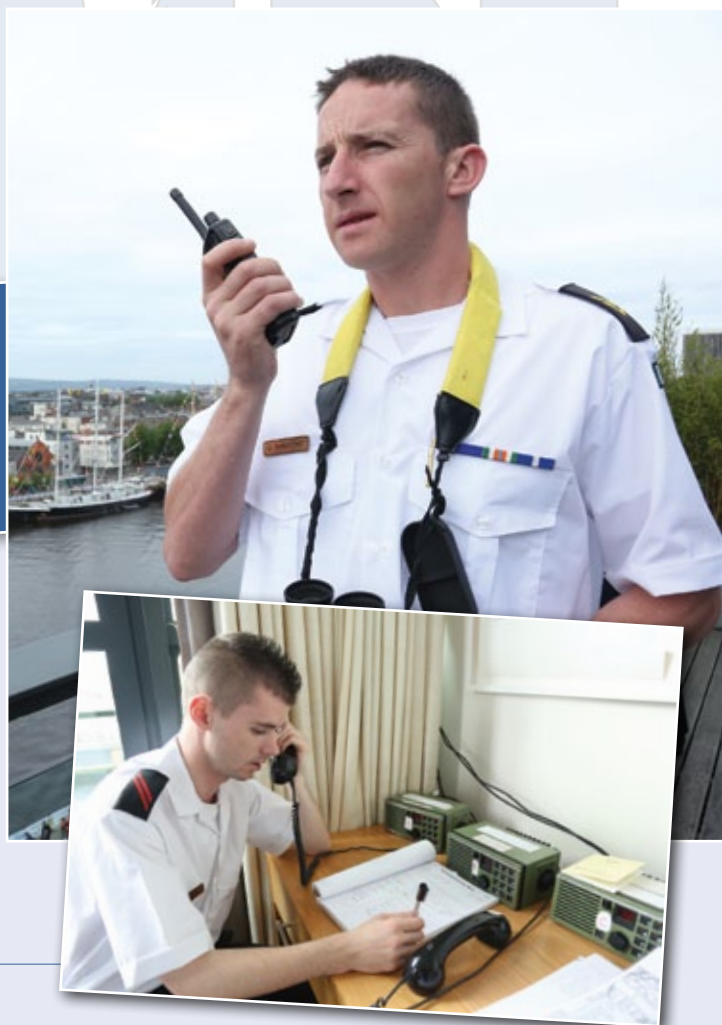
VOICE PROCEDURE

Following on with our Signals themed Tac-Aide from the previous two issues, here we discuss the use of PRO-WORDS.

PRO-WORDS

Pro-words are used to indicate specific meaning that replaces abbreviated sentences or phrases. They are basic and easy pronounced words, which have been given certain meanings and also help speed up message handling on radio networks thus reducing the chance of a mistake during a transmission.

STANDARD WORDS AND PHRASES



WORD OR PHRASE

MEANING

Affirmative	Normally used when a question is asked and the reply is yes
Break, Break,	Interruption to transmission
Contact wait out	Informs your chain of command that you have come into contact with the enemy and to await your Sit-Rep
Disregard	The transmission has been made in error - ignore it
Emergency Emergency	Only used when there is a serious and immediate danger to life, Immediate help is needed
Figures	Numbers to follow (to distinguish numerals from words similarly pronounced)
Go ahead	Ready to receive your message
I spell	Following words to be spelt out with phonetic alphabet
I say again	Repeating the transmission
Negative	When a question is asked and the reply to it is no
Out	End of transmission of message
Over	Invitation to other operator transmit back to you
Roger	Message received and understood, can be followed with either over or out
Roger so far	Confirmation of a segment of a long message before continuation of the same
Say again	Repeat last Message
Say all after	Repeat all after a certain word or key message
Say all before	Repeat all before a certain word or key message
Standby	Wait for a reply or message and I will get back to you
Sit-Rep	Means a Situation Report at that present time from your location
Wait over	Wait for a moment & I will get back to you
Wait out	Wait for a longer period and I will get back to you ASAP
Wrong	Indicates an error was made and the message will be repeated back to you from the last correctly transmitted word



VICKERS IRELAND'S 'GERMAN' HELMET

BY GNR TERENCE O'REILLY (DEFENCE FORCES LIBRARY)

One harsh lesson learned in the first year of World War One was the large number of fatal head injuries caused by low velocity projectiles. As a result the major powers rushed to provide suitable steel helmets for their armies. The first to be issued in large numbers was the design of the French Intendent-General August-Louis Adrian (vaguely resembling a fireman's helmet), three million of which were on issue by the end of 1915. The British Army opted for the Brodie 'soup bowl' helmet which, although cast from hardened steel, did not provide lateral protection; nonetheless a million were on issue by mid-1916 and the helmet was later adopted by the US Army. Possibly the best design of the time was the German Stahlhelm which was the product of a rigorous selection process that included subjecting various designs to artillery fire. Over 300,000 'Model 1916' helmets were issued in that year, with an improved model issued two years later.

Following the Irish Civil War and the establishment of the Irish Defence Forces, a decision was made to procure steel helmets for the new force. The Adrian design seemed to be an obvious choice, having been adopted by several European armies as well as Mexico and Siam, and a small number were evaluated in 1927, featuring in Irish grenade and bayonet training

manuals printed that year. However the Adrian helmet provided limited protection due to its mild-steel construction, further weakened by apertures for ventilation, and the Defence Forces opted not to adopt the design.

In November 1926, the Government had approached the German consulate in Dublin with a request that a sample of the Stahlhelm design be provided for evaluation, but the following month the German Foreign Office advised that they were prevented from supplying such material by the strictures of the Treaty of Versailles. The Government then approached the British engineering firm of Vickers, a vast concern which included munitions, ship-building and aircraft construction among its specialities. An agreement was made for the provision of five thousand steel helmets throughout 1927, with some sources claiming that Vickers utilised requisitioned German machinery for this purpose.

The Vickers Helmet, as it became popularly known, was obviously modelled on the Stahlhelm and included two side lugs that provided ventilation and were also originally intended as mounts for an armoured visor. (The visor was rarely issued to the Germans and never to the Irish.) The main difference between the

Stahlhelm and its Irish counterpart were the less severe angles of the Vickers, and two brackets mounted on the front to hold a black-painted version of the Defence Forces badge. Each Vickers helmet was serial numbered on the rear, lower inside rim under the inscription 'V Ltd.' Soft leather internal fittings, installed in Dublin, were stamped 'T Smith & Son Dublin 1927.'



June, 1985

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A SUITABLE GUNTOWER

Capt E. Fogarty

DIE JÜNGSTE ARMEE EUROPAS

IRLANDS STEHENDES MEER TRÄGT DEN DEUTSCHEN STAHLHELM



"The Youngest Army in Europe wearing a helmet similar to the German Army". This paper clipping was taken from a German paper of the 1930's when a German delegation visited Ireland to view the young army. The officer on the extreme right is Col. J.H. Byrne, deceased, as a Lt, there is no indication of the name of the officer on the 2nd left. (The paper-clipping was loaned to Mr. Oliver J. Byrne, son of Col. Byrne). The clipping gives a fine shot of an Artillery Horse-drawing team. (The clipping was photographed by Conchí P. Walsh, ret.)

Certain faults soon manifested themselves. In July 1928, one officer noted of the new helmet:

From experience in field exercises it can be said that it is light and apparently affords a maximum of protection, but it is very difficult to wear. In practice the pads and the leather banding holding them have a tendency to work loose from the copper rivets designed to hold them in position.

As a consequence the helmet slips easily from one side of the head to the other, and sometimes entirely off. The leather chin-strap is sufficiently broad, and would be quite comfortable but for the fact that the posts on which the strap-swivels engage are made of some soft white metal, and the retaining flanges on the post are quickly worn down. Once this has occurred the swivel only stays in position until a jolt sets the swivel free, when it and the strap fall down across the face. The helmet must then be taken off, and an attempt made to adjust the strap. Repetitions of such effort can be very annoying to a soldier on service.

It should be noted that the Vickers helmet copied the 'Model 1916' Stahlhelm by attaching the chinstrap to the shell rather than the liner; the Germans had deemed this to be a design fault, which they rectified with the 'Model 1918'. The Irish soldier of 1928, however, found his own solution in an early example of non-issue kit being utilised, by procuring "one of them chats like an ass's bellyband that yeh cud get in Sandes fur a tanner in them days" (ie a privately produced heavy chinstrap available for a sixpence in Sandes Soldiers Home in the Curragh.)

Another problem was the relatively mild steel that the helmets were cast from, which could dent if struck hard enough.

The Vickers helmets remained in service throughout the 1930s and drew the attention of at least one German publication which, under the headline 'The Youngest Army in Europe', noted approvingly that "Ireland's Army wears the German Stahlhelm." By 1940 however, Ireland was a neutral in the Second World War then raging in Europe and the Vickers helmets were the subject of occasional adverse comment from Allied propagandists; their British manufacture notwithstanding.

There was also the case of the RAF bomber crew that force-landed near the Curragh at night in May 1940 and were shocked to find themselves apparently surrounded by German troops! (The misunderstanding was quickly cleared up and the bomber allowed to fly home the following day.)

Due mainly to the need to equip a rapidly expanding Defence Forces, the British helmet was adopted from the summer of 1940 and the Vickers helmets withdrawn from service. Some were painted white for issue to emergency services such as the Air Raids Precaution (ARP) service, while others were later stored in the 'Black Huts' on the edge of the Curragh Camp. Today, examples of the Vickers helmet are relatively rare and typically fetch prices in excess of €250.

Gnr Terence O'Reilly is currently a member of staff of the Defence Forces library (DFTC), specialising in military history. He has written many books most notable: 'Hitler's Irishmen' (2008) and 'Our Struggle for Independence' (2009) 'Rebel Heart: George Lennon: Flying Column Commander' (2009) all by Mercier Press. He is a former artilleryman who completed several tours of duty with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon. He lives in Portlaoise.
www.mercierpress.ie/terenceoreilly ■



DEFENCE FORCES

All Army Triathlon 2012

BY CAPT ANDREW SHINNICK (2 E BDE HQ)

PHOTOS CPL NOEL COSS & ARM NEVILLE COUGHLAN

On Friday 10 Aug 2012 the 4th Annual DF Triathlon took place in Lilliput, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. The event, which is the highlight of the Defence Forces Triathlon Associations calendar, follows months of preparation on behalf of both the Triathlon committee and the athletes who take part in the sport. Triathlon which is still relatively a new sport to the DF has seen its membership steadily grow over the past few years with the introduction of the cycle to work scheme and also due to the increasing popularity of the sport itself which has now a 70.3 IRON-MAN event which takes place in Galway.

Many serving members have taken to the sport as it offers a multi discipline approach towards training. The added benefit to the DF is that it promotes fitness, team building and esprit des corps amongst its members whilst it also has the added benefit of portraying the DF in a highly positive light amongst members of the public. Many members of the DF can be seen regularly every weekend taking part in the many races both nationally and internationally all of which highlights the positives of sport within the DF.

DF Members can then avail of all what the DFTA has

to offer by means of coaching and advice etc. along with the monthly training sessions which take place in the DFTC.

These club training sessions take members regardless of experience and categorise them according to ability. This is so that people get the right sort of training and attention in order to improve themselves so that they can reach the goals which they have set for themselves for the year ahead. The training sessions begin normally with a coached swim session in the morning followed by a spin Turbo session or bike ride. After lunch then sees the athletes complete a run or interval speed session. Lots of experience and structure is brought to each session and the coaches are always on hand to give instant feedback so as to help each athlete improve whatever their level or capability.

Most of the triathlon training takes place indoors over the long autumn, winter and spring period whereby athletes will be put through various sessions which are used to

improve cardio fitness, endurance and speed whilst they also focus on technique in the pool and also in the transition phases. Towards the end of winter the sessions will move outdoors to avail of the longer days and slightly warmer weather. The spring training sessions step up in their intensity in April/May prior to the Triathlon season kicking off and members will complete shorter bike sessions with more emphasis being placed on speed to help acclimatize athletes to the pace



needed in a race.

The Naval Service (who also have a triathlon club) run two race events for the DFTA committee each year, one of them being an internal event confined to the Naval Service personnel only and the other event is "Open Event" for all members of the Defence Forces. The race distance is a short but fast 400m swim followed by an 11km bike ride and a fast 3km run. For all those that took up the sport over the winter it's a great way of starting out in preparation for the All Army Race in August. For most Defence Forces Triathletes the focus will then turn to compete in the various Triathlon Ireland sanctioned events held all over the country. The favourites being TriAthy, the ever popular TriAthlone and the Dublin City Triathlon to name just a few along with the many other National Series events held around the country.

As the season progresses in to May, June and July the 12 Inf Bn in Limerick organise a "Time Trial" cycling series consisting of three separate races over a fixed 15km course. The series crowns an overall DF Time Trial Champion and a race series winner. Shortly thereafter the Air Corps Duathlon Club (again on behalf of the DFTA) organise a "Duathlon Race" series consisting of again three separate races all of which are held in Baldonnel. These races offer a unique chance for all of the DFTA members to race each other in a league event with an overall DF Duathlon Champion and race series winner being crowned each year. The Duathlon consists of a 4km run, 14km bike and a 4km run.

The month of August then sees the focus of the committee gearing up for the Defence Forces All Army Triathlon which takes place in Lilliput, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath. This race is organised in conjunction with the Midlands Triathlon Club who hold the "Caroline Kearney Memorial race" which is held normally on the second Saturday of August each year with the DF event taking place on the same location day prior to the memorial race. The organising committee headed up this year by Comdt Ronan Dillon, Capt's Andrew Shinnick, Paul Connolly, Peter Kelleher, Claire Quinn, Neil O'Grady, Lt Gearoid O'Briain, Sgt Johanna Tilley-Rock and Cpl Derek Nugent put in a huge amount of time and effort in getting everything in place for the Defence Forces All Army Triathlon. The venue of Lilliput (which is on the shores of Lough Ennell) was truly spectacular this year as the sunshine finally made an appearance and the temperatures on the day were a very warm 26-29degrees something the athletes would have to contend with on the day of the race.



Comdt Ronan Dillon (DFTA) presents the overall female winner (above) Pte Gretta O'Connor (27 Inf Bn) and the overall male winner (below) Sgt Paul Connolly (4 Fd Arty Reg) with Comdt Neil Taylor (Sec. DFTA)





passed then has to drop back so as to not draft from the person in front. This rule which was not observed by one individual would later mean a substantial time penalty costing that individual overall first place in their category. As this year saw the absence of the top three Defence Forces triathletes in both the Male and Female category the top spots were anyone's for the taking and this only added to the competitiveness of the event.

This year saw the addition of a Try-A-Tri event (400m Swim, 20km Bike and 5km run) to the already familiar event of the Sprint distance race and the ever popular Relay event (750m Swim, 20km Bike and 5km run). As athletes took to the rather calm waters of Lough Ennell (which wasn't to remain calm for long) the 4 Fd Arty Regt started the race with a bang from a 120mm Mortar and a pyrotechnic which quickly resulted in Lough Ennell being turned into white water frenzy as the athletes set off at a blistering pace led by the two race favourites Sgt



over a hundred this year) saw the final preparations for most of their year long training preparation for this race. The registration and Transition area were a hive of activity as people busied themselves with final adjustments to their gear and began to lay out their kit in the all too much rehearsed manner that all triathletes go through before races. The atmosphere was one of concentration however there were the usual few jokes and banter being thrown around as old rivalries amongst friends and rival units across the DF raise their heads as they tend to do at these social gatherings.

A safety brief led by Cpl Derek Nugent – Race Director ensured that all competitors and marshals knew what was expected of them especially the athletes with particular emphasis on the rule of drafting. This is where triathletes have to ensure that they are not within 10m x 2m imaginary box of another athlete as this gives them an energy saving advantage over the front competitor. Strict rules enforced by Triathlon Ireland Bike marshals ensure that you must also pass the athlete within 15secs and the athlete that was



Paul Connolly (4 Fd Arty Regt) - who was to exit with the fastest swim on the day - followed closely by Cpl Gavin Crawford (28 Inf Bn) in second.

Sgt Connolly would continue to dominate and ultimately win the men's race posting the quickest times of the day (Swim 11.21mins, Bike 32:25mins and Run 18.30mins) of the day narrowly beating Cpl Crawford in to second place (Cpl Crawford lost a water bottle on the start of the very warm bike section and that most likely cost him the race due to not having any means of hydrating himself on the 20km bike course in the intense heat that day).

In the female race Lt Niamh Ni Fhatharta of the Naval Service exited the water just ahead of Pte Gretta O'Connor (27 Inf Bn) - both had recently prior to the DF race completed IRONMAN triathlon events in the UK and Austria respectively. The battle on the bike amongst these two women was again a close fought event as was the run event. However it was Pte O'Connor who would ultimately be crowned as the DF Female Champion on review of a fixed time penalty being handed down to Lt Ni Fhatharta for drafting. The relay event was won by a Naval Service Team consisting of Lt's NS Dan Humphries, Barry McCormack and Darren Molloy. In the Try-A-Tri race the winners were in the Male category: Pte Graham Whittaker (Med Coy, 4 LSB) and in the Female category: Sgt Jackie Wykes (4 Fd CIS Coy). Meanwhile the O/40s category was won by CPO Ray Norris (NS) and the O/50s category was won by Sgt Marty Gilligan (HQ 4 W Bde).

Much of success of the Defence Forces event is largely contributed to the help and assistance provided by the Midland Triathlon Club (MTC) and their main committee member Mr Brian Ivory was on hand to give advice and assistance and MTC kindly help provide the necessary equipment needed for the event every year. The timing of the event was done by "Precision Timing" who again did a great job in supplying all of the timing chips and collated the results and emailed everyone their pre-race brief and results after the event.

A special mention also goes to our special guest and DJ on the day which was Mr Gerry Duffy (DECA IRONMAN Champion & 32 Marathon in 32 Days). Thanks also go to the TriAthlone organising committee who generously gave

us some left over goodie bags from their event again this year and to the Defence Forces Athletic Association (DFAA) which provided each of the competitors with a souvenir printed t-shirt and some rather nice Defence Forces branded water bottles for the goodie bags. On hand too in Lilliput were our kit suppliers "SHADOW BRANDS" who supply the members of the Defence Forces Adventure Racers (DFAR), Defence Forces Cycling Association (DFCA) and the Defence Forces Triathlon Association (DFTA) with the new Defence Forces branded Cycling and Triathlon gear. This club gear is now available to purchase through the club listed above. The next order of kit for serving PDF members only will be submitted in October/November so that members will be able to train and race in the new club gear over the winter and race in it next year. Special thanks go also to the DF Kayak club, the Military Police, 4 Fd Engr Coy, 6 Inf Bn, BPEO staff from each Bde, all of the marshals that assisted from each Bde all of whom without their help the event would certainly not have ran smoothly

Finally, on behalf of the President of the DFTA Col Michael Beary and the Chairman DFTA Lt Col Michael Moran I would like extend an invitation to you all to come and join us at next years event in Lilliput which promises to be even bigger again with perhaps the addition of an Olympic event added and whereby families will be invited to attend. So, get training now and keep an eye out on the DF electronic notice boards for information on the upcoming training camps and or contact a Bde Triathlon Rep for further information.

The DFTA organises a series of training sessions every month which are coached by the DF Head Triathlon coach Cpl Derek Nugent (6 Inf Bn) and assisted by TI (Triathlon Ireland) swim coach Sgt Johanna Tilley-Rock (DFTC). Any member of the PDF and RDF personnel can join the DFTA as membership is free with a simply process of filling out a membership form. Members will then additionally have to purchase Triathlon Ireland membership for the purpose of insurance cover etc. as this a mandatory requirement at triathlon events around the country. ■



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GEAR REVIEW



Sponsored by Team Alpha.ie

5.11 TACTICAL AGGRESSOR PARKA

€259.99

The manufacturer says...

5.11's Aggressor Parka is three jackets in one and will keep you comfortable in a number of different weather conditions and climates. Layering is the key to staying comfortable and this parka uses that concept to adapt to changes in the weather. Designed to last and take a beating, the Aggressor Parka has sealed seams, a durable outer lining, and heavy duty construction using quality fabrics. Loaded with storage and featuring heavy duty construction using quality fabrics the Aggressor Parka is a parka length jacket designed to fit sizes from extra small to 4XL.



The outer shell is completely waterproof and breathable and can be worn separately in cool and wet conditions. A full featured waterproof and breathable hood is concealed in the collar of the outer shell for those extreme cold conditions requiring full coverage. The fleece liner which is colour matched to the shell can be worn on its own in cool and windy conditions. Worn together you have a full functioning cold weather parka which will protect you against extreme cold.

The outer shell has five pockets including our hidden chest document pockets. The document pockets are lined to accommodate our Back-Up-Belt System accessories so you can secure your critical items for immediate accessibility. The remaining pockets have YKK zippered closures for extra security. The fleece liner has two zippered hand pockets which are great for keeping your hands warm on those cold days.

Our tester, Sgt Joe Fitzgerald (506 Sqn, Air Corps) says...

The 5.11's Aggressor Parka is extremely comfortable and durable. It's a heavy duty jacket with plenty of pockets which is perfect for my daily needs as a fire officer. It's great for the changeable weather we have. I like the way the hood fits into the collar and the fact that the fleece can come off giving you three jackets in one. I would have no hesitation in recommending 5.11's Aggressor Parka Jacket to a friend or work colleague.

Comfort 10 - Fit (True to Size) 8 - Grip 6 - Value for money 7

5.11 TACTICAL ATAC GLOVE

€24.95

The manufacturer says...

5.11 have designed a tough and durable tactical glove that is great value for money to boot. Fit and comfort are high priorities with the ATAC gloves; the back panel is made with stretch nylon so the glove moves with you instead of impeding your movements, and 5.11's Tactical Touch seamless fingertip gives you more sensitivity and control.



Protection from impact is gained through the Foam-backed coated Kevlar knuckle zone, a coated Kevlar/nylon thumb saddle reinforcement, a flexible exoskeleton and extra padding on the thumb joints and cuffs. Rugged Duraclad reinforced palm and fingers defend your hands and extend the life of the gloves. 5.11 have scaled the exoskeleton toward the end of the trigger fingers so you can confidently handle firearms. The wrists of the ATAC glove are elasticised and feature a Velcro closure which also helps keep out debris.

Our tester, Cpl Ian Woods (27Inf Bn) says...

I used the gloves on the Infantry phase of the Standard NCOs course. A course which not only tests you, but all your kit to the limit. I found the gloves offered great protection and that they would suit the tactical soldier. The only downside was that it was difficult to do some manual tasks without taking them off, like writing notes such as an ammo/cas state. They'd be ideally suited for a soldier on the ground on sentry duties or in urban warfare like FIBUA/DIBUA, but not a posting with field admin to complete. I would certainly recommend them to a friend.

Comfort 9 - Fit 8 (True to Size) - Grip 6 - Value for money 9

COMPETITION

This month Team-Alpha is offering a €120 Voucher to use on their website. For a chance to win this month's prize answer the following question: Name the first category under the Military Tab on the www.team-alpha.ie website?

ANSWERS ON A POSTCARD TO AN COSANTÓIR'S REGULAR ADDRESS OR BY EMAIL TO SUBS@MILITARY.IE BY THE 22ND OCT 2012. WINNER WILL BE THE FIRST CORRECT ENTRY DRAWN.

Last month's winner of a Streamlight Sidewinder LED Light (value €80) was Alan Hill.



NOTICEBOARD

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

Book Launched

RETURNING HOME: IRISH EX-SERVICEMEN AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR BY BERNARD KELLY



Returning Home investigates one of the least known periods in Irish history – the story of Irish veterans that returned to Ireland after the end of the Second World War. The book was launched on the 1st May by the Minister for Defence, Alan Shatter T.D.

“Bernard Kelly has given us an invaluable insight into our hidden history. The story of the men and women of independent neutral Ireland who joined the Second World War, and of their treatment when they returned home.” - Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Alan Shatter T.D.

Bernard hails from Kiltullagh, Athenry, Co. Galway and was a member of the RDF for many years. He has a BA in History from NUI Galway, as well as an MSc from the University of Edinburgh and a PhD from NUI Galway. The book is available in Easons and other bookshops around the country and online at www.kennys.ie.

ISBN: 978-1908928009 – Price: €15.31

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For all queries, contact: 045-445342 or email: curragh.militarymuseum@defenceforces.ie.

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OCTOBER Q&A COMPETITION

1. What is the An Cosantóir's current Volume number?

Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email subs@military.ie for a chance to win a Discovery Channel: War on Terror 6 DVD set including: Al Qaeda:

9/11 The Towers and the Pentagon, Attack on the USS Cole, Hunt for Osama Bin Laden, Chechen Rebels: Beslan and Oklahoma City Bombing Conspiracy. Run Time: 270min. Last month's winners of one of three Family Passes to Funtasia Waterpark are Tom Brett, Michael Keogh & Ellen O'Neill.



Simply fill in the blanks spaces with the numbers 1-9.

Every row, column and 3x3 block must contain all nine digits with no number repeated in:

- Each of the nine vertical columns
- Each of the nine horizontal rows
- Each of the nine 3x3 boxes

2	6	7	3	8	4	1	9	5
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8	9	1	2	5	6	7	4	3
9	1	2	8	3	5	4	7	6
6	4	3	9	1	7	5	8	2
7	5	8	4	6	2	3	1	9
3	7	6	7	4	8	9	5	1
5	7	9	6	2	1	8	3	4
1	8	4	5	9	3	2	7	6

REVIEWS

reviews

35

BOOK

THE FCA - AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY

Authors:

Denis Carroll,
Michael Deegan,
Marie Hennessy, Stephen Kelly &
William Sheehan

Publisher: The History Press,
Ireland

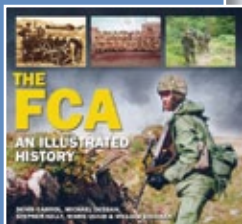
Price: RRP €20.00 (Website
€18.00)

Publication Date: October 2011

ISBN: 9781845887186

www.thehistorypress.ie

THIS BOOK IS an illustrated history of the FCA, its members and its work, captured in images are the people and their dedication to what became an important part of Defence Forces history. The book starts off in the 1940s with an introduction about how the FCA evolved from originally the Local Security Force (LSF) assisting the Garda Síochána and then becoming the Local Defence Force (LDF) in 1941. Then in 1946, An Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil (FCA) was established, providing the Defence Forces with a volunteer reserve force, which at one time numbered over 100,000. In 2005, the FCA was renamed Reserve Defence Forces (RDF) and was an integral part of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF). Members of the FCA have participated in training and military exercises and it was an integral part of life around Ireland during its existence for a great many people. The book also contains an illustrated appendix of unit flashes.



DVD

MARVEL AVENGERS ASSEMBLE

Director: Joss Whedon

Writers: Joss Whedon (screenplay), Zak Penn (story)

Genre: Action/Adventure/Sci-Fi

Certification:

Run Time: 2 Hrs 23 Mins

Rental Release Date: 17 Sept 2012

Starring: Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Mark Ruffalo, Chris Hemsworth, Jeremy Renner, Tom Hiddleston, Stellan Skarsgård and Scarlett Johansson



CLAIMED AS THE best action superhero movie of all time – and it certainly doesn't disappoint, it's a who's who of Marvel Super Heroes. When Nick Fury (Jackson), the director of an international peacekeeping agency known as S.H.I.E.L.D., encounters an unexpected enemy that threatens global safety and security, he finds himself in need of a team to pull the world back from the brink of disaster. Spanning the globe, a daring recruitment effort begins for Earth's mightiest heroes. Iron Man (Downey Jr.), Captain America (Evans), The Incredible Hulk (Ruffalo), Thor (Hemsworth), and two of the world's greatest assassins, Black Widow (Johansson) and Hawkeye (Renner), must assemble to defeat Loki (Hiddleston), the darkest villain the Earth has ever known. http://marvel.com/avengers_movie

GAME HITMAN ABSOLUTION



HITMAN ABSOLUTION FOLLOWS Agent 47, a cold blooded assassin, who takes on his most dangerous and personal contract to date. Betrayed by those he trusted and hunted by the police, he finds himself at the centre of a dark conspiracy and must embark on a personal journey through a corrupt and twisted world, in his search for the truth. Showcasing IO Interactive's new proprietary Glacier 2 technology, the game has been built from the ground up, boasting a cinematic story, distinctive art direction and highly original game design. Hitman Absolution combines much loved classic gameplay with completely new gameplay features for the Hitman franchise. One new key feature is - Blend In: Impersonate your victims and hide in plain site. A huge variety of disguises offer you deep strategies, new options, and the element of surprise. So what kind of Hitman are you? <http://hitman.com>

Genre: Shoot 'Em Up - **Platform:** PS3, Xbox 360, PC - **PEGI:** 18 - **Price:** €49.97 (PC €27.97)(gamestop.ie) - **Released:** 20 Nov 2012 - © 2012 IO Interactive, Eidos & Square Enix Ltd. All Rights Reserved.



WHAT I DO

NAME

DAVE WHELAN

RANK

LIEUTENANT

UNIT

106 IRISH/FINNISH
BN, UNIFIL

I grew up and went to school in Clondalkin and after doing my leaving cert I joined the Defence Forces as a cadet in October 2004. In doing so I became the first member of my family to join the military.

After 21 months training in the Curragh I was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 27 Inf Bn, Aiken Bks, Dundalk.

Over the next five years I held a number of appointments in the battalion including platoon commander, transport and signals officer. I also completed a number of courses such as the Javelin, MOWAG and the Specialised Instructors Course. During that time I also completed a BA in politics, sociology and history in NUI Galway.

In the summer of 2011 I was posted to the Brigade Training Centre, in Cathal Brugha Bks, which is responsible for conducting various courses on behalf of units in 2 Eastern Brigade. Since I arrived I have been responsible for the organising and running of a number of different courses including a range managers course and an infantry light support weapons course. This has been an excellent experience, as the responsibility to ensure the highest standard of instruction is achieved constantly improves your ability both as an instructor and a leader.

In January 2012 I was selected to serve overseas with 106 Irish/Finnish Battalion in Lebanon. On May 9th, after completing almost three months pre-deployment training, we departed for South Lebanon to serve with UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon).

It has long been a desire of mine to serve overseas with the Defence Forces and I was fortunate to receive an interesting appointment as part of a four-man CIMIC team. It is our responsibility to liaise with the local authorities and to discuss any issues that locals have in our area of operation. Currently, the Irish/Finnish battalion is responsible for 12 villages.

Another part of our job is to identify potential ways that the local population can be assisted through funding that comes from Irish Aid, the Finnish Foreign Ministry and UNIFIL. Since the

arrival of Irish troops in Lebanon for a third time in 2011, numerous projects have been achieved, ranging from the upgrade of social amenities in various villages to more practical projects such as the purchase and installation of water pumps to assist the local population in crop harvesting during the summer months. These projects have certainly had a positive impact on the lives of the locals and it is very rewarding to see.

In order to be selected for this appointment I had to undertake the International CIMIC Course in the Curragh before my pre-deployment training. I then completed the Functional Specialist CIMIC Course in the NATO CIMIC Centre of Excellence in The Netherlands. This was a great opportunity to experience firsthand how other European militaries approach the concept of civil-military relations and has certainly benefited me on my current tour of duty.

In mid-November I'm due to return to the BTC in Cathal Brugha Bks and I have no doubt that my experiences in South Lebanon will benefit me in my future career in the Defence Forces. ■



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Results Sheet for 30th August 2012

1st Prize, €8,000: John Brogan, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

2nd Prize, €5,000: Ronan Maher, Artenry, Co. Galway

3rd Prize, €2,500: Michael Hoey, Drogheda, Co. Louth

4th Prize, €1,500: Jonathan Daly, Finglas East, Dublin 11

€500 Prize: Christopher Feeney, Walkinstown, Dublin 12; Pat Halloran, Circular Road, Galway; Kevin Ellis, Dundalk, Co. Louth; Keith Houlihan, Kildare Town, Co. Kildare.

€100 Prize: Colin Connolly, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath; Anthony Timmins, Finglas East, Dublin 11; Richard Watchorn, Athy, Co. Kildare; Stephen Leonard, Clondalkin, Dublin 22; John Donohoe, Santry, Dublin 9; Patrick Byrne, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare; Gerard McLoughlin, Aughamore Near Sligo; Frank Foran, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15; Caroline Warnock, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal; Glenn Kelly, Monasterevin, Co. Kildare; Craig Keogh, Tallaght, Dublin 24; Casey Mc Quillan, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5; Kevin Barry, Ballyvolane, Cork; Christopher Mc Laughlin, Balkon Street, Belfast; Austin O'Sullivan, Kilbarrack, Dublin 5.

Congratulations to all our winners

The next draw will take place on 27th September 2012.

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