

THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTOIR

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SEPTEMBER 2013

MEDIA
PIONEER
AWARDS

SHORTLIST 2013

CADETSHIPS
2012/13

CIS CORPS

EUTM MALI

ARW MARITIME
TASK UNIT

THE AMERICAN LEGION

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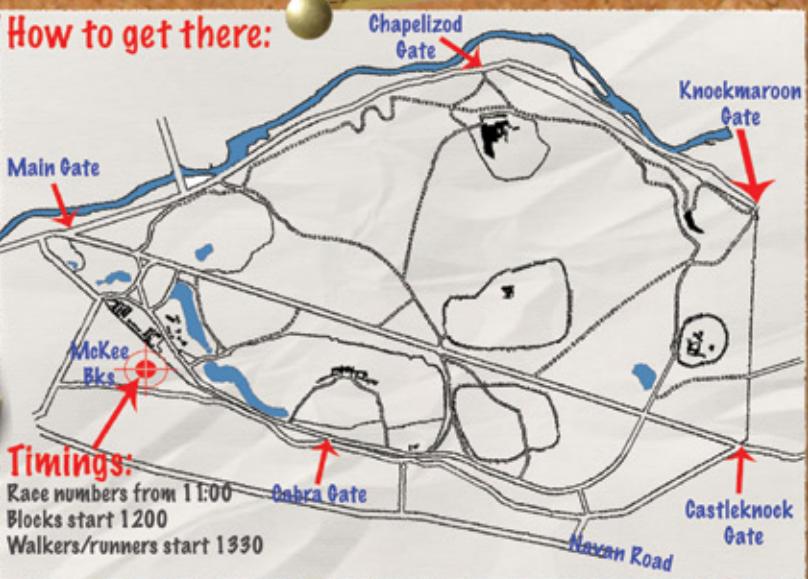
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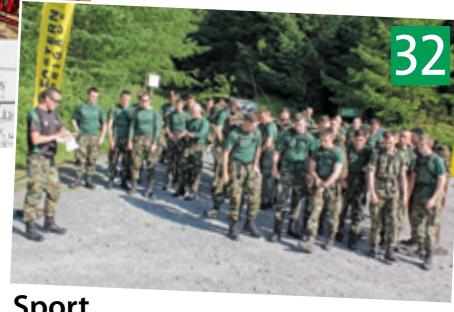
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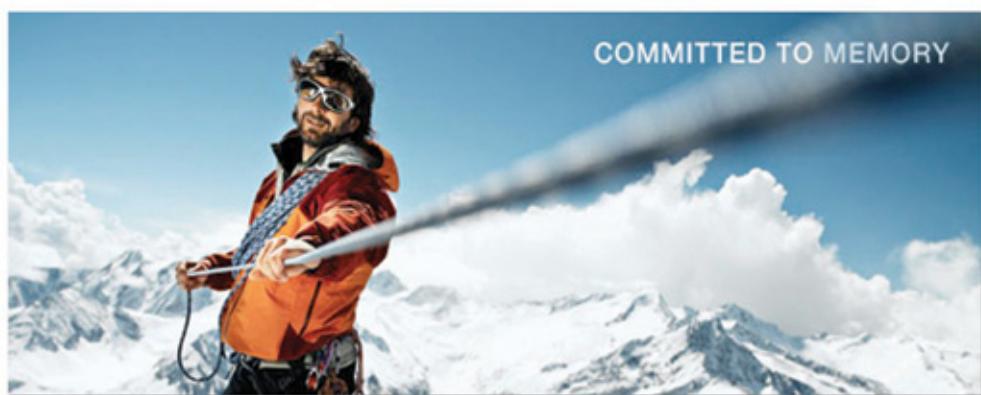
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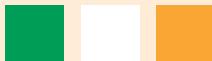
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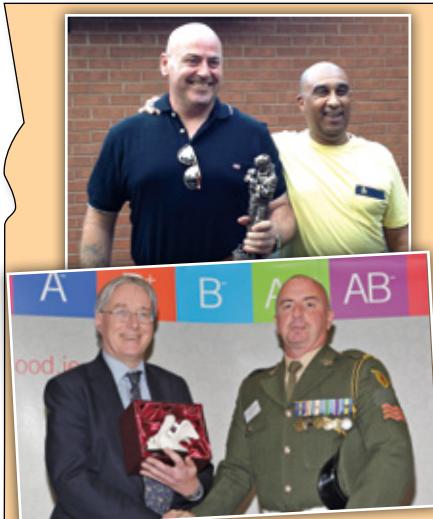
Front Cover

ARW Maritime Task Unit member. Photo by:
DF Photographer
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Editorial

Welcome back after our summer break, we have decided to continue with the 4 extra pages of content because we had such a busy two months between issues. We start with many of your photos *On Parade*. In *Focus* this month features many mini features from around the DF with the COS stand-down, The Irish Military Vehicles Group (IMVG) show in Naas, the ONE Fuchsia Appeal 2013 and a tribute to Lt Col JP Duggan (retd). One of our main features this month is an update on *EUTM Mali Mission* by Lt JJ Gaffney and then we have a look at the American Legion in Ireland and a very interesting piece on *Comics in War* by Aidan Courtney. Our other main feature is the *ARW Maritime Task Unit* by Cpl Paul Millar who spent some valuable time with the teams. In *Strategic Review* Wesley Bourke talks to members of the CIS Corps and gives us an insight into their work. In place of our regular *In Reserve* feature we have a look at the Cadetships 2012/2013 by Wesley Bourke, where some members of the PDF and RDF took on the challenge of this very demanding career change. As an added feature, Cpl Paul Millar briefs us on the recently published *Green Paper on Defence*. In the first of our extended *History* pages this month we have Operation 'Market Garden' 1944 by Paul O'Brien, followed by New York's Irish Military College by Des Gilhawley and Comdt Gerry Jordan. In *Sport* we have the DF Mountain Marathon by Lt Ronan Lambe with photos from Pte Dave Hogarty. Plus our other regular features – *World Strategic Picture*, *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews and What I Do*.

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor



25 Years On Call

On the 12 July, FQMS Joe Fitzgerald was presented with a fireman sculpture by Flt Sgt Willie Norton in recognition of completing 25 years in the Air Corps Crash Rescue Service by his aviation fire fighting colleagues in 506 Sqn, No 5 Sp Wing at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnel. Photo: Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald (PR Br)

100th Platelet Donation

Professor Anthony Staines, chairman of the blood transfusion service presents Sgt Maitiu O Aimhirnghin (2 Bde) with an award in recognition of 100 platelet donations. The platelet clinic is currently looking for donors, and you can contact Ms Jo Lawlor, National Apheresis recruitment manager on 01-2407400. Photo by: Stephen Wall Morris, Event Photographer www.eventphotographer.ie

LÉ Aoife Change of Command

Lt Cdr Erika Downing handed over command of LÉ Aoife to Lt Cdr Marie Gleeson in the ships adopted port of Waterford City on 12 July 2013. This is history in the making for the Naval Service as it's the first handover of command between two female ships Captains. Photo: A/Sea David Jones (NS)



PLEASE HELP!

A/Comop Damien Adderley joined the Naval Service in 2010. He has served on LÉ Eithne and LÉ Róisín and is currently on shore duty in the CommCen part of Comms Branch. His father Damien Adderley Snr completed The New York City Marathon in 2009 for Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin raising €7,500. Now unable to take part in such events due to two upper spine surgeries, his son A/Comop Damien Adderley Jnr takes up the baton of fund raising for this worthy charity. Damien Jnr is registered for the NY Marathon in October 2013. His naval training has prepared him and has also given him the tools to complete this challenge. Fundraising is in full flow with €3,000 raised so far and with a target of €10,000, there is still a long way to go! Events completed: 21K Trek through Wicklow Mountains and a Fight Night at Ryston Boxing Club, Newbridge. The funds raised will go towards the Children's Cancer Ward – St John's, which urgently requires these much needed funds. Should you have an idea or want to support Damien in this fundraising please contact him on 086 259 9166. Pictured from fight night (L/R): Damien Adderley (Navy) Vs Sean Tyrrell (DFTC). Photo: Damien Adderley Snr



COMMODORE JOHN BARRY'S DAY ▲

Pictured at Commodore John Barry's Day in Wexford town is Minister Brendan Howlin TD, Pat Dillon, John Flower, Captain Hugh Tully (Naval Service), Lt Col Paul Kennedy (OC 3 Inf Bn), Peter Hughes and members of the ONE Commodore John Barry branch, Wexford. Photo: Patrick Hogan



DEFENCE FORCES ORIENTEERING ▲ CHAMPIONSHIPS

7 Inf Bn with Team Captain Lt Col Brendan Delaney, who took 1st place in Defence Forces Orienteering Championships recently. Individual medals to Lt Col Brendan Delaney, (OC 7 Inf Bn) - 1st Place in Men's under 50 and Lt Deirdre Carbery, (7 Inf Bn) - 1st Place in Women's 21 Long. Photo: Lt Deirdre Carbery (Military Archives)



GORMANSTOWN CAMP ▲

2 Arty Regt receive five new 3 star privates who celebrated their passing out parade in Gormanstown Camp on 8 July. Pictured (L/R): Bty Sgt Gary Madden, Ptes' Ronan Guerin, Larry Whelan, James Daly, David Smyth, Gavin Stowe and RSM Noel O'Callaghan. Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan (2 AR)



LEGAL EAGLES ▲

On Thursday 27 June 2013, the Midlands Bar Association visited Custume Bks Athlone and received a guided tour by Capt Murtagh Brennan and Lt Marie Pigott (6 Inf Bn) while Lt Shane Walsh (2 AR) briefed them on the Museum. The group then received a detailed presentation from Lt Col Richard Brennan (BL) on Military and International Law. Photo: Capt Murtagh Brennan



CAPT MALONE

Capt Mike Malone's stand-down parade in Ballymullen Bks, Tralee on the 11 July 2013. Capt Malone enlisted in February 1975 and was commissioned in May 1992, before serving with C Coy, 12th Inf Bn he was with 3 Fd Sigs Coy. Pictured (L/R): Comdt Reynolds (O/C C Coy, 12th Inf Bn) presented a plaque to Capt Malone, with Lt O'Shea looking on. Photo: Sgt Ian Sims (C Coy, 12 Inf Bn)

OVERSEAS PROMOTIONS ▲

Recently two members of 108 IRISHFINN Bn received their promotions for vacancies at home, they are Sgt David O'Sullivan (12 Inf Bn) and Cpl Ciaran Oman (D CIS) - congratulations to them both. Photos: Capt Mark Conway (PIO, 108 IRISHFINN Bn)

SPIKE ISLAND

An Taoiseach Enda Kenny is pictured on Spike Island on 11 July 2013, he is accompanied by Lt Tim Cunningham, inspecting a GOH during the 75th anniversary of the hand-over of the Treaty Ports. Photo by: Cpl Christine O'Leary (1 Bde Press Office)





COMMEMORATE AND HONOUR ▲

On 7 July 2013, Commodore Mark Mellett DSM (FOCNS) welcomed retired service veterans to the Naval Base, Haulbowline to commemorate and honour deceased shipmates. The occasion was the ONE Commander George Crosbie Branch's 'Lá na bhFiann' (Warriors Day). *Photo: Domhnall Mac Cárthaigh FS (PRO SAC ONE)*



PASSING ON SKILLS ▲

A Basic Navigation Skills workshop was provided by RDF personnel from C Coy, 28 Inf Bn to the Donegal County Museum recently by Lts' John McCandless, Kevin McGranaghan, Patrick McDevitt and Shaun McLaughlin. The workshop had full attendance, ranging from the Cubs/Scouts from Lifford to people who travelled from Killybegs, Raphoe and Gortahork with ages from 9 to 70. Everyone found it helpful, enjoyable and very informative. Donegal County Museum wishes to express our sincere thanks for allowing the RDF personnel to provide the workshop. *Photo: Caroline Carr, Donegal County Museum*



MARATHON MEN & WOMAN ▲

Pictured in Sixmilebridge, Co Clare recently after completing 10 marathons in 10 days are (L/R) Sgt Charlie Walsh (DFTC), Sgt Ann Marie Larkin (DFHQ) and Sgt Brian Ankers (Air Corps). *Photo: Sgt Rena Kennedy (DF Press Office)*



FOR CHARITY ▲

Limerick Unit of the Naval Service Reserve (NSR) recently raised money during their own time for Pieta House. Photo shows the cheque presentation with O/Sea David Quinn, O/Sea Boris Humvima, L/Sea Darren Moloney, Kieran O'Brien (Pieta House), A/Sea Amie Rush and A/Sea Evan Tobin. *Photo: NS Press Office*



IN MEMORY ▲

The Patrick Sarsfield Br of ONE held their 'Lá na bhFiann' on May 26 in Limerick. Vinny Lyons carrying the Tri-Colour leads the Colour Party, and in the background is the famous Boherbuoy Brass and Reed band. *Photo: Joe O'Mahony (Br Sec)*

NEW RDF PHYSICAL LEADERS ▲

Pictured are students and instructors from a recent RDF PTL course conducted in the DFPES, DFTC from 15-26 July. Photo shows students with Lt Col Ger Maguire, Comdt Ross Dunphy (OIC DFPES), instructors Sgt Tommy Sheehan and Sgt Liz Kelly. *Photo Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald (PR Br)*

Farewell to the Chief

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD
PHOTOS ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN

On July 25, 2013 a Stand Down Ceremony took place in McDermott Bks, DFTC in honour of the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Seán McCann prior to his retirement from the Defence Forces. The ceremony included a parade of troops from all formations and brigades of the Defence Forces, a Cavalry Corps drive past and concluded with a 'lights out' ceremony in Plunkett Bks, DFTC.

His military career started in 1970 as an army cadet and his rise up through the ranks has seen him hold the positions of DCOS Ops, D Ops and D Cav as well as instructing in the Military College and United Nations Training School Ireland (UNTSI). He is a graduate of UCG and of the United States Command and General Staff College (USCGSC, Fort Leavenworth). In October 2011, he was formally inducted into the International Hall of Fame at USCGSC, Fort Leavenworth as recognition of International Officer Graduates who have achieved the highest positions of command and authority in their respective militaries. He is the first Irish graduate to have achieved this award.

He completed six tours of duty overseas seeing service in Lebanon (UNIFIL, 1981 & '87), Israel, Iraq/Kuwait border (UNIKOM, 1991) Former Yugoslavia (EUMM, 2000) and in 2002-03 he was Chief Operations Officer with UNTSO based in Jerusalem. In sport he captained the Defence Forces and the Curragh (now Newbridge Rugby Club) rugby teams and played for UCG and Connacht.

The Chief of Staff is assigned authority and responsibility by the Minister of Defence in respect of all staff duties connected with the executive management of the Defence Forces. The Office of the Chief of Staff (COS) consists of his Personal Staff, a Strategic Planning Branch and a Public Relations Branch. Lt Gen Conor O'Boyle, formerly Deputy Chief of Staff (Sp), has succeeded Lt Gen Seán McCann, who retired on 12 August 2013. We would like to wish them both every success in their future endeavours. ■



THE IMVG ANNUAL SHOW

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD
PHOTOS SGT MICK BURKE &
SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD



The Irish Military Vehicles Group (IMVG) held their 6th annual event at Naas Racecourse on the 22/23 June 2013. An Cosantóir was invited along to visit the show and meet some members of the group. The show is now in its third year at Naas Racecourse and included static military vehicle displays with bicycles, motorbikes, Land Rovers, ACMATS and Bedford trucks, APCs and an AML 90, trade stalls selling a wide range of military related items, re-enactors depicting different periods of history including WWII, Roman and Irish Civil War, it also had other activities like rifle ranges and paintballing. The racecourse is a great location to hold such a big event, with restaurant and toilet facilities on hand and a hard-core track around the fields where the exhibits are, which allowed for inclement weather.

Ken Blair, the groups PRO met us and showed us around the show. He said "The IMVG is a club for Military Vehicle enthusiasts and is the largest group of its kind in Ireland. We have over forty members who



own nearly thirty vehicles between them. This year's show has seen the number of visitors and exhibitors grown from last year."

The main ethos or mission behind IMVG is to Restore, Preserve and Educate others; they do this by attending shows and displaying their vehicles throughout the year as part of a Living History. Some of the main events we attended so far are: Athy St Patricks Day Parade, Naas Easter Parade, Listowel Military Tattoo, MVCI Curragh Show, Duncannon Military Show and most recently the War and Peace Show in Folkestone, Kent – the biggest event in the UK and Ireland.

An Cosantóir would like to thank Ken Blair, Jennifer Kelly, Conor McDonnell, Mick Jones and all the guys and gals for the great reception and show – keep up the good work and we wish you even more success in 2014. If you are interested in knowing more visit their facebook page or website: www.facebook.com/IrishMilitaryVehiclesGroup/ or www.imvg.ie. ■

ONE FUCHSIA APPEAL 2013

**BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD
PHOTOS SGT MICK BURKE**



On June 27th Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann Teoranta (Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women), or ONE as it is more commonly known, launched its annual Fuchsia Appeal in Brú na bhFiann on North King St, Dublin.

ONE has been providing residential facilities in Dublin since 1994, and now has two other residential centres in Letterkenny and Athlone, and two drop-in centres in Dundalk and Limerick. The organisation currently provides housing for up to 40 former Defence Forces members and needs over €600,000 annually to run its current facilities.

The overall objective is to ensure the welfare of ex-servicemen and women who may have become homeless, elderly or suffer from a disability. ONE also promotes a spirit of comradeship between serving and retired members and provides information on pensions, social welfare, and other entitlements.

This year's appeal was launched by Minister of State at the Department of Defence, Paul Kehoe TD and Defence Forces Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán McCann. Minister Keogh in his speech said: "*The work ONE does is practical and supports the welfare needs in hard and difficult times.*" He went on to add: "*It's great to see ex-service personnel come out and parade at different events up and down the country and show their pride in the organisation.*"

In his address Lt Gen Séan McCann said: “*In the last three years as chief of staff of the Defence Forces, I have watched with a mixture of pride and gratitude the great work that ONE does on a daily basis for our ex-servicemen and women around the country. As I come towards the end of my term as chief of staff I am delighted to be invited here today to launch this year’s Fuchsia Appeal as ONE has a very special place in the wider Defence Forces family.*”

Also speaking at the launch ONE CEO Ollie O'Connor said: *"The Fuchsia appeal is of critical importance to the organisation. It enables us to help former colleagues who are having a difficult time and without a home. Many of these people gave outstanding service to the state and to the United Nations and for one reason or another have not been able to make ends meet since leaving the service. The homes and drop-in centres do not just provide accommodation, but also an opportunity to meet and socialise with others who served. This we feel is important. Most of the people who spend time with us move on to independent living after a period of time with support and comradeship."*

The Fuchsia 2013 appeal ran throughout June and July but if you would still like to donate to ONE you can do so through PayPal or standing order. No donation is considered too small and all are welcome. For more information contact ONE on 01-4850666 or email info@oneconnect.ie. Registered charity No. CHY 13868 ■



In Remembrance

Lt Col JP Duggan (Retd) RIP

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

On March 8th 2013, *An Cosantóir* lost one of its most notable contributors from the last half century with the passing of Lt Col John Patrick Duggan (Retd). He served as a volunteer in the TVF (Territorial Voluntary Force) from 1937 to 1942 during The Emergency period before entering the Defence Forces as a cadet in December 1942.

During his long career, which lasted until 1976, JP held many positions, including battery commander, Military College instructor, operations officer, Arty School Comdt, and Defence Forces German interpreter.

JP was a prolific writer who wrote several books as well as being a long standing contributor to *An Cosantóir*, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent*. Along with his book 'A History of the Irish Army' he wrote other books with German themes: 'Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich' and 'Herr Hempel at the German Legation'.

He was responsible for bringing great kudos to *An Cosantóir* in the late 1940s and early 50s, while the magazine was still in its infancy, as he was responsible for the magazine acquiring a series of articles from senior German generals who had served during the war.

Projects being worked on by JP will still be published thanks to his family who will carry out the necessary editorial work. These include a biography of General Dan McKenna (chief of staff during The Emergency), and a history of the Irish diplomatic service. We owe much to Lt Col JP Duggan and we would like to express our belated condolences to his family. ■





EUROPE

Campaigners handed a petition to 10 Downing Street calling for all Afghan interpreters who worked for the British army to be allowed to settle in Britain. At present only those interpreters who were on staff in December, when Britain announced a drawdown of forces, are being allowed to resettle. It is feared that the Taliban will target those who are left behind.



Tensions grew between two old European powers England and Spain, over the Rock of Gibraltar. Both countries prime ministers spoke on the phone after the Spanish were upset by the construction of an artificial reef by Gibraltar. Apparently in retaliation, Spanish border guards increased their checks, causing long queues. The Spanish foreign minister also talked about introducing a €50 charge for each crossing. The British government since threatened to take Spain to court. British Royal Navy vessels recently dispatched to the Middle East are to visit Gibraltar; the Ministry of Defence said the stop had been "long planned".

Africa

In Nigeria gunmen presumed to belong to the extreme Islamist group Boko Haram, stormed a mosque in Konduga, a town in the north-eastern Nigerian state of Borno, killing 44 people. The action was intended to deter Muslims from joining pro-government vigilante groups opposed to the extremists.



Former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was elected president of Mali in a run-off against Soumaila Cisse, a former finance minister.

MIDDLE EAST

Egypt is tethering on the brink of a civil war after a military led coup. On July 27th Egyptian security forces killed hundreds of supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, who were marching in Cairo to protest against the ousting of the Muhammad Morsi government. The military government issued orders to the security forces to clear the protesters. Two sit-ins were fired upon in Cairo, where supporters of Muhammad Morsi, had been protesting. A state of emergency has been declared.

For the first time in three years peace talks between Israel and Palestine resumed in Jerusalem. As a preliminary gesture, 26 long time Palestinian prisoners were freed.

At least 100 Iraqis were killed in a string of bombings during and after the Eid al-Fitr celebrations that marked the end of Ramadan. It is one of the

worst waves of sectarian violence since 2008 as many civilians were killed.

The government of Yemen said that it had foiled a major terrorist plot. Tanks and troops were deployed on the streets of the capital, Sana'a, to protect foreign embassies and offices.

The civil war in Syria continues. Syrian rebels have claimed they fired upon the convoy of President Bashar Assad. In what would be the most direct attack against him in more than two years of conflict. Assad's regime has denied the claims.



Iran's new president, Hassan Rouhani, was inaugurated on August 4th 2013. Since his election in June the cleric has called for substantive negotiations with the 'West' over its nuclear programme.

THE AMERICAS

Colombia's government and the country's FARC rebels said they had made good progress at their latest round of peace talks in Havana. Even after the killing of a senior FARC leader by the army in western Colombia had rattled nerves, but both sides remain optimistic that a deal will be struck.

A terrorist threat forced the United States to close 19 diplomatic missions in the Middle East and north Africa. The decision was made after communications were intercepted between al-Qaeda leaders.

Reports suggest that Osama bin Laden's successor Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Nasser al-Wuhayshi, leader of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, were involved.



A military judge found Bradley Manning, an American soldier, guilty of violating the Espionage Act for releasing hundreds of thousands of classified documents to WikiLeaks in 2010. However he was found not guilty of 'aiding the enemy'. A US military judge

has sentenced Army Private Bradley Manning to 35 years in prison for his role in the largest leak in American military history.

Worsening relations between America and Russia grew over Russia's 'disappointing decision' to grant temporary asylum to Edward Snowden, wanted for leaking details of American surveillance. President Barack Obama said he would attend the upcoming G20 Summit in St Petersburg, but cancelled a meeting with Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, scheduled to take place during his visit.

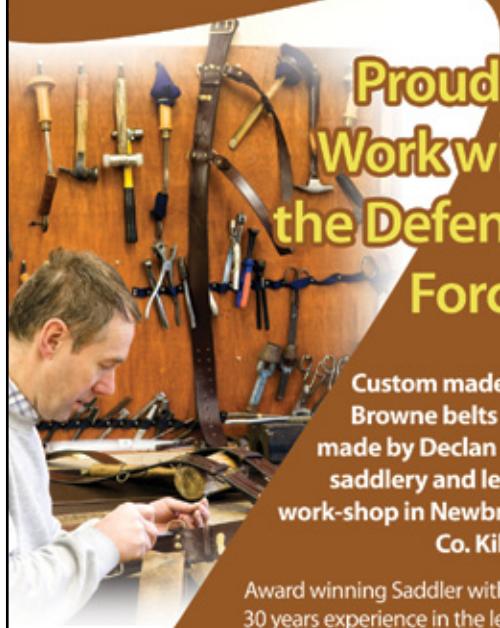
ASIA

An Indian navy submarine that was berthed in a Mumbai dockyard suffered an explosion killing 18 sailors. The Russian-built vessel had only been recently refurbished.

Tension grew again along the Kashmir border, both India and Pakistan blamed each other. India accused Pakistan of shooting at its positions and Pakistan said a civilian had been killed when India fired at it. India recently said that five of its soldiers had been killed in an ambush along the border.

Japan unveiled its biggest warship since WW2 on August 6th. Officially titled the Izumo, it is a destroyer, it is believed that the vessel could be turned into an aircraft carrier and used to launch fixed-wing aircraft if required.

In a speech to mark the Muslim festival of Eid al-Fitr, the leader of the Afghan Taliban, Mullah Omar, has said that his group will not seek to monopolise power when NATO troops leave Afghanistan next year. He said the Taliban would try to reach an understanding with the Afghans for 'an inclusive government based on Islamic principles'. However he still opposes elections.



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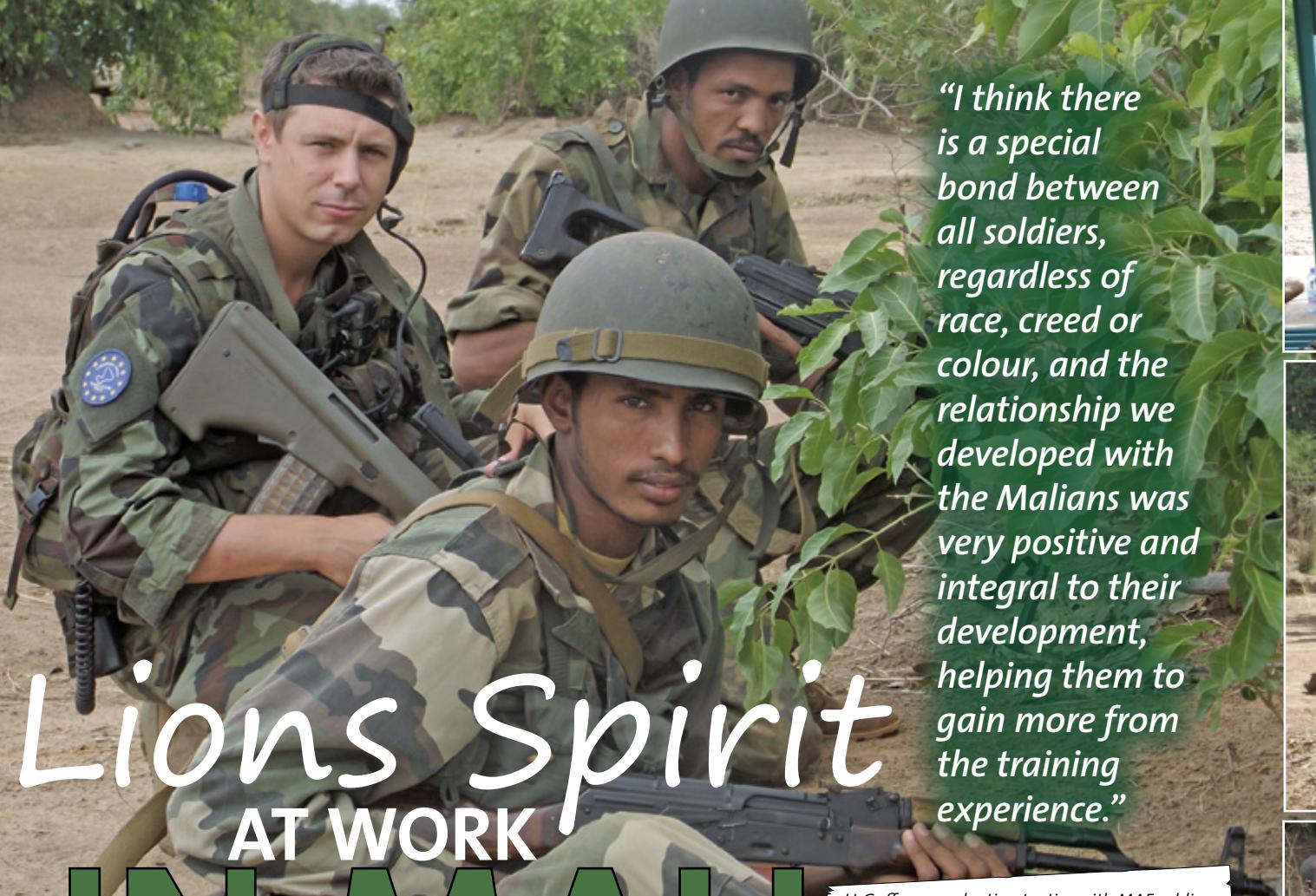
Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all
- Helen Keller



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Lions Spirit AT WORK IN MALI

BY LT JJ GAFFNEY (7 INF BN & EUTM MALI)

The international community, including the EU, has a strong interest in the Malian crisis. A key element in any resolution of this crisis will be the reconstruction and reorganisation of a Malian defence and security apparatus that is effective and respected, respectful of the law, and under the authority of a legitimate government. There is wide agreement that an urgent and serious reorganisation of the Malian defence and security forces (MDSF) is needed to enable Malian authorities to stop the movement of rebel groups towards the south; re-establish state authority and security over Malian territory; and create the conditions to put an end to trafficking and terrorist groups' activities. These military 'contingency operations' are seen as the new template to tackling conflict at the root cause, are more cost effective, and avoid large scale kinetic conflicts.

In a military equivalent of rugby's British and Irish Lions, this mission sees the first formal joint overseas deployment of UK and Irish military personnel. An infantry training team comprising six members of the Defence Forces under operational control of 1 Royal Irish Regiment (RIR); Lt Col P Ryan is Camp Comdt, Koulakoro Training Camp; and Comdt D McGrath, J1 Ops in Mission HQ.

The first Malian Armed Forces (MAF) battle-group commenced training on April 8th and after a ten-week training cycle has deployed north to Gao for operations. With the

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Lt Gaffney conducting tactics with MAF soldiers

second battle-group with us for training, I feel it's time to reflect on Operation 'Newcombe', EUTM Mali, so far. Pre-deployment training in Tern Hill, home of 1 RIR, we underwent the OPTAG (operational training and guidance package). This was hugely beneficial and afforded me the opportunity to meet my OCs, Majors Holden and Huxley, my counterpart, Mr Coulson, as well as the regiment's NCOs. Two weeks later we deployed to the mission area, via RAF strategic air assets.

Koulakoro, approximately 80kms north of Mali's capital, Bamako, is our home for the duration of the tour. As soon as we commenced our FITT (force in-theatre training) it was very evident that the Defence Forces and 1 Royal Irish share common TTPs (Tactics, Techniques and Procedures), allowing full integration and proving our interoperability. This meant rather than having a stand-alone Defence Forces training team, we now had mixed teams. This in my opinion delivers the best training outcomes to the Malians, drawing on the Royal Irish Regiment's operational experience and the Defence Forces' experience on similar training missions and previous African deployments.

EUTM Mali provides a ten-week training package designed to contribute to restoring the military capacity of the MAF, which, under the full control of legitimate civilian authorities, will be able to engage in combat operations aimed at restoring Malian territorial integrity. Phase one and two concen-



trate on basic section tactics, techniques and procedures, encompassing basic soldiering skills such as camouflage and concealment, movement, judging distance, observation, weapons training, manoeuvring as a section, recce and CP drills. Phase three concentrates on infantry platoon operations; phase four on company operations; and phase 5 deals with operating at battle-group level.

Weekly field-training exercises are conducted to confirm assimilation of instruction and the battle-group undergoes a final exercise to assess their operational effectiveness.

As a platoon commander, I have to co-ordinate all aspects of training to ensure that all training objectives are achieved. This in itself has proved challenging. The first group of Malian trainees did not arrive task-organised or sufficiently equipped with the individual and collective weaponry required for the training process.

Logistical challenges were also encountered but were soon overcome and training commenced. Methods of

instruction had to be flexible and creative to ensure maximum learning outcomes for the MAF.

We found that using more creative instructional means, namely visually stimulating ROC-drills (Rehearsal of Concept), delivered the best results. Before long I built up a professional rapport with my platoon (2 Pl, 2 Coy). I think there is a special bond between all soldiers, regardless of race, creed or colour, and the relationship we developed with the Malians was very positive and integral to their development, helping them to gain more from the training experience.

Every day in Mali presents different challenges. The climate is harsh, with daily temperatures often climbing into the 50°C's. A significant portion of training is spent on foot, marching across rough terrain in full battle order, so good physical fitness is essential.

Change is constant and understanding the culture and psyche of the Malians is important. A creative approach to training is needed in order to achieve the desired effect. I found they had a distinct lack of trust in their command structure, which often meant tailoring the training for success, which in turn promoted confidence within the ranks.

Other challenges included the language barrier (given the diverse ethnicity of the MAF, lessons are translated into French, Banbara and Tamashiq, which makes for challenging but interesting days), cultural awareness, managing subordinates' expectations, lack of real-life support, welfare, morale issues and working in a multinational mission, to name but a few.

Reflecting over the first training cycle identified a lot of lessons. From a training point of view the need to fully understand the Malian psyche is important in order to tailor the training for them; the need to train, mentor and develop their command structure; and the need for more combined arms training is also necessary. From a professional point of view, managing expectations, the maintenance of morale and keeping subordinates motivated are areas in which I have learned a lot.

So far this has been a positive learning experience for me. I have achieved a greater understanding and appreciation for contingency operations in a multinational environment. I can better understand the mission's mandate, as part of a comprehensive strategy from the international community to support the Malian government in restoring territorial integrity. I have enjoyed working with 1 Royal Irish Regiment; the relationship we established has gone from strength to strength and it seems logical in future operations to take advantage of the ease at which our forces operate alongside each other. Finally, I would like to thank my team of NCOs for their hard work, dedication, understanding and advice. ■





The American Legion and IRELAND

Ireland and her people have enjoyed a marvellous relationship with the US government and its people and both countries have benefitted immensely from each other. Ireland has often looked westward during difficult times and indeed many of her sons and daughters have found new livelihoods in the US including in her military.

After military service with the US military the American Legion becomes a great resource for veterans as its members form bonds with other veterans who work together for a common goal. The American Legion has currently about 3,000,000 members in some 14,000 posts worldwide and is currently the largest veteran organisation in the world.

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress as a patriotic veterans organisation devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is committed to assisting our fellow veterans and service personnel, mentoring youth and sponsorship through wholesome programmes, and advocating patriotism and honour while promoting a strong national security.

The Legion was founded by American veterans serving in the Allied territories shortly after the Great War and is the oldest veterans' organisation in the world. The primary objective of the Paris Caucus in March 1919 that founded the American Legion was to attend to the immediate welfare of repatriating American military personnel of the American Expeditionary Force. Its objective has essentially remained the same ever since.

The AL's ideals are simple, to defend the US Constitution, assist US wartime veterans, and promote Americanism in the country's youth through wholesome activities. One of its greatest tenets, particularly in Ireland, is to remember the sacrifice of war by honouring its war dead. Through their efforts the public are made aware of the magnificent sacrifice made on their behalf for our common freedoms that are nowadays so often taken for granted.

In defence of our Constitution, they remind the public that these freedoms have been paid for in blood by the countless millions of service personnel whose lives were cut short, seri-

ously altered by injury and/or disease and all put in harm's way to protect the world from evil regimes and unjust ideologies. These reminders also serve as a permanent lesson for future political endeavours lest we forget past sacrifices.

The AL is also the most powerful political lobby in the US Congress for US veterans.

The Legion's, which has its national headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, has basically three tiers of leadership. The highest is the National Committee. The next level is the departments, which are generally based on geographical areas, with each US state having its own department, and departments for posts located overseas. The final level is the 'post' often equivalent to the branch in foreign veterans' groups. Posts are often named after US patriots. The Irish AL posts are currently under the Department of France, though at one time it had its own department.

All members of the American Legion must be veterans of the US armed services having served in time of war and honourably discharged. For this reason we don't have associate members like other veterans' organisations, nor can we accept their goodwill to join our ranks. However, through partnership we are more than willing to work together with other veterans' organisations who share our common goals.

The early history of the Legion in Ireland is obscure. However, it was undeniably engaged in the burials of ex-US service personnel here, and perhaps involved in the repatriation of ex-US servicemen to Ireland after WWI, most of whom obviously had very strong Irish connections.

The first Irish post was the Michael O'Donoghue (IRO1) of Cork City, which was granted a temporary charter in 1930 and held at least some of its meetings in Cobourg Street, Cork. The members of this post, largely consisting of WWI veterans, disbanded in May 1960 after most of its members had passed on.

The AL is a relatively small but increasingly active group in Ireland. American Legion members in Ireland are largely Irish born or of Irish-American extraction. Others are Americans of other

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origins but all are connected to Ireland in some way.

There are currently three posts: the Fr Francis P Duffy Post (IR02), Killarney;



the Commodore John Barry Post (IR03), Claremorris; and the John F Kennedy Post (IR63), Dublin. The Fr Francis P Duffy Post is the largest and also the oldest, having been granted a permanent charter on September 21st 1951. Our Irish posts are always looking for new membership and we encourage eligible US veterans to join us.

In the US many posts have their own clubhouse where members meet, socialise and have their meetings. However, no such establishments yet exist in Ireland and the three posts hold their meetings in various locations in their areas. One long-established meeting place is the Flesk Restaurant in Killarney, the spiritual home and meeting place of the Fr Francis P Duffy Post. The Flesk has much AL memorabilia and is well worth a visit to those interested in the AL in Ireland.

We continue to serve our country and fellow veterans by assisting them in a variety of ways, particularly with regards to obtaining government and private assistance. We frequently liaise with US Embassy staff in Ireland and the Veterans' Administration in the US to assist our veterans and their dependents.

One of our sacred duties is to provide an honour guard and military presence at the funerals of deceased US servicemen, Legionnaires or otherwise. This is often deeply appreciated by grieving families. We also represent our nation and the AL at public functions.

The Sons of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary are organisations closely affiliated to the AL and are intended as complemen-

tary organisations for the family of members of the American Legion. While their activities in Ireland are very limited, they often act in the role

of hidden support for their family members in the American Legion and frequently accompany them to AL functions.

There are several memorials of interest to the AL in Ireland, including the Korean War Memorial at Lixnaw, Co Kerry, the Veterans' Me-

morial in the grounds of Adare Manor, the Mayo Peace Park (where there is a memorial devoted to US servicemen of Mayo ancestry). There is also a statue of Commodore John Barry, Father of the American (US) Navy, in Wexford Town.

American Legionnaires often take part in civic and municipal functions near their home post, and are often invited by the Irish government, and occasionally others, to take part in other events. In Ireland, these events are often national in nature and over the last year included the Korean War Commemoration, the National Day of Commemoration, the visits of Queen Elizabeth II and President Obama to Ireland, and several other dedication/rededication ceremonies around the country.

In recent years we have forged great links with ONEt, who have very generously offered their services to American Legionnaires in Ireland. We are most grateful to them and to the goodwill and generosity of the Government of Ireland.

We often meet friends and well-wishers at public events and encourage their questions and queries. So if you have the opportunity to meet one of us, please feel free to engage in conversation if we are not otherwise engaged. We are perhaps best identified by our Legion cap and lapel pin. We can also be found online.

In regards to the future we shall continue to serve alongside our Irish brethren in Ireland and other veterans' groups overseas that are working for a common goal. ■

www.americanlegion-ireland.com



Fr Francis P Duffy Post (IR02) members and friends and Medal of Honor recipient Barney Bonham at the US Armed Forces memorial in Adare Manor. © Copyright George Rickard



John F. Kennedy Post (IR63) Dublin members taking part in the Commodore John Barry Maritime Festival, Wexford, 2013.



Vice Commander Mike Devine, Adjutant Seán T Rickard, Sergeant-At-Arms Joe Willis, with Son of the Legion Peter Stein before the Listowel St Patrick's Day Parade 2013.



Legionnaires Glen Foy and Joe Willis accompany family members and remains of Legionnaire Thomas Keenan to his final resting place at Holy Island, Lough Derg, Co Clare in 1998.



COMICS *at* War

BY AIDAN COURTNEY

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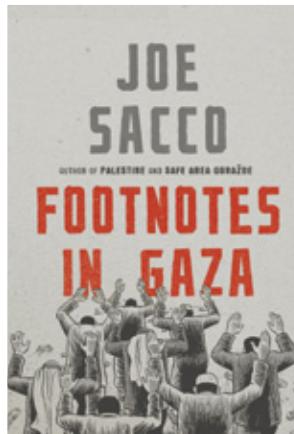
In Ireland, many children grew up reading comics from Britain and the United States that had the military as their subject matter. Comics as a medium are a good way to get children reading and develop literacy, which has been proven by the generations on this island whose interest in reading began with weekly comics like the *Beano*, *Dandy*, *Buster*, and others. For many the attraction came via wartime adventure comics.

In Britain and the USA there was a huge push for military themed comics after World War II. In the United Kingdom, DC Thomson published many wartime adventure comics, including *Victor*, *Warlord* and *Commando* comics. IPC Magazines

many war adventure strips. Again, nostalgia has kept many of the strips alive in recent years with strips in new book formats. *Charley's War*, one of the most popular of these, has been reprinted and published in lavish hardbacks by Titan Books.

Written by Pat Mills and drawn by Joe Colquhoun, the comics tell the tale of Charley Bourne who at the age of 16 (after lying about his age) joins the British Army to fight in the trenches of World War I. He soon finds himself in the Battle of the Somme. It is a comic that explores the harshness of life in the trenches. It also shows Charley's experiences as a soldier in what was a harrowing time for all.

While the British published and distributed comics on a



or Fleetway published *War Picture Library* and *Battle Picture Weekly* as well as many other comic books that featured at least one military tale as part of their comic.

Many of these British-published, weekly comics were available in Irish newsagents.

Although most of these publications ceased to exist, there has been a revival of late in military related comics. *Commando* is still published today, with four books a fortnight on a variety of military themes as well as several historical military campaigns. It has a format of 68 pages with about 135 panels per story and is in black and white. It might seem a bit odd for a comic that was first published in 1961 to be still going today with the same no-colour format but it shows no sign of stopping. These are now available digitally on iPhones and iPads on a subscription basis, so they have adapted with the times.

The tales have expanded from World War II to include tales from other periods of conflict in history. Nostalgia has also meant that collected editions of the comics have been assembled. Many tales have also been reprinted in book anthologies.

Battle Picture Weekly, or *Battle*, as it became known before it ceased publication in 1988, was a very popular comic featuring

weekly basis throughout the UK and Ireland, in the United States comic publishers distributed their comics on a monthly, or sometimes bimonthly, basis. Many publishers published some form of military comics on a regular basis until the late 1980s. The major comic publishers of military based comics in the United States were Charlton, DC Comics, Marvel and EC Comics. Each of them published anthology based comics that featured World War II settings.

Some featured tales from the Korean and the Vietnam wars. *The 'Nam*, a series of Marvel comics published from 1986 to 1993 was based on the exploits of soldiers in the Vietnam War. Like *Charley's War*, it put its fictional characters in historical events but it was also significant in that it was created by former Vietnam veterans: Larry Hama, the editor, and Doug Murray, the writer.

Sgt Rock featured in a monthly publication called *Our Army at War*, which was published by DC Comics. *Our Army at War* started in 1952 when there was a surge in war adventure comics but its title was subsequently changed to *Sgt Rock* and was usually drawn by the brilliant Joe Kubert. *Sgt Rock* led Easy Company (his fictional company of men) through many

escapades in World War II that saw Rock and his men face their enemy with gusto. As the '80s progressed however, interest in Sgt Rock and his type of comics waned.

In his time, Sgt Rock was a popular character and the imagery was drawn expertly by Joe Kubert, who also later wrote and drew the graphic novel *Fax from Sarajevo*. Kubert had been known for his fictional portrayal of war and the military for many decades but *Fax from Sarajevo* was his first step into comic journalism.

Ervin Rustemagic was Joe Kubert's European art agent in March 1992 when Serbian forces started to shell Sarajevo. Rustemagic and his family and many others were pinned down throughout the siege of Sarajevo and Rustemagic's only contact with the outside world were faxes to and from his clients abroad when he could. Rustemagic's faxes to Kubert gave a unique perspective of life of a family living through a terrible situation and Kubert produced *Fax from Sarajevo* to show the life of ordinary people trying to survive in hostile conditions.

Many other creators have published non-fiction military tales through comics. Joe Sacco is considered to be one of the greatest non-fiction comic creators alive. When staying in the Israeli-occupied parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for

maintained. *PS Magazine: The Preventive Maintenance Monthly* was started to show proper preventive maintenance methods in a comic book format.

However, this was not a new idea. In fact, Eisner had been drafted in 1942 and became head of the Art Department of *Army Motors magazine*. This publication mixed text and pictures to provide soldiers with the know-how to perform maintenance on their vehicles.

In *PS* Eisner used his skills as a cartoonist to produce a gallery of different fictional soldiers to communicate, using visual humour, how to perform skilled techniques. *PS* was to be a quick and easy way to show troops how to fulfil their duties. Today, the US Army still publishes *PS* and although the equipment it deals with is more advanced the publication still retains its comic format.

In 2011 some of Eisner's work was collected in a book called *PS Magazine: The Best of The Preventative Maintenance Monthly*. There is also a free online source of these comics available from Virginia Commonwealth University, that have issues digitally formatted from 1951 to 1971, at the following URL: <http://dig.library.vcu.edu/cdm/landing-page/collection/psm>



two months in 1991 he learned about the way of life there by interviewing Palestinians (and some Israelis). He drew his interviews and published them in Palestine as a nine-issue comic book series between 1993 and 1995. After that, Sacco travelled to Bosnia and stayed there for five months at the end of the war to do a series of reports like Palestine. Drawn from interviews with soldiers, teachers, refugees and others from every part of the community, his graphic book *Safe Area Gorazde* highlighted the effect war had on ordinary people.

He has also worked as a war comic journalist for The Guardian, having drawn two eight-page comics retelling his time in Iraq embedded with the troops like any other war journalist.

Journalism, Sacco's latest book, features some of his unique war reportage in an anthology of his work over the last few years.

There are other non-fiction applications where comics and the military have crossed paths in the past. Since 1951 the US Army has seen the benefits of comics as an educational tool for troops. Will Eisner, a comic writer and artist, was hired by the US Army to publish a comic that could provide an educational tool to show the troops how to keep their gear and equipment

Perhaps the most famous military related comic strip of all is *Beetle Bailey*, a daily strip that features in over 1,800 newspapers worldwide. The strip's main character, Bailey, is a hapless layabout stationed in Camp Swampy with a large cast of personnel, who all are inept in one way or another. It was created in 1950 by Mort Walker, who still works on it today.

Comics as a medium have always tried to tell tales that entertain, instruct and inform. War comics are full of adventure and also highlight aspects of the military for all to see. As a medium they will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. ■

Aidan Courtney has worked as a cartoonist for several publications in Ireland over the years, both north and south, covering many different subjects. He has also worked as a writer, editor and publisher of *Rírá*, an Irish language comic for kids. For more from Aidan visit: www.aidancourtney.blogspot.ie; www.facebook.com/coimici.gael

ARW MARITIME TASK UNIT



BY CPL PAUL MILLAR PHOTOS BY DF PHOTOGRAPHER

When the team surfaced there were no bubbles, they just appeared. The first thing to be seen was the black antenna of the Diver Propulsion Device (DPD), their chosen method of insertion for the day's exercise. The aerial protruded just enough to confirm their position and then the divers silently emerged to complete their Mission. The DPD extends the range and accuracy of the combat divers from the ARW Maritime Task Unit, just one of the tools and techniques that were practised during the week that the *An Cosantóir* spent with the ARW.

To position the DPD within range of the target, the operators use one of their surface delivery methods, in this case, a military specification, high-speed rigid hull inflatable boat (RHIB). One of the Rangers gave us an insight of how they work, "We have two main types of insertion; surface and sub-surface and a variety of boats to do this." The surface methods range from small inflatable dinghies and two-man kayaks to the vessels and crews of our Naval Service. However, it's how the divers operate sub-surface that marks them out as members of a Special Operations Force.

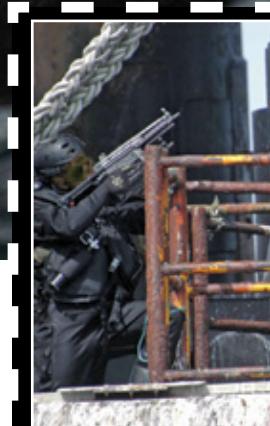
Apart from the DPD already mentioned, the Task Unit has a variety of breathing devices and equipment setups that can be adapted to suit the mission, but the teams prefer to use re-breathers. This system has defined modern day combat diving. Re-breathers are used as they leave no trace of bubbles and are virtually undetectable to many early warning systems. Every detail has been considered in opting for re-breathers, right down to their low magnetic signature which is essential for tactical reasons. The advantages offered by the re-breathers bring their own drawbacks as the pure oxygen in the system can lead to potentially lethal

oxygen toxicity if used incorrectly. This can lead to disorientation, breathing difficulties and seizures.

Everything in the Maritime Task Unit is based around the combat diver; all the equipment and techniques are geared towards maximising their effectiveness, not the other way around. The ability to function with this equipment in a claustrophobic and disorientating environment and still accomplish the mission requires continuous training and personal dedication. One lapse in focus from maintaining a basic rubber seal, navigating to a target or handling a weapon system can lead to mission failure. Listening to the combat divers describe how they train and work is motivating and contagious. This doesn't even include the hours they spend on the range or training for their counter-terrorist and green roles.

The training week to ingrain these skills in the new members of the Maritime Task Unit was described as, "high-tempo." In reality what this meant was rapid turnarounds between dives and the immediate application of lessons learned on each dive to the next one. The divers spent as much time in or on the water as they did on land. The maritime environment is an obstacle in itself, as one of the team leaders said, "Nature and the sea are unpredictable and the machines we use can be just as complicated. If you combine a complicated task or machine with the unstable and rough sea, it's only the experience and knowledge of the divers that keeps everything on track".

The simplest of tasks can be made extremely difficult. Although kitted out with dry suits, the cold is always an issue. Sometimes, divers are required to remain stationary for



Along with the other responsibilities already assigned to the ARW, the Maritime Task Unit has roles that encompass everything from the traditional role of coastal recce to countering the worldwide resurgence in piracy. But this week was about the boats, from handling them to assaulting them and all the skills and drills in between.

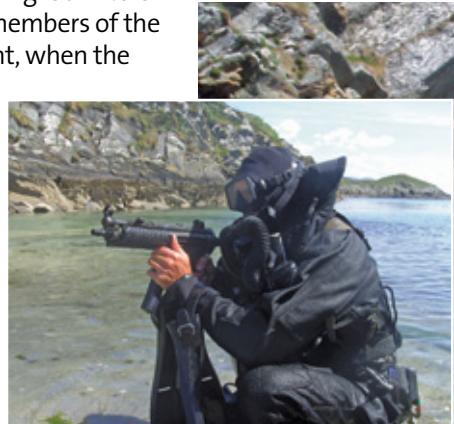
An opposed ship boarding is one task that could potentially use all of the tools and procedures available to the ARW in one operation. The methods of insertion remain the same. Practically, this could mean coordinating the arrival of teams fast roping from a helicopter, interdicting the target at high speed using RHIBs or covertly approaching for a sub-surface assault. For every problem that a particular type of ship presents, a solution has been designed and rehearsed.

Once on board, the teams move to their objectives, clearing level by level and room by room, drawing on their training and experiences in the unit to ensure that the mission succeeds. The



long periods of time, suspended in the sea, waiting for the right time to progress to the target. The aches and pains that result from this are not allowed to interfere with their mission. Numb hands and fingers are needed to shoot and cramping muscles are needed to climb ladders or fin into a recce location. A particular type of fitness and attitude is needed to overcome these discomforts.

Underwater currents and tides can be just as daunting. A combination of tide tables, charts, the latest underwater navigation tools and in some cases local knowledge are all part of the detailed research and planning that goes into each dive. There are, of course, limits to the technology. Even on a bright day visibility can be limited to one meter making it difficult to see the other members of the dive team. At night, when the combat divers perform most of their operations, the glow of a compass is all the diver has to guide him onto the target.



training and commitment necessary to pull all these variables together, the sub-surface insertion, the assault and the successful extraction, is what makes membership of the Maritime Task Unit one of the most difficult goals to achieve in the Defence Forces.

Asked why someone would choose diving as a discipline, considering it's harsh reputation, one operator replied, "it's one of the few places in the world that this type of diving is practised." With 40% of the world's population considered coastal and 90% of our trade carried by sea, there will be plenty of opportunities to practice. ■

Roger So Far?

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN

The work of the CIS (Communication and Information Services) Corps may not look as exciting as that of a 120mm heavy mortar crew or an engineer's heavy demolitions exercise, but without them the entire Defence Forces would grind to a halt. They are a small corps with a huge impact as their specialist officers, NCOs, signallers and signalwomen carry out complex behind-the-scenes jobs using highly technical, and in some cases classified, equipment. *An Cosantóir* was recently granted access to the CIS Corps, allowing us to bring you this insight into the Corp's training and capabilities.

Sgt Ken Smyth told us about the detachment commander's course and the various equipment used by the CIS on the ground; Sgmn Tom McHale-Roe and Sgwn Sarah Downey took us through the communication operatives (Com-Ops) course; and Lt Bartley McFadden gave us an insight into the world of encryption and cyber-crime.

FROM BATTALION TO HQ

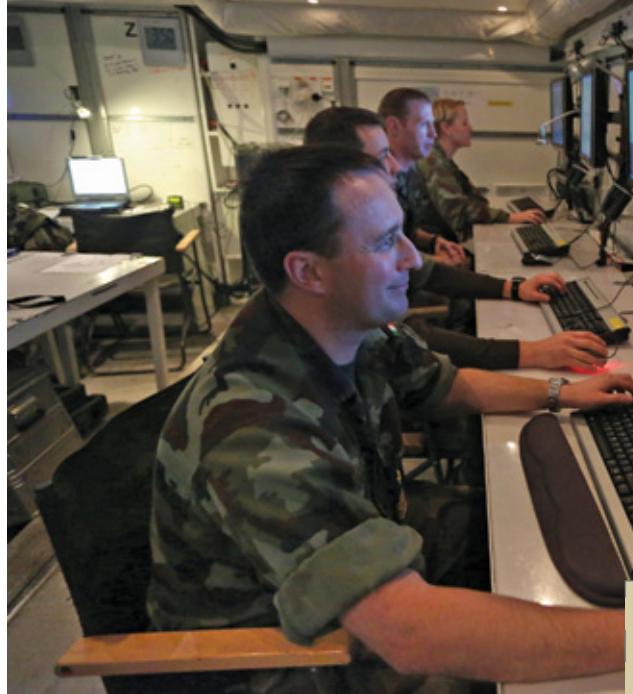
The CIS Corps provides many different services both in-barracks and on the ground. In barracks the line-crew, for example, is responsible for maintaining the telephone lines and the computer network. CIS is also responsible for the intranet, the PMS, the Helpdesk, and the SDS post throughout the country.

On the ground CIS detachments provide communications for battalion, brigade and above. The CIS detachments' trailers can be deployed as a rear-link or acting as a relay or a rebro station. Further mobility can be achieved using fitted-for-radio (FFR) vehicles or the CIS's LTAV (light tactical armoured vehicle). The Corps can also utilise the C2 container, which is a mobile command and control unit for brigade level and above that can offer encrypted telephone and data communications, internet and satellite communications.

Part of the on-the-ground equipment are the ruggedised Toughbook laptops operating the Tactical Battlefield Management System (TBMS). This system

provides file transfers, command messaging, and blue-force tracking with GPS, giving 'eyes' on Defence Forces vehicles on patrol or other CIS detachments.

Sitting in with



Cpl Jimmy Tarpey and his team of three signallers on a Detachment Commanders course, we were able to watch every vehicle and detachment operating in the Glen area on the TBMS. "In this exercise scenario we are operating with the MPs," explained Cpl Tarpey. "They are operating in a hostile environment so it is vital we monitor their positions at all times and relay any change in the situation back to Brigade HQ."

On the ground you will find regimental signallers at battalion level. These are infantry soldiers trained up to operate signal equipment at platoon-, company- and battalion-level. A CIS detachment is deployed to relay information from battalion to brigade HQ where CIS signallers will be operating from a C1 container, relaying information to staff in the C2 container.

The Detachment Commanders course is the first phase of a CIS NCOs course during which signallers go through deployment and communications training. Sgt Smyth told us, "A detachment should be operational within two hours, which includes raising a 60ft Clarke mast and the Harris tactical antenna."

Voice and data communications are carried out with SINCGARS VHF, which has a range of 35km, and Harris HF sets, which have an unlimited range. "In theory, under suitable conditions it doesn't matter how far the battalion is from brigade HQ. As long as we have HF we have comms that allow for voice and data transfer such as photographs," said Cpl Tarpey. "You see this in practise overseas, for example, where the CIS vehicle accompanying a long-range patrol would be fitted with HF, allowing for secure communications way beyond the 35km range of the SINCGARS."

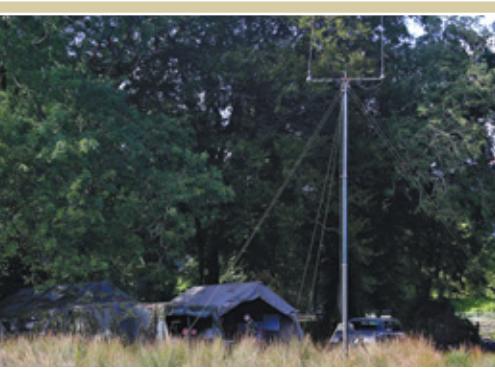
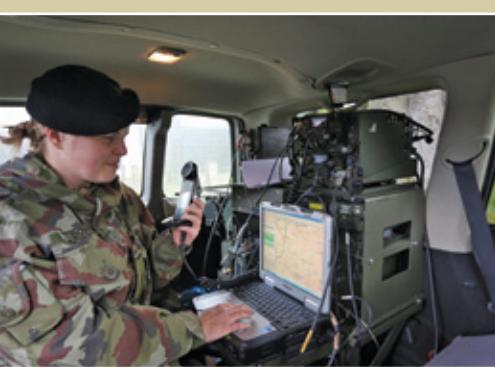
The C2 container, which is put in place by a Drops vehicle, can also be set up and operational within two hours. "The principles are the same," Sgt Smyth told us. "The detachment commander learns how to site and clear the route in and out."

The C2 container is also equipped to allow for the viewing of from a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) or from an ISTAR OP.

COM-OPS

Communications have come a long way from the





cradle-crank telephones and heavyweight radios of World War II to today's compact, lightweight and data enabled, ruggedised battlefield laptops and radios. Within the Defence Forces, the CIS personnel responsible for maintaining and operating these systems, known as Com-Ops (communication operatives), qualify after a 22-week specialist course.

Before starting the Com-Ops course all students must complete and pass an ECDL course so they are proficient in IT skills and all aspects of Microsoft Office. The technical side of the course covers areas such as learning about public address systems, batteries, the theory behind communications, electrical principles and data communications.

In the radio module of the course, first up is the SINCGARS VHF, both the 119C full-size and 119E half-size versions. This covers everything from basic operations, ERFs (Electronic Remote Fill) and MROALs (Manual Remote Over-the-Air Load), to more technical operations such as how to set up rebroadcast stations; remoting the SINCGARS; relay stations; and how to fit-out vehicles with the various radio configurations.

Students are then introduced to the ROVIS (Royal Ordnance Vehicle Intercom System), which is in use in the Mowags and LTAVs. This system allows up to six people to listen in and operate any combination of up to six different radios, for example SINCGARS, Harris, or Motorola.

Students also learn about the Harris Falcon II RF5800H MP HF radio, which is used for long distance and worldwide communications, and the Harris Falcon III 7800MP multiband radio. This is a recent addition to the CIS Corps and is a software-defined, narrow and wideband radio that offers simultaneous voice and data operations with an increased data rate that facilitates live video streaming.

The next stage of the course is the line module, which involves anything to do with the physical elements of voice and data networks in any military camp or barracks, such as telephone and data lines, outlet points, distribution boxes, comms cabinets, etc. As part of this phase students are introduced to rigging and are given the exciting opportunity to climb the 120ft communications mast in the CIS School.

The course then moves on to CommCen (communications centre) procedures, a very relevant topic as a Com-Op would conduct the majority of their duties in their brigade CommCen. This involves learning about the role of the CommCen, its organisation, procedures, dealing with messages and all the associated forms and books.

Students then move onto the TBMS referred to earlier and the Tactical Battlefield Network Configuration Application (TBNCA) that allows the operator to set-up and establishes data communication through TBMS with SINCGARS. As a Com-Op it is very important to be able to operate these applications proficiently as they are highly integral to the operation of a CommCen, cash escorts and mobile HQs.

The Com-Op students also get the opportunity to learn about some of the more complex and lesser known communications equipment used by the Defence Forces, such as the NORSAT Rapidly Deployable Satellite System; the Thuraya and Iridium satellite phones; and the BGAN (Broadband Global Area Network), which provides a highly portable, always-on connection supporting simultaneous voice and data usage.

Students participate in several on-the-ground exercises to give them the opportunity to put theory into practise.

After completing a CIS Detachment Commanders course some students, such as Sgwn Sarah Downey, go on to the CIS Technician Scheme, which is a three-year Bachelor of Engineering degree course in Electronic Engineering (Military Communications Systems), in Carlow IT.

ENCRYPTION AND CYBER-CRIME

Officers in the CIS Corps have to complete a YOs course on which many of the modules are the same as those undertaken by their enlisted colleagues. Module 2 is very similar to the Com-Ops course while Module 3 covers a number of technical areas. Here students study the physics behind radio communications, analysing VHF, HF and UHF radio waves. "We also look into IP networking, operation of the DF intranet and the encryption systems for sending classified material," Lt McFadden explained to us.

Although it is not essential, officers generally have a technical degree specific to the Corps. Lt McFadden for example has a degree in Electronic and Computer Engineering and is currently studying for an MSc in Forensic Computing and Cyber-crime Investigation.

Officers within the Corps take on different projects in order to improve their own knowledge and skills and to benefit the Corps. "Projects could relate to anything from network planning, blue-force tracking, or cyber security, to improving our interoperability with other NATO Pfp countries and UN forces," Lt McFadden said. "It is essential for all CIS personnel to maintain and further develop their skills in order to meet current demands and recognise emerging threats in the area."

CADETSHIPS

Determination, Motivation, and Resilience

Cadetships 2012/2013

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR AND A/SEA DAVEY JONES

Some people who join the Defence Forces are happy to let their career drift along, while others have set goals they want to achieve. For another group, though, there is always a drive and determination to achieve more, to seek out new challenges, to test themselves to the maximum. Four of the cadets with 89th Cadet Class have come from the ranks and jumped at the chance to face the challenges involved in becoming commissioned officers. Over a four-month period, from March to June, we met up with these cadets to find out what motivated them to leave an established career to start all over again at the bottom rung of a different ladder. We also spoke to Cadet School staff about cadetships in general.

Cadet training comprises a 15-month, intensive leadership course. It is academically, physically, and at times emotionally, demanding, and requires the cadet to reach very high standards. Over the four months that we followed the class they underwent live-fire tactical training; section-in-attacks; several ceremonial duties, including the 1916 commemoration, Arbour Hill, the International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes, and the JFK commemoration; dig-ins; regular battle PT; lectures on economics, military history,

and politics; and public relations training; among other things.

Whether a cadet has previous military service or not the demands are the same. Notwithstanding the fantastic weather in July, I'm

sure most people would have no difficulty in remembering just how cold spring was, with that continual ice-cold Baltic wind that cut through to the bone. During a three-week period at the end of March and beginning of April the cadets underwent a dig-in in the snowy, frozen ground of the Glen of Imaal; stood to attention for several hours on O'Connell Street for the 1916 Commemoration; and spent a fortnight in Kilworth on section-in-attack assessments.

Their schedule was so busy that every time we tried to arrange an interview the guys told us, half joking and half serious, that they have a break from 0100hrs to 0600hrs most days.

Anyone who may be thinking that prior service and a good leaving cert will guarantee them an easy ride should think again. Previous military experience no doubt helps, but as both Comdt Frank Flannery (OC 89th Cadet Class) and the NCO instructors explained, every cadet is treated the same no matter their background. The initial three-month induction bloc of training gets everyone up to the same standard and once cadets enter stage 2 and 3 they move into section- and platoon commander appointments, which it is unlikely any of them have covered previously.

"Our job here is to train cadets to be leaders of character and competence and turn them into efficient and effective platoon commanders," Comdt Flannery told us. "It is a very intense course and they have to have the determination, motivation and resilience to get them through it."

The members of 89th Cadet Class range in age and life-skills. Nearly the entire class have third-level qualifications, there is one school leaver, four with master's degrees, two teachers, and several with permanent or reserve military service.

"During stage one, we teach them the defence forces' ethos and culture and we bring them together for teamwork, living in the lines and working in section-level groups," Comdt Flannery continued. "That military socialisation binds them together closely, as does the difficult training. They learn that you can't do it as an individual."

"The cadets with previous service are already at a high standard, which we expect them to maintain. Generally, in stage 1 these cadets will help out the rest of their class with their induction into military life."





No matter their background, on commissioning these cadets are going to be leaders in the Defence Forces and the instructors constantly remind them of this. During a night attack in Kilworth a cadet in a command appointment was wavering due to tiredness after days on the ground. After spotting several mistakes instructor Sgt Mark Gareth said to the cadet: "In a year you'll be a platoon commander. What would you expect of a private or corporal under your command? Come on, work through the tiredness! Work through the cold!" ■

Vox Pops



Sgt Gavin Coventry (Instructor)

"Over the years we've had cadets with overseas service, NCO courses, Mowag driver courses, HGV driver courses, and so on. But during their cadetship we have to treat and instruct them all the same. For example, someone with a driver's qualification won't be called on to use it. The training is hard enough as it is without throwing another job at them. However, because we know what courses and experience they have, we expect them to keep up that high standard, which generally they do. Cadet Sweeney has excelled in every way and is now Class Captain, and after seeing Cadet Tierney putting in a section attack in Kilworth I'd say she'd pass a Ranger Wing selection course."



Cadet David Finnegan (formerly 103 Sqn, No 1 Ops Wg)

"I was in the Air Corps for six years, during which I completed my aircraft maintenance technician apprenticeship. I have a private pilot's licence and my main interest in becoming an officer is because I've always wanted to be a pilot."

"It's been a long ten months in the Curragh and although the training has been tough I've enjoyed it. Hopefully, I'll be leaving these guys after our summer leave to go back to Baldonnel for ground-school flight training in the Flight Training School. I'm really looking forward to that!"



Cadet Siobhán Tierney (formerly 2 Cav Sqn)

"I was in 2 Cav Sqn for two years and completed a ceremonial bike course. I always wanted to be an officer and applied twice previously for a cadetship. When I didn't get it the first time I applied for the recruit competition; either way I was joining up."

"The training so far has been tough but enjoyable. My previous service definitely helped in the initial phase and the academic side is ok too. But we are now entering more leadership training, which is new to all of us. For example, I'd done section-in-attack previously as a private but when you have the responsibility as section commander or 2i/c it's completely different."



Cadet Daniel Graham (formerly 6 Inf Bn and 2 Fd Eng Coy)

"I did a degree in engineering in DIT but always wanted to join the army. After training in Athlone I served in Cavan and Dublin before I felt the best way to utilise my qualification fully was to apply for a cadetship."

"I'm getting on grand although it's tough going. You'd be fooling yourself if you thought it was going to be easy just because you have previous service, although it definitely stands to you. After two years' service you begin to know how the army system works; you understand that the NCOs and officers are training you to get through the cadetship, whereas if you had no military experience an intense regime like this would be a major shock to the system."

"The cadetship focuses on teamwork so you use your experience to help others. However, now we're moving into platoon-level training and none of us have done that before."



Cadet Cathal Sweeney (formerly 4 Cav Sqn)

"I was formed-up to deploy overseas to UNIFIL when I got word that I had got a cadetship. I was delighted as I always wanted a career as an officer although I had completed a degree in anthropology and sociology in NUI Maynooth. Before joining 89th Cadet Class I had applied three times before, as I was determined to get the chance. When I got a place in a recruit platoon in Athlone I was delighted and I really enjoyed the training. I did a basic recce course and a truck driver's course while serving in 4 Cav Sqn, which was a great unit. It was the CO there that recommended me for a cadetship."

"I've no regrets making the change. Although it's very difficult and challenging, especially when you're a little bit older, you know it will be worth it in the long run. Having undergone military training before we know what the light is at the end of the tunnel."



MEETING THE MOWAGS

REPORT AND PHOTOS BY CQMS MIKE BARRETT (D COY, 7 INF BN)

The 'Single Force Concept' has seen a major reorganisation of all reserve units in the Defence Forces; many units have relocated while some have been integrated into other units. However one of the advantages in the new reserve are the opportunities to partake in types of training courses, which were until now, rare or not available.

In mid August 2013, reserve troops from D Coy, 7 Inf Bn, began a 2-day Mowag familiarisation course in Cathal Brugha Bks, Dublin. For most of the 24 reserve personnel who took part, this was their first chance to "get up close" to the 18-tonne DF vehicle.

The course with PDF instructors from 7 Inf Bn, began with classroom lectures on the characteristics of the Mowag, safety briefs and a detailed series of lessons on the comms/radio systems on the vehicle. The students were then brought outside to meet the two Mowags, which were allocated to the training.

The PDF drivers introduced all the troops to the turret and drivers station. Instruction on seating arrangements, mounting and dismounting drills, and safety aspects of the ramp followed. The drills for

dismounting and taking up tactical positions became refined with practice, before the first day's training came to a close.

The second day of the course involved more classroom lectures, on such aspects as APC Coy organisation, vehicle tactical markings, and some interesting discussions on Mowag operations.





the Mowag training



in the Reserve troops



overseas. Urban patrolling, and the need for APC-Infantry cooperation was impressed upon the troops, before they practiced some of the basic skills required - practicing around the interior of Cathal Brugha Bks.

Overall the Mowag impressed the reserve troops present, and a further course may take place for other 7 Inf Bn

reserve personnel, to update skills which may be required on future DF exercises.



CQMS Mike Barrett has been a regular contributor to *An Cosantóir* over the last few years, and uses his own camera and equipment - Nikon F80 film camera and a Nikon D5000 digital camera. He has captured the newly designated D Coy, 7th Inf Bn in live action drills. This is a great example to others who are interested in sending in a piece on their respective unit/course/exercise or chosen subject.

Green Paper on Defence Published

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR PHOTOS: DF PHOTOGRAPHERS



a specific and formulated defence policy that impacts on all our day-to-day activities.

Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr Alan Shatter TD, said: "The new White Paper on Defence will set out Ireland's defence policy for the next decade and the consultative process launched today will provide the general public and interest groups with the opportunity to input their views. The Green Paper on Defence is intended to both inform members of the public and to stimulate a mature and productive debate on Ireland's future defence policy. I encourage all interested parties, both individuals and organisations, to contribute their views. All suggestions, opinions and perspectives will be considered in the formulation of the new White Paper on Defence."

The Green Paper starts with an overview of our current roles and an explanation of where these came from and current DF programmes. There is a section on some of our specialist capabilities, including CBRN, in unique, realistic environments, and the Naval Service's lead role in a study on naval mariner training for the European Defence Agency. The latter is part of a larger initiative focusing on the pooling and sharing of skills and education within the EU to enable a more integrated, multinational approach to security.

The paper contains a plain language explanation of neutrality and the triple-lock system, from how they are defined to how they are applied in practice. Two key questions in relation to this seek to examine how we can maintain these two concepts while still being effective in collective and international missions.

From a soldiering point of view, we often forget that the Civil Defence is part of the Department of Defence. This, and references to the RDF, means that all PDF personnel will need to become a lot more knowledgeable of our domestic security partners.

The paper goes on to define what it sees as the future of our international security environment, with good

The Green Paper on Defence was launched in July by the Department of Defence (DoD). This is a consultative document that raises questions and invites answers from interested people and organisations and sets the basis of discussions for the White Paper that will establish the next era of Óglaigh na hÉireann from 2014. The White Paper on Defence in 2000 was the first such document in our history, so we are entering the second decade of

sections on the emergence of cyber crime and warfare, piracy, and the change in terrorist experience in Europe. It describes these future threats as "interconnected, more diverse, less visible and less predictable." How this re-branding of threats affects our training and deployments has been seen already and will be laid down in stone with the White Paper. It is these future projections that are of most interest, as they reflect changes to the world landscape that we as peacekeepers will have to operate in.

Sometimes it can be difficult to see the forest for the trees in terms of the tasks of the Defence Forces fitting into a bigger, more cohesive picture. The Green Paper provides a bird's-eye view of what we do and the reasons for it. While you wouldn't curl up at night with this, it is worth reading just to keep you informed of our chosen profession.

An electronic copy of the Green Paper on Defence is available on the DoD website at www.defence.ie and on the Strategic Planning Branch web page on the DF Intranet.

D COS (Ops) requests that Brigades/Formations and Corps Directors submit observations on the Green Paper on Defence to Director Strategic Planning Branch for inclusion in the Defence Forces submission on the Green Paper. Individual submissions by members of the Defence Forces can be made by e-mail to whitepaper@defenceforces.ie or by post to the address below. Hard copies of the Green Paper may be requested from the same address or by telephoning 045 49 2190. ■

The closing date for submissions is 27 September 2013. Please note that all documentation received will be subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 and may be subject to release.

White Paper on Defence,
Director of Strategic Planning
Branch,
Defence Forces Headquarters,
Station Road,
Newbridge,
Co Kildare.



MEDIA TAC-AIDE

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR

In the information age we are now in, the smallest of actions can have the largest of effects, especially in the situations that members of the Defence Forces may find themselves in on operations both at home and overseas.

The tips contained below are geared towards the escort commander, detachment IC, or private on sentry duty, for example, that may find himself, or herself, at the wrong end of a microphone at a tense time. It is not permission to conduct interviews as you see fit, rather, it is advice on how to react when you have no choice but to speak to the media.

It is the function of the Defence Forces Press Office to conduct media interviews.

Situation: An IED has detonated overseas, Irish troops have been tasked to secure the area and two Mowag APCs, with two sections, have been dispatched as an initial response. The senior section commander has established an incident control point, which is now also the first point of contact with the media. Large numbers of locals have gathered along with the national news team.

Points to note when approached by the media:

1. Are you the most senior rank present? If not, politely inform the news team that you will get your superior at the next available opportunity.
2. If you are the most senior present, get the details of the news team; who they are, contact details (think business card).
3. If approved by the Defence Forces Press Office: Remember your backdrop; do not stand in front of something that might cause embarrassment.
4. Check your appearance, dress, equipment, etc.
5. Address the journalist politely, not the camera.
6. Be mindful of security protocols.
7. Explain in plain language what is happening. Think of your mission statement, 'Defend, Protect, Support' and so on, and explain that in relation to the situation.
8. Keep it simple and short, speak distinctly and slowly.
9. If any of the questions do not relate to the immediate situation, refer the reporter to the relevant press office or next higher authority, for example the UN, EU, or Irish press section.
10. Remember, we do not comment on matters of policy and members of the Defence Forces are prohibited from speaking to the media about anything relating to their employment unless authorised by the Defence Forces Press Office.
11. If in doubt, kick it up the chain of command!



We're never far from a lens or the media even on overseas duties.



You will have to deal with the media as well as your immediate task just remember that the media team may not portray you in the best possible way!



It is the job of the press office to conduct set piece interviews but a camera and a microphone will always pop up when you least expect it.

For further information contact the Defence Forces Press Office: 00353 45 2503, press@military.ie



Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery

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Descent into Hell Operation 'Market Garden'

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA

MARKET GARDEN OPERATIONAL CAMPAIGN MAP IS PRINTED WITH KIND PERMISSION OF LABYRINTH MEDIA & PUBLISHING LIMITED

Operation 'Market Garden' in September 1944 was one of the boldest and most controversial operations of World War II. A two-part assault by a British armoured column and a three-division Allied airborne drop was planned to secure vital roads and bridges in occupied Holland. Propponents of the plan said that if the operation succeeded the war would be over by Christmas 1944. However, the securing of the bridge in the town of Arnhem was to prove an objective too far.

The brainchild of Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, a successful Operation 'Market Garden' would gain Allied entry into Germany over the Rhine and by punching a hole through the German defence line would threaten the industrial heart of Germany, the Ruhr.

The plan involved airborne troops capturing and securing vital bridges over the Meuse River and two arms of the Rhine, the Waal and Lower Rhine, as well as capturing three towns: Eindhoven, Nijmegen and Arnhem.

The plan of action consisted of two distinct operations. In 'Market' airborne forces from Lt Gen Lewis H Brereton's First Allied Airborne Army were to seize bridges and other terrain.

In the 'Garden' operation, ground forces of the Second Army were to move north, spearheaded by XXX Corps, under Lt Gen Brian Horrocks.

The US 101st Airborne Division under Maj Gen Maxwell D Taylor, would drop in two locations just north of XXX Corps to secure the bridges northwest of Eindhoven at Son and Veghel. The US 82nd Airborne Division, under Brigadier General James M Gavin, would drop and secure the bridges at Grave and Nijmegen.

The British 1st Airborne Division under Maj Gen Roy Urquhart, with the Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade under Brig

Gen Stanislaw Sosabowski, was detailed with capturing the road bridge at Arnhem and the rail bridge at Oosterbeek.

The 52nd (Lowland)

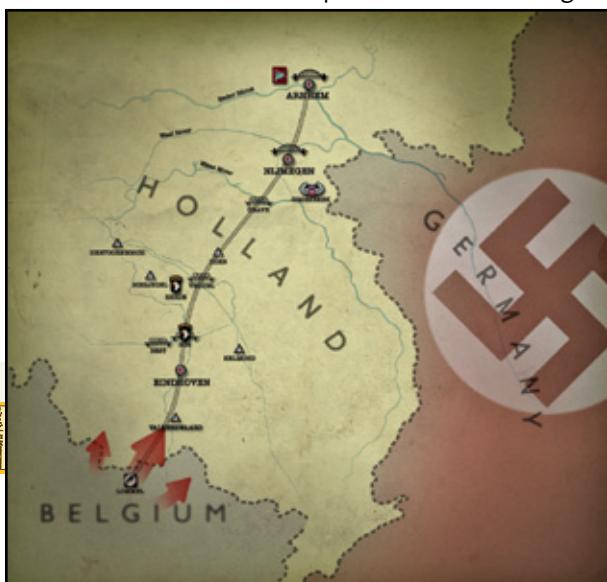
Division would be transported by air to the captured Delen airfield on day five of the operation. Ten thousand airborne troops would descend in Holland in order to secure the objectives.

Allied ground forces spearheaded by the Guards Armoured Division would race to support each airborne unit, assisting them in securing and holding their targets. The tree-lined, double track that the armoured column was to race along ran through countryside that was almost entirely flat and devoid of cover. It was partly sandy soil or drained bogland broken by orchards, small copses, narrow streams and ditches; terrain that was unsuitable for a massed armoured advance. Intelligence reports stated that the German army in the area was exhausted and that there would be little resistance. It was envisaged that the airborne elements, having secured their objectives, would have to hold out for 48 hours before being relieved by ground forces.

The operation began at 23.00 hours on the night of Saturday 16th September when squadrons of bombers struck German airfields in Holland. The following day, hundreds of Dakota transport planes packed with paratroopers and equipment took off from airfields in England for their drop zones in Holland. Many other troops packed into gliders and were towed to their destinations. A shortage of air transport resulted in the Allied forces being dropped in relays instead of being dropped en masse.

On the 17th September, the first air drops took place along a corridor north of Eindhoven. The US 101st Airborne Division secured bridges from Eindhoven to Veghel, while the US 82nd Airborne secured bridges from Grave to Nijmegen. At the same time the British 1st Airborne Division secured Arnhem Bridge and the high ground to the north. However, unknown to those forces that had just landed, elements of the elite 2nd SS Panzer Corps were in the area refitting and were immediately called into action. The initial successes of the Allies were threatened by the German troops who rallied rapidly and held off any advances Allied troops tried to make across the bridge.

Having received reports of an Allied air drop, German Field Marshall Walter Model immediately deduced the Allied objective and ordered the 9th SS Panzer Division to Nijmegen. Allied troops were soon in action against well equipped and determined German units. During the operation, the Germans recovered a copy of the 'Market Garden' plan from the



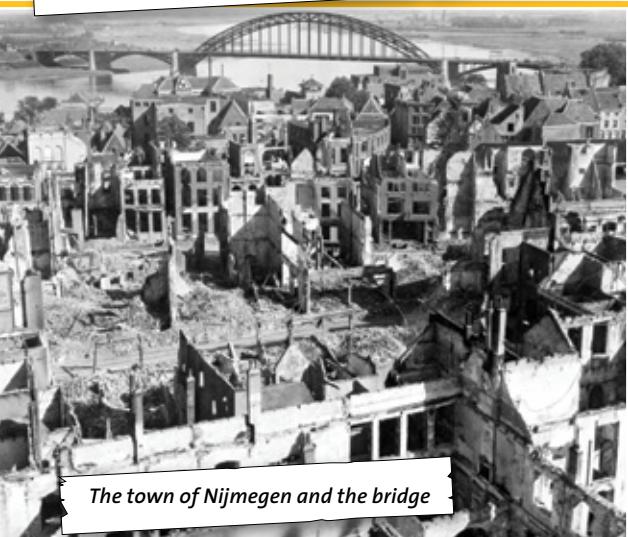
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DVD cover and image taken from the movie 'A Bridge Too Far' (1977) depicting a German attempt to take back the Arnhem Bridge. © MGM/United Artists - All Rights Reserved.



The town of Nijmegen and the bridge



Mass deployment of paratroopers

corpse of an American officer who should not have been carrying the top secret information into combat. Using this information, Model identified the Allied drop zones and immediately concentrated his forces in these areas. Armoured German units attacked British forces in Arnhem, smashing their way across the bridge. Armed with only light weapons, the British paratroopers fought with great tenacity, holding up countless German counter-attacks. The British troops were also hampered by a loss of communications between the bridge at Arnhem and Divisional Headquarters. Radios that had been issued did not have the required ranges and some were set to different frequencies.

As Allied ground forces made their way to relieve those airborne elements holding the bridges they were met by a determined and well entrenched enemy who knocked out many tanks with their 88mm guns, seriously delaying the advance. In addition, air support was unable to help due to bad weather. On Monday September 18th the second airlift was postponed for a number of hours due to poor weather. In the days that followed other lifts were to be cancelled as well, leaving those on the ground short of men and supplies.

Having suffered heavy casualties the Germans began to bombard the town with heavy artillery and mortar fire. German SS units and British paratroopers clashed in the ruined houses of Arnhem. With little or no hope of being relieved by ground forces, British forces decided to attempt a withdrawal. Instead of being relieved after 48 hours, British paratroopers had been cut off for nine days. Any attempt by the Allies to try and relieve the beleaguered 1st Airborne was hurled back by German troops. As a result of these failures, it was decided to withdraw the remnants of the 1st Airborne from its bridgehead on the northern side of the Rhine. At dawn

on Monday September 25th, the 1st Allied Airborne Division received their orders to withdraw from their positions. However, the withdrawal could only be carried out under the cover of darkness and German attacks threatened to cut off the British line of withdrawal.

Fierce fighting took place throughout the day and at 2200hrs the planned withdrawal took place, with a small rear-guard covering the evacuation across the Rhine. British paratroopers, holding the north end of Arnhem Bridge surrendered their positions as soon as the evacuation was complete. Montgomery's daring plan had failed.

To this day, Operation 'Market Garden' has remained a controversial battle. Allied tactics and strategy have been debated and questioned with some stating that the operation was 90% successful while others deemed it an unmitigated disaster. Although other parachute drops took place before the war ended, Operation 'Market Garden' remained the only attempt by the Allies to use airborne forces to penetrate deep behind enemy lines. Of the 10,000 men involved in the operation less than 2,000 managed to get back to Allied lines.

Far from the war ending by Christmas 1944, northern Holland would not see liberation until the spring of 1945. Arnhem had proved to be 'a bridge too far'. ■

About the author: Paul O'Brien MA is an Irish historian, author and regular contributor to *An Cosantóir*. He has published five books on 1916; 'Blood on the Streets: 1916 and the Battle for Mount Street Bridge', 'Uncommon Valour: 1916 and the Battle for the South Dublin Union', 'Crossfire: The Battle of the Four Courts 1916' and 'Field Of Fire: The Battle of Ashbourne 1916'. His fifth book 'Shootout: The Battle for St Stephen's Green 1916' was reviewed in our July/August 2013 issue. www.paulobrienauthor.ie

STORY HISTORY



HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

New York's Irish Military College

BY DES GILHAWLEY AND COMDT GERRY JORDAN (28 INF BN) PHOTOS COURTESY OF MILITARY ARCHIVES

Many articles have appeared in *An Cosantóir* mentioning the Irish heritage of the famous Fighting 69th Regiment of New York. This month we look at the historical links between the famous US regiment and the Defence Forces through the life and times of Jeremiah J "Ginger" O'Connell.

Ginger O'Connell played an important role in the run up to the Easter Rising and in the War of Independence, before going on to hold a number of senior positions in the new Free State Army until his untimely death in 1944.

Born in Ballina, Co Mayo, in 1887 he moved with his family to Sligo when he was five. His father was a school inspector and the family moved many times, but the family home remained in Sligo at Cranmore. Ginger attended secondary school at St Mel's College, Longford, and then at Clongowes College, Kildare. In 1909 he graduated from the Royal University of Ireland with a BA, followed by an MA in philosophy from University College Dublin in 1912.

From an early age, O'Connell was a student of military affairs and planned a military career. Anticipating that there would be fighting to establish an independent Irish State he decided that he must prepare himself for the fight by becoming a trained soldier. He first thought of the Austrian or German army, but he found out he would face a stiff examination through German – which he didn't know.

A letter by his sister recalls: "He wanted to learn soldiering. He would not join the British Army, so he decided

to go to America and learn it there." Accordingly, he arrived at Ellis Island on 3 August, 1912.

A letter by a friend recalls that O'Connell "having tramped all the eastern Atlantic states from Connecticut to Virginia inclusive" then

joined the Fighting 69th Regiment in New York: "Meagher's old Civil War regiment," according to O'Connell himself. The New York National Guard muster rolls for 1912 show that 'Jeremiah Joseph O'Connell' enlisted in the 69th Regiment, Company L on 20 September 1912.

For O'Connell, with his interest in independence and military affairs, to travel to America and join a US Army unit would be to follow in the footsteps of many of his countrymen. There was a long tradition of Irishmen going to (in the words of the Fenian John O'Mahony in 1857) "an Irish military school in the US to learn the trade of the soldier and then return to fight for Ireland's freedom."

If some US military units could be regarded as 'Irish military schools', the Fighting 69th in New York could rightly be regarded as the 'Irish military college'. A private study of Irish revolutionary personalities associated with the 69th Infantry Regiment provides a list of approximately 110 names. Two of its most illustrious graduates were Ginger O'Connell and John T Prout; both of whom played an important part in the War of Independence.

At the request of Seán MacDiarmada, Ginger returned to Ireland in November 1914 and joined the Irish Volunteers. By January 1915 he was appointed full-time organiser/instructor and in that capacity he toured much of Ireland, while also writing for the Irish Volunteer newspaper and giving tactical lectures to Na Fianna. Throughout 1915 and early 1916 he ran volunteer training camps, making a valuable contribution to the militarisation of the movement.

Like MacNeill, O'Connell opposed the Easter Rising, travelling with MacNeill and Hobson to confront Pearse on Holy Thursday 1916. Subsequently, MacNeill sent O'Connell to Cork and the South-East to call off the Rising.

After the Rising he was arrested and interned, spending time in Wandsworth Prison with Arthur Griffith. On release from Lewis Gaol in mid-1917, O'Connell returned to Sligo and became OC Sligo Volunteers.



September 17th 1862, Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg), Maryland. Father Corby gives absolution in front of the 69th New York Regiment.

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In late 1919 he left for Dublin to become director of training for the Dublin Brigade. Later he was appointed a member of the GHQ staff and he was assistant chief of staff during the War of Independence.

When the Provisional Government was set up at the start of 1922, he was appointed assistant chief of staff of the new National Army with the rank of lieutenant-general and given the task of training up the new army.

By May 1922, O'Connell was in command of the 3rd Southern Division with the special Curragh area attached. The event of his military career that probably gave him most satisfaction took place on 16 May 1922 when, representing the National Army, he took over the Curragh Camp from the British. The enormous tricolour flown from the Water Tower on that day, measuring 150" x 243", remained in the possession of the O'Connell family for many years before it was given into the care of the army.

O'Connell was also central to the incident that most people consider to be the opening engagement of the Civil War. It was O'Connell's kidnapping by the IRA detachment occupying the Four Courts that was apparently the last straw for the Free State authorities who ordered the bombardment of the building.

After the Civil War O'Connell continued his military career, with most of it spent as GOC Curragh Command, although he was also the first OiC Military Archives.

In 1926, the first overseas mission by an Irish Army delegation took place to the USA. This delegation was led by Major General Hugh MacNeill. Given the many links of history, heritage and personal connection between the Fighting 69th and Ireland, it is appropriate to remember the contribution made by Ginger O'Connell. This year is particularly appropriate, considering that it marks the centenary of his return to Ireland, bringing with him the soldiering skills he had acquired with the Fighting 69th; skills that he spread throughout the Irish Volunteers and which helped to transform the movement into a military force capable of fighting a war of independence. ■

This year is the 50th Anniversary of US President John Fitzgerald Kennedy's official visit to Ireland. During his visit to Leinster House in 1963, President Kennedy, on behalf of the 69th Regiment of New York, presented a flag, the actual Second Colour 'green flag' of the 'Fighting 69th' New York Volunteer Infantry, the First Regiment of 'Meagher's' Irish Brigade of the US Army of the Potomac (one part of the historic lineage of the 69th Regiment of New York) to the people of Ireland. [The First Colour green regimental flag was shot full of holes in battle, mostly at Antietam (Sharpsburg) on 17 September 1862 (the bloodiest single day in American history); the Second Colour was not delivered until the day after the heroic assault upon Marye's Heights at the Battle of Fredericksburg, 13 December 1862, or it might have suffered a similar fate.] This flag, which is displayed in Leinster House, is one of the most significant artefacts relating to the Irish experience of the American Civil War.

The authors would like to thank Col James P Tierney (retd), Honorary Colonel of the Fighting 69th Regiment, for his valuable assistance in the preparation of this article.

No of Absent	No of Present	NAME	DAYS ON WHICH IN FULL, CHRISTIAN NAME LAST	Days or Intervals on which on Service or Leave or Leave of Absence			Avg no of Leave or Leave of Absence
				Days	Months	Years	
1	2	Musician	Matthews, John	✓✓✓			19
2	2		Sheehan, Patrick	✓✓			38
3	2						
4	2	Private	Bartley, James Francis	✓✓			19
5	2		Brennan, Michael Francis	✓✓			19
6	2		Blacks, John Francis	✓✓			19
7	2		Brown, James Joseph	✓✓			19
8	2		Deville, Charles William	✓✓			48
9	2		Devine, William	✓✓			48
10	2		Farren, James Edward	✓✓			44
11	2		Fitzgerald, Edward Francis	✓✓			44
12	2		Healy, John	✓✓			44
13	2		Hickey, Michael Joseph	✓✓			44
14	2		Hickey, Peter John	✓✓			44
15	2		Hickey, William	✓✓			44
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Defence Forces Mountain Marathon

BY LT RONAN LAMBE (BPEO, 2 BDE HQ)
PHOTOS PTE DAVE HOGARTY (2 BDE HQ)

The 2 Bde Mountain Marathon took place on June 19th. The event, organised by McKee Bks Gym staff and BPEO 2 Bde, was open to all members of the Defence Forces and 93 competitors took part, with 40 completing the long course and 53 completing the short course.

The long course (32km) started at 0900hrs outside Enniskerry and followed the Wicklow Way before diverting to cross Djouce, then on to Kippure, Seefingan and Corrig before finishing in Kilbride Camp. The first four-man team home, in a time of 4hrs 47mins, was from 27 Inf Bn and comprised Lt Donnacha Reilly (captain) and Ptes Flannery, Erasmus, Leonard.

The winners of the eight-man section of the long course were Cpl McGillion (captain) and Tprs

Lowry, Mooney, Gibney, Monahan, O'Connor, Conlon and Cahalan of 2 Cav Sqn with a time of 5hrs 18min.

The short course (12km) started on the Military Road entrance to Kippure at 1200hrs and brought the 53 competitors over Kippure, Seefingan, Corrig and into Kilbride Camp. The two-man short course winners were Ptes McEvoy and McGuigan from 27 Inf Bn in a time of 1hr 29mins, closely followed by Ptes O'Hare and Pentony, also of 27 Inf Bn, in a time of 1hr 32min.

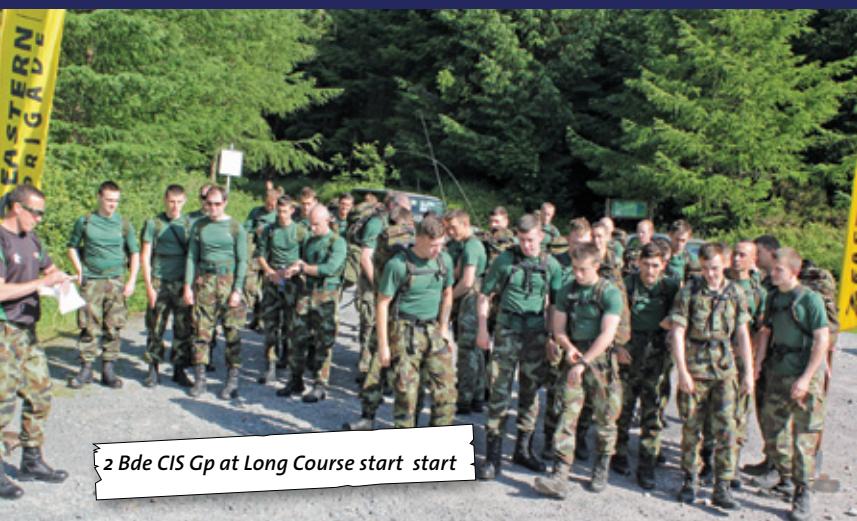
Other notable winners were Pte Brien (TIS) who won the Men's Veterans short course in 1hr 25min; Pte Dorothy (12 Inf Bn) who won the Women's Open short course in 1hr 57mins; and Tpr McCarthy (2 Cav RDF) won the Men's Open in 1hr 23mins. ■



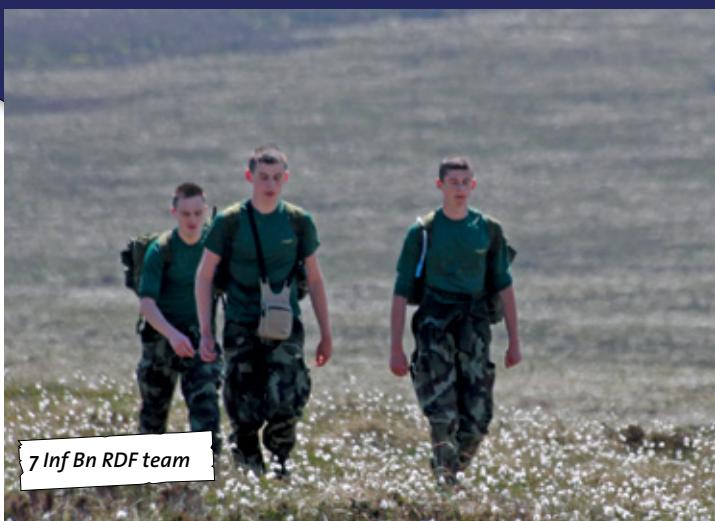
Long Course



Short Course



2 Bde CIS Gp at Long Course start



7 Inf Bn RDF team



SPORT

SPORTS ROUND-UP

33

Defence Forces Mountain Marathon Results



Long Course Eight-Man Team

1st 2 Cav Sqn 5.18.22

Long Course Four-Man Team

1st	27 Inf Bn	4.47.50
2nd	6 Inf Bn	4.54.00
3rd	2 Cav Sqn	4.56.36
4th	27 Inf Bn	5.16.10
5th	7 Inf Bn	5.56.33
6th	7 Inf Bn RDF	5.57.11

Short Course Two-Man Team

1st	27 Inf Bn	1.29.07
2nd	27 Inf Bn	1.39.13
3rd	27 Inf Bn	1.40.26
4th	27 Inf Bn	1.46.31
5th	7 Inf Bn	1.48.31
6th	12 Inf Bn	1.51.22
7th	7 Inf Bn	1.53.13
8th	12 Inf Bn	1.57.19
9th	2 Ord	1.59.04
10th	7 Inf Bn RDF	2.03.39
11th	2 Ord	2.04.47
12th	7 Inf Bn RDF	2.16.05
13th	ACHQ	2.23.47
14th	12 Inf Bn	2.45.05

Short Course Women's Open

1st	Pte Dorothy (12 Inf Bn)	1.57.00
2nd	Lt Wilson Higgins (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00
2nd	Lt McMorrow (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00
2nd	Swmn Short (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00
2nd	Sgt Mahon (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00

Short Course Men's Open

1st	Tpr McCarthy (2 Cav RDF)	1.23.42
2nd	Capt Knight (7 Inf Bn)	1.28.53
3rd	Capt Gleeson (McKee Bks Coy)	1.32.19
4th	Lt Buwalda (2 CIS)	1.33.00
5th	Sgmn Phelan (DFHQ CIS Coy)	1.34.07
6th	Sgt O'Neill (Ord Gp)	1.39.05
7th	Pte Murphy (2 CIS)	1.43.37
8th	Pte Levins (7 Inf Bn)	1.44.19
9th	Lt McNally (2 CIS)	1.45.04
10th	Sgmn Murphy (DFHQ CIS Coy)	1.45.08
11th	Cpl McCarthy (7 Inf Bn RDF)	1.45.16
12th	Cpl McKenna (Ord Gp DFTC)	1.53.59
13th	Pte O'Neill (Tpt Gp)	2.00.00
13th	Pte Tynan (Tpt Gp)	2.00.00
13th	Pte Hernon (Tpt Gp)	2.00.00
16th	Pte Rochford (2 Ord Coy)	2.04.51
17th	Pte Brennan (7 Inf Bn RDF)	2.20.39
18th	Lt Col Hanna (MPC)	2.22.42
19th	Sgt Reynolds (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00
19th	Sgt Guilfoyle (DFHQ CIS Coy)	3.00.00

Short Course Men's Vets (40+)

1st Pte Brien (TIS)



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GEAR REVIEW

5.11 TACTICAL - RAPID ASSAULT SHIRT

COLOUR: BLACK

SIZE: MEDIUM

PRICE: €69.95

The manufacturer says...

The new Rapid Assault Shirt is the perfect addition to 5.11's popular Tactical Duty Uniform. We have worked with a team of law enforcement officers and military personnel across the country to develop the ultimate combat shirt for tactical use. The body fabric is a lightweight poly/cotton/spandex knit that wicks perspiration and dries quickly. Engineered side mesh panels improve airflow, keeping you cool. With premium stretch the torso is form fitting without being tight or restrictive.

Flat lock seams reduce chafing and maximize comfort for wear under body armour. The saddle shoulder construction allows for maximum range of motion for all operations. The sleeves are constructed of a tough poly/cotton ripstop with articulated, reinforced elbows. Large, dual shoulder pockets provide additional storage capacity. The Rapid Assault Shirt has a half zip entry with a woven collar that can be worn up or down. We've considered every detail in designing the perfect addition to your Tactical Uniform.

Our reviewer Cpl (Army Ranger Wing) says...

The 5.11 tactical shirt is a great design, and its now being used by many different clothing companies as an under body armor system. However the quality of the 5.11 shirt is very good, fits great, it is tight but not constricting (doing what it's meant to do). The design to keep cool definitely works very well as I tested it in the recent warm weather we had, and it did keep me relatively cool. It is designed more to take sweat away from the body and does this job equally well. Again the breathability of this shirt ties into the 'keeping cool' attribute that the shirt gives and the thin material that is used on the torso is made to do such.

The elbows on the shirt are ok, but could definitely be improved with a small amount of additional padding for lying on the ground or prone shooting. Durability is very good but I was expecting it to be as the 5.11 brand is known for - making good robust clothing for operators. Overall it's a very good under body armor shirt that does what it says on the tin.

Fit 9 - Breathability 9 - Reinforced Elbows 7 - Durability 8



5.11 TACTICAL - SPORTS BOXER BRIEF

COLOUR: BLACK

SIZE: LARGE

PRICE: €29.95

The manufacturer says...

The Sports Briefs are very comfortable and designed to keep you dry even under heavy athletic activity. 5.11's trademark 3D Wicking; technology pulls moisture away from the body then promotes quick evaporation. If you are looking for a comfortable pair of under shorts, the 5.11 Sports Briefs will fit the bill.

The 5.11 Sports Briefs are cut for an athletic fit and are built with state-of-the-art fabrics and manufacturing processes. Designed for an active lifestyle, the Sports Briefs are a perfect complement to your uniform. The three-dimensional fibre design keeps you dry and comfortable even under the most arduous activities. Our fabric blend of 95% polyester and 5% spandex is perfect for any type of wear providing a stretchable, comfortable and breathable pair of under shorts.

Our reviewer Sgt Mick Burke (DFHQ CIS) says...

I tested the Sports Boxer brief over the last month in all types of weather especially the last month of great sunshine. I wore the briefs mainly playing golf and when I did my daily constitutional walk. I have to agree with what it says on the pack. It takes the moisture away from the body while still maintaining a comfortable breathable feeling and this was very noticeable when temperatures reached the high twenties.

They certainly reduce chafing of the legs and are designed to look like day to day briefs, with its front opening for "functional toilet breaks" which is missing from many other sports briefs. They came through many washes without losing their shape or compression. The only downside is the price in comparison to other brands but once you start to wear them it's hard to try anything else.



Comfort & Fit 10 - Moisture

Wicking Fabric 9 - Durability 10 - Price 7



COMPETITION

- This month Team-Alpha is offering a €100 Voucher to be used on their website www.team-alpha.ie.
- For a chance to win this prize please answer the following question:
- How much are the 5.11 Covert Cargo Khaki Pants on the team-alpha website?
- Answers on a postcard to An Cosantóir's regular address or by email to subs@military.ie, closing date 20 September 2013. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.
- Last month's winner of a €100 voucher for Team-Alpha.ie was Michael Dalton, Co Cork.



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**THIS SEPTEMBER FOR
CHILDHOOD CANCER AWARENESS**

Our goal is to create awareness of childhood cancer. In September as part of a worldwide cancer awareness campaign, we will light Ireland's buildings up **GOLD**.

Without awareness, many hundreds of children in Ireland will be left to suffer through severe and toxic treatments, which can cause lifelong health issues. 1 in 5 will die within five years and depending on the type and stage of their cancer, they could have a much lower chance of survival. We believe children with cancer deserve to suffer less and survive more.

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Application Forms Available from
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Lucan
Hollingsworth cycles
Stillorgan/Tempelogue
Cycle Starts 0915Hrs

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NOTICEBOARD

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

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

Payable Orders are being abolished as a method of payment from **30 August, 2013** under the Public Service Reform Plan. This decision is being implemented by all Government Depts and public bodies. After that date, public service pensions will be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) only. In order to ensure continued payment of pension when Payable Orders cease to issue, DoD have been seeking banking account details from the remaining small number of military pensioners who are currently being paid by Payable Order. Now just a few weeks away from the deadline, the 'closedown' date for the September pensions payroll is **12th/13th of September**. If you are aware of anyone who has not yet made the move to EFT, please encourage them to make the necessary arrangements, by providing their bank account details so that we can pay their pension by EFT in September. If you need to discuss this please contact Martin Hughes at 091-743811.

Artillery

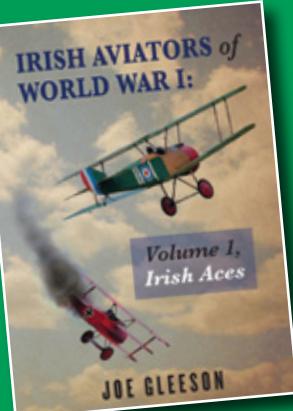
AIR	ARTILLERY
BATTERIES	DEFENCE
FIELD	FIRE
INDIRECT	REGIMENT
RUAG	SURVEY

SEPTEMBER Q&A COMPETITION

1. What year did O.N.E. start providing residential facilities in Dublin (this issue)?

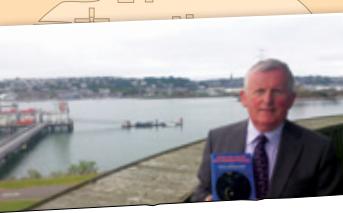
Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email subs@military.ie for a chance to win *Irish Aviators of World War I: Volume 1, Irish Aces* by Joe Gleeson (reviewed this month).

Last month's winner of a signed copy of *Shootout: The Battle for St Stephen's Green, 1916* by Paul O'Brien was Gerard Morrissey, Co. Wexford. Closing date 19 September 2013.



BOOK

RADAR AND AIS FOR WATCHKEEPING OFFICERS



Author Daire Brunicardi is pictured at the NMCI, in Ringaskiddy Cork.

Author: Lt Cdr Daire Brunicardi (Retd), BSc (Hons), Master Mariner
Publisher: Brown, Son & Ferguson Ltd (December, 2012)
Pages: 440 Hardback
ISBN: 978-1849270274
Price: €58.69



FEW DEVELOPMENTS IN the maritime sphere have been as ground-breaking as the development of radar and AIS (automatic identification system) since WWII. Their introduction has fundamentally altered how navigation is conducted, and it would be unthinkable nowadays to go to sea without either. Drawing on his wealth of experience, firstly in the Naval Service and later at Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI), Daire Brunicardi has produced a book that should be considered essential reading for anyone considering, or in the early stages of a career at sea as a ship's watchkeeping officer.

The information is presented in an easily understood manner, and illustrations allow an appreciation of what to expect when operating at sea. It covers basic radar principles at length, which gives a very firm grounding in radar operations. It expands on the various sections that comprise a modern radar system at sea, from the transmitter and scanner to the receiver and display.

The author discusses the various techniques that are applied when navigating a vessel using radar, with reference to collision avoidance and target tracking. Though visual pilotage remains the primary means of navigation in coastal waters, especially with the Naval Service, in cases where this is not possible, in restricted visibility at night, etc., radar comes into its own. The use of parallel indexing and concentric indexing techniques are covered in depth, with almost 50 radar plotting exercises that allow the mariner to hone his, or her, skills.

Modern developments that are having far-reaching effects on radar navigation are not ignored either. The integration of radar with electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) and AIS has had a dramatic effect on the amount of information that is presented to the modern deck officer. The author remains positive with regard to these developments though cautions against over-reliance on these new systems to the detriment of the more traditional radar navigational skills.

This is an informative read that should be carried by all watchkeepers, regardless of rank, such is its comprehensiveness and attention to detail on a subject that is instrumental to the trade that we ply.

Review by S/Lt Niall McCarthy, BA (Hons), BSc (Hons), MA (Hons)

BOOK

IRISH AVIATORS OF WORLD WAR I: VOLUME 1, IRISH ACES

Author: Joe Gleeson

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (April, 2013)

Pages: 472

ISBN: 978-1480082328

Price: €16.90



THIS BOOK, CONTAINING brief biographies of 37 Irish aviation aces (an 'ace' is a pilot or other crew member who has destroyed five or more enemy aircraft) of the Great War, is a work of serious scholarship compiled by Joe Gleeson.

Each chapter heading details the birth and death dates of the subject aviator, awards attained, and religious affiliation. A further part of the book carries similar biographies on 'unconfirmed' Irish aces, that is, those successful aerial combatants who were not shown to have attained five aerial victories.

Particularly of interest to those of a military bent is the tracing of the progress of each ace through his regular unit, as most would have transferred to the RFC from the army. For the rest, the human interest stories and anecdotes that permeate almost every page are of endless fascination.

Review by Martin Wade

Anyone who has a passing interest in the Great War will probably know of Edward "Mick" Mannock, arguably the greatest RAF pilot of all time, and perhaps Oscar Heron and James Fitzmaurice, pioneering officers of the Free State Air Service, the forerunner of Irish Air Corps of the present day. These are just a small selection of the many interesting characters that populate the pages of Joe Gleeson's excellent book.

After finishing this book I am looking forward to reading Volume 2 (the Irish contribution to the Royal Naval Air Service) and Volume 3 (the RFC and the RAF).

Dublin-born Joe Gleeson holds BA degrees in History & Politics and Political History & Political Theory. He took a career break from the Civil Service to research this book, a labour of love assiduously undertaken, as evidenced by the list of sources acknowledged in the preface.

BOOK

ONCE IN ANOTHER WORLD

Author: Brendan John Sweeney
Publisher: New Island (May 2013)
newisland.ie
ISBN: 978-1848402331
Price: €12.99
Pages: 241



BRENDAN SWEENEY'S DEBUT novel has received rave reviews from his literary colleagues and readers alike. Set in Dublin in 1937 when the young Irish Free State is still finding its feet and the

rest of Europe is amass with spies and espionage leading up the outbreak of World War II. The story concerns an idealistic young IRA recruit called Holland and Sabine, a Jewish refugee he is ordered to spy on.

Holland gets a job chauffeuring a shady Hungarian businessman, Farkas, in order to get close to Sabine who is Farkas's secretary.

What follows is an engaging love story with plenty of action thrown in for good measure, set during a very interesting period of our history.

When events start to spiral out of control Holland and Sabine go on the run to England. However, Holland's closest friend from the IRA is soon hot on their trail, leading to an action-filled climax.

Brendan Sweeny is originally from Co Cavan and now lives in Sweden. As a journalist he worked for the Sunday Press and travelled throughout Europe, picking up languages as he went and writing articles on subjects as diverse as violence in Danish supermarkets and the influence of Celtic myths on Scandinavian literature. 'Once in Another World' was inspired by his MA dissertation on the topic of IRA films, and by his abiding interest in myth, nationalism and the roots of political violence.

DVD

THE COLONY



Director: Jeff Renfroe

Starring: Laurence Fishburne, Bill Paxton, Kevin Zegers, Charlotte Sullivan, John Tench, Atticus Dean Mitchell, Dru Viergever and Romano Orzari

Runtime: 1hr 35mins **Release Date:** 25 October 2013

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED by Jeff Renfroe, 'The Colony' is a post-apocalyptic action-packed thriller filmed inside the former NORAD base. Filmed with many similarities to 'The Thing' and 'The Day After Tomorrow', 'The Colony' is an enjoyable sci-fi action film.

In what is claimed as the next ice age, the survivors are forced underground; struggling with plague like flu they form a colony in an underground bunker. Led by a firm but fair leader, Briggs (Fishburne) enforces the rules as they were passed down. Throw into the mix an antagonist, as a sub-plot Mason (Paxton) has his own plans of how the colony should be run.

The colony forms an alliance with surrounding outposts, on receiving a mayday call a search team is sent to Outpost 5 to check on them. After a day and half's journey in zero temperatures the trio arrive at Outpost 5 to find a threat more terrifying than death by freezing – a ravenous band of flesh tearing cannibals. Who hack and slash their way through colonies in hours. After the failed rescue attempt our main hero Sam (Zegers) makes his way back to the colony with the remainder of the savage posse on his tail – looking to finish the job.



GEARS OF WAR: JUDGEMENT

Microsoft Studios

18
www.pegi.info

EPIC GAMES



GEARS OF WAR: Judgement is a prequel to the original Gears of War Trilogy – we are taken back before the events to the immediate aftermath of 'Emergence Day'. Damon Baird leads Kilo Squad, accompanied by Augustus 'The Cole Train' Cole; they fight to save the city of Halvo Bay from the most unstoppable enemy yet in the Gears of War universe.

With the introduction of a variety of new multiplayer experiences, including OverRun, a thrilling new class-based competitive mode that will pit Locust and COG soldiers in a head-to-head battle unlike anything Gears fans have experienced yet. An objective-oriented mode that lets five-player teams alternate between playing as Locusts and COG soldiers. This new system ensures that each encounter is unique and new because types, timing and locations of enemies change with each new encounter.

<http://gearsofwar.xbox.com/>

Genre: Third Person Shooter - **Platform:** Xbox 360 - **PEGI:** 18 - **Price:** €54.97 (gamestop.ie). **Released:** 22 Mar 2013. © 2013 Microsoft Corporation & Epic Games. All Rights Reserved.

NAME
RANK
UNIT

EAMON CAHILL

CAPT

G7 TRAINING CELL, 1 BDE HQ



I am a staff officer in 1 Bde Training Cell. The cell consists of a lieutenant colonel, a commandant, two captains (training & BPEO), a sergeant and a corporal. It is our job to co-ordinate, support and assist all training within the brigade; that includes brigade training courses, LFTT, Brigade Lessons Learned Cell, competitions and assistance to Defence Forces courses.

1 Bde covers an extensive area from the south-west to the west-coast of Galway and contains four main barracks: Collins Bks, Cork, Sarsfield Bks, Limerick, Stephens Bks, Kilkenny, and Dún Uí Mhaoliosa, Galway. Our main training areas are Kilworth Camp, Fort Davis and Bere Island, all in Co Cork. It's a big area and there's always a lot going on.

The director of training (D-J7) co-ordinates all training within the Defence Forces, and G7 is responsible for all training at brigade level. The job of co-ordinating support to training is always challenging, as within the brigade at any one time you could have recruits in training in one barracks, a support weapons course being run in another, a cavalry exercise in Kilworth or an engineer watermanship course on Bere Island, and so on.

The G7 Cell supports unit commanders by assisting with any needs or support they require, such as training ammunition, personnel, or instructor support, and access to training areas. There are also several RDF posts, including Clifden, Skibbereen, Tralee Bks, Waterford Military Post, and Wexford Military Post.

We are now operating with the single-force concept, where RDF personnel are now assigned directly to reserve companies or platoons within PDF units. Unit commanders are now directly responsible for the training of reserve personnel within their units and we assist and support RDF training through PDF commanders.

The job takes us all around the brigade for things such as brigade training inspections and competitions, where we ensure the highest standards are being maintained. We are also involved in coordinating the brigade shooting competitions, brigade courses, mortar concentrations, and so on. For example, in July 1 Bde held its GPMG, Steyr, and pistol competitions. We assist in such competitions to encourage units to keep up regular training and maintain high skillsets under the direction of D-J7.

It is an excellent job: I really enjoy it and there are certainly different challenges every day and I'm lucky to work with some great characters.





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