

THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE

AN COSANTÓIR

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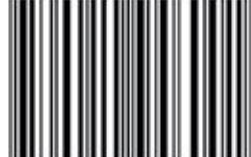


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An Cosantóir 10K Road Race



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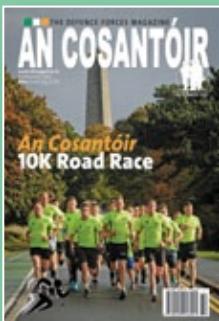


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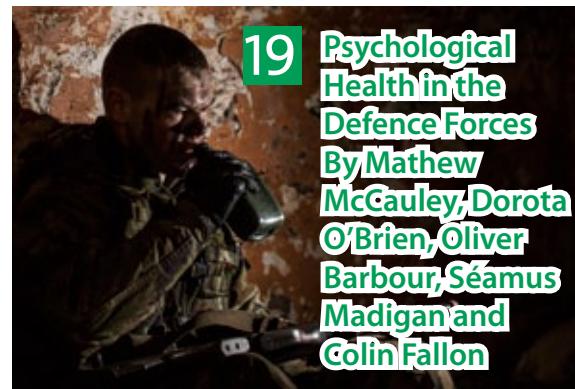


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Front Cover

7 Inf Bn Block Runners during the An Cosantóir 10K 2017 in the Phoenix Park. Photo by Armn Billy Doyle, 105 Sqn

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

Editorial

Hello and welcome to our November issue. Our main focus this month is on technology and health; looking at communications, cyber security, security technology, mental health, and health and safety in the DF.

Your photographs *On Parade* came from Cork, the Curragh, Dublin, the Golan Heights and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while *In Focus* are the *New Transport Workshops for James Stephens Barracks*. This is followed by a look at how former DF members are making technological advancements while *Providing 21st Century Security*.

Our *Veterans' News* looks back to the 2nd and 12th Army Apprentice School platoons whose members are celebrating their respective 60th and 50th anniversaries.

Our first main feature looks at the Ordnance Corps' annual exercise that puts Engineer Specialist Search and Clearance (ESSC) teams through varied and highly realistic scenarios.

Next, we have a two-star course from 3 Inf Bn who conducted a tri-service tactical exercise, '*Céim Deireanach*'.

Comdt Conor Ryan then advises us on the importance of H&S with an introduction to *Defence Forces Health, Safety & Welfare Week 2017*, which is 13th – 17th November.

Three reports on recent annual

conferences start with PDFORRA's in Cavan, where over 200 delegates attended. Later, we cover ONE's ADC in Limerick and IUNVA's in Mayo, both of which focused on veterans' affairs.

Next, we have an extended feature on *Psychological Health in the Defence Forces*, written by a number of DF experts who go through all the different options available to DF personnel seeking advice and assistance.

For our *In Reserve* feature, Sgt John Sargent (RDF) briefs us on the recent *Regimental Signals Course* conducted by 2 Bde CIS Coy for RDF and PDF students under the single-force concept.

Our history feature, *On the One Road: crossing the Blackwater, 1942*, looks at the 75th anniversary of the largest ever military manoeuvres held in Ireland.

We also have four pages of sport, starting with an international ladies' soccer friendly between the DF and the RAF. This is followed by a report on the largest sporting event on the DF calendar, the annual *An Cosantóir* 10K road race.

All this, plus our regular features: *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Up*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews*, and *What I Do*.

Finally, check out our competitions and results on pages 40 and 43.

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor

Wayne Fitzgerald

VETERANS DAY 2017

Pictured at DF Veterans Day 2017, which was held in the DFTC on Sunday 8th October 2017. L/R: Brig Gen Joseph Mulligan, GOC DFTC, Jim Casey, IUNVA National Secretary, Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe TD, Col Dick Heaslip Retd, ARCO, Gerard Fogarty, Pierce McCan Br ONE and DF COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM. Photo: Sgt Karl Byrne



ON PARADE



DF LADIES BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congratulations to 2 Bde Ladies Basketball Team, who won the DF Ladies Basketball Championships that took place in McKee Bks on the 20th and 21st of September 2017. They defeated a strong DFTC team to meet the 1 Bde team in the final. *Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan, 1 BAR*

CIVIL SERVICE GRADUATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The DFTC hosted the Civil Service Graduate Development Programme on the 21st September 2017. The visitors came from DPER, Dept Finance, DFAT, Transport, Health and Revenue. They were briefed on the roles, threats and resource challenges facing the DF and DFTC, and were given a capability display by 1 MIC and Engineer School. They experienced the Mobility Corridor from inside a MOWAG, and received a guided tour of the Curragh Military Museum. *Photo: Comdt Conor King, HQ DFTC*



HANDBALL CHAMPION

Pictured is OC 12 Inf Bn, Lt Col Sean Murphy who presented Sgt Michael Hogan with his winning medal for handball. *Photo: Pte Michael 'Rama' Walsh, 12 Inf Bn*



EUFOR ARTICLE MEDAL PARADE

On the 26th September 2017 COMEUFOR, Maj Gen Anton Waldner, presented the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Medal Althea to 14 service personnel from 5 different nations in EUFOR HQ, Camp Butmir, Sarajevo. He thanked them for their dedicated service in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Three Irish received their EUFOR ALTHEA medals at the ceremony. Medal recipient Capt Loraine Whelan said, *"I feel hugely proud to receive my medal and it is an honour to be part of such a professional and important mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina."* *Photo: Lt Col Cyril Whelan, Chief J2, EUFOR HQ*



DERMOT EARLY MEMORIAL

Pictured at the wreath laying ceremony and presentation by IUNVA to the family of former DF COS Dermot Early RIP, at his monument in Gortaganny, Co. Roscommon on Friday 22nd September in Mayo. L/R: IUNVA Chairman Eddie Robinson with the late Dermot Early's wife Mary and daughter Noelle. *Photo: Martin Rowe, IUNVA Post 27*

COMBINED SERVICES SHOOT

This image was taken at the recent Combined Services Shoot with the Air Corps, Naval Service and Artillery firing from Kilworth Camp. *Photo: Sgt Henry O'Brien, 5 Bty, 1 BAR*



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IN MEMORY OF NOBBY

Retired Sgt Anthony O'Brien is pictured front and centre with young cavalry troopers from 1 ACS at the *An Cosantóir* 10K in McKee Bks on the 11th October 2017. Anthony (60) ran in the first ever 10K in 1980 and subsequent ones; Anthony retired from the DF in 2003 after 26 years service. Pictured on his t-shirt is CQMS Jim (Nobby) Clarke, his running partner of many years. Sadly Nobby passed away last November, and Anthony ran in memory of his old army friend. *"Thank you to the young soldiers who were proud to get in the photograph; it is a great sign of military comradeship".*
Photo: Sgt Anthony O'Brien Rtd



1916 CENTENARY COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS

Pictured recently are RDF members of 1 Bde Tpt Coy receiving their 1916 Centenary Commemorative Medals' in Collins Bks, Cork. Photo: Denis Boyle Photography



MERITORIOUS SERVICE PROMOTION

Pictured receiving his state stripes for meritorious service is Cpl Joe O'Rourke, 2 BAR attached to Bk Accountants Office, McKee Bks Coy with Lt Col Mervin Farrell, OC 2 BAR, CQMS Paul Gifford and Comdt David Duff, OC McKee Bks Coy. Photo: Armin Adam Murphy



FOND FAREWELL MARY

Brig Gen Joseph Mulligan, GOC DFTC is pictured with Mary Dowling, a typist in the Military College at a retirement lunch in honour of her 48 years service. Photo: Cpl Lee Coyle

IN FOCUS

NEW TRANSPORT WORKSHOPS FOR JAMES STEPHEN'S BARRACKS

BY PTE PARAIC SULLIVAN, PR BRANCH PHOTOS ARMN ADAM MURPHY



Lt Col Brownen with Minister Kehoe, Maj Gen Brennan and Brig Gen Flynn opening the new workshops.



On Friday the 29th of September, in a splendidly presented James Stephen's Barracks, the official opening of the newly constructed transport garages and workshop buildings took place.

D COS Ops Major General Ciaran Brennan welcomed attendees to the Barracks for the official opening and then formally introduced Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe TD, who officially unveiled the new premises.

Minister Kehoe opened the ceremony by welcoming all who attended, including both former and current members of the Defence Forces as well as distinguished guests. He informed the crowd that the old workshops, which have been replaced in the new build, were in existence since the Barracks was established in 1801.

With a collective total of over one million kilometres covered in military vehicles throughout 2016 by personnel in the Kilkenny Barracks, it is vitally important that all vehicles are well maintained and are readily available whenever needed.

Military transport is paramount in fulfilling all the assignments detailed to the unit. With vehicles needed for any task, from aid to the civil power to providing the provision of services to the public in times of adverse weather, this new garage will ensure prompt vehicle



maintenance and repair.

The old buildings were used as storage units for land rovers that were then converted into workshops, which contained a pit for works. The three-individual sheds were to be knocked in the 1980's however they survived until construction of the new building started on the 12th July 2016.

Today workshop personnel have access to a modern and spacious workshop that is fully capable of providing both level one and level two maintenance. Inside the bays, are two-post and four-post fixed mobile hoists along with a diagnostic machine to detect and repair faults.

Adjacent to the bays is a large office and storage room, which is stocked with materials and new vehicle parts. On display were photographs from times past, showing the previous set-up. The visitors marvelled at the dramatic change from a glorified galvanised shed to a chic and modern facility.

Minister Kehoe remarked that the new building cost in the region of one million euros to construct and thanked all those responsible both internally in the Defence forces and externally for ensuring that the build completed both on time and on budget.

With another workshop almost complete in Sarsfield Barracks in Limerick, it certainly shows the intention of the Defence forces to provide its staff with top class working facilities in the safest of environments. ■

Providing 21st Century Security

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

Every member of the Defence Forces learns the basics of security in their initial training through sentry duties in a variety of settings. Unsurprisingly then, on leaving the military many personnel would consider starting a new career in the private security industry.

In 1969, after an exciting career in the Defence Forces, Capt Karl Dunleavy left and started Provincial Security in Newbridge. In 2009 the business moved to new, modern premises in Market Square House in Kilcullen, where it now employs security officers, receptionists and front-of-house personnel to service the Greater Dublin area and Co Kildare. Following the untimely passing of Karl Dunleavy, his son Robert took over the mantle as Provincial's MD. It was with his vision and expertise that the company grew to be one of the industries leading faces of security within Ireland in the 21st Century.

I recently visited Provincial's HQ as the company approaches its 50th anniversary, and met with their Operations Manager, another former member of the DF, Comdt Carmel Moran (retd) to see how the company has evolved and developed to keep up with technology in the security industry.

Carmel told me that Provincial has many military traits and employs over 200 staff, many of whom have military experience. "We value our employees and recognise their worth through succession planning and awards. We hold the Excellence through People Award, making us highly regarded in the Security Industry. This is a similar ethos to the Defence Forces, which is not surprising given the history we have with them."

Describing the company, Carmel said: "We provide discretionary secu-

rity services for many large, high-profile, international blue-chip companies. We are one of only three manned guarding companies in Ireland to hold the highest quality standards attainable within the industry, including ISO 9001, Qualsec Platinum Standard & PSA 28:2013.

We are looking for new personnel with a military background, of different ages and ranks, who are team players with good communications skills, and who remain fit and healthy."

Stephen MacDermott, Provincial's Director of Personnel, added, "A military background, either full time or reserve, is very beneficial in this industry and will help with career advancement, currently we have a number of former Defence Forces NCOs in supervisory positions on our key sites."

Carmel says that potential security officers would be required to hold a Private Security Authority (PSA) licence for static guarding; complete Garda vetting; and have a minimum of five years verifiable work history. (A PSA course costs approx €350 and a list of QQI approved trainers can be found on www.psa.gov.ie.)

Applicants go through a series of interviews starting with initial screening, then a face-to-face interview with their HR manager, and finally another interview with the Site Security Manager at the location of the position.

All applicants who are successful in the interview process will then be required to complete a computer proficiency test, as all site documentation and reports are produced electronically, with security officers using tablet computers in their daily duties. Successful applicants receive site specific training, as well as first aid and are provided with all uniforms.

Some employees may go on to complete further courses such as supervisory management courses, H&S course along with other QQI certified training.

Provincial's working week is based on a 12-hour shift rotation with up to four shifts per week. A typical security officer's shift includes: patrolling; logging movements of contractors and visitors; control room operations; including CCTV; and report writing.

Provincial's rates are above-average within the Security Industry and they also offer additional allowances and benefits.

If you would like to be considered for future vacancies, please email your CV to Anthea Lalor: Provincial, 3rd & 4th Floor, Market Square House, Main Street, Kilcullen, Co Kildare. Email: anthea@provincialssecurity.com; call 045 431 015; or visit www.provincialssecurity.com. ■

FORMER SGT EDDIE POLLARD:

"I have been with Provincial for less than a year and I'm already a supervisor on one of their biggest client sites. They have encouraged me to upskill and use my military leadership to develop the team I am working with. Management in the company believe in an open door policy and I feel valued by them."



FORMER CPL GERRY CRAMPTON: "When I started with Provincial, I was scared of technology, through their encouragement and training, I'm now working as part of the security team in one of the most modern datacenters in Europe."



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

ARMY APPRENTICE SCHOOL REUNIONS

No 2 Platoon, AAS - 60th Anniversary Reunion

BY CPL LEE COYLE

The 2nd Platoon Army Apprentice School (AAS) Naas, recently held a reunion in Wexford town to celebrate 60 years since they walked through the gates of

Devoy Bks back on the 8th August 1957. Their committee of Larry Hayes, Paddy McElroy, Paddy O'Reilly, and Eamonn Moore, remember their first day clearly and recanted stories back with fondness and nostalgic memories. They entered the service, some at the tender age of 15, fresh-faced and straight out of school. They were young adults with much to learn about the world and their service gave them the experience to become adults of great calibre, they said *"It gave us such a great start in life"* with one adding jokingly *"We came out much better then we went in."*

Some of them recalled Devoy Bks as it like being in a boarding school with them laughing, it had a great mixture of discipline, learning and fitness. This mix proving to be a great learning environment, with high honours being achieved by all in their respective trades.

The Army Apprentice School opened its doors to its first



2nd Apprentice Platoon on the 28th September 2017.



2nd Apprentice Platoon pictured in 1957.

platoon on the 8th October 1956, only a year before. The late Lt Col Michael Begley in consultation with the chief herald designed the Coat of Arms of the Army Apprentice School, with the shield and artwork being done by Eamonn Moore of the 2nd Apprentice Platoon (who later went to teach in IT Carlow). The coat of arms depicted the three main trades taught at the school, which were fitter, electrician and woodworker.

There were 53 apprentices enlisted with the 2nd Apprentice Platoon, they came from all over Ireland with the highest number from Cork, then Kildare and Dublin. They were split into groups of about 17 for each trade. Out of the 53, Larry Hayes and two others went on to be commissioned officers in the 1970s, and served over 21 years. Paddy McElroy went on to serve for nearly 45 years and became the first Sgt Major of the Ordnance Corps in Clancy Bks. ■

NO 12 PLATOON, AAS - 50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

BY EAMONN HOLDEN

After 50 years, 36 members of No. 12 Platoon, Army Apprentice School, Naas, returned to Naas on 6/7th September 2017 from all over Ireland, and one from as far away as Australia, to celebrate their 50th Anniversary Reunion.

Celebrations began with everyone meeting up in Lawlor's Hotel on 6th September. The following day Mass was celebrated in Naas Parish Church where deceased platoon members, officers, NCOs and teachers were remembered and prayed for, as well as those of us who are sick and unable to attend.

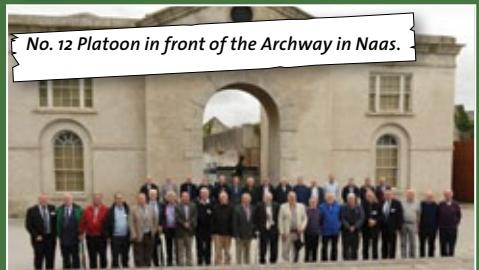
In the afternoon the group met up at Kildare Co. Council's Aras Chill Dara offices where Cllr Seamie Moore gave a talk on the historical significance

of Devoy Barracks and gave a very informative guided tour of the Council Offices which are built on the site where the school and barracks once stood. Prior to the tour group photographs were taken in front of the 'Archway'.

Following the tour, refreshments were served. Our special thanks go to Cllr Seamie Moore, Acting County Secretary - Maura McIvor and Aras Chill Dara for their time and hospitality. That evening in Lawlor's Hotel guests, Dickey Dawson - Platoon Sergeant, Derek Butler - Teacher of Senior Fitters and Mick Kavanagh - a Platoon Officer, joined the group for dinner. The chatter and celebrations continued into the night. ■



No. 12 Platoon at the 1916 Memorial with Cllr Seamie Moore.



No. 12 Platoon in front of the Archway in Naas.

School Motto: "Ni Obair in Aisce I" - No Work is Done in Vain

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ESSEX 19

The Engineer Specialist Search and Clearance Exercise 2017

BY CPL LEE COYLE PHOTOS ARMN ADAM MURPHY

The Corps of Engineers (COE) has many roles within the DF; these include mobility, counter-mobility, survivability and general engineering. But what is less known about the COE is they also provide support to the civil power and civil authorities when requested. With the latter in mind, the COE, Engineer Specialist Search and Clearance (ESSC) Autumn exercise 2017 ESSEX 19 was conducted in the Kilkenny area from the 9th – 13th October. The exercise was designed to provide ESSC Teams from each formation an opportunity to deploy in a variety of realistic situations.

We met up with Lt Diarmuid O'Ceidigh from Eng Gp, DFTC, who gave us a brief outline of the exercise; the exercise was broken down into three different scenarios, each with its own challenges to keep the teams busy. The scenarios have taken into account recent and past situations that the DF have dealt with, and may have to deal with in the future at home or overseas.

SCENARIOS 'A' AND 'B': The recent vote on Article 50 by the British Government which most of us have come to know, as BREXIT. This was the main theme of these scenarios. With the UK's imminent departure from the EU, it is envisaged that there will be an increasing unrest throughout the UK. Civil discord has been particularly intense in both Scotland and Northern Ireland, where pro-EU populations have been repeatedly demonstrating and protesting at the Westminster led EU exit process. Over the last two months paramilitary groups have seen this as an opportunity and have intensified their activities. With BREXIT leading to a border crisis with Northern Ireland, dissident loyalist paramilitaries have organised rioting and carried out attacks on state officials, EU institutions and led initiatives in seeking an all-island border solution. Also trying to capitalise on the political crisis, republican paramilitaries have started to increase their campaign by increasing attacks on Northern Ireland Security Forces.

This results in the Irish Government hosting an all-party multinational summit at Kilkenny Castle to discuss the on-going crisis and seek solutions to the BREXIT border crisis. The meeting includes high profile parties from the EU, including a British delegation led by the UK Foreign Secretary, an Irish delegation as well as other parties from Northern Ireland and various state officials and global business leaders.

An Garda Síochána deployed significant resources with DF support to the Kilkenny area. With the Gardai providing a K9 search and location security for the summit venue itself, it has requested the COE's ESSC support to secure key installations that will be used during the summit. These included an Agricultural Expo in the Hub and Nowlan Park for a Hurling match.

We joined the first ESSC team at Nowlan Park; in charge of carrying out the search of the arena was Lt Liam Grace, who



was the Engineer Specialist Search Officer. He gave us a quick brief on what is involved in a tasking like this. He told us the first thing is to complete a threat assessment of the tasking, in this case it was a non-specific threat so there were multiple things to be searched for. In the assessment they will also assess the threat level and what the primary threat is, prioritise areas to be searched and make a plan.

At the arena the first tasks on the ground was to set up an Incident Control Point (ICP), which consisted of a large inflatable tent; panel boards were set up with details and information, while a computer showing an overhead image of the arena with coloured areas mapped out, also being drawn on a large whiteboard was a detailed map of buildings in the arena that were areas of special interest to be searched.

The search was broken into a number of different types of searches, firstly explosive particle detection and explosive vapour detection, next specialist equipment search, non-evasive electronic search, and finally a rummage search, which is a systematic manual and visual exploitation of the area.

The Engineer Specialist Search Teams were sent into the arena in groups to carry out the individual searches, the first group went in to carry out explosive vapour and particle detection, with them they carried a Multi Mode Track Detector (MMTDs) and a hand held Non Linier Junction Detector (NLJD).

The MMTDs can perform many functions and can detect explosives and narcotics. It picks up explosive vapours by carrying out a sniff test to analyse the air, it is placed in the room to be tested on its own while it does its analysis. It also detects particles by a touch test, the technician swabs likely places where contact would be made by the perpetrator, like door handles, windows and even telephones. When each room is searched they are marked with an X to indicate the room is safe.

SCENARIO 'C': Was a more conventional one, with the narrative centring on an overseas unit in Lebanon, with a routine patrol encountering a suspicious vehicle. They had been ordered to remain in position, secure the area and await ESSC team to search and clear to route.

When we joined the ESSC team they had completed their threat assessment and set up an ICP. Any equipment that may be required had been laid out in order so it could be quickly put to hand if needed. Some ESSC team members were kitted out in SRS 5 suits, which provide ballistic protection; it is designed lighter and more manoeuvrable compared to the EOD 9 suit that an EOD officer uses. They already had completed a sweep up the road to the suspect vehicle with Vallon metal detectors. To help move personnel and equipment around the area they employed the use of a John Deere ATV known as a Gator, which is essential for long-distance movements with the heavy equipment and ballistic suits.

Also the ESSC team had deployed the Mine Wolf Systems, mini Minewolf MW240 robotic mine clearance vehicle. The MW240 is designed to be operated remotely and if required can be operated from the ICP away from the danger area. It is fitted with a number of cameras to give the operator all-around visibility. It is a very versatile machine and has a number of different attachments that can be used for different tasks, like a grabber arm and a flail to find mines.

The suspect vehicle was easily inspected and manipulated with the Mine-wolf, there was no threat found in the vehicle but a device was found underneath the vehicle. The grabber arm made light work of moving the vehicle out of the way for a closer inspection of the device by EOD personnel.

Exercises like these are an essential part of learning and remaining an effective part of a COE ESSC team within the Defence Forces. They are designed to show how determined and cunning perpetrators of these acts of terrorism can be and how difficult they can be, while also giving the teams confidence in their job and a chance to learn from each other and think outside the box. ■



EXERCISE 'CÉIM DEIREANACH'

BY COMDT STEPHEN MOLUMPHY, OC A & SUPPORT COYS, 3 INF BN



2 Lt Corbett gives fighting patrol orders in the Glen of Imaal

At the beginning of the three-star course conducted by 3 Inf Bn in July 2017, OC 3 Inf Bn, Lt Col Mark Brownen, issued his commander's intent to me, as company commander, that their final tactical exercise in the Glen of Imaal would encompass not only a land component but also air and sea components, in order to demonstrate the importance and capability of joint operations within the DF. The reasoning being that two-star soldiers who experience this type of operation at the beginning of their careers would have a permanent mind-frame for DF joint operations in the future, which will help develop our capability.

With this planning guidance and with the Naval Operational Command Centre

(NOCC) and Air Corps Operations eager to assist, Exercise 'Céim Deireanach' was designed to achieve the learning outcomes and training objectives as per the three-star course syllabus, with an additional focus on achieving this through joint military operations.

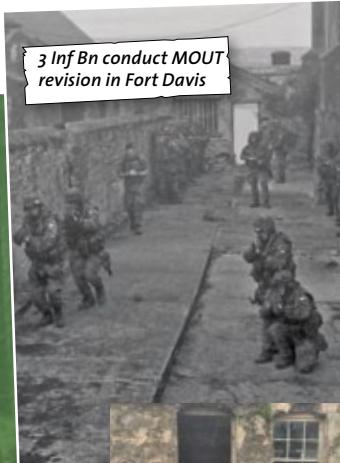
The conventional phase of the exercise began on a clear Monday morning with 37 members of 145 Two-Star Platoon departing in convoy from James Stephens Bks at 0700hrs. On reaching their drop-off point in Donard, they were tasked with conducting a route march over Lobawn and into Stranahealy Forest, where they would establish a patrol harbour and base camp procedures.

From here the two-stars were tested in

their patrolling capabilities by day and by night, against an opposition-held outpost.

The opposition forces, wearing foreign DPM uniforms, had an active perimeter in defence, which made it difficult for friendly force recce patrols to gain valuable info on the layout of the outpost. In addition, the enemy presented several challenges for the two-stars through CBRN attacks and conventional assaults. The culmination of this phase resulted in a night-time fighting patrol that eliminated the threat and allowed the two-star platoon to be redeployed for future tasking.

At 0400hrs on Day 3, following the successful fighting patrol, the two-stars were tasked with conducting a withdrawal in darkness from the patrol harbour to a



3 Inf Bn conduct MOUT revision in Fort Davis



3 Inf Bn two-star platoon boarding the LÉ Eithne which can be seen in the distance



145th two-star platoon conducting MOUT drills in a CBRN environment



2 Lt Corbett gives Pl Comdrs orders session on board the LÉ Eithne



3 Inf Bn 145th two-star platoon with crew of LÉ Eithne

pick-up point several kilometres away. Once there, they were informed that their new objective was Fort Davis and that Joint Operations Command in J3/5 had directed them to report to Rosslare Harbour where they would be embarked on *LÉ Eithne*.

At 0600hrs the platoon was transported by RIB from Rosslare Harbour to the naval vessel, which was under the command of Cdr Brian Fitzgerald. Once aboard, the order to get underway was given by the captain and *LÉ Eithne* began the eight-hour journey to Fort Davis.

Utilising the large deck, the two-stars got some much needed rest before an orders session was conducted by the platoon commander, 2/Lt Jack Corbett, who outlined the difficult mission and taskings that lay ahead. Once the orders were completed, the platoon went to the galley for lunch before beginning rehearsals of Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) drills on the ship's deck.

This area of the ship proved a valuable asset to the army personnel for a number of reasons and highlighted the contribution a multi-role vessel would play in future combined army-Naval Service operations.

(As an aside I would like to express my thanks to *LÉ Eithne*'s EO, Lt Comdr Nessa Maloney, and Cdr Fitzgerald for their generous hospitality; not only providing tours of the NS flagship for the two-stars but also adding to the realism of the exercise by providing

simulated covering fire onto Fort Davis as the platoon assaulted.)

As the ship sailed close to Roche's Point, the two-stars could see how daunting their coming amphibious landing was going to be. Under *LÉ Eithne*'s covering fire, the 37 two-stars loaded into the RIBs and began their amphibious assault onto the pier of Fort Davis. The ever-active opposition forces located on the Fort waited until a third of the assaulting force was on the pier before launching their counter-attack but failed to dislodge the two-stars' foothold.

The two-stars conducted several MOUT assaults against opposition DIBUA positions, which required extensive use of MOE kits and innovative methods to continue the momentum. By last light a large section of the upper level was cleared and positions established to consolidate the seized area.

Following several probing enemy attacks throughout the night, 2/Lt Corbett decided to retain the initiative by launching a deliberate MOUT platoon attack at first light. This succeeded in breaking the opposition's line of withdrawal and eliminated the threat they posed. As sunset came down on Fort Davis on Day 4 of the exercise, intelligence received indicated that the enemy leader was located in the tunnels on the lower level. This resulted in the two-stars conducting a passage-of-lines through a sister platoon and clearing the dark

underground tunnels and passageways until successfully capturing the opposition leader.

As dawn broke on Fort Davis on Day 5, the platoon was informed that four AW139 helicopters would be arriving to extract them and their casualties back to James Stephens Bks. However, due to deteriorating weather conditions the airlift was cancelled and the exhausted platoon were loaded onto trucks for the journey home.

On the square in James Stephens Bks, DCOS Ops, Maj Gen Kieran Brennan, addressed the two-stars and complimented them on their excellent performance and the fact that all 37 students who started the exercise finished it, highlighting the importance of teamwork.

Of the 37 two-stars who completed their training with 3 Inf Bn, 22 were from outside the battalion and as they return to their units we wish them every success in their careers. *Dilis go bráth.* ■



MOUT Rehearsals two-star platoon on deck of LÉ Eithne prior to the amphibious assault

DEFENCE FORCES HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE WEEK 2017

BY COMDT CONOR RYAN, SO DF H&S

It is the policy of the Defence Forces to manage the health and safety (H&S) risks to military personnel, civilian employees, visitors and members of the public in relation to all Defence Forces installations and activities. Our risk managers are committed to continuous improvement in the areas of health, safety and welfare. Every member of the Defence Forces, irrespective of rank and civilian employees are expected to contribute positively to ensure that the work environment within the Defence Forces is as healthy and safe as possible. Health and safety management within the Defence Forces is underpinned by effective planning to control risks, react to changing demands and to sustain a positive health and safety culture. Defence Forces Health and Safety Week is an annual initiative to remind people of the importance of maintaining a positive health, safety and welfare culture.

THE STATE CLAIMS AGENCY AND THE DEFENCE FORCES

Acting as the State Claims Agency (SCA), the National Treasury Management Agency provides risk management advice and assistance to 146 State authorities including Government Ministers, healthcare enterprises and the Defence Forces (DF) with the aim of reducing future claims.

Since its launch in 2007, the Enterprise Risk Network (ERN) comprising of the 146 authorities delegated to the SCA, has not only proven to be an effective vehicle for disseminating advice but also in acting as a knowledge sharing forum, where individual Network members can share their knowledge and experience or seek the advice of other public sector bodies. On the 15th November ERN will be hosted by the Defence Forces in Cathal Brugha Barracks. The SCA has worked with the Health and Safety Risk Management Section for a number of years, who was recently shortlisted for a Risk Management Initiative Recognition Award. This is a unique opportunity for the DF to showcase how they manage risk and employee well-being in a high-risk environment. ■



DEFENCE FORCES HEALTH SAFETY AND WELFARE WEEK 2017

NOVEMBER 13TH-17TH

Get informed and get involved. Find out what's happening in your Barracks by accessing your timetable through IKON/Groups/Health and Safety/DF Safety Week

The week will be launched by DCOS Sp Maj Gen Kevin Cotter in the Sch of Catering McKee Bks at 10:00hrs, Monday 13th November 2017.

Vox Pops



COMDT MARK DONNELLY, 103 SQ COMMANDER /AC SAFETY OFFICER

"I am a qualified Aeronautical Engineer. As the OC 103 Sqn Engineering Officer, I am responsible for the Continuous Airworthiness Management of all fixed wing aircraft in No 1 Operations Wing. In addition, I am also the Formation Safety Advisor to the GOC Air Corps in relation to OH&S Risk Management. I completed the Higher Diploma in Safety Health Welfare Work in UCD in 2009. Managing Occupational Health and Safety Risk Management in an Aviation Environment is both challenging and very rewarding."



CAPT BRIAN MCINTYRE, SAFETY OFFICER, 2 BDE HQ

"With an MSc in Emergency Management and currently completing an MSc in Environmental Health and Safety my key objective as a Safety Officer is to maintain a safe work environment for 2 Bde personnel by advising and assisting Unit Commanders and their staff to comply with current legislation. Enhancing workplace safety and reducing risk is a significant motivating factor in the course of my work."

SGT MICK HORGAN, DFTC SAFETY NCO

"In 1998 I entered the gates of Collins Barracks in Cork training under the now disbanded 4 Inf Bn. I have spent the majority of my military career to date in the ARW and then the Cadet School, so I know all about managing risk. With a HDIP in H&S from UCD, I'm currently undertaking an MSc in Environmental H&S in DIT. The role of DFTC Safety Cell is both rewarding and challenging. I had no idea how vast the whole area of H&S was until it took up the appointment."



SGT PATRICK CODD, AIR CORPS SAFETY NCO

"I completed my apprenticeship as an Aircraft Technician in 2003. I am a qualified Avionic inspector. I completed the Higher Diploma in Safety Health Welfare Work in UCD in 2015. I am currently undertaking the MSc in Environmental Health & Safety in DIT. Managing Occupational Health and Safety within the Air Corps is very interesting due to the highly technical and diverse work in the aviation environment."



PDFORRA Conference 2017

'FIRST TO SERVE'

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY SGT MICK BURKE

On the 3rd of October, over 200 PDFORRA representatives gathered in the Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan, for their annual delegate conference.

Outgoing president, Mark Scally, got proceedings underway, introducing the new general secretary, Gerard Guinan, and assistant general secretary, Martin Bright.

President candidate, Assistant Vice President Mark Keane, then addressed the conference, saying, if elected, his four priorities would be pay restoration, pensions, holiday leave, and medical care.

Donagh Maguire then spoke on his nomination as vice president. "I've been a member of PDFORRA since the start," he said. "We need to go back to grassroots; as an association, we need to let our members know their opinions count."

Minister with Responsibility for Defence Mr Paul Kehoe TD then spoke, saying it was a great honour to be invited to address the conference, and congratulating PDFORRA's new officers on their appointments.

"As minister with responsibility for defence," he continued, "I meet your members on the ground regularly and I want to stress the government's appreciation for their commitment at home and abroad."

Minister Kehoe said, "The government is committed to improving the pay of all public servants through the implementation of the Lansdowne Road Agreement. Following PDFORRA signing up to this agreement your members have received backdated payments over the last few months."

The Minister urged PDFORRA members to vote for the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020, telling delegates, "This will allow your members to receive the first phase of pay increases of 1% on 1 January and to avail of subsequent pay

increases, ranging from 5.75% to 7.25%, over the lifetime of the agreement."

Other points the minister addressed included: maintaining the strength of the PDF at 9,500; initiating 300 NCO promotions; bringing the Defence Forces within the Working Time Act 1997; reviewing the Conciliation and Arbitration scheme; and a broader review of contracts for enlisted personnel.

On equipment, the minister announced a major upgrade to the Mowag APC fleet; the arrival of new NS vessel, *LÉ George Bernard Shaw*, in mid-2018; and the replacement of the Air Corps' Cessnas and CASAs.

The Minister concluded, "There is no quick fix on all these issues, but I'm willing to work with you for the betterment of your organisation."

General Secretary Guinan then began his maiden speech, saying that the current C&A scheme is not working, and that pay talks must be addressed urgently as it is having a negative effect on personnel, with 30% leaving in the last five years.

He went on to say that the failure to implement the Working Time Act 1997 has adversely affected PDFORRA members.

The general secretary finished by thanking the office staff, and PDFORRA's local representatives for their hard work.

Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM then addressed delegates. "The Defence Forces must be a place where soldiers, sailors and aircrew feel that they belong," he said; "that they can make a living, and have the opportunity to grow, personally and professionally."

In relation to the concerns highlighted in the climate survey, the COS said, "All our issues will not be solved overnight, but I can assure you that I am committed to progressing all matters in a timely manner."

He said he looked forward to working with PDFORRA to ensure, "that we can pass on our legacy on to the next



New General Secretary Gerard Guinan



Minister with Responsibility for Defence Mr Paul Kehoe TD



Outgoing president Mark Scally

generation of Óglach na hÉireann."

Outgoing president Mark Scally, who was last to the podium, agreed that the climate survey showed many underlying problems with the DF, stemming, he said, from the last re-org, which "severely affected members and their families, and even changed communities." Criticising the decision to disband units, he said the effects "are still being felt today, and the cost of commuting is one of the main reasons personnel are leaving."

He also said PDFORRA wanted the DF/DoD to put funding in place to assist with the training and education of the many personnel from the lower ranks who are discharged after years of loyal service with no qualifications for civilian life.

Finally, after requesting that the DF Ombudsman be restored to a full-time position to deal with the backlog of redresses and complaints, Mark finished by thanking all the delegates and local representatives. ■



PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

in the Defence Forces

The Defence Forces of the 21st Century has never been more actively deployed on international military operations, which reflects a heritage that began with Ireland's initial UN deployments in the 1950s and 1960s. Through the Partnership for Peace (PfP), EU battle groups, and the UN, DF personnel have served in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, East Timor, Mali, Sierra Leone, and many other places, on multi-national peacekeeping, peace enforcement, crisis stabilisation, and humanitarian assistance operations.

BY MATHEW MCCUALEY, DOROTA O'BRIEN, OLIVER BARBOUR, SÉAMUS MADIGAN AND COLIN FALCON

DF soldiers, sailors, and aircrew serve with one of the world's most highly respected militaries, and the fitness and resilience of DF personnel are crucial in maintaining the high standard of capability, readiness and competence. However, operational service can expose personnel to demanding and potentially traumatic events. These experiences are rarely encountered outside the military.

Every member of the DF has a responsibility to maintain operational readiness. This entails the promotion and maintenance of psychological health by the individual, their peers, and command at all levels within the organisation. Nevertheless, there are a number of professionals within the DF who are tasked with providing specialist support for the assurance of psychological health across the organisation; namely the medical services, the Personnel Support Service (PSS), and the Chaplaincy Service. It is their mission to serve those who serve and to advance psychological health throughout the DF.

The medical services are responsible for maintaining health and preventing disease in the DF, while providing treatment for sick and wounded personnel. They are concerned with sustaining the military force in preparation for, during, and after, operations. This mission is carried out by many specialities, including physicians, dentists, pharma-

cists, physiotherapists, clinical psychologists, nurses, combat medical technicians, and others. The DF appreciates the mental health risks associated with military service, the psychological factors related to many physical health difficulties, and the role that mental healthcare interventions play in treating patients across care pathways.

The military medical services also maintain several mental health assets. These include two commissioned officer positions for a psychiatrist and a clinical psychologist, respectively, who are based within the Permanent Defence Force. DFHQ also retains one clinical psychologist officer within the Reserve Defence Force, who serves within the Medical Corps and is based within the Office of the Director, Medical Branch.

Such resources may be augmented at times by locum civilian psychiatrists and clinical psychologists. These clinical professionals provide a caring and supportive occupational mental healthcare service, which assures that the mental healthcare needs of the individual service member are met, while directly and indirectly supporting command in carrying out the overall military mission. As is seen in comparative international military medical systems, this process is attained via the provision of a clinical, advisory, and educational service.

Clinically, each of these professionals may assess, diagnose, and treat service members who are experiencing mental health difficulties that may be causing illness and functional impairment. These mental health assets address all aspects of mental healthcare by supporting personnel who experience clinically significant problems, which may be deemed as mild, moderate or severe.

DF mental health professionals offer acute crisis mental health assessments, pre- and post-operational psychological evaluations, expert witness services, neuropsychological testing, pre- and post-surgical psychological assessments, and pain management; along with psychotherapy for complex clinical conditions relating to trauma, sleep, mood, anxiety, personality, impulse control, or other difficulties. In addition, they provide evidence-based out-patient treatment services, which entail pharmacological and psychological interventions. In-patient care, when required, is available through resources based within the HSE. DF personnel can access the mental healthcare clinicians via a referral from their MO.

Every effort is made to return service members to duty, as they are seen as a valued asset to whom the organisation has a duty of care. However, as an occupational mental healthcare service, the clinical team is especially concerned with the ongoing fitness and safety of service members who present for care. Therefore, these clinicians regularly assess fitness and suitability for duty. They work closely with the DF occupational physicians and command to manage and reduce individual and workplace risk that might arise in those experiencing mental health difficulties. Occasionally, service members may be supported by removing them from certain duty obligations while they receive treatment. This is often temporary, and is generally reversed upon successful completion of care.

Mental health services can also assist personnel in returning to work after a period of ill-health, and support the advancement of psychological resilience across the organisation. On occasion, the clinical team promotes mental health via individual and group briefings, which helps service members to manage their own psychological fitness. Training and research support might also be delivered to the Military College and DF Medical School for those attending professional and military courses and programmes. Advisory and liaison assistance is also provided to the PSS. Finally, as serving officers in the Medical Corps mental health clinicians may be tasked to deliver services on international deployments.

The types of psychological health difficulties that arise within the DF are not always at a clinical level of severity. Like anybody, many in the DF can experience temporary challenges with work-related stress, relationship difficulties, alcohol misuse, stage-of-life concerns, debt, bereavement, gambling problems, weight and fitness challenges, etc. Often in such cases, these problems can be resolved at an early stage, before there is a need to access the mental healthcare team. As a result, the DF operates a non-clinical resource and support service through the PSS and Chaplaincy Service.

The PSS is a confidential, information, education, emotional support and referral team, designed to give personnel access to resources and services within and outside the organization. Specifically, its services fulfil an advisory and employee assistance programme function for permanent service personnel and military families. Reservists are eligible for PSS support if a need arises as a result of an event during RDF training and/or if the reservist is on full-time duty. The PSS is staffed by personnel recruited from the ranks, overseen by a number of PSS officers. Although not mental health clinicians, PSS personnel undergo training in stress management and counselling, amongst other related areas, to be able to fulfil their duties.

All major barracks have a full-time Barracks Personnel Support Service Officer (BPSSO), while smaller units or facilities are covered on a part-time basis. The PSS team holds particular responsibility for providing the DF with pre- and post-operational stress management briefings and immediate advice regarding emotional support following critical incidents, including the delivery of a critical incident stress management service.

In addition, a team of occupational social workers (OSWs) function as an internal service within the PSS, currently operating with five full-time and two part-time OSWs, along with the Principal OSW. They operate across formation and brigade areas, providing an OSW service to all serving members and their families, civilian staff, DF veterans and reservists on duty. The OSWs take part in pre- and post-deployment social work briefs and PSS overseas visits to operational theatres. They also provide counselling on a range of issues, such as occupational stress, interpersonal conflicts, financial/debt management, and alcohol misuse, as well as major life events such as relationship difficulties, bereavement, accidents, ill-health, and retirement preparation. In cases of interpersonal conflict in the work environment, a mediation service can be offered. The service has well-established links with DF command structures, the Medical Corps, the Chaplaincy Service, and Allied Health Services. It also promotes an interdisciplinary approach to psycho-social issues presenting in the military environment; developing policy and promoting best practice.

PSS and OSW services are accessed via self-referral or, with the individual's consent, a referral can be made via the chain of command, BPSSO or other internal support services. A confidential telephone counselling service is also provided, which operates 24/7, 365 days per year.

Delivered by Inspire Workplace Services, this external civilian agency offers non-clinical listening, supportive and advisory assistance to DF personnel. Ultimately, the PSS staff and OSWs also serve as a referral conduit for service members in accessing mental healthcare within the DF medical services.

An additional source of emotional support for DF members is offered through the Chaplaincy Service. The DF chaplaincy service offers spiritual assistance, pastoral support, and moral direction, whilst also living out the values of faith. Such support is provided individually to each service member, along with public ministry, such as through acts



PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

of remembrance. Their resource plays a significant role in contributing to the morale and wellbeing of service personnel. Currently, DF chaplains are attached to each service, brigade and the DFTC. In addition, chaplains accompany each major overseas deployment of Irish personnel.

Chaplains support all personnel, regardless of rank, religion or faith (or of no faith), and minister to DF members and their families throughout the overseas deployment cycle. While serving as chaplains they wear the DF uniform, although they are non-combatants and do not hold a military rank nor serve in a command role. As such, they offer a uniquely accessible, private and supportive service, and it is common for personnel with emotional or behavioural concerns to first approach a chaplain, rather than immediately seeking assistance via the medical services.

DF chaplains work in collaboration with command, PSS staff, and medical services to support the emotional wellbeing and military readiness of DF personnel, and they are trained to ensure that service members are linked with appropriate medical care when professional mental health intervention is required, while continuing to provide pastoral support.

Collectively, the medical services, PSS, and the Chaplaincy Service play a crucial role in maintaining the overall psychological health of our military forces. One of the many challenges faced within the DF is reducing barriers to psychological health supports systems, and, specifically, clinical mental healthcare services. These challenges can be geographical, logistical, and cultural. However, DF psychological health resources are now offered in most areas of

the country, which makes it less challenging for personnel to access such care. Training and education by the medical services, PSS, OSWs and the Chaplaincy Service, continues to address practical and stigma-related hurdles across the organisation, through CPD events, unit briefings, annual training camps, etc, during which personnel are advised to seek help before problems worsen, in order to avoid even greater impact on their health and functioning.

In serving those who serve, the various psychological health resources within the DF reflect the many advances seen over the past century in successfully addressing the needs of military personnel. As outlined in the recent White Paper on Defence, there are many new challenges and opportunities for the DF in the years to come. Psychological health plays a crucial role in assuring the ongoing wellbeing of service members and the operational readiness and effectiveness of the DF, both at home and abroad.

Please refer to the Defence Forces Information Handbook for contact information on medical services, the PSS, and Chaplaincy Services. 'Inspire' can be reached by telephone on 1800 409673. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Lt (Dr) Mathew McCauley is a consultant clinical psychologist, with the RDF Medical Corps; Comdt Dorota O'Brien is a clinical psychologist with the Medical Corps; Lt Col Oliver Barbour is Director of PSS; Fr Séamus Madigan is Head Chaplain to the Forces; and Mr Colin Fallon is Principle Social Worker with the Defence Forces.

REGIMENTAL SIGNALS COURSE



REGIMENTAL SIGNALS COURSE

BY SGT JOHN SARGENT (ARMY RESERVE), 2 BDE CIS

At a unit training conference in September, Capt Martin Mulvey threw out the idea of running a regimental signals course in Cathal Brugha Bks for 2 Bde Reserve. It would be run according to the PDF syllabus, with the same content, hours of instruction, etc, with the only difference being that instead of four weeks of full-time training, this course would be run over five months, consisting of two-hour blocks on Tuesday nights beginning in February, two field days at the end of every month, and ending with five days of full-time training at the beginning of July.

We sent out joining instructions in January and to our surprise, we received not only applications from

RDF personnel but also from four PDF personnel who had missed out on the full-time course due to it being over-subscribed. Consequently, the course began in February with two RDF and four PDF students.

Chief instructor on the course was Sgt Peter Brennan (Army Reserve), who had recently finished instructing on the PDF regimental signals course. The other instructors were also RDF personnel, and Sgt Brendan Clarke (2 Bde CIS Training Section) providing support by making sure equipment and training facilities were available.

The objective of the Regimental Signals Course is to train personnel in the skills and techniques required to operate with a regimental signals platoon,



Sgt Tommy Gunn (2 Bde MPC) on 'Exercise Alpha'.

and the course is broken into four modules: CIS Procedures, Radio Equipment, Tactics/Line, and Radio Exercises.

The programme was designed so



Students erecting a 60ft Clarke mast.



Students get a run down on satellite comms during a visit to the CIS School, Combat Support College, DFTC.



Students and instructors pictured in Cathal Brugha Bks visitors' centre. (L/R): CQMS M Brazil (AR), instructor, Sgt P Brennan (AR), instructor, Cpl D Hand (AR), Pte A Gaule, Pte D Lyons, Pte M Dunne, Pte L Stirling, Sgt T Gunn (AR), Sgmn D Young (AR) admin, Sgt J Sargent (AR), instructor, and Capt M Mulvey (AR), course i/c.

that most of the lectures and classroom elements were covered on Tuesday nights, with the exercises and more practical work being carried out over the weekends and on the five-day, full-time training block.

The course was a complete success with all the students achieving a pass grade in both their practical and written tests, which were supervised by Cpl Aidan Clancy (2 Bde CIS Training Section) to ensure parity with the PDF course.

Furthermore, the success was an endorsement of the single-force concept as the only difference between the PDF and RDF students was the 'Cultaca' badge.

Another course is planned in early 2018 and will again be open to both RDF and PDF applicants. ■



CPL DAVID HAND (27 INF BN RDF)

"The regimental signals course run by 2 Bde CIS was an excellent example of the single-force concept at work and shows just how successful it can be. Students on the course consisted of RDF and PDF personnel, which 10 years ago would have been unthinkable. As a member of the RDF I was delighted to see how the single-force concept has improved the standard of training available to the reserve and enabled RDF units to augment and support their PDF counterparts in new ways. This support enabled 2 Bde CIS to run a second regimental signals course this year and allowed a number of RDF and PDF personnel to advance their careers. I hope to see this trend continue in the years to come."

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CYBERCRIME CYBERCRIME

How to prevent Ransomware from infecting your electronic devices by EUROPOL EC3 European Cybercrime Centre



Ransomware is malware that locks your computer and mobile devices or encrypts your electronic files, demanding that a ransom is paid through certain online payment methods (and by an established deadline) in order to regain control of your data.

It can be downloaded through fake application updates or by visiting compromised websites. It can also be delivered as email attachments in spam or dropped/downloaded via other malware (i.e. a trojan). It is a scam designed to generate huge profits for organised criminal groups. To prevent and minimise the effects of Ransomware, Europol's European Cybercrime Centre (www.europol.europa.eu) advises you to take the following measures:

DO

Update your software regularly

Many malware infections are the result of criminals exploiting bugs in software (web browsers, operating systems, common tools, etc.). Keeping these up to date can help to keep your devices and files safe.

Use anti-virus software

Install and keep anti-virus (AV) and firewall software updated on your devices. AV can help keep your computer free of the most common malware. Always check downloaded files with AV software.



Browse and download software only from trusted websites

Use official sources and reliable websites to keep your software patched with the latest security releases. Always use the official version of software.

Regularly back up the data stored on your computer

Full data backups will save you a lot of time and money when restoring your computer. Even if you are affected by Ransomware, you will still be able to access your personal files (pictures, contact lists, etc.) from another computer. There are a number of high quality data backup solutions available on the internet for free.

Report it

If you are a victim of Ransomware, **Report It** immediately to your local police and the payment processor involved. The more information you give to the authorities, the more effectively they can disrupt the criminal infrastructure.

Consult your anti-virus provider on how to unlock and remove the infection from the device

There are numerous official websites and blogs with instructions on how to safely remove this type of malware from your electronic devices. Always consult www.nomoreransom.org to check whether you have been infected with one of the Ransomware variants for which there are decryption tools available free of charge.

DON'T

Click on attachments, banners and links without knowing their true origin

What looks like a harmless advertisement or image can actually redirect you

to the website from where the malicious software is downloaded. The same can happen when opening attachments in emails received from unknown sources.

Install mobile apps from unknown providers/sources

Always download from official and trusted resources only. In the settings of your Android device, always keep the option "Unknown sources" disabled and the "Verify Apps" option checked.

Take anything for granted

If a website warns you about obsolete software, drivers or codecs (programs that encode and decode your data) installed on your computer, do not fully trust it. It is really easy for criminals to fake company and software logos. A quick web search can tell you if your software is really out of date.

Install or run non-trusted or unknown software

Do not install programs or applications on your computer if you do not know where they come from. Some pieces of malware install background programs that try to steal personal data - for more information on this, see our information sheet on Identity Theft.

Do not pay out any money

Paying does not guarantee that your problem will be solved and that you will be able to access your files again. In addition, you will be supporting the cybercriminals' business and the financing of their illegal activities. ■

ONE Convention 2017: 'STRONGER TOGETHER'

REPORT AND PHOTOS BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD



On 23rd September, over 100 delegates from around Ireland met to discuss veterans' affairs for the Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel (ONE) in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Limerick.

The opening addresses were given by Chairman Paddy Rooney, CEO Ollie O'Connor and, new to the board, Brig Gen Colm Campbell (retd).

General Campbell said the reason veterans join the ONE is comradeship. "We have shared experiences and a shared past," he said. "That's why we get on so well; we value the *esprit de corps* of comradeship." He went on to discuss ONE's strategic plan: "We have to accept we won't always get it right, but we must work at it; we have to be able to change the plan."

"The veterans policy in the government's latest white paper is positive and it's good that it's there – but it's not enough and needs to be developed by DoD and ourselves, along with IUNVA and ARCO," he continued.

Speaking about membership, General Campbell said, "There are an estimated 100,000 veterans out there, and ONE needs to recruit more members, more influencers; not senior ranks but the guy on the back gate who knows everyone."

He finished his address with the rallying cry, "Veterans are much stronger together."

Company Secretary Albert Farrell then spoke about corporate governance, and the organisation's main objective: funding the homeless. He told delegates that the last annual audit by Dublin City Council "passed with flying colours".

Albert went on to tell the convention that ONE was to be commended for only spending 45% of monies collected on wages, which compared favourably to similar charities that spend in excess of 70% on wages. He also said that Revenue and the Charities Regulator were both happy with the new branch banking system.

Derek Ryan BL, Director of Fundraising, was next up. He thanked all delegates for their hard work. "We wouldn't be the organisation we are without you," he said. "It's you out on the ground, wearing our uniform, and shaking buckets to raise much-needed funds for our colleagues."

On a negative note Derek expressed ONE's disappointment that some branches were not supporting ONE's annual Fuchsia Appeal, the main fundraising appeal that supports ONE's homeless initiative. "Parades are important, but they are ancillary to fundraising," he said.

Derek also thanked other veterans' associations and military groups for their continued donations.

He finished his address by urging continued recruitment. "If every member brought in one new member we would increase our membership by 100% and not the 10% as stated in the strategic plan," he said. "A bigger membership would give the ONE more leverage when advocating on behalf of veterans."

Ollie O'Connor then informed members on the new veteran support centres (VSCs) being rolled out in the next few months. It is hoped to have an additional eight

VSCs set up in suitable locations around the country, along with the current two in Drogheda and Limerick. Ollie announced that the Director of PSS, Lt Col Ollie Barbour, is retiring soon and will be coming onto the board of ONE.

The guest speaker was Tony Stafford, who told delegates about spending 10 months in Brú na bhFiann after he became homeless following the break-up of his marriage (see September's *An Cosantóir*). He told the delegates that former soldiers often find it hard to ask for help. "We all wore flak jackets, and big boys don't cry," he said.

Tony hopes that hearing his story will help others to better understand the plight of some of our former colleagues, and he received a standing ovation for having the courage to talk about his problems to a room full of his peers.

The conference finished with ONE's outgoing president, Michael Carroll, handing over the chain of office to the incoming president, Tom James, who coincidentally comes from the same branch in Newbridge.

Ollie O'Connor closed the conference by thanking ONE Chairman Paddy Rooney, who has completed his term in office. ■

Cuimhnímis: We remember those who served



IUNVA Convention 2017

BY CPL LEE COYLE
PHOTOS BY MARTIN ROWE

This year's IUNVA annual general convention took place over 22-24 September in the Talbot Hotel, Claremorris, Co Mayo, a location chosen due to its proximity to a monument celebrating the sporting achievements of the late Lt Gen Dermot Earley DSM, former chief of staff of the Defence Forces and one of the greatest gaelic footballers of his generation.

The first day of the convention started with delegates and observers signing in, the affirmation of national delegates, and the adoption of standing orders; then it was straight to business.

First up was a presentation about a booklet that is being produced that will cover ceremonial dress guidelines and the organisation's dress codes. This will give members easily accessed information on how and when various items of dress uniform should be worn.

Delegates also received information about IUNVA's new website and updates on its progress. The new site will be much more user friendly and will boast a host of new features.

The evening ended with a wreath-laying ceremony at the monument to Lt Gen Earley in Gortaganny, Co Mayo. The wife and daughter of the greatly loved former chief of staff attended the ceremony and were presented with a small token from IUNVA.

The second day started with updates on events organised and work carried out by IUNVA posts across the country over the past year. Many of these events concerned the attendance of IUNVA members at the funerals of former soldiers. The organisation's officials also thanked IUNVA members for their visits to sick, retired soldiers who may not have many relatives, and also congratulated them for the success of the food programme, known as the 'food cloud', which help many people in need.

Later the delegates were briefed on IUNVA's proposal to the Defence Forces for additions to the current pre-retire-

ment course that assists personnel in adjusting to civilian life. They were also informed about the many improvements to the organisation over the last year, including the arrival of new vehicles and stands that can be used for events, as well as a new initiative that is being undertaken: the creation of a database showing the locations and dates of the deaths of Irish soldiers who died on overseas service. Coy Sgt Frank O'Connor, recently retired from Ceremonial Section, DFHQ, is helping with the construction of this database, which will be linked to IUNVA's new website.

A guard of honour assembled outside the convention venue to welcome Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, who came to address the convention. After Vice Admiral Mellett thanked IUNVA for the invitation, he spoke about Maj Gen (retd) MJ Savino's *"inspirational leadership in forming IUNVA"*. He also spoke about how grateful he and the nation were for the service provided by the Defence Forces. *"Without our service, our society would not exist,"* he said, before adding, *"As serving soldiers, we are only here now because of the service of others before us."*

Vice Admiral Mellett concluded by asking IUNVA members for their continued service and support in helping others in need.

Another guest speaker was Shelly Cotter from the Wives and Partners of the Defence Forces (WPDF), who was invited to inform the convention about the aims of the group, which was recently formed to advocate on behalf of their spouses/partners for better working conditions. IUNVA have pledged to attend WPDF events to show support for their cause.

On the final day of the convention, IUNVA presented plaques to members of A Coy, 35 Inf Bn, ONUC, in recognition of their heroic actions during the Siege of Jadotville. This was a very moving ceremony, with 157 plaques being awarded to those involved in the siege. ■



DF COS Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM meets IUNVA executives.



IUNVA's National Welfare Officer Michael Thompson with members of WPDF.



Jadotville Veteran with his family



Jadotville Veterans' with their IUNVA presentation.

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

ON THE ONE ROAD

Crossing the Blackwater, 1942

Seventy-five years ago, with WWII at its height and the outcome still far from certain, Ireland's military chiefs decided the time was right to put the country's Defence Forces to the test. In this article, the resulting manoeuvres, the largest in the history of the state, are examined by Pat Poland. All photos are from the Hanley Collection in Military Archives.

In the autumn of 1942, the Second World War was in its third bloody year. In January, the first of 300,000 American troops to be stationed in Northern Ireland had arrived in Derry. In North Africa General Erwin Rommel attacked the British perimeter of El Alamein but was repulsed. In August Rommel's counterpart in the British Eighth Army was replaced by an officer with Irish roots, Bernard Montgomery, who was once stationed with the British Army in Victoria (now Collins) Barracks, Cork, and who would soon be promoted to field marshal.

Also in August, Operation Jubilee, an attempt to land a significant force of British and Canadian troops at Dieppe, on the north coast of France, ended in a rout.

Meanwhile, in Russia the *Wehrmacht* seemed unstoppable as it continued its advance on Stalingrad

Against this background, Taoiseach Éamon de Valera declared that the chances of Ireland being invaded were increasing and ordered the strength of the Defence Forces to be raised to 500,000, and the Irish Army planned major manoeuvres to test and prepare its troops.

The scenario for the manoeuvres devised by the Plans and Operations staff at GHQ posited that Redland, 'an aggressive totalitarian country' had declared war on its southern neighbour, Blueland, 'a small democratic state' having its capital at Fermoy, Co Cork. Their neighbours, Brownland and Greenland, had declared themselves neutral; no incursions from the belligerent sides, however, would be countenanced.

Thus began Ireland's biggest-ever series of military exercises. The principal *dramatis personae* were Chief of Staff Lt Gen Dan McKenna; Maj Gen Hugo MacNeill, GOC 1st ('Spearhead') Division, based at Carton House, Maynooth; and Maj Gen Michael J Costello, GOC 2nd ('Thunderbolt') Division, based at Collins Barracks, Cork.

Dan McKenna, a Derryman and veteran of the War of Independence who was not renowned for suffering fools gladly, worked around the clock – he was known to frequently put in twenty-hour days – to bring the Emergency army to optimum efficiency, and he expected his staff to do likewise. He was held in high regard by senior US and British army officers.

Hugo (aka Aodh) MacNeill was a nephew of Eoin MacNeill, founder of the Irish Volunteers. Tall and considered austere, he had held the rank of major

general since the foundation of the National Army. His brief was to contain any incursion by Allied forces coming from Northern Ireland.

MJ Costello's personality could not be more different; if MacNeill preferred the quiet shades of relative anonymity, 'Mickey Joe' heartily enjoyed the bright lights of fame. Promoted to colonel at the age of 19 on the order of Michael Collins, one commentator described him as 'a born soldier, worshipped by his men'. His 'Thunderbolt' Division was tasked with countering an Axis invasion along the southern coast.

On 17th August 1942, Redland troops (MacNeill's 2nd Division) mobilised and began marching southwards from Dublin and the Midlands to engage the forces of Blueland (Costello's 1st Division). Soon, 20,000 troops were on the move – many marching over 150 miles – to engage each other in what became known as the Blackwater Manoeuvres.

The chief of staff's subsequent lengthy report to Minister for Defence, Oscar Traynor TD, on the exercises was summarised as follows:

August 17th: 2nd Division commences its march from Dublin and the Midlands to the south.

September 1st to 3rd: First exercise - attack on the line of Blackwater from the northern bank.

September 6th to 7th: Second exercise - attack on the line of Blackwater from the southern bank.

September 10th: Third exercise - attack on assumed invasion bridgeheads east and west of Cork Harbour.

September 13th: Parade of two divisions,

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Eastern Command troops and Dublin LDF units.

Tragically, four members of the Defence Forces lost their lives to the Blackwater. On the evening of Tuesday 1st September, Cpl Charles O'Donoghue from Killarney drowned at Cappoquin, Co Waterford, and 20 miles away, at Fermoy, Pte Peter McGovern from Windy Arbour, Dublin, got into difficulties and was swept away by treacherous currents. Both were bathing while off duty and the accidents were unconnected with the exercises. On the

following Sunday, 6th September, Lt Thomas Ryan from Cashel, Co Tipperary, and Sgt John McElligott from Listowel, Co Kerry, drowned in full view of hundreds of horrified military personnel and civilians near Fermoy Bridge while attempting to cross the river while on manoeuvres.

The military parade held in Cork on Sunday, 13th September 1942, took nearly three hours to pass An Taoiseach and other VIPs on the reviewing platform on South Mall. Marching eight abreast and led by Gen McKenna, they comprised the largest-ever military parade held in the state.

The Cork Examiner reported:

'At precisely three o'clock was heard the drone of aeroplanes and into view came a formation from the Army Air Corps. There was no end to the variety of the spectacle. Long lines of infantry, presenting an appearance of a forest of bayonets, were broken periodically by the mechanised sections, which included motor-cycle contingents, armoured cars, light artillery units, Bren-gun carriers, cyclists, troop-carrying lorries, and radio vans. Later in the procession came the 47th and 48th Battalions of the Local Defence Force, whose magnificent appearance more than earned the spontaneous applause, which greeted their march past. Equally favoured were two sections of the Coastal Defence, the Marine Service and its volunteer arm, the Maritime Inscription. These, in their distinctive uniforms, made a most impressive display. The entire proceedings were enlivened by no fewer than 23 bands – twenty provided by the Army, two by the LDF, and one by the Marine Service. They played stirring marches en route. Last, but by no means least, were the Red Cross members, male and female.'

The lessons learnt during the exercises of the autumn of 1942 were considered most valuable by the army's top brass. Significant lacunae were manifested, particularly in the area of air cover and support, which, however, due to fiscal restraints, would largely remain unresolved for the duration of the Emergency.

The six weeks of exercises provided the participants with countless anecdotes with which to regale their families and friends for years to come. One such was recalled in Donal MacCarron's excellent book on the period, *Step Together*. A battery commander and two of his officers from the Dubs' Redland Army (the 'baddies') were taken prisoner by the wily Corkies of Blueland and brought to their HQ in Fermoy for interrogation. Soon the 'battle' raged again, and the trio was quickly shunted out of the way up a side lane. In the confusion, their guard momentarily left them on their own. In a flash, they seized their opportunity:

"We weren't going to be left out of the fun," one of the trio recalled, "so we scaled the wall of the local cinema where a friendly projectionist helped us inside. We told him to hire a taxi and when it arrived we covered ourselves with blankets, lay down in the back, and told him where to head for. He was stopped very quickly at a Blueland road-block, but we had him primed to say, 'Clear the way, urgent maternity case for the hospital!' and we were soon back with our unit. I am sure the umpires would have approved!" ■



Photos are from the Hanley Collection in Military Archives.

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IRELAND TAKES THE SPOILS in Local Derby

BY GNR PARAIC
O'SULLIVAN PHOTOS
ARMN ADAM MURPHY



DEFENCE FORCES WOMEN 2 (Amy Phelan 15, Sinead Taylor 65)
Versus ROYAL AIR FORCE WOMEN 0

Two pieces of individual brilliance separated the sides in a hotly contested international friendly between the Irish Defence Forces and the Royal Air Force (RAF) ladies. Played in splendidly presented Home Farm grounds in blustery and testing conditions, the home side were full value for their hard earned win.

With the RAF recently defeated by Germany in the final of the Aircom Inter Nation Football Tournament, this was always going to be a tough assignment for Darren Cody's charges. This, coupled with the fact the Irish Defence Forces ladies had very limited time training in camp together, meant that the win was truly a remarkable achievement.

The opening exchanges were a cagey affair and very much a tense game of 'cat and mouse' as both teams settled into the game. With both defences showing well, it was going to take something special to breach the deadlock.

This all changed in the 15th minute when Amy Phelan received the ball thirty-five yards from the RAF's goal. Having been involved in the move earlier in play, Phelan spotted Jones off her line and spectacularly lobbed the keeper to put the hosts in front.

Shortly after, Ireland's lone striker Sinead Taylor almost got through to make it two-nil but a timely intervention from Rachel Rutherford halted Taylor's progress. The visitors were well in this game though and had two decent

chances to score by Ashlyn Mester and Rachel Griffiths.

Early in the second half Taylor almost put Ireland two up once again when a beautifully weighted pass from Shelley Keogh saw Taylor one on one with the keeper. With acres of space and all the time in the world Taylor rushed her shot and it struck the ball straight at the waiting keeper.

However, a good striker will always persevere and when Taylor got her third chance she made no mistake this time. A brilliant through ball from Amy Phelan put Taylor in on goal and she was able to shirk the tackle from the oncoming defender and passed the ball into the corner.

At two-nil, the game opened up and saw both teams have more scoring opportunities. Both managers emptied the bench, giving the substitutes a chance to show their worth.

Referee Alan Sherlock blew his final whistle and the game ended two-nil

to the Irish Defence Forces. A very worthwhile exercise for both teams played in a very sporting manner, Darren Cody will be very pleased with his teams' performance.

Ireland were very self-assured throughout the match and had standout performances from Siobhan O'Sullivan, Amy Phelan and the industrious Sinead Taylor.

Irish Defence Forces Women: Linda McNamara, Karen Irwin, Kim Turner, Siobhan O'Sullivan, Rebecca Coogan, Shelley Keogh, Amy Phelan, Ciara Carroll, Katherine Mooney, Sinead Taylor and Grainne Kennelly.

Subs: Leah McEvoy (for Kennelly 65 mins), Cloe Carroll (for Keogh 78 mins), Margaret Hogan (for Taylor 80 mins), Aisling Byrne (for Turner 86 mins), Chloe Foy (for Irwin 88 mins), Stacey Keogh (for Phelan 88 mins) and Nicole Kelly (for Carroll 89 mins).

RAF Women: Nicola Symons, Rachel Dean, Rachel Howes, Rachel Rutherford, Robyn Stewart, Zara McIntosh, Rachel Griffiths, Catherine Beaver, Ashlyn Mester, Jade Brown and Keri Haywood.

Subs: Katherine Ratcliffe (for Brown 55 mins), Lauren Welsh (for Haywood 60 mins), Amelia Quinn-Downing (for Dean 75 mins) and Mollie Lambert (for Griffiths 85 mins).



Referee:

Sgt Alan
Sherlock.

Assistants:
Pte Declan
Toland, and
CQMS Derek
Stafford. ■

An Cosantóir 10K ROAD RACE

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD

PHOTOS BY AIRMEN ADAM MURPHY, BILLY DOYLE AND JAMIE BARRETT, 105 SQN

The highpoint of the Defence Forces competitive sporting calendar *An Cosantóir 10K Road Race*, took place in the Phoenix Park on Wednesday 11th October 2017. With 1,100 competitors from all over the DF along with veterans and invited guests, they took to the roads for the 38th annual *An Cosantóir 10K Road Race and 5K Walk*.

The Senior Male category was won again by Pte Kenneth Rodgers (12 Inf Bn) in an impressive time of 32.47, 55 seconds slower than last year's winning time; his name is yet again etched into the trophy. The Senior Female category was won by newcomer Cadet Elizabeth Carroll, (36.06) from the Cadet School.

The other individual winners were as follows:

Female O/35: QMMS Dolores Collins, 2 BTC (49.18)
 Female O/40: Sgt Siobhan Boyle, DFSM (59.20)
 Guest Female: Ms Jennifer Gilmartin, (48.22)
 Male O/35: Cpl Peter Walsh, 6 Inf Bn (36.22)
 Male O/40: Pte Paul Buckley, 6 Inf Bn (34.58)
 Male O/45: Tpr Brendan McCarthy, 2 Cav Sqn (39.23)
 Male O/50: Sgt Declan Madden, 6 Inf Bn (39.08)
 Male O/55: Sgt Maj John Murray, CIS Gp (40:28)
 Veteran Male: Mr Ben Wedick (43.28)

As well as winning individual categories the 6 Inf Bn also won the Team Event for their impressive 9th consecutive year, they were followed by McKee Bks Coy and 1 ACS respectively. This year out of 16 Blocks the winning bragging rights also went to the 6 Inf Bn (40.22), followed by the Cadet School (41.03) and 7 Inf Bn (41.16) respectively.

The Minister with Responsibility for Defence Mr Paul Kehoe TD who had taken part in the event along with the Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, was at the finish line acknowledging competitors.

At the prize giving the Chief of Staff, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM addressed those gathered. The COS started by thanking everyone for taking part, he thanked our sponsors ANASC Credit Union and Friends First for their continued support. He said the *An Cosantóir 10K* was part of maintaining a soldier's health, fitness and wellbeing. "The Defence Forces is a great organisation built on fitness," he said. Adding that we should build on events like these and encourage others to take part, "Help me help you, by encouraging others," he said.

Lt Col Oliver Dwyer, Dir of Public Relations thanked J7 Branch, OC McKee Bks, Catering Staff, MPs, medics, CIS staff, An Garda Síochána, the Office of Public Works (OPW) and to everyone whose efforts made the race possible.

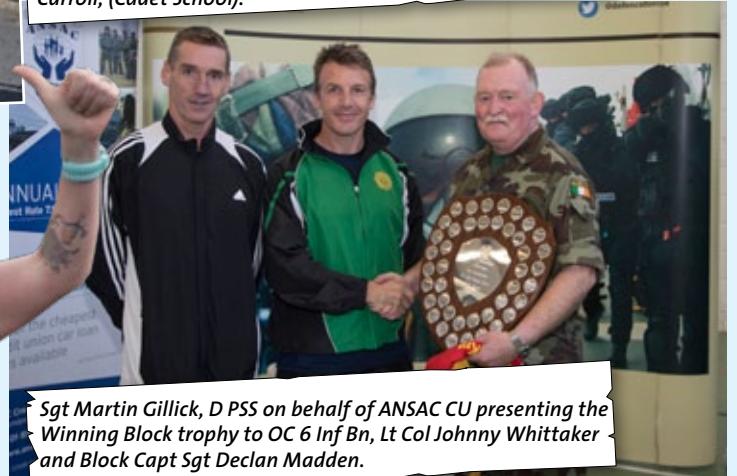


We kindly thank our two main sponsors for their continued support Friends First and ANSAC Credit Union, and also Druid Craft for the wonderful plaques. Well done to all those who took part and a big thank you for making the event what it is, in particular, the organising committee, the *An Cosantóir*/Information Office, J7 Branch and all those who gave a hand on the day like PTIs, engineers, logistics, McKee Bks catering centre and the 6 Inf Bn work party. ■

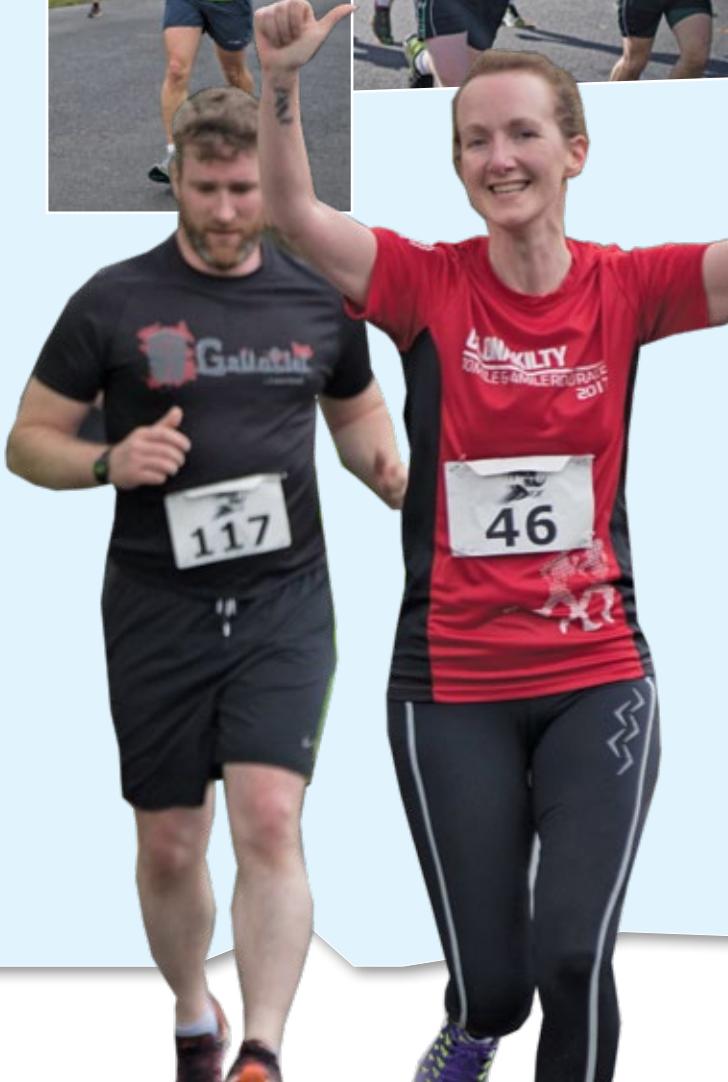
For the full results visit: www.myrunresults.com



DF COS, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett DSM with DCOS Ops Maj Gen Kieran Brennan, and Senior Male Winner Pte Kenneth Rodgers (12 Inf Bn) and Senior Female Winner Cadet Elizabeth Carroll, (Cadet School).



Sgt Martin Gillick, D PSS on behalf of ANSAC CU presenting the Winning Block trophy to OC 6 Inf Bn, Lt Col Johnny Whittaker and Block Capt Sgt Declan Madden.



Mr Brian Hosford from Friends First presenting the Winning Team trophy to the 6 Inf Bn.



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Send your answer along with your name, address & contact number to An Cosantóir's address or by email to subs@military.ie by the 20th November 2017. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn. **Last month's winner was:** Fr Paul Murphy CF, Renmore, Co Galway.

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BLACK DOG ISLAND (2017) Highly Recommended Album

Gabby Fitzgerald was a great soldier, he served in the Defence Forces for over 30 years, in many units at home and abroad including the elite Army Ranger Wing, and overseas as a peacekeeper in Lebanon, Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo, Africa and East Timor. He also worked in Liberia, Sierra Leone, North Africa, Uganda, Ruanda as a security specialist. Finglas born Gabby has been singing since he was 10, he is an accomplished singer/songwriter, and musician on the Irish uilleann pipes, whistles, guitar and the octave mandolin. He has many life experiences, which he has made into a 16 original track album of Celtic Rock.

50% of total sales will go towards Mental Health Ireland a charity that creates awareness for suicide and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The album can be purchased at www.gabbyfitzgeraldmusic.com

"My favourite song on the album is 'Soldier of a Soldier's Son', this is also the title of his as yet unfinished autobiography. Best wishes with the album Gabby."

Wayne



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Special Operations

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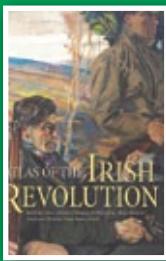
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Last month's winner of the PROTAC €50 Voucher was Patrick Quinn, Co Cavan. Closing date is 20th November 2017.

ATLAS OF THE IRISH REVOLUTION

Edited by John Crowley, Donal ÓDrisceoil and Mike Murphy, and Assistant Editor John Borgonovo
Publisher: Cork University Press (September 2017)
ISBN: 978-1-782051176
Pages: 984
Price: €59.00



This door-stopper weighs in at 5kg. But its pride of place should justifiably be front and centre in the [reinforced] bookcase of anyone who has a passion for history in general and the pre-state revolutionary period in particular. The historian Dermot Ferriter has noted that no book can be utterly complete in describing the period but that this majestic work is as good as it gets, it's quite hard to disagree with him. The range of sources in their combination with new archival material that has become available to researchers gives a majestic sweep of the period but with the fine brush strokes of the minutiae that give the underlying nuances to key events; accordingly, the analysis has an often searing lancet effect. Allied to a superb range of accompanying maps and graphics which almost visually overwhelms the reader with the depth and breadth of knowledge contained within this work. It is unquestionably the definitive account of the revolutionary period in literally mapping out the diverse and intertwining threads that encapsulated the period. The European Geopolitical situation superimposed over the Irish socio-political, religious and economic background give an overarching synthesis that is truly mind-boggling in its detail; particularly the how and why the revolutionary campaign was waged in the period 1919-1923 and varied in intensity from region to region and often parish to parish. The evolution of the IRA campaign is definitively portrayed but the real strength of the book is in its analysis of the Crown Forces, both the British Army who through Garrison life was a stable in the social and economic life of many Irish towns and the invidious role that the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) found themselves in upon the outbreak of hostilities. Within this matrix the strategy of the military conflict is mapped out in its often-confusing throes and the effect it had on the civilian population, what is today euphemistically described as 'Collateral Damage'.

This *Magnum Opus* may have a future competitor but not on the immediate horizon of academia's gaze for quite some time. **R.F.**

TIPPERARY TANGO

Author: Fergal Anton
Publisher: Less Serious Books a division of Logic Press
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This is the first publication of the 'Less Serious Books' division of Logic Press. Set in Ireland of the mid-1980's, this hilarious caper charts the trials and tribulations of Fionn Mac Tubaiste who plays the dual role of university mathematics lecturer and Ireland's only operational member of An Serbhs Rúnda (ASR) or secret service. ASR is managed by penny pinching civil servant Malachy Mulligan known as 'M' who sends the hapless Fionn on all manner of secret missions from spying on our EEC partners prior to budget negotiations, to dealing with an Israeli mole in Army Headquarters. Fionn's espionage methods are not typical of the direct-action methods associated with the James Bond genre. His spycraft is more closely aligned with the indirect approach, where brainpower and technology are used to secure a decisive intelligence advantage over Ireland's adversaries. Francis Hazelton aka 'Punch' is the loyal tech geek working from a room in Fionn's house and providing him with all manner of hacked intelligence.

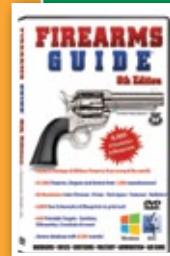
As we know, every self-respecting spy novel has beautiful women, brothels, Russian agents and a clever, intricate, fast paced plot and here Tipperary Tango does not disappoint. Throughout his journey Fionn faces hilarious moral dilemmas, proving that being an ASR operative in 1980s Catholic Ireland is a distinct challenge. This is a really enjoyable read because of the familiarity of the locations, its visual, historical and descriptive detail and the characterisation of the main players.

Recently, the national press reported that the Dáil approved the Secret Service Fund. One can only hope that there is a highly trained team of agents like our hapless hero Fionn, protecting our interests, instead of a team of bureaucratic Mulligan's thwarting their efforts!

A highly recommended and humorous read and that would make an ideal stocking filler this Christmas. **CL**

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REPORT AND PHOTOS BY
SGT KARL BYRNE

I work in the Technical Workshops of 2 Brigade CIS Company in Cathal Brugha Bks. I'm from Skerries in North Co Dublin, but I now live in Carlanstown, Kells Co Meath. I am married with two children, a 5-year-old girl and a 15-month-old boy. Before joining the Defence Forces I worked in Gateway Computers for about two years, doing customer service, it wasn't something I enjoyed so I decided to join the DF.

Enlisting in December 1999, and training with the 5 Inf Bn in Gormanstown Camp as it was known back then. I spent four and half years in the 5 Inf Bn doing a range of different courses, from a Mag SF course to a clerk's course. Along with courses, I was involved in plenty of exercises and the ATCP flood relief back then too. I went overseas for the first time with the 6th Tpt Coy to Kosovo. I thoroughly enjoyed this mission, as it was a change from normal military life at home.

In 2003 the Trainee Technician Scheme (TTS) became available so I applied in for it. Being a successful applicant I went to Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) for two years, where I earned a Higher Certificate in Electronic Engineering. The two years afterwards were spent doing my 'City and Guilds' course and exams in the DFTC, which included subjects such as data-coms, maths and radio-coms.

When fully qualified, I was posted to 2 Field CIS Coy in Cathal Brugha Bks, where I've served since now called 2 Bde CIS Coy. Upon my posting, I spent my initial time as an understudy to Cpl Mick Reid and Sgt Phil Curry. I learned so much while and I still work with Phil today. In 2008 I completed my NCOs Course in 2 Brigade Training Centre (BTC)

in Cathal Brugha Bks and I was promoted in 2011. I went back to Kosovo in 2009 with the 40th Infantry Group, spending my time as a



CIS tech in Logs Coy.

Getting promoted didn't really change my day-to-day job as such, but it did make me more responsible for the work I was doing. My day-to-day tasking's changes on a daily basis, which means your knowledge base of the CIS Corps needs to be fairly wide. The kind of jobs we get tasked with varies from fixing and fitting of the CIS system, consisting of Sincgars, Harris, Motorola or Rovis radios to the hardware network side of the DF. This would be fixing and fitting switches, routers and cabling, which is the backbone of the DF computing network. We also maintain the telephony system across the brigade, fleet maintenance of Mowags, LTAVs and any other vehicles fitted with radios within the brigade.

While overseas another part of our taskings is the maintenance of the Gigasat system, which directly links overseas units with Ireland, this is an essential system to have because as at times of emergency it may be the only link to home for the overseas unit. At home, we also maintain the rebro stations on the relevant masts across the brigade, which could mean travelling to Athlone or even Finner Camp in Donegal. We also maintain the microwave systems that link barracks to barracks for voice and data. Another tasking that happens from time to time is the partial assistance with 2 Bde CIS Coy Training Section for Regimental Signals Courses. We also have Exercise Viking coming up in Sweden next year, that I will be playing a technical roll in, the preparation for which has already begun.

I plan on completing my contract up to my 21-year, up to then I would like to up-skill myself by completing such courses as the Cisco Certified Networking Associate (CCNA) course and the Riggers Course. As a parent, I don't plan on going overseas again unless the family-friendly trips were opened up to tech appointments. This job presents great opportunities for educational and career purposes and I thoroughly enjoy my job and the people I work with. ■





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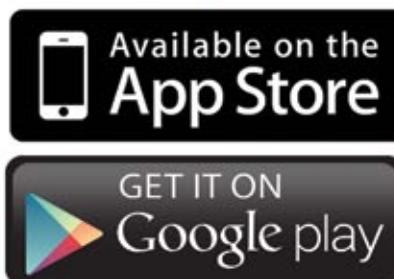


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