

# THE Wire



*The Magazine of The Royal Corps of Signals*

October 2016



Corps Formation: 28 June 1920

Corps Motto: Certa Cito

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**Front Cover:** 2Lt Elise Sharp, 39 Sig Regt on Ex Somerset Warrior.

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**Back Cover:** Lt Col Terry Crane and Maj John Howell-Walmsley at Christ Church Cathedral in Stanley on their final day in the Falklands.

## Note from the Editor



Welcome to the bumper October edition of the Wire magazine!

Thank you for all your contributions to this edition, however once again we have received many more submissions than we have pages but be assured that if your article is not in this edition it will be included in the December issue. Can I please ask that all photographs sent into us are of good quality and are sent as separate JPEG's.

Please keep sending your submissions to [wire@royalsignals.org](mailto:wire@royalsignals.org). If you would like to see any other articles included please contact us with your thoughts.



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Please email submissions in Microsoft Word format,  
together with related photographs to the e-mail  
addresses above. Digital images should be in JPEG  
format, kept separate (and not embedded within the  
article) and supplied with captions.

**Contribution Deadlines:**  
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15th June for publication in the August.  
15th August for publication in the October.  
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# The Last serving soldier returns to the Falklands after 34 Years

by Lt Col TP Crane

On the 8 Aug 2016 two of the oldest serving officers in the Royal Signals deployed to the Falkland Islands: **Lt Col Terry Crane** and **Maj John Howell-Walmsley**. The first time **Maj John H-W** set foot on the Falkland Islands was at San Carlos Bay on 27 May 1982 at the start of the Falklands War. **John** always wanted to go back but has never had the chance, but with 2 Sig Regt soldiers supporting the communication network on the island, **John** being their QM, and a bit of encouragement from SO1 LE, the opportunity arose, so **John** and I stepped on the RAF Air Bus at Brize Norton and we were on our way.



*This picture was taken at Fitzroy which was where Maj H-W was left for several weeks after the war to collect in all the Clansman communication equipment. He found the very store he used and the (Signals Store) sign which hung above the shed in Jun 1982*

We landed at Mount Pleasant after a short stop on Ascension Island 20 hours later. The weather was clear and sunny for the duration of our stay and although cold (FI winter) the opportunity to visit all the locations/sites **John** frequented in 1982 was easier than we thought. As the only soldier/officer in the R SIGNALS still to be serving who fought in the Falklands War it was an honour for me to be in his company and listen to the many stories that came flooding back as we travelled around the island. In typical **John** style, he did not want any pomp, ceremony, fuss or bother, so our low key party of **Lt David Seaton** and **Cpl Rukman** headed off in the Land Rover across some 'bouncy' single track roads to San Carlos Bay where **John** initially landed with the main body of ground troops, on 27 May 1982. Following my complaints to the driver to try and hit as many potholes as he could, **John** commented "there were no roads on the island in 1982", so I decided to keep quiet and suffered in silence for the rest of the trip.

The stories told would fill up this edition of *The Wire*. To listen how **John** moved from San Carlos then to Darwin, Fitzroy, and then finally into Port Stanley, just brought home how our



*This picture was taken in San Carlos Bay. Maj H-W standing on the Jetty where he came ashore on 27 May 1982. This jetty was used as the main disembarking point for the main force during the landings in 1982*

soldiers endured the very worst of conditions. Moving across rough terrain in DMS boots and puttees, no Gore-tex and only a few vehicles able to land, with sporadic 're-supply', it just highlights the robustness and determination of both commanders and soldiers alike, during the conflict. To see the ground and hear the experiences from **John** as a young technician LCpl in 205 Sig Sqn as part of 5 Infantry Brigade, was at times emotional, but also hilarious. His account of taking on a (suspect) Argentinian position (shed) at Darwin Bay, only to be confronted by a very hungry and angry domestic pig, is worth listening to.

We ended the trip visiting a memorial on Mount Pleasant where **John's** Sqn Commander, **Maj John Forge** and **SSgt Joe Baker** died when the Gazelle they were travelling in was shot down heading to a Royal Signals Rebroadcast Station at the top of the mountain. The detachment required an urgent re-supply of VHF 351 radios and at the time they were holding both the main HF and VHF links on Island. Again a poignant moment for both of us; but in good QM style **John** found some Brasso and cleaned the memorial plaque and tidied up the site to prevent two old blokes seeing each other shed a tear.

Both **John** and I have always been proud to be both soldiers and Late Entry (LE) Officers, and as we look around the Corps and see the LE cohort develop and grow from strength to strength over the years it is good to see we are as strong as ever. Being with **John** in the Falkland Islands re-living the experiences of 34 years ago, I feel, in many respects 'nothing has changed'. That 'soldier spirit of 82' still shines bright, whether it is the Falkland Islands, the Middle East, Bosnia, Kosovo or Afghanistan, the Royal Signals soldier and officer is always at the forefront of 'The Battle', which is something to be proud of. The experience of going to the Falkland Islands with **John** and listening to the war unfold from his perspective I will never forget – it was a privilege.

*Maj H-W paying his respects; it was the first time he had seen the memorial at Mount Pleasant*



# NEWS FROM BLANDFORD

## CORPS ENGAGEMENT TEAM

### Armed Forces Day Northern Ireland - by Cpl Horniblow

On the 18 Jun 16 the Royal Signals CET travelled to Northern Ireland to assist 32 Signal Regiment in support of Armed Forces Day (NI). This took place at Antrim Castle Gardens, a large venue able to host the large crowds, which turned up from the outset.

The team really enjoyed the opportunity to get over to Northern Ireland as most of us had never been there before. After leaving our rather claustrophobic cabin on the ferry (which was full of men snoring throughout) we arrived at Antrim to take part in the day's festivities. This was a great opportunity to engage with the public who were all very enthusiastic about the military and keen to learn more about the Corps. They all wanted to have a look inside the Falcon Detachment and try on some of the kit on show. The sun was out which helped and there were various marching bands and air displays taking place, as well as the opportunity to sample the burger van!

The team were keen to make the most of being in Northern Ireland so ventured out to the Giants Causeway for the chance to see one of Northern Ireland's landmarks. The weather wasn't the best that day and that coupled with the fact that we had to clamber about a mile down a hill to reach the actual causeway, which brought out a few moans, until we reached the bottom. Here we had a chance to climb over the slippery, weirdly shaped natural rocks and this made for some great photo opportunities. After we had taken our fill of selfies we stopped for a quick fish and chip dinner before heading back to the ferry port.

The chance to interact with a Reserve unit, whilst looking to recruit new members to the Corps, proved worthwhile and thankfully it will not be long before the CET is back for the next event.

### Dragons March – Cardiff, Wales - by LCpl Mills

The Royal Signals CET travelled to Cardiff on Wed 6 Jul to take part in the annual Dragons March event. We arrived at Cardiff City Stadium in the afternoon and pitched our trailer right next to **Aaron Ramsey's** home ground. The event was perfectly timed for the Euro 2016 and with Wales in the semi-final; there was already a buzz about the place.

After treating ourselves to a *Nandos* and **LCpl Jason 'Bruce' Lee** smashing a sharing platter to himself, we decided to watch the game with the Welsh faithful. There was a sea of red everywhere you went which was incredible to witness.

The first two days of the event were open to schools, the kids and their teachers had a walk around the 'military village', engaging with all the different Corp Engagement Teams (CET). Our most popular 'attract' piece on the stand with the children was the BATAK, a reaction test game, which saw lots of competition ensue amongst the school kids.

**Cpl Charlie Horniblow** and **Capt Jordan Blee** got to enjoy a game of Frisbee throughout the day, encouraging others to get involved and make the most of the items being given away. It was a good experience for the school children and you could tell they enjoyed themselves and gained a lot of useful information from the various Corps' and cap badges.

With Wales being knocked out of Euro 2016 their homecoming parade was organised for the Friday evening and luckily for us we were handed tickets to Cardiff City Stadium where the event took place. It was an amazing atmosphere to be a part of, allowing for nearly 100,000 people to pass the military village and look at all the different stands on show. The final day was a chance for the public to view all the stands, chat with members of the Recruiting Team and get a flavour of what jobs are available.

This was a very successful event with a much larger attendance than anticipated thanks to the parade and is one we are very much looking forward to next year.



# NEWS FROM TRAINING



## 11th (ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS) SIGNAL REGIMENT BLANDFORD



### 2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC      **Maj L Kelly**  
SSM     **WO2(SSM) J Wignall**

### Exercise CATTERICK CULMINATION VII

2 (Catterick) Sqn's Ex CATTERICK CULMINATION VII took place on the weekend of 3 – 5 Jun at Copehill Down Village, SPTA. This FIBUA based ex, organised and delivered by **SSgt Weatherill**, was a great opportunity to introduce exciting and challenging training to the 100 strong cohort of Phase 2 and Phase 3 soldiers. Squadron Permanent Staff delivered a variety of military skills stands incorporating: manual method of entry (picture below), abseiling, VCP, room clearance, vehicle anti-ambush drills and bayonet 'Bull Ring' amongst others.



Having deployed to the FOB on the Friday afternoon, establishing defences and their own ops room, the platoons were responsible for the occupation and battle rhythm of the FOB throughout the weekend; ably led by 3 officers from 5 Sqn's Troop Commanders' course. The evenings proved eventful with harassment and attacks against the FOB, a SBIED at the main gate (**Sgt Blackburn** dressed up with a make-shift IED vest, complete with flash bulbs) and an IDF attack early Sunday morning.

Reveille at 0630 hrs on Saturday morning introduced a busy day where all 9 sections would rotate through a series of stands, learning new skills they would confirm on Sunday. Additionally visits from Comdt DSCIS, CO 11(RSS) Sig Regt and the Padre, guaranteed a full day's programme. Despite the brave efforts to get the visitors down the abseiling line, the sight of 'shaky legs' from young trainees meant a lot of encouragement was required.



With an earlier reveille on the Sunday, following from Orders the night before, the 3 platoons moved to their FUPs and waited to commence their attack on the South of the village. Led by their Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants (trade instructors from 2 Sqn); **Sgt Barley**, **Sgt Netra** and **Sgt Palin**, each platoon embarked on a gruelling 4-hour attack putting into practice the newly acquired skills from the previous day. After clearing multiple buildings and moving through a fantastic bayonet room clearance lane organised by **Sgt Abbott** and **Sgt Hall**, it was onward into the infamous tunnel system only to be greeted, on exit, by a mass casualty incident stand. The casualties with the aid of **Cpl Thomas** and the Amputees in Action team ensured both the realism and intensity presented a sufficiently realistic experience for all.



With the ex finally complete, the Sqn gathered for a photograph before jumping on the transport and making their way back to Blandford Camp. Upon return a BBQ awaited and a well earned opportunity to relax and exchange stories from the weekend. The Sqn's next ex will be in November 16 where a focus on survival skills will yet again present a new and challenging environment for all those involved.

### EW Europe Conference 2016: Transforming EW - by **SSgt (YofS(EW)) Moucher**

EW Wing recently sent **SSgt (YofS(EW)) Moucher** and **WO1 (YofS(EW)) Fox** to the Association of Old Crows (AOC) sponsored EW Europe Conference which took place 10-12 May 2016 in Rotterdam, Holland. The theme for this year's event was Transforming EW: Evolving threats, concepts and capabilities. The main theme throughout was factored around platform defence and the obligatory cultural visit to Amsterdam.

## EW in NATO

EW is a key factor in NATO's force projection and is essential for full spectrum of operations in all domains. EW is critical in denying adversary access to the Electro Magnetic Spectrum (EMS) whilst ensuring its unimpeded use for NATO.

Improving Situational Awareness (SA) and delivering specific effects (FIND, FIX, and UNDERSTAND) will have an impact on the battlefield whilst also helping us to deal with evolving threats.

## Russia's Information Warfare (IW) progression

Information Warfare combines EW, Cyber Warfare and Psychological Operations (Psy-Ops) into a single fighting organisation with the aim of tipping nations into chaos, and this will be central to all warfare in the future. Combining IW with a kinetic war can produce a cocktail that can neutralise a nation state quickly and effectively.

Russia's modern IW adapts soviet reflexive control to the contemporary geopolitical context. Reflective control is defined as a means of conveying to a partner or opponent specially prepared information to incline them to voluntarily make the predetermined decision desired by the initiator of the action; in other words, reflective control is a method in which a controlling party can influence an opponent into unknowingly making a bad decision by interfering with its perceptions.

A study by the World Bank stated that Russia boasts that over 1 million software specialists are involved in research and development. Russia's illegal cyber warriors are among the most proficient in the world with around 40 large illegal cyber rings in operation. Russia is well known for sourcing technology, intelligence and utilising their world class hacking talent for its own use. Since 2012 these criminal rings have recruited over 2000 software specialists. This criminal cyber fraternity receives state immunity for its cyber-crimes in return for offering service to the state.

## Protecting Society Against Malicious Use of Drones

Commercial drones are an emerging threat to national security. They have been used maliciously in a number of ways. These include, a VIP breach, smuggling contraband into prisons, stadium harassment and war fighting in the Middle East. To combat the threat, drone alarm system trials are currently taking place within the UK and Denmark.

This is a small snapshot of what was covered over the 2 days. If you would like any more information on the symposium (or the trip to Amsterdam) please feel free to email me for the complete document.

## 3 (HARROGATE) SQN

OC **Maj DG Gale**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C Deal**

## Welcomes and Farewells

The Sqn has undergone the usual changes of personalities this summer. **Maj David Gale** assumed command of the Sqn, with **Maj Rebecca Jacques-Grey** giving birth to a new addition to her family.

The Sqn would also like to say farewell to **Capt Mat Darby**, who has returned to 4(Mil Trg) Sqn and has settled into the woods nicely.

## Exercise JURASSIC STRIDER - by Cpl Dean Wilson

Ex JURASSIC STRIDER was a 30 mile charity walk across Dorset's undulating Jurassic coast line. The world heritage site in southern England played host to the fundraiser for the Royal Signal Benevolent Fund and Help for Heroes charities. At 0715 hrs we set off on our first leg from Weymouth Sea Life Centre and made our way up to the first Dorset hill, a taster of what was to come. Although early in the morning the sun was out and made for some great scenic photographs of the Dorset coastline as we continued on our route.

The robust and arduous hills continued one after another with the unrelenting sun beating down on us which made for a very tiring initial twelve miles. We stopped at renowned viewpoints such as the natural arch at Durdle Door and limestone folding at Lulworth Cove to take some spectacular photographs. Our first stop was at Lulworth Cove, 12 miles in, and after a quick turnaround we were back on route. As we made our way through Lulworth Cove we noticed that the path had been worn away and the track had been diverted to another longer route; a sign of things to come.



With the unplanned diversion **Capt Samuel Cutting** used his orienteering skills to great effect and managed to get us back on track. As the day continued our legs began to tire and once we passed Lulworth Cove, the hills became mountainous. There were various paths that were unmarked as we continued along the treacherous route and occasionally made the wrong call and ended up climbing up the face of the mountain. Secretly **Cpl Johnathon Rogers** and **Cpl Paul Osling** wanted to get extra hill reps in the bag, being PTIs, but for the majority of us it was a hard graft grappling up the mountain. We reached the 17 mile point when we stopped for a lunch break at Purbeck Wildlife Reserve and we were met by OC 3 Sqn **Maj David Gale** and Lightning Troop **SSgt McCreadie** who would walk the next leg with us.

It was refreshing to have new members join us for 6 miles and distract us from the blisters, but soon reality struck back when we were grappling up the side of a hill. By this time we had easily covered 20 miles of rough terrain and the finish seemed a lifetime away. Each hill was a slog to climb up and at the top we had begun to take rest periods which would allow us to recoup our spent energy. 25 miles along our route we could see what looked like the finish line, a white lighthouse emerging in the distance. Each hill we attacked in the hope that we were nearing the white peak of the lighthouse, only to realise that there was another hill. Demoralised and with over 10 hours of time spent on our feet we were nearing our goal of 30 miles. By this time, everyone was running low on energy and blisters started to form under the blisters under the blisters.

With one final hill in our way we slogged over it and reached our goal of 30 miles. Finally, with a sense of achievement and pride we took one final photo before we collapsed into the minibus and headed back home to Blandford Camp. We had reached our goal and managed to raise £190 so far for the charities; a huge well done to everyone involved.

#### Exercise KOHIMA LINE 2 - by Sig Harris

On Saturday the 9 July a group of us went down to Swanage to terminate Fibre Optic cable at Norden and Corfe Castle railway stations. The cable had already been laid by an external agency down the live railway line, so all we had to do was terminate the 24 cores of single mode fibre for their new signalling system at both ends.

To start the morning off we all got up and met at the scoff house on Blandford Camp to ensure the team all had enough energy for the arduous day ahead. At 0830 hrs we left Camp and started our journey through the Dorset countryside, to the accompaniment of "the wheels on the bus, go round and round".

As we arrived we were met by **Frank Roberts** and **Peter Milford** as representatives of the Swanage Steam Railway. They had obviously worked with squaddies before as they welcomed us with a nice brew. After a tasty cuppa and an in-depth safety briefing about working on the railway we split into two teams with one supervisor on each team. Team one was made up of a Cpl from CSS, **Sig Jackson**, **Sig Thorneycroft** and **Sig Ghale**. Team two was made up of **Cpl Bates**, **Sig Stone**, **Sig Weekes** and **Sig Harris**.

As we worked tirelessly to get the job done **Cpl Bates** tried desperately hard to hide the fact that he is a secret train enthusiast. But when he got the opportunity to drive a train and ride at the front of the steam locomotive on the Saturday, he could hide it no further and spent the rest of the day walking around with the biggest smile on his face you have ever seen.

After an interesting and instructive job spent splicing fibre optic cable, learning how to overcome real world problems and drinking brews we packed up and went on our way with a sense of achievement of a job well done. To date we still haven't heard on the news of any rail disasters at Swanage because of signal failure, so we can assume the job is still working.

It was a good experience for all the lads involved and we all look forward to getting more experience on fibre.



#### Fiji Cyclone Winston - by Cpl Rabakewa

On 19 February a mega storm hit Fiji that gained strength, momentum and achieving Category 5 status. The Islands can expect very destructive hurricane force winds with an average speed of 220km per hour and momentary gusts to 315km per hour. This made it the strongest storm to ever strike the nation and the second largest storm recorded in the world.



Hundreds of schools have been damaged or destroyed, health facilities have been severely damaged and the agricultural sector severely affected. This was a loss of catastrophic proportions for Fiji; suffering a terrible blow to infrastructure, health, education and agriculture. According to the Fiji Times (local newspaper) at least 42 people were killed by this severe tropical cyclone Winston. A total of 40,000 homes were damaged/destroyed and approximately 350,000 people and roughly 40% of Fiji's population were significantly impacted by the storm.



After the devastation that hit Fiji, I was approached by the 11 (Royal School of Signals) Sig Regt Welfare Officer **Mr Mark Brunning** to see if any of our families within the Garrison had been affected by the cyclone. **Lt Col Short**, CO was concerned that there were 11 Fijian families living and working within the Garrison community at that time which had families in Fiji that had been directly affected by the cyclone.

Permission was given by the Garrison Camp Commandant to start fund raising; this was also supported by the Blandford Camp (Cio) Facebook page - **Mrs Gerry Waters**, Blandford Hive by **Wendy** and **Mr Dave Donaldson** (AWS) who has helped us with 'bacon butty' mornings. Funds were raised and along with the contribution from SSaFA we secured an ISO container to send out support in the form of clothing and equipment.



The relief drive then kicked off within the garrison community alongside SSAFA, Downlands Primary School, Army Welfare Service (AWS), Garrison Shooting Team, the Thrift Shop, BGSU, 11 (RSS) Sig Regt, Garrison MT and 15 Sig Regt. We had other support from 3 Yorks Regt and Christian Mission Foundation Fellowship (Warminster) and the local Blandford Rugby Club with the donations of tents, clothes, toys, equipment and bedding which came flooding in.

The collection points were set up at the Londis shop, Downlands School, the Thrift shop, Guardroom and 3 Sqn/ Battleaxe Tp. BGSU QM had also allocated the Jubilee Hall as a collection point for those who were donating; this gave the opportunity to view videos and detailed information about the damage the cyclone had caused and how their donations would be used. With the sheer amount of donations flooding in we were allocated an area in which to store everything by BGSU QM before loading it onto the ISO container.

Members of the Fijian community at Blandford Camp assisted with loading the vast amount of boxes full of donated items from the Blandford Community into the ISO container. After a long few weeks of the TC Winston relief drive, the container was packed and shipped out on 21 April 2016.



The container took 8 weeks to arrive at port in Fiji. Myself (Cpl Rabakewa), Sgt Saunitoga and Mrs Tema Kauvesi went across to Fiji to meet the container, ensuring that the items were being distributed to the community's families.

We are hugely grateful for all generosity, trust and most importantly your commitment to our appeal. On behalf of the Blandford Fijian Community, thank you for your kind and generous support, not only to us but more importantly to the people back home in Fiji. Without your help and support we would not have been able to give the aid that was so desperately needed in their time of vulnerability.



## Exercise HARROGATE SURF 2016 GROUP 1 - by LCpl Abel and Cpl Hardy

On 11 July members of 3 Sqn assembled at 0630hrs with sleepy eyes and set off for Cardinham woods in Cornwall to start a week's Adventure training. Mountain biking was the first activity on list, however everyone seemed to take ages to get ready possibly because it was raining the group was apprehensive about their ability to get around the trail.

Once we had some instruction from **SSgt Chris Loynes** and got going things started to get more fun and confidence in the group started to increase. After the first lap of the Bodmin Beast trail we stopped for lunch at the Woods Café. **Sgt Bruce Horoszko** was quick to get the largest piece of cake in the cafe to ensure he was recharged and ready for the next lap.



We went back out after lunch for another loop of the trail but with less stops and an opportunity to put our new found skills in to practice. We finished cycling for the day and headed off to our accommodation at RAF St Mawgan.

The next day was a great day for rock-climbing. The sun was out and we headed to Holywell Bay, only a 30 minute drive from Newquay. We were quick to get our kit together as time was

against us because of the tide coming in and we knew we only had a few hours climbing before our cliff face would be underwater. While getting the equipment from the van we discovered that **Sgt Mike Culkin** had packed a set of size 8 climbing shoes which were in fact an 8 and a 9. We all took it in turns climbing and belaying, **LCpl Pratikcha** showed us how climbing was done by reaching the top in record time.

When **Sgt Bruce Horoszko** decided he wanted to belay for **Sgt Mike Milburn** we were worried that if **Mike** did fall then **Bruce** being half his size would be sent flying up the wall behind him. A BBQ and a few beers back at RAF St Mawgan ended a tiring days climbing.

Day 3 was a welcome late start before our surfing lesson at 1030hrs at Fistral Beach; we had a 2 hour introduction to surfing in which no one seemed to quite get the hang of how

to stand up, however, there were some very funny moves and positions all along the beach. After a few hours we started to see the more capable members of the group on their feet. **Sgt Bruce Horoszko** decided to use other people as a way to get himself to his feet, first using **LCpl Pratikcha's** head to surf on. We had lunch and met up with Group 2, who were replacing us for the remainder of the week. With our AT package complete we headed back to Blandford Camp exhausted and happy.

On arrival at Fistral Beach, Newquay we donned our wetsuits and hit the surf. **SSgt Loynes** has a thing for whales so looked at us big lads with delight. Then for some interesting warm up moves and expert tuition on how we should be on a surf board. The next hour or so proved interesting and even though some of us are military instructors, that doesn't mean we can follow instruction! At times it looked like flying surfboards minus the whale on top. Even though this seemed quite arduous at times everyone thoroughly enjoyed it.



The next day involved a short trip to Holywell Bay where we participated in rock climbing and sun bathing/beached whale impressions. Yet again **SSgt Loynes** had that look about him with **SSgt Hodgetts** his favourite and best sunbather. This day was quite a relaxed day which the group finished off with a BBQ and a few sociable drinks with **Maj Greaves** and **WO1 RSM Savage**, back at RAF St Mawgan.

The final day involved a trip to Cardinham Woods for a spot of Mountain biking. This was most of the group's favourite activity of the week even for the novice of the group turning up in denim shorts and just general holiday attire. Under the expert guidance of **SSgt Loynes** we made our way around the Red and Blue routes of Cardinham Woods for the morning. With this being the last day we made our way home after this activity. Fortunately after two days of refreshments and socialising between activities we had **Sgt Smith** driving making it a chilled out journey. Overall it was an excellent Adv Trg package enjoyed by all.



## Trailwalker 2016 - by LCpl Pratikcha Chamling Rai

Trailwalker UK is a 100 km charity run/walk event across the South Downs way in a 30 hours or less timeframe. It is organised every year by Oxfam with admin and support from Queens Gurkha Signals. The charity money raised goes to Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The Sqn entered two teams for Trailwalker 2016 held over the weekend 22-24 Jul. Under the leadership of **FofS (IS) Sachin Thapa**, the teams were prepared to take on the mighty challenge.

The team training and selection started 2-3 months prior to the event. Due to injuries which were not related to the Trailwalker training (.i.e. sports and AT), the team members list had to be amended several times. Team A, the self-proclaimed team-awesome consisted of the upgrader course, **Cpl Andy McHugh**, **Cpl Tom Lamb**, **LCpl Dan Leighton** and **LCpl Matt Wilkinson**. Team B consisted of permanent staff; **Sgt Matt Bibby**, **Sgt Bruce Horoszko** and **LCpl Pratikcha Chamling Rai**. The admin team played a pivotal role throughout the event and it consisted of the team leader and **Cpl Jase Crawley**.

The event itself was full of ups and downs and it was evident right from the start. The team had planned to start the race at 0700hrs but the admin vehicle was found to have a faulty crank shaft pulley just before the start time. So it meant, either we had to find another vehicle that actually worked or withdraw from the event itself. The team decided to start the race at 0800hrs having full faith on the team leader and admin team to sort the admin vehicle. The team managed to cover roughly 30 Km and reached check point (CP 3) without admin vehicle support. In the meantime, the team leader managed to find a minibus and a minibus driver (**LCpl Karna - DST**). After approximately 40 minutes wait at the Check point 3 (CP 3), the admin team arrived at the location and fed the exhausted runners which was definitely a morale booster.

The weather was extremely challenging with temperatures hitting as high as the 26 degree mark. Unfortunately, enduring long muscle cramp for approximately 30 km, **Sgt Bibby** from team B had to pull out from the race at CP 6. **Cpl Lamb** was doing so well, until he had to stop at CP6 due to sunburn. Toughest man, **Cpl McHugh** suffered sickness and was forced to stop at CP 8. With three team members retired from the event this left two members from each team to continue the race. The four remaining members combined to form one mighty 3 Sqn team. We lost the way a bit from CP 8 to CP 9, for almost an hour; hopping barb wire fences. But we finally managed to complete the event in 21 hours and 12 minutes.

All in all, it was a lifetime experience for all of us, with a few surprises and bitter-sweet memories. I can't thank enough the admin team, each member of the team and all those who were involved to make this event a success.

## 4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC        **Maj GLM Dunn**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) Easterby-Jackson**

### Welcomes & Farewells

The Sqn has seen plenty of changes in personalities in the past few weeks. Firstly we welcome our new members of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn permanent staff; **Capt Mat Darby** joins us as the new 2IC, **Capt Autar Shrestha** as the Trg Offr, **Sgt Kishor Gurung**, **Cpl Kyle Parkhill**, **LCpl Jonno Johnston**.

As always with new arrivals, come our farewells. We say farewell to: **Capt Dan Wall, SSgt (FofS) Pete Stewart, SSgt (FofS(IS)) Danny Miller, Sgt' Mitch' Mitchell, Sgt Sean Beach, Cpl Andy Madden.**

As ever, the Sqn has been busy delivering CLM and PNCO courses to the wider Corps. Additionally the men and women of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn have found time to represent the Corps and Regt at sport.

### 611 (COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING) TROOP

OC **Capt J Willden**  
SSgt **SSgt Ware**

Pace of life within the Tp shows no signs of slowing down with our training commitments. However, with the recent Unit Det inspections and annual Equipment Care Inspections completed (and all passed with flying colours), Tp personnel have managed to squeeze in a bit of 'down time'. We deployed to Devon for a week of AT, fitted in some Tp Team Trailwalker training, and had a sports afternoon on Bournemouth Beach playing volleyball and rounders. **LCpl 'Sam' Dow** even managed to cram in a 2 week PNCO CLM course and secure the accolade of Top Student – good effort!

The hard work and abilities of the JNCOs within the Tp continues to be recognised across the wider Regt and Corps. Recent success on the Cpl-Sgt and LCpl-Cpl promotion boards gave a clear indication of this. We would like to say massive congratulations to the following on their selection for promotion to Sgt, **Cpl 'Swede' Roberts, Cpl Andy Madden, Cpl Matt Worthington and Cpl Emma Bilsby;** having 4 from one Troop is pretty impressive! Equally impressive and testament to the calibre of the JNCO instructors we have within 611, is having 5 LCpls selected for promotion to Cpl. Well done to, **LCpl 'Big Rob' Owen, LCpl 'Nelly' Parnell, LCpl Jonny Scott, LCpl Steve Skews and LCpl Desmond Bull.**

Lots of success on promotion boards only means one thing tough – assignments out and in! We say farewell to **Cpl Andy Madden** who goes to the windy side of camp, 628 Sig Tp, and **Cpl Emma Bilsby** who moves within the Sqn to take up a role as a SI in JCTT. We welcome in **Cpl Kyle Parkhill** from 14 SR (EW) and ..... that's it! Manning is once again becoming a bit of a 'pinch'!

### Exercise TIGER MERCURY DEVON - by Cpl Lyons-Negus

On the week of the 27 Jun - 1 Jul 16 a brave group of soldiers from 611 (Comms Trg) Signals Troop departed Blandford Camp in order to conduct adventurous training; our destination was Okehampton Camp, Dartmoor. Here, we had the privilege of sharing the camp with what seemed like the entire population of the London University Officer Training Corps conducting their annual camp.

We took part in a range of adventurous training used to help develop us and teach new skills.

We participated in Kayaking organised by **Cpl Andy Madden**, where we learnt the basic skills to be able to turn and go in a straight line as well as practicing capsizing drills and self-recovery as perfectly demonstrated by **LCpl Sam Dow** on his many attempts.

During the kayaking we also had time to play some sport such as volleyball using our skills learnt during the day.

We participated in mountain biking conducted by Army cycling expert, **SSgt Chris Lyones** where we showed off our limited skills in at least being able to stay upright over a mixture of red and blue routes. During the day we learnt how to navigate around a route using the terrain to our advantage while **Sgt Mike Milburn** showed off his best attempt of cycling uphill by snapping the bike chain which instantly gave a head start to the rest of the team in the race to the top of the hill.

And finally rock climbing; this was instructed by the **Sgt (SI) Mike Culkin and Cpl 'Ozzy' Osling** where we learned the basics of route selection and how to safely harness and belay our partners before being let loose on the indoor climbing wall.

In the evening we had free time to head down to the local town and had the joys of watching England lose to Iceland in EURO 2016. On the Tuesday we had a quiz night which consisted of riddles to test us, and on the Thursday we headed out to a local pub for some Chinese food.

Overall it was a great week where we got to experience some new sports and activities, taking Troop members out of their comfort zones whilst gaining new skills with some well-deserved time away from the garages.



Commandants visit to Piddlehinton Camp - by Cpl Laval-Chesterton

Key Development (KD) exercises are used to deploy Phase 2 soldiers to a field environment whilst putting their Bowman theory knowledge to the test in a practical environment. This includes siting and setting up a Rear Link Detachment (RLD) or HQ detachment and providing voice and data services for the Battle Groups in a secure location.

Recent KD exercises have been of normal routine however, this time, the new Commandant DSCIS, **Col Percival** visited Piddlehinton Camp along with **WO1 (GSM) Wedge** and OC 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, **Maj Dunn** who were met by SSM 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, **WO2 (SSM) Easterby-Jackson**. During their visit, **Col Percival** went to each RLD and received a brief from each member of the DS on the requirements and the Training Objectives that the Phase 2 soldiers must meet and also having a general chat to the Phase 2 soldiers on how they were finding the field Phase of the exercise.

Once **Col Percival** had visited the locations of the RLDs he turned his attentions to the HQ where he received a brief from a rather red faced, nervous Phase 2 soldier on situational awareness and the services they provide.



*Cpl Jeff Corbin briefing Col Percival*

Once **Col Percival** had seen all the soldiers and instructors he then proceeded to the Ops room for a brief. **LCpl Rob Owen** saw this as a perfect opportunity to get the kettle on and he was caught sprinting to get the brews on and at one point shouting "SIR, SIR, SIR how many sugars?"

All in all it was another very successful ex with all students meeting the required training objectives even whilst being nervous about the Commandant's visit.

#### **The Drumhead Service at Fovant Badges - by Cpl Corbin**

On 2 Jun 16, 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn visited the Fovant Badges at East Farm located between Salisbury and Shaftesbury on the A30. When we arrived we were given a guided tour of the surrounding area where the Fovant Garrison was during the First World War and shown black and white photos of how the Garrison looked all those years ago. Upon hearing the news that the Fovant Badges Society were going to create a new Badge to mark the Centenary of the first Badge being created, **Cpl 'Wes' French** was quick to volunteer to lead a team from the Sqn to help in the construction of the new Badge.

The Fovant Badges were created by soldiers who were in Fovant Garrison, waiting to go to France during the First World War as a demonstration of their Regimental pride. The first was created in 1916 and now every year on the first Sunday of July a Drumhead Service is held. This year on 3 Jul 16 around 400 members of the public attended including members of the Wiltshire Army Cadet Force and a handful of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn. This year was quite significant as it was the Centenary of the first badges appearing on the hillside, hence why the new Centenary Badge was being built. **Cpl French** has enjoyed helping build the new Badge and looks forward to serving the Fovant Badges Society in the future.



*The new badge to commemorate the Centenary*

#### **Exercise FULL CHARGE - by Cpl Thomas**

4 (Mil Trg) Sqn welcomed 26 Cadets from Welbeck College in a bid to entice them into, potentially, joining the Royal Corps of Signals.

A week long package was put together by **SSgt 'Paddy' Ensor** and **SSgt Craig Downer** over the period of 10 – 16 July 16. The week commenced with a 1.5 mile streaming run with the first cadet crossing the line in an impressive 8 minutes 10 seconds. From here two PLDs were conducted during the course of the week along with 5 command task stations in and around the local area. Communications training was delivered by 611 (Communications Training) Troop where the Cadets were introduced to Bowman man pack and vehicle borne installations.

The week culminated in a 2 night ex where members of the DS were tasked in trying to get the cadets from individual fire and movement all the way up to a Platoon style echelon attack within only 48hrs.

Always showing willingness, the Cadets typified what we as a Corps look for in Potential Officers, by conducting an impressive dawn attack under the steady eye of the Commandant and SO2 Army Reserve / Cadets. For these 24 Cadets who are embarking on a long journey to potentially filling the Commandant's shoes one day, along with their engineering background and determination this stands them in good stead to achieving their end result.

Special thanks go to **Lt Chapman**, **Sgt Emma Bilsby** and **Cpl John Hellwig**, who put a huge amount of effort into ensuring these Cadets reaped the rewards of training.

#### **5 (MARESFIELD) SQUADRON**

OC        **Maj J Budding**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) S Fox**

#### **Welcomes & Farewells**

The Sqn has seen changes in personalities in the past few weeks. Firstly we welcome our new members of 5 (Maresfield) Sqn permanent staff; **Capt Charlie Jones Troop Commanders Coordinator (Airborne Warrior(Go to it))** flash to bang here's TCC 96, **WO1 YofS Gav Hollaway** joins us as the new YofS course coordinator, fast ball here's Centre Piece.

As always with new arrivals, come our farewells. We say farewell to: **WO1 YofS Dean Wicks** on completion of service boy, man, and grumpy old man YofS 70 finally broke him although intelligence suggests it is the hardest YofS course ever; we wish Dean and family all the best for the future; don't forget we still have a requirement for a Sqn Clerk.

Congratulations to **2 Lt Shortland** awarded the Evis memorial sword, farewell to Troop Commanders Course 94 upon their completion of course and future command;

2 Sig Regt  
**Lt Drummond, 2 Lt Annable, 2 Lt Hawkins, 2 Lt Reid**

30 Sig Regt  
**2 Lt Mould, 2 Lt Shortland, 2 Lt Salero, 2 Lt Younge**

1 Sig Regt  
**2 Lt Eveleigh, 2 Lt Nicholls**

16 Sig Regt  
**Lt Marchant**

3 MRSR  
**2 Lt Hadfield**

10 Sig Regt  
**2 Lt Shapiro**

**Lt Sami Al Kalbani** returns to Oman Army.  
**Lt Rasheed Al Mutairi** returns to Kuwait Army.

**Exercise SHARP BAYONET** - by 2Lt C Bratby

An instructional day led by Troop Commanders Course 95 (TCC 95) on the 11 Jul 16 for a group of soldiers not under training. The main purpose of the day was to instruct on various battle lessons to develop their individual field craft knowledge.

This ex is a great way of throwing troop commanders, fresh from RMAS, straight into the deep end. Not only does it test the troop commanders on their knowledge of field craft but also puts them under pressure teaching soldiers for the first time. The troop commanders had to; plan and deliver the exercise including battle lessons to the soldiers, the lessons were as follows; target indication, fire control orders, contact drills, patrolling, and casualty under fire. The planning phase involved conducting a recce of the training area to be used during the ex and adherence to the relevant training documents, reading up on their chosen lessons, producing supporting documentation and lesson plans, and finally requesting and procurement of the supporting training equipment to assist the training and development of the soldiers.

With enough ammunition to invade a small country a bunch of super keen young officers TCC 95 aka (suicide squad) set to task, each lesson was designed to be all singing and all dancing (not the sound of music).

The day of the ex was upon us, with a hearty breakfast and a read of The Independent; we signed out our weapons, grabbed our lesson plans and headed down to the area to go and meet the steely eyed soldiers. Sharing the training area with another exercise added to our flexible plan, the troop commanders and their delivery of information was certainly being tested under the ever watchful eye of **Capt Rich Simpson** aka (Boomerang).

The ex ended with a huge section attack, with a lot of smoke and ammunition to use in a short amount of time (up and at them lads), it looked and sounded like the biggest attack ever!



Ex SHARP BAYONET was on the whole well-received by both soldiers and officers completing a successful ex. The soldiers and the troop commanders were definitely "fragged" (not literally) by the end of the day. The ex highlighted the importance of training and the relationship between soldiers and Troop Commanders such as **2 Lt Whiting** OIC aka (Deadshot), **2 Lt Highet** Ex 2ic aka (Rick Flag), **2 Lt Mulderring** aka (Enchantress), **2 Lt Bratby** aka (Harley Quinn) to name a few, TCC 95 is ready to invade Cornwall.

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Soldiers from 43 Signal Squadron joined their colleagues from 93 Support Squadron, both from 39 Signal Regiment on a back to basic war-fighting exercising at Caerwent training area in South Wales. The training was varied over the weekend with soldiers practising harbour drills, patrolling, navigation, recces and section attacks as well as fighting in woods and forests. It also included elements of practising casualty evacuation, planning and giving orders.

# EXERCISE

by Capt Martin Crilly

“Training like this is critical” said the Regt’s CO, Lt Col Nik Bruce. “We need to maintain the basic

soldiering skills we have spent time building up. With the increasing focus on technology skills, we cannot allow some of these basic soldiering skills to lapse. An intensive refresher weekend like this invigorates the seasoned reservists but also supports the recently recruited members of the squadrons to develop and integrate into the reserve family.”



SOME





# WILTSHIRE WARRIOR



# NEWS FROM FORMATIONS



## 11 SIGNAL and WEST MIDLANDS BRIGADE



*The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Signals*

### Evening Reception and Beating The Retreat

The annual Headquarters 11 Signal and West Midlands Brigade Reception and Beating the Retreat was held on Thursday 21 July in Venning Barracks, Donnington. The event presented an opportunity to engage and pass on our thanks and best wishes from the Brigade Headquarters to those from the local community who provide support to the military in the West Midlands.

Representatives from local employers mixed with military commanders, civic dignitaries and people who provide invaluable service to both the serving community and the numerous veterans in the area. The Brigade Commander, **Brig Anderton-Brown** briefed the audience on the Brigade's key activities over recent months, along with an idea of future commitments. The guests were then entertained by a cadet band, the Queen's Gurkha Signal dancing display, the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Signals and the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. In a fitting conclusion to the evening, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands, **Col George Marsh** presented WO1 (Bde Sgt Maj) **Christopher Moore** with his Captain's rank slide on the occasion of his commissioning.



*The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas*



*The Cadet band*



# NEWS FROM REGIMENTS



## 1st SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



Ex FLYING FALCON 16  
1st Signal Regiment  
20th June-15th July 2016



1 Sig Regt after Ex FLYING FALCON

CO Lt Col PRD Muir MBE  
RSM WO1 (RSM) D Corcoran

### Exercise FLYING FALCON 16

200 on Ex FF16 - by Capt Keegan



A bulldog looking over Salisbury Plain

Ex FLYING FALCON 16 offered 200 Sig Sqn the opportunity to deploy both Main and Fwd HQs in the VJTF(L). The IBDP element in camp went extremely well for the Sqn allowing us to get well ahead of the game. Having recently collected a number of UDTs which all required testing we were able to set the conditions for a successful deployment. As an Armoured Sqn it is always a battle to make sure all of our vehicles are task worthy for the deployment and for the length of ex a large amount of maintenance had to be effectively forecasted. The fruits of the LAD's and the Troop's labours were felt though as by the end of the ex the ASM mentioned that we'd had the best vehicle availability he has ever seen on such an ex, a real plus for the Sqn.

The first week was spent under the guidance of RHQ in preparation for our validation phase from 7 Gp and 11 Sig X. Main HQ was exercising yet another different layout and by the second move the Troop was much more comfortable with the requirement. **LCpl Fleck** stepped up to cover the role of complex Cpl and performed impressively, managing the SWE on the TacCIS side and overseeing the attachments from the other Sqns who were providing the OpCIS and WAN. Fwd soon got into the swing of things managing to make a number of improvements to the liveability of the HQ which will provide a great benefit to the 20AI X staff when they

come to operate on Ex VENERABLE GAUNTLET. The Recce Officer was also kept busy racking up 280km of recce in the first 2 days, clearly getting to know the Plain!

Both Main and Fwd conducted a number of moves throughout the first week and were well practised as we moved into the validation week, the only thing giving away our positions was the big yellow golf ball of DRASH that was needed for the OpCIS. Hopefully if deployed we'd be able to source a slightly more tactical option!

During the validation phase both HQs moved a number of times again with Fwd establishing HF comms with 16 Sig Regt up in Catterick for Comd 7 Gp's conference. Remarkably we only had one issue with a Bulldog which proved to be reliable in their old age. The FFR fleet wasn't so lucky as **SSgt (FofS(IS)) Gurung** swerved to avoid a fox causing his vehicle to roll. The damage to the vehicle was quite severe but thankfully, although shaken **the FofS(IS)** was not badly injured.

As the ex drew to a close it was clear the Sqn had been well tested, moving both at night and during daylight, conducting a number of serials which proved the Sqn's readiness to deploy as part of the VJTF(L) in 2017. The hard work isn't over though as the kit was turned around immediately before summer leave, the Sqn took on the Op TEMPERER commitment and prepared to deploy to Germany at the end of August. During a really busy time for the Sqn, Ex FLYING FALCON 16 allowed us to test our capabilities and proved the capability of the Sqn to operate.

**201 on Ex FF16** - by Lt Keegan



*201 Sqn establishing VEGp HQ*

The first morning of Ex FLYING FALCON 16 was an early one for 201, with the Sqn deploying to Barton Stacey 24 hours ahead of the rest of the Regt in order to set up for the RSOM package. After this concluded, it was time to move again, and the Sqn re-established itself in Old Carter Barracks, this time constructing the Vanguard Enabling Group (VEGp) HQ. After a lot of hard work by all, the HQ was established and declared FOC, allowing the OC **Maj Andrews** and the OpsO, **Capt Thorogood** to start discussing more important topics, such as what webbing / chest rig / daysack they were going to buy next.

The next major event to contend with was the arrival of the Staff Officers. After the initial rush of bringing them into the headquarters, things soon settled down, with the exception of ten minutes before each of the daily conferences when

invariably the Falcon network became temperamental. An issue later resolved when we learnt that cross domain conference calls are not actually feasible over the Falcon network. Thankfully, this was the only problem faced, and the ex went successfully for all involved. The Sqn was able to gain experience from having Staff Officers within the VEG HQ. There were important lessons learnt by all (including one for myself, as **Cpl Hunt** informed me that there was a pizza place near the SPTA that would deliver to grid references, a fact I wasn't able to test), and the ex placed us in good stead for the upcoming year at readiness.

**211 on Ex FF16** - by Cpl Poulter



*Camouflaged Falcon Det*

211 Sig Sqn deployed on EX FLYING FALCON 16 to Salisbury Plains Training Area alongside the rest of the Regt in order to provide a robust FALCON network for BSG, VEG and VJTF to act as bearers for services such as MAGPIE and HOUSEKEEPER and also to provide telephony services. The FALCON network was supported by detachments and crews from 21 Sig Regt and 3 Sig Regt. The main bulk of the Sqn were with BSG which comprised of CP1/211 but individual detachments were also located with VEG and VJTF as well as WASPs and BOWMAN rebros individually located at tactical sites. The Sqn also provided BOWMAN assets and support trades.

PACEX and IBDP were carried out in the week prior to deployment. **Cpl Poulter**, a new addition to the Sqn, was going to be signing for CP631, after being assured it was the best detachment in the entire fleet by **SSgt Marlborough**. "There's nothing wrong with it, it never lets us down" he said. After all the detachments had finished 5 phases of IBDP and CP631 was not even past phase 1 as nothing was working, it became apparent that either the long drive from the garages to the parade square had caused everything to break, or **SSgt Marlborough** was lying through his teeth. Luckily **Cpl Kerrigan** was on hand to resolve all the issues whilst **Cpl Poulter** looked on and drank brews for the rest of the week.

The ex itself began with a 2 day RSOM package at Barton Stacey. From here the Sqns deployed to their initial sites on the Training Area and the exercise went into full swing. Across the length of the ex there were serials from the Training Wing which would involve anything from RTAs, enemy attacks at site and CBRN attacks.

211 Sig Sqn's first move was to Coombe Farm with BSG and were afforded the luxury of being set up on hard standing inside a building of opportunity, which meant no cam nets.

This luxury was offset though by the ground being one large dustbowl, covering all kit and personnel in an inch layer of dust making life that little bit worse. After initially setting up the REACHER, FALCON and TC/OPO for a couple of hours, the detachments were all told to move about 10 metres away because they had been sited wrong. All 3 detachments had to then tear down and set up again costing hours of valuable time, much to the annoyance of the crews. It was OK though, it was the first move and we were sure it wouldn't happen again...

After a few days we then moved to Tilshead Water Tower where one packet came across an RTA en route. **Sgt Clark** showed impressive skills and drills in commanding a team who safely tended to the injured. The convoy then went through a rolling replen before moving into location. Once again after being sited and having started set up again, the FALCON Det was once again told it had to move so it was inside the wire. Whilst here, the CBRN dress state went up and everyone had to work in their CBRN suit for a few hours on perhaps the hottest day of the whole ex.

The next move was to Wadman's Coppice and all vehicles were given route cards for the move. **Sgt Dolan** was packet commander and lead vehicle. After taking the heavily laden trucks off course and down probably the dodgiest track on the whole training area the packet eventually made it into location, although there were many heart in mouth moments where trucks were close to tipping. Apparently, **Sgt Dolan** didn't get lost, he was told to go a different route to the card but nobody else needed to know. Once again, much of the CP had to be re-sited after starting set-up, by this time it wasn't much of a surprise.

The final stage of the ex meant BSG moved back to Tilshead Water Tower, and on the fourth and final attempt nobody had to be re-sited; proving that practice does indeed make perfect.

The whole ex showed that the Sqn have become very proficient at creating the robust mesh network needed to continue providing comms when detachments have a glitch or are 'blown-up' by the Bde staff.

At the Regtl consolidation in Old Carter Barracks, there was time to visit the on-site burger van before everyone was put into position for a Regtl photograph. We were also treated to a rather heartfelt and uplifting speech by the Commanding Officer at this point before the packets were released back to Stafford in 30 minute intervals. With a total of 10 packets, many people had the opportunity to enjoy the sunshine at Bulford before they were able to travel.

After we had turned around all kit and had our post exercise inspection from the RHQ team, the Sqn grouped together to say a fond farewell to the OC, **Maj Swift**, who was to be leaving the post that day to take up his new post in London. The whole Sqn wish him good luck.

#### **Morrison's Cup 2016 - by Cpl Burton**

OIC                      **Lt S Hoyland**  
Team Captain        **WO2 (SSM) M Vinten**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Sig Regt Athletics squads went into this year's Morrison Cup with strong expectations from the rest of the Regt, having come second in the male competition and 5<sup>th</sup> in the female competition in 2015.



*1 Sig Regt Athletics Squad*

There were some strong performances throughout the event from the female squad. Notably from **Cpl Burton**, who won the 400m for the third straight year and was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 100m. **LCpl Hurry** showed some great strength, speed and springiness winning both the Javelin and the High Jump. **Sgt Steel** demonstrated her experience and technique achieving first place in the hammer throw. It's a good job **LCpl Hyde** didn't take part in this event as she thought it was a claw hammer! Instead **LCpl Hyde** took part in hurdles and leapt over them as fast as she could to cross the line in 3<sup>rd</sup> position. **Cpl Burton**, **LCpl Hurry**, **LCpl Hyde** and **LCpl Adams** put in a valiant effort in the 4x100m relay but unfortunately the female team were disqualified; **LCpl Adams** ran so fast she lost her balance when handing the baton to **Cpl Burton** and accidentally crossed the line between her lane and her competitors on the inside. Overall the female team finished 4<sup>th</sup> overall, one place up on last year.

The male team has lost a few key athletes since moving back from Germany so there was an in-depth look into the remaining talent in the Regt to fill these key spaces. The trials proved to be successful as these new athletes put in some incredible performances over the competition. **Cpl Scott** showed some great strength competing in the Hammer, Discus and Shot Putt where he finished 4<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. **LCpl McQuade** showed why he is a PTI putting in a fantastic performance in the Steeple Chase, winning the B race. **Sig Taylor** had a lot to live up to following his dominance from last year's distance races; unfortunately his race tactics were not up to his normal standard and he was overtaken in the final lap of the 5000m. **Sig Smith** showed an excellent turn of pace in the 1500m and the Steeple Chase where he finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in both. The team lost 2 key sprinters from last year's team, but **Cpl Thompson**, **LCpl's Sankey** and **Robinson**, and **Sig Pendrous** did not let the team down to bring home the 4x100m relay team in 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

Over the whole event, the male team finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 5 points behind the winning side from 11 Sig Regt.

A great result for the team and solid foundation upon which to build a strong athletics squad for future years.

#### **Tesco Superstore Versus 1 Sig Regt – Watt Bike & Static Row Challenge - by LCpl Vanessa Royals**

On the 23 Jul the local supermarket contacted the 1 Sig Regt and asked for military assistance to help them raise money for Macmillan Cancer Charity. They requested if we could set some form of challenge to grab the attention of the shoppers thus promoting the charity and hopefully raising some money in the process. After a brief discussion with my fellow PTI's

we decided to go with the “Watt Bike & Static Row” challenge.

The Tesco manager welcomed the idea and the date and challenge were set. Unbeknown to us, Tesco had a store full of gladiators that fancied their chances of actually beating us. With this clear message passed onto my team we welcomed the arrival of our very own PT Corps gladiator **SSgt (SSI) Allen** who quickly turned on the competitive dad switch and proceeded to gather the team for a tactics brief any Olympic coach would be proud of.

We arrived nice and early and set up the equipment, albeit a little nervous knowing they had also trained for this. The team comprised of **WO2 (RQMS) Davies**, **WO2 (RQMS) Cope**, **WO2 Howard**, **SSgt (SSI) Allen**, **SSgt Melia**, **LCpl Cox**, **LCpl Royals** and last but by no means least **Sig Clarke**.

The store manager wanted to start the challenge on the Watt bike and we chose **WO2 (RQMS) Cope** to be the first one on the bike for us. For Tesco, big Tony was on the rower and for the military team we had **LCpl Cox** start on that equipment. We knew from the start the **RQMS** meant business when he set an impressive distance and covered 16.64 km in just 25 minutes. This was in fact the overall furthest distance covered on the day, much to the dismay of **SSI Allen** who was beaten by just 100 metres. He quickly shrugged this off and proceeded to demonstrate his fitness when he passed the record of 6180m rowed in 25 minutes with his distance of 6536m rowed in 25 minutes. An impressive effort I think you will agree.



*RQMS Davies working hard with the RSM giving a few words of encouragement*

As one of the 2 females in ‘Team Army’, I competed against both male and female participants and due to the fact I am a PTI and the **SSI** was hot on my shoulder I managed a credible 5815m rowed and 15.27 km cycled in a total of 50 minutes. This combined score put me in 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall on the day just behind the **SSI** and **WO2 (RQMS) Cope**.

A mention must go out to our very own Regt! Sgt Maj **WO1 (RSM) Corcoran** and **WO2 (YofS) Brown** who stood in uniform for 4 hours collecting money and exchanging war stories with the local pensioners.

The overall competition was won by us with the total distance cycled and rowed 165.86 km in 3 hours and 20 minutes. Tesco also put in a commendable performance with their combined total 147.70 km.

After thanking the local store for inviting us, we departed so that the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess could attend their annual Summer Ball that evening and I think you’ll agree the team deserved a celebratory drink.

## Silverstone Invitation - by LCpl Bullard



*1 Sig Regt at Silverstone with Williams F1 Team*

On 19 Jan 2016, the Regt and ARTD West Midlands hosted the Williams F1 Team for a team-building event at Beacon Barracks. To return the favour the William F1 Team invited 16 serving personnel from the Regt and ARTD to Silverstone race track to gain an insight into what the team does during mid-season testing.

On a sunny morning on Wed 13 July we were met at the track by one of the team managers who escorted us to the ‘F1 paddock’ which was an imposing sight in itself. Each team present that day had their own building constructed out of huge lorry trailers fitted together. Within each one there were offices, kitchens and suites for entertaining guests. The hospitality that the team offered us was unbelievable and we were treated to a 3 course lunch designed by a Michelin-starred chef.

The first tour we went on was of the pit lane. We were able to get up close and personal with the cars as they sped past to pit with their various teams. The speed at which they approach the waiting crew is impressive to see in real life and the television doesn’t quite capture it. We were also able to view the team at work on the car itself and appreciate the amount of engineering and data capture that goes on to get the fastest possible times out of the cars and indeed the drivers.

The second tour was of the workshops that lurk behind the scenes. The number of tyres used for the racing was an eye opener and we learned they are all heated by electric blankets before they’ve even been put on the cars! The tour also included an explanation of the gearbox and chassis and detailed the constraints F1 rules place on the alteration of cars during the racing season. All in all the day was a fantastic opportunity to see a dedicated team of high functioning individuals work on complex problems whilst under pressure. We are very grateful to the Williams team for such a detailed and well hosted day and a brilliant time was had by all.

## 200 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC        **Maj F Pearce**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) D Jackson**

## Bulldog Driver Training - by LCpl Davies-Burrows

2016 has proven to be a very busy year for 200 Sig Sqn. With numerous exercises and other tasking’s within the Sqn

already this year, driver training has been very much a leading task in itself. As we are an armoured Sqn, the primary vehicle that we use is the AFV Bulldog so it's important that everyone who works with the vehicle is fully trained and capable, allowing the Sqn to be more effective during the busy schedule and whilst deployed. The current DMI's within our Sqn are **Sgt Mettam, LCpl Kerr and LCpl Davies-Burrows.**

Personally it's been a steep learning curve as I only finished my DMI course in February this year. At first being a DMI was not at all on my career 'to-do' list, but it has had its benefits!

For the majority of the course things ran relatively smoothly. However, when working with these old vehicles they start to show their age and begin to mechanically break down which can be frustrating to say the least. With the first week being purely the theory side of it all, it can be quite a lot for the students to take in. Learning about how engines and vehicles work mechanically can be tricky, especially if they have never worked with anything like it before. There are usually a lot of heavy eyes! So we try to keep it as entertaining as possible.

The more practical side of the course is where it gets interesting, and can become quite a scary time for the instructors! Obviously, a 17 ton armoured vehicle is going to drive differently to a normal car, and over the course of the first few days driving it's clear to see. We start off with using the vehicles over cross country just so the crews can get a feel for the vehicle and how it handles over the rougher terrain and obstacles. The drivers can get a bit nervy especially when going down the steep hills but it's always fun going through the deep puddles and seeing them get soaking wet!



*Bulldog Driver Training*

Once we get on the road the first few drives are pretty edgy. The vehicle is a lot wider, it is a lot slower and the steering is a lot lighter than any car so it can feel like you're losing control. It's extremely important that the drivers stay focused and keep concentration throughout. The evidence is clear on the routes we take that previous courses have marked the curbs in places along the way, proving the damage a Bulldog could cause if a student has a lapse in concentration; but once they get comfortable with the vehicle it's plain sailing.

This year we have had 1 fail, where the driver pulled over in a bus stop and left an indicator on all the way round the circuit. For future reference this is not a good thing to do on your test. Nearly everyone in the Sqn is now fully trained apart from new arrivals, all of which will be captured in the near future. Unfortunately that means there will be fewer courses for me to run. But it's been a great challenge and has given us all a great sense of achievement by seeing so many of my peers learning from my tuition.

## 201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Andrews**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R Horsborough**

### Exercise SPRING STAG - by Cpl Scott

On Mon 25 Apr, 201 Sig Sqn deployed on a week of AT in North Wales. We stayed at Capel Curig camp where we enjoyed 3 days of multi activity AT comprising of mountain biking, hill walking and orienteering. After such a busy period in work everyone was looking forward to a bit of team bonding.

The most enjoyed activity of the AT package was mountain biking where **Cpl Scott** and **Cpl Dugmore**, were the instructors; however after seeing his skills on a mountain bike, it might be more beneficial for **Cpl Dugmore** to be a student next time!



*Members of 201 Sqn after a long day riding*

The days were long and arduous and made to seem even longer due to everyone's patience being tested to the limit by **Cpl Dugmore's** ability (or lack of) on a mountain bike.

The trail centre we used was Coed-y-Brenin in North Wales. Each morning started with basic riding skills which comprised of learning to brake correctly, the attack position and negotiating hazards (burns, table tops and gravel). Some students didn't quite master all these skills so when they eventually got out on the trail there were a few (very) minor accidents. One such mishap consisted of **Cpl Scott** taking a trip over his handlebars. Luckily it went unseen so his dignity remained intact. **LCpl Hinton** shone throughout the week and was clearly a professional bike thief in a past life.

On Wed 27 Apr there was a BBQ to round the week off where everyone was rejuvenated and ready for a busy period upon returning back to work. Sadly **Cpl Dugmore's** riding skills still leave much to be desired but everyone is looking forward to him being able to take his stabilisers off in the next couple of years.

### Nepalese Cultural Squadron Event - by LCpl Gardiner

On 20 July the Ghurkhas of 201 Sig Sqn hosted a Nepalese cultural night.

On arrival at the Falcon Club, **Sgt Ale** and **Maj Andrews** took part in a traditional ceremony. It was then the turn of those who were recently promoted within the Sqn to come out to receive a 'Tika' and a 'Khada'.



*Maj Andrews presenting a 'Tika' to those recently promoted*

The atmosphere was set with the wearing of 'Topi' and the smell of incense in the air. **Sgt Ale** then gave a fantastic presentation on Nepal and the selection process faced by potential Gurkhas to join the British Army. The 'Doko' race is the most arduous of the physical challenges faced and **Sgt Ale's** explanation really brought it home how tough both physically and mentally the Gurkhas are.

Once the presentation was complete the night got into full flow with a starter course of BBQ cooked by **SSgt (Yofs) Tamang** and **Sgt Yonzon**; there were of course 'MoMOS' expertly cooked by the wives of our Gurkha troops. The main course was a selection of traditional Nepalese curry again cooked by the wives. **Sgt Kishan** was on hand throughout to persuade everyone to try everything although his task was an easy one. What meal would be complete without a 'Man Test'? In this case it was consuming extra hot home-grown chillies without crying. Finally the desserts were served which were delicious sweet balls of sponge with traditional spices on them. The food was tremendous and there was not a person left who could eat another bite.

Everyone now being full of food, it was raffle time with everyone wanting to win the Kukri and also a chance to win a bottle of Khukuri Rum. In the end the winners were **Cpl Hatchard** winning the rum and **LCpl Adams** winning the Kukri, which everyone was jealous of but at least she had a handbag to fit it in.

As the night was coming to an end, **Sig Elder** performed a spectacular finish to an amazing night with a drum display whilst also having a little boogie to himself. It's fair to say the whole Sqn and families who attended had an educational and altogether fantastic evening.

## 211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj E Swift**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L Cleghorn**

### Golf Troop Function - by LCpl Tsang

On 20 Jul 16 Golf Tp took part in a team bonding day which began with a relaxed but interesting trip to the National Memorial Arboretum just outside Birmingham, followed by a quick lunch and a game of Zorb football. This fun and educational excursion was rounded off at the end of the day with a troop meal at *Frankie & Benny's* New York Italian Restaurant:

The day began at a nice relaxed pace as we waited for the minibuses to arrive, showcasing the immense organisational skills of **Sig Goodwill**, to find drivers for those minibuses at

the last minute. On top of this drama was the fact that our troop commander was also held up in a meeting meaning one minibus had to stay back to wait for him therefore we ended up with a bus for the seniors and one for the juniors. This was all good and well though as it all came together in the end and we left on time for the Arboretum.

What no one had factored in, however, was the traffic. Sections of the M6 motorway were at a crawl with one or two small parts coming to a complete standstill for minutes at a time. G Troop, however, would not be deterred! Everyone was in high spirits, taking on the new craze of Pokémon Go as we made slow progress towards the memorial, little to our knowledge that the Arboretum was a veritable haven for Pokémon.

Obviously, though, we were not there to catch Pokémon and it was a humbling experience seeing the many different memorials dedicated to the many thousands of men and woman that gave their lives for us to be where we are today. There had initially been plans for a guided tour; however, due to the traffic we were running short on time. Instead, we went our separate ways and explored the Arboretum



*The statue of Jimmy at the Arboretum*

independently. A personal favourite memorial was a couple of beautiful poems written by an 11 year old girl, under the giant carving of a bear. They were incredibly thoughtful and well written. Once we were back in Stafford, it was time for some Zorb footballing, and again the dramas commenced once more! **Sig Goodwill** had originally booked the 4G pitch on camp for our Zorb experience; however due to the extreme heatwave Britain was experiencing that week we were promptly told by the PT staff that we could not partake in any PT on camp. This brought about a scramble to find a suitable replacement venue.

And so, to the rescue came one of our absentee troop members, **LCpl Freemantle!** Swooping in to save the day, he knew of a large patch of grass and an indoor Astroturf pitch we could use to play on. We had a lot of fun playing football, bulldog, and 1v1s. It was also funny trapping people upside down in the Zorb balls. One particularly memorable moment, was when **Sig Spencer** charged at **Sig Goodwill**. A bit of background to this, **Sig Spencer** is about 6ft tall, and **Sig Goodwill** is closer to 5ft, so when **Sig Goodwill** squatted down to brace himself for the impact, he actually managed to time it perfectly when he stood back up, catching his ball right under **Sig Spencer's**, sending him flying about 5 feet into the air. It was funny for everyone else looking in, but the landing did look a little sore for **Sig Spencer**.

Finally we were due to round off the day with a lovely meal at *The Bear Grill* but due to some lacklustre organisation it transpired that our booking had never actually been placed.

Overall though, the day turned out to be informative, historical, and thought-provoking as well as fun and generally a good group bonding experience.

#### **Hotel Troop Function - by LCpl Woolley**

H Troop wanted to conduct a function in order to encourage team cohesion within their ranks, so they decided to organise a barging experience along the Staffordshire canals. The day began with a morning brief, whilst waiting for the transport to arrive. When the transport finally arrived, **Sgt Durham** drove us to the barge hire facility approximately 30 minutes away. The weather that day was sunny with highs of 22 degrees, so after having a quick ice cream, we separated into two boat groups. We were given a tour of the two barges and told how to operate them and given a rough outline as to barge procedure along the canals. We then embarked in our groups and set off along the canal. The first barge set off slightly ahead due to the transport having to journey back and forth from camp. This meant that the second group had to pick up the pace along the canal in order to catch up with the first group. The two boats were once again reunited at the first lock where **Cpl Cash**, a self-proclaimed canal veteran, took over and heroically operated the lock to get us through. As we continued down the canal it came to our attention that **Cpl Eaves** had prepared for this function as he donned a Captain's hat whilst taking command of the barge in a rather serious fashion. Our halfway/turn around point was a carvery pub, where the troop enjoyed a meal together and a drink in the sun.



*Sig Pitcher in charge after 'borrowing' Cpl Eaves' hat*

After lunch we once again boarded our boats where once again the first barge took the lead and was quite a way ahead so by the time the second barge had reached the lock it became apparent that the first barge was not interested in waiting. This resulted in the crew of the second barge having to learn how to operate the lock rather rapidly. This proved to be an issue as the doors to the lock unexpectedly burst open and started to fill the lock back up. Once we had figured out the lock, it was a short journey back to the company from whom we hired the barges, where our time on the water came to a stop; not too soon for some. With there being two shuttles back to camp, those left behind enjoyed yet another ice cream in the sunny weather of Staffordshire.

A rather enjoyable day had by all, and a new skill learned proving that Troop functions in any capacity are beneficial to individuals and to team efficacy.

#### **India Troop Function - by Sig Ross**

On Thu 21 Jul, India Troop took the time to go on an educational and Troop bonding day out organised by **Sig Lowndes**.

It was the perfect day for it with plenty of sunshine and not a cloud in the sky. The day started with a trip to the museum at RAF Cosford where we were put into groups of five and then set off to gain some insight into the RAF, both its history and current commitments. There was something for everyone here. If you preferred hands on experience then there was an area in which you could take control of a model aircraft and control its flight using the pedals and a joystick. Plenty of time was spent in this area by all. The most impressive thing in the entire museum was the aircraft that they had in their hangars and the enormity of some of them. Each aircraft had its own story, which allowed you to grasp a real understanding of what these aircraft went through in their aviation lifetime.

After lunch it was time to move on from the museum and onto Foot Golf. For most of the group this would be the first time they had ever set foot onto a golf course. At this point a lot of the guys were re-evaluating their footwear and changed into something more appropriate. We were again in groups of 5, with my group kicking off first. From the start **SSgt Marlborough** made it a personal battle to beat me (this was probably to do with me being a better goalkeeper than him – just saying). Obviously I accepted the challenge and was determined to beat him. The guys seemed to be enjoying themselves and there was plenty of banter as you would expect. The entire way round the course **SSgt Marlborough** was giving it the big I am; clearly trying to play mind games which had no effect on me.

To our surprise there were two hole-in-ones. One not so legitimate, but the intention was there. **Sig Wykes**, on a Par 3 with about seventy five to ninety yards to the pin took a long low drive up the fairway, bouncing it off the pin and just watching it drop in. It was majestic. Then out of nowhere, **Lt Hoyland**, who was one hole behind us decided to hammer foot it and managed to also sink a hole in one, unfortunately for him this was not his hole and was aiming at our green instead; still very majestic in its own way.

The golf came to an end. In first place was **SSgt Marlborough**, and in joint second place was myself (**Sig Ross**) and **LCpl Baldwin**. I was disappointed that I had lost out to **SSgt Marlborough** by one shot; he was not so disappointed.

The day concluded with a troop meal at one of Stafford's finest Indian restaurants. This topped off what was a very well organised, enjoyable day.

At the end of the night there were also some final goodbye speeches for **Sig Meetun** who the whole premise of the day was organised for. He has now left the Army and is enjoying himself immensely back in his native Mauritius.

All in all it was a very enjoyable day and along with having a laugh with friends, it was educational, team-building and a good pressure release after the intensity of back to back exercises.

## SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Middleton**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M Vinten**

### National Service Foundation Day Service And Reunion 26 JUNE 16 - by LCpl O'Donovan

On 26 June members of 1 Sig Regt took part in a commemoration service to celebrate the National Service Foundation Day and Reunion at the National Arboretum, Staffordshire.

National Service is a commonly forgotten part of British Military History and was the common name given to the mandatory government service programmes (usually military service, also known as conscription). During the Second World War the programmes were expanded to include most men aged 18 to 51, and unmarried women under the age of 30. Whilst national service ended post Second World War in 1945 it was reinstated in 1947 to enlarge the size of the Armed Forces, initially for an 18 month term for citizens to complete, but was then extended to two years of service. Compulsory military conscription ended in 1960 and national registration was discontinued.

So with this history in mind, 13 marching personnel and three personnel in the admin party under the command of **Sgt Ashcroft** deployed to the National Arboretum; however as with all parades there were the fatigues to complete first, which in this case was the laying out of 400 chairs. The Marching Contingent then paraded under the Parade Marshal, **WO Bland** RNR, who took control of the combined Naval, Army and Royal Air Force Honour Guard and marched them into position for the service.

As part of the admin party, with **Cpl Thompson** and **Sig Williams**, I had the pleasure of being able to watch the parade and spend time with the Armed Forces veterans and their families. It was an inspiring experience to speak to these veterans, who despite some being conscripted were still so passionate about the Armed Forces in general, and their respective branch and arms in particular. Being able to listen to their adventures and stories that spanned across the years that they had served; whether on National Service for 2 years or over a full career, made my Sunday in work very enjoyable.

### Op REFLECT SOMME Commemoration 01 July - by SSgt Reid

The whistles blew 100 years ago and the men went over the top to begin the Battle of the Somme on what would become the bloodiest day in the British Army's history. On that day nearly 60,000 British and Commonwealth troops died and by the end of the battle in November 1916, the British Army had suffered 420,000 casualties. The French lost 200,000 men and the Germans nearly 500,000.

To commemorate the Battle of the Somme, 11 Signal and West Midlands Brigade, in conjunction with Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Cathedral and the Royal British Legion, held a service of remembrance at Birmingham Cathedral. Orchestrated by **Bde Sgt Maj C M Moore**, eight members of the 1 Sig Regt joined representatives of other Army units within the Brigade, as well as representatives from the Navy, RAF and Cadets in providing a Guard of Honour for the invited guests before the service. Whilst I am sure that the VIPs were more than impressed, it appeared that the members of the general public were most enthralled by the sight of so many members of the Armed Forces in Service Dress, and more than a few pictures were taken.

Thankfully there was space within the Cathedral for some of the honour guards to take part in the service itself. Packed with Army veterans, serving soldiers from Signaller to General, city faith and political leaders and school children, it was a real representation of the city and county to hear the service. Led by Dean **Catherine Ogle** the service included first-hand accounts of the Battle as well as recreating the sounds of trench warfare with cannon and machine gun fire; the two minute silence itself punctuated by rifle fire by members of the Royal Corps of Signals.

**Canon Nigel Hand** went on to state:

"One hundred years on, the Battle of the Somme still casts a shadow over Europe. Today we remember a wounded and shattered generation."

It was with this thought that the members of the Regt filed out of the church and began the physically short, but very deeply reflective journey home.



*The 1 Sig Regt Honour Guards outside Birmingham Cathedral*





## 2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT YORK



CO Lt Col C Lewin  
RSM WO1 J McMahon

### Exercise NORTHERN FLOATING KEYS - by Lt A Myers

Ex NORTHERN FLOATING KEYS was a level 3 Adventurous Training expedition which took place in June 2016. 1 Officer and 11 Soldiers from 2 Sig Regt and our paired reserve unit 32 Sig Regt, took over yachts Teal and Pochard and spent 7 days sailing to various ports in the Baltic Sea.

**Initial Training - Lt Anthony Myers, WO1 Darren Cattle and SSgt Paul Strange** flew out to the British Kiel Yacht Club (BKYC) in Germany a day before the rest of the crew in order to take over the yachts and fill the cupboards with enough food to keep us going for the week. On day 2 the rest of the crew arrived and after some brief introductions and collecting their foul weather kit we began with some low level training. The crew was made up mostly of novices, out of the 12 on the expedition; only 4 had ever sailed before, meaning that the training **WO1 Darren Cattle** provided was especially useful. The training consisted of learning about the different parts of the boat, which rope pulls which sail and ended with some man overboard drills, which gave the crews the confidence that **WO1 Darren Cattle** and I could pick them out of the water if they were to accidentally fall in.



*'oi oi Sailor'*

**Out at Sea** - The two yachts headed north on day 3 to Kappeln. As the inexperienced skipper I was expecting to follow **WO1 Darren Cattle** until I'd gained a little more confidence, but he put an end to that idea 500 metres out of the harbour, when he stopped dead in the water and waved me past. The initial sail out of Kiel went reasonably well with **LCpl Garry Greenwood** proving to be a steady hand on the helm; our only issue was when **LCpl Katie Woodland** took control of the yacht and put it into a 360 degree spin within 20 seconds, which sent the boom, the crew and most importantly everybody's cup of tea, flying in all directions.



*Sunny Afternoon*

**Danish Waters** - After a night spent eating mountains of ribs and drinking a reasonable amount of German beer in Kappeln, the two crews headed for the Danish island of Aero. The weather and the sea were both pretty calm for the sail across, which allowed the skippers to hand over to the crew and let them sail the yachts. This gave them the opportunity to practice taking, jibbing and man overboard drills with little input from the skippers but did inevitably end in a race between the two yachts. We reached our first stop on Aero mid-afternoon, which gave the crews time to purchase some ice creams and enjoy the sunshine before heading out to watch a disappointing draw from the England v Russia game.



*There is always time for a brew!*



*The old sea dog*

**Returning to Port** - We spent a couple more days sailing around Aero, testing the novice sailors in high winds with plenty of sail changes and some tacking and jibbing before heading back towards Germany to hand the yachts back over. Both crews continued to stay in good spirits on route back to Kiel was largely uneventful, except for when I dropped the ensign in the sea and we had to test out our man overboard drills, I tried to dress it up as another training serial but I feel everybody knew what had really happened. Once back at Kiel we enjoyed a last drink together and the crews exchanged stories from the successful expedition before flying back to the UK.

**LAD**



*Practically Pirates now*

OC **Capt P O'Brien**  
ASM **WO1 A Thomas**

**Exercise JORVIK FLOWN NEST 16/1 06 – 10 Jun 16**

- by LCpl Forbes

With packing lists ticked off and weapons oiled, a small cohort from 2 Sig Regt Set off to Otterburn training area. The objective was to complete Jorvik Flown Nest, a week long basic infantry and soldiering skills refresher exercise with MATTS included.

Two sections consisting of 2 Sig Regt LAD, bolstered by Royal Signals members from Support Sqn attended. **Cfn Gottschalk** relished the chance to step up to the role of One Section 2 I/C, as did **Cfn Lazenby** for Two Section, with **Sig Rogers** taking command of Two Section.

The ex started with a patrol to the intended harbour area, it was clear from the off the soldiers were prepared and ready for the week ahead. The first lesson began early on, a refresher in entering and setting up a harbour area. The harbour was soon set and the troops spent their first night under the stars waiting for the day of lessons to follow.

Sections were to patrol to each lesson and as such got up early to prepare for the day ahead. Although there were no official adjudicators present, **Cfn Southwick** made an attempt at setting a world record on how much kit could be fitted into an issued daysack. It was clear he was prepared for any eventuality and soon became a valuable asset.

The first lesson was to be Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear. MATT 4 instructor **Cpl Hucklesby** kindly reminded the sections as to the effects on the human body of working (and sprinting) whilst wearing the GS Respirator. This was a lesson I'm sure both sections won't forget for a while.

A short patrol later and it was to a Counter IED and Ground sign awareness stand with **SSgt Potter**. Troops were exposed to dummy IEDs and mines and practised their skills spotting hidden objects and ground signs that potentially indicated the presence of said IEDs.

Patrols seem to be a staple diet when it comes to exercise and these came in abundance. One certain patrol was to be a recognisance patrol and was to take part after nightfall. The section I/C's were briefed a set of orders and these were cascaded down to the troops. One section made it to the correct location on time ready to collect intelligence. The intended target took an uncanny resemblance to OC LAD **Capt O'Brien**, albeit with an unconvincing Eastern European accent.

After lessons were complete, the section attacks began. When assaulting a confirmed enemy position, **Cfn Gottschalk** threw a well-placed L111 grenade. However much like popular postal services the grenade was lost in transit, only to be found by a team of searchers using VALLON some considerable time later, hidden in a rabbit hole.

ENDEX was called and the necessary declarations given. The exercising troops had worked very hard and were proud of their achievements. Their once neatly packed bergans were loaded onto SVs and everyone recovered back to Imphal Barracks for a well-earned weekend off.

Although the sections consisted of both REME and Royal Signals, they were all reminded that they are indeed, a soldier first.

#### **214 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj D Whitworth**  
SSM **WO2 J Sheehan**

**Army Operational Shooting Competition 2016**  
- by Lt A Sanderson

This year's Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) was held at Pirbright, Ash and Bisley range complexes over the period 19-23 Jun. The shooting event had a number of prestigious prizes including Queens Medallist, top Army 100 and top shot in each match. The shooting took place on a mixture of electronic and manual targets both moving and static. Altogether, 392 firers took part comprising of 46 x 8 person teams (1 team per unit) in the competition.

2 Sig Regt's shooting team made the long journey from York to Pirbright for a 3 week training camp before competing in the event itself. Having had some success at the Force Troops

Command Operational Shooting Competition (FTCOSC) and, with some fresh talent, hopes were high. The start of the training began in the usual way for any ranges: grouping and zeroing. This completed, it was time for the first of many application shoots, learning the differences between each range and where best to aim at each distance. This would take up the bulk of the time but before long, the team was able to start practicing the matches themselves.



*The team between shoots, looking handsome*

After what felt like no time at all, the competition started and the team was on the start line of the first match. Nerves were high but good scores were attained all round. This trend would continue and as with any sport, there were ups and downs. Nonetheless, the week was soon over and it was with determination and composure that the team found themselves competing at Bisley. There were mixed emotions in the final shoot of the competition but with good weather and a bit of luck the team walked away in high spirits. At the end of the competition 2 Sig Regt had secured 3<sup>rd</sup> place of 46 Regular Army shooting teams, with 7 of its 8 members in the Army 100. Placing was as follows:

1. **Sgt Khagendra Tamang** (3<sup>rd</sup>)
2. **LCpl Ram Tamang** (18<sup>th</sup>)
3. **Cpl Milan Rai** (31<sup>st</sup>)
4. **Cpl Sanjay Kumar Rana** (35<sup>th</sup>)
5. **LCpl Deepan Tamang** (51<sup>st</sup>)
6. **2Lt Sanderson** (69<sup>th</sup>)
7. **Sig David Ghissing** (89<sup>th</sup>)
8. **LCpl Sandesh** who narrowly missed a place in the Army 100 by 4 rounds!

2 Sig Regt won the following team prizes:

- Fire Team Close Combat Assessment
- Pistol CQM Assessment

**Sgt Khagendra** won the following individual prizes for the following shoots:

- The Attack and Reorg Assessment
- The Army 100 Assessment

**Sgt Khagendra**, **LCpl Ram** and **LCpl Deepan** were selected to represent the Royal Signals Shooting Team for the Mithuin Cup whilst **LCpl Ram** will also go forward to represent the BACST (British Army Combat Shooting Team). With the biggest shooting event of the year completed, it is time to begin the training cycle again, and the team is always on the lookout for new talent. Overall, a fantastic result for 2 Sig Regt and a few trophies for the cabinet, hopefully an even better result next year!



*Awards ceremony with the CO*



*The team*

#### **Exercise RHINO CHARGE 1 – 27 June - by Sig Wright**

Ex RHINO CHARGE is an annual 1 Divisional HQ CT 6 level ex, this year held at Longmoor training camp in Hampshire.

A build team of 50 soldiers from 214 Sig Sqn of various trades, deployed on 1 Jun. Within the deployment, were small niche teams who had their own area of responsibility. These included; OTEs+, Housekeeper, Dii, Falcon, Reacher and Bowman, not forgetting the Inst Techs with their miles and miles of cable.

During the first week we were split into groups and set tasks for completion by the end of each day. The tasks were plentiful and included setting up the following; deployed detachments, main HQ building, Brigade HQ's and Excon, not to mention the fibre laying around the site. It was a mammoth task in which a lot of us had never completed before. It took six days for the entire site to be ready for the arrival of the Staff Officers the following week. However we achieved our daily targets and had some downtime during the evening, which was gratefully received due to the Euro 16 Championship being on for the entire duration of the ex. There were plenty of civilian contractors on site too, whose task it was to set up huge screens and internet for the officers to utilise, including Exonaut and Abacus.

Week two saw the arrival of Staff Officers from 1 Div as well as from various units from around the country including foreign allies such as their Dutch, German, US and Canadian counterparts. The General Officer Command **Maj Gen Hill CBE** also arrived and gave his orders and that signalled the start of the ex.

The ex was mainly that of a stabilisation role in the fictitious country of Aratropia. The exercising staff played their roles throughout the two weeks, whether that was Intelligence, Infantry, Political or Future Ops. It was our role now to support them with the I.T provided or general assistance so they could fulfil their roles. We worked in three shift patterns, 0700 – 1500hrs, 1400 – 2200hrs and a night shift. The shift pattern allowed a welcomed respite from the day to day working within the HQ and many of us utilised that opportunity to do some phys.



*1 Div Staff fully immersed in the Atropian issues and problems that the country are facing, or just waiting to get in the massive cookhouse line first*

At ENDEX the GOC gathered everyone into the main HQ building where he presented some people with a commendation coin for their hard work throughout the ex. **Cpl Williams, LCpl McBlain, LCpl Basanta and Sig Wright** were amongst some of the recipients who received the coin, rewarding them for their excellent work and continued hard effort.

The ex area was collapsed in around 9 hours and after some rest, 214 Sig Sqn returned to York in the packets we arrived in.

The ex was a huge success and was praised by the GOC and officers from 1 UK Div. It was a great chance for inexperienced soldiers to learn and participate in something new and challenging. The food at Longmoor was one of the benefits, with sirloin steaks and lamb shanks on the menu as well as chocolate éclairs and muffins, quite a few people have returned to York with a few extra pounds in their pockets and on their waists.

## 219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Ashan**  
SSM **WO2 N Grainger**

### Exercise FLYING FALCON - by LCpl Morrell

Ex FLYING FALCON was planned as a Collective Training Level 1 (CT1) ex that took place from 3 - 14 July. The aim of the ex was to refresh, revise and practice basic level communications skills within a HQ. This involved moving to different locations such as Warcop training area, Ripon training area then finally ended at Driffield training area.

The Sqn exercising personnel assembled and did their final vehicle checks in preparation of the 1300 hrs departure of the convoy from York to Warcop. On arrival at Warcop, once a suitable location was found, the first priority was the set-up of the ALT HQ as this would be used as a classroom for the first week of the ex. Once the ALT HQ was built, the priority was the build of the field kitchen and the accommodation. Throughout the ex **Sgt Boon** supervised all of the ex build, and initial set up.

Phase one of the ex was over the first week which covered a variety of lessons we would then later use on phase two of the ex. These lessons included; detachment set up taught by **LCpl Boyle** and defence of a comms site taught by **Cpl Briscoe**. While on the ex we also covered some military lessons such as battle preparation taught by **Sgt Body**. Coming to the end of the first week we set up the main HQ to achieve the aim of having connectivity between the two HQ's over secure voice and data. This allowed us to move on to phase two of the ex.

The aim of Phase two was to test the LCpl's ability to manage and run all stages of the HQ. This started with main HQ initially moving to a forward location. Both HQ's moved locations during the week, in each new location the DS would throw a number of challenges at each, such as; coming under contact, EW threats and having to deal with both friendly and unfriendly civilian population. The extended with one main attack on each HQ that required us to put in to practice all the skills we had learned during the ex to defend the comms site.

Phase three concerned the turn around phase that started before leaving the training area. Det commanders would make a note of any kit that was either broken or damaged so it could be reported on arrival back at camp. Once back at camp, all the det's turned around their kit so it was ready for the next deployment.

### Exercise CHIMERA RAY - by LCpl Clare

With all the hard work 219 Sig Sqn has been putting in over the previous months, Sqn hierarchy thought it would be a good idea to reward the troops with a fun week. Who said the Army is all work no play?

Day 1: Flamingo Land - With a 0800 hrs start, the Sqn formed at the minibus. The day was on its way, destination Flamingo Land. Most of my group had never been, so I was a bit sceptical looking at it from the outside. For those who haven't been, it's a synthesis between a zoo and a theme park. When we arrived, the place was quiet, which was ideal for us, as this meant no queuing. We were having a good day, until Sigs **Anthony** and **Birnie** pressured me onto the spinning ride from hell aka the 'FLIP FLOP'. Trying not to look weak and not let the team down, I decided to man up and give it a go, unlike **LCpl Morrel** and **Sig Newton**, who paid an entry fee to be spectators for a day. Maybe the next day's events will be better for their strengths.

Day 2: Snowboarding/Sledging/Crazy Golf - Same start, different day and off we went. This time the destination was 'ESCAPE'. I decided to bring my own snowboard, however, the rest of our merry band did sledging. I was doing all right until I tried showing off and ended up sliding down the slope on my head in front of everyone (not embarrassing at all). The rest of the team looked like they were having a right laugh at my expense, so I gave up on snowboarding and joined the rest of the group.

Later on, we gave crazy golf a go. I was pretty confident I would win but I had competition from the likes of **LCpl Mercer**. We were drawing most of the way until I had a nightmare of a hole where it just wouldn't go in. In the end, **Mercer** won and earned himself a free game for next time. On the other end of the scale, **Sig Robson** was terrible at golf; I still think he's waiting to find a sport he is actually good at. **Sig Birnie** was just as bad, I know he has clubs in his room so just another case of 'all the gear & no idea'. As a team we were probably distracted from performing well by our singular aim to get a hole in one! The day ended with a classic

'cheeky Nandos' and a drive back to York. The fun week was having the effect the Sqn was striving for.

Day 3: Hill walking - The last day consisted of hill walking. **SSgt Mcarther** led the team and maintained a high performance all the way. We kept as a group all the way round and finished with a pub lunch which is always the best way to finish a walk! That evening we were treated to a Sqn BBQ. Families were also welcome so there were loads of kids running about, which set a nice atmosphere for the evening. A bucking bronco had been put on, plus sumo suits and a bouncy castle. Everyone was in good spirits until **Cpl Hulín** thought it would be really funny to take out **Cpl Reid** in the sumo suits. A mid-air dual followed and in what seemed like slow motion, **Cpl Hulín** not only missed **Cpl Reid** but ended up wiping out the OC Sqn's daughter. Long awkward silence and a lot of apologising later, things went back to the way they were. That brought an end to the 'fun week', and I think the entire Sqn has benefited from a period of morale inducing activity. We look forward to organising another in the future and building on the experiences we have already had!

#### 246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Whillis**  
SSM **WO2 Gopal Krishna Saru**

#### Exercise BRILLIANT JUMP II/EX ANAKONDA-POLAND VJTF (L) 16 - by Cpl Keshav Karki

With the current tempo in today's world affairs, it is crucially important to stay united and be prepared for the unexpected. NATO is not an exception to this notion. NRF (NATO Response Force), a rationalized force package, is held at high readiness to deploy to any flank of the NATO AOR, as the NATO first responder to an Article 5 threat or Non Article 5 crisis Response operation. To enhance on availability and responsiveness to the NRF, ENRF (Enhanced NATO Response Force) was announced at the Cardiff NATO summit in Aug 14. VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force) forms the lead element of the ENRF.



*The deployed 246 GSS Personnel*

As part of the UK Contribution to VJTF (L) 16, elements of British Army (approx. 1000 UK personnel) took part in the high scale ex, namely Ex BRILLIANT JUMP II and Ex ANAKONDA respectively, over the period of 17 May-18 Jun in Poland. The first phase of the ex was a NATO ex under

command of 7 (ESP) Bde and the second phase of the ex was under command of 15(POL) Bde. However, on Ex ANAKONDA the second phase of the ex was not a NATO exercise but utilised NATO structures within it. 13 personnel from 246 GSS led by **SSgt Sekendra** were to provide CIS support to the logistic support squadron of the UK deployment. Minimum information and time constraints were two of the larger challenges that we had to face in the early phases of preparation. Kowloon Troop, 246 GSS, are held at 7 days NTM over the period of 1 Jan -31 Dec 16.

With the deployment order being delivered by **SSgt Sekendra** after his fruitful recce of the exercise location, the Tps were exhilarated with the upcoming prospect of an overseas exercise deployment. With pictures of wrecked cargo ships flooding the WhatsApp group, deciding who would accompany the vehicles on the long journey to Poland overseas was particularly difficult. Nevertheless, vehicles got dropped off to the Port ready to embark to the destination. After all necessary checks being done and kit packed away, on the early hours of 17 May, the remaining personnel flew from Brize-Norton to Wroclaw Airport, Poland via Paderborn, Germany. It was immediately obvious the scale of the deployment we were involved in, with the sheer number of people on the plane. On arrival to the Wroclaw Airport, it was 'beer garden' weather but hey ho, chilled soft drinks did the job. Soon after, we boarded the coach that took us to the ex location, 'ZAGAN Training Area'. Our driver had little idea of where he was meant to be going and soon got lost, however a friendly local managed to get him out of the situation with his local knowledge.



*SSgt Sekendra Briefing our foreign counterparts*

As soon as we arrived, we went straight into familiarization briefs and were informed that the DFAC was not set up so we had to be on 24hrs ration pack for the night. Although there was a language barrier with our foreign counterparts, all had a common language to share, the language of smile and head nod. Additional troops started to arrive and vehicles were driven back to the ex location from the seaport in convoy packets. Polish law enforcement must have been on NATO's side for the ex as there were some questionable manoeuvres through some questionable traffic lights by the military convoys. A suitable site for first phase of the deployment was identified and tents began to get set up. Eventually communications were established and a stag list to water the earth spikes was made and a successful end to the first phase was achieved.

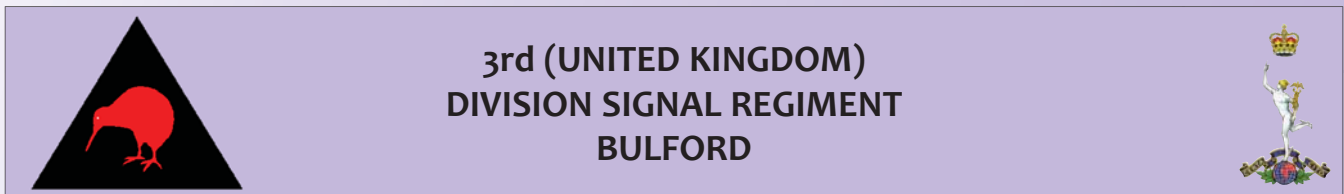
Along with the ex, various activities were conducted concurrently; visits from polish brigade hierarchy and an

educational visit from G6 group of the Spanish brigade were the highlight. In addition to this, cultural visits to cities like Poznan and Wroclaw were of particular note. It provided the ex personnel with a better understanding of Polish culture and the history that they embrace. A Gurkha curry night was organised for the whole of the CSS group and an ample selection of visitors.

The second phase of the ex took place in Wedrzyn training area in the northern part of Poland. We conducted a river crossing operation as part of the move to the new location. Polish Army engineers built a temporary bridge where two vehicles drove over the bridge at a time. On arrival in location it was clear that the ground meant we may have some problems with Reacher connectivity, however my scepticism was short lived and it worked perfectly throughout. The troops began to get into battle rhythm and there was high morale amongst the exercising Tps. The facilities weren't the best as DFAC was about a mile away and the nearest shops were about a mile away. However, this didn't stop the Gurkha's being able to make their typical curries. On a number

of occasions some of the guys took it upon themselves to run into the nearest town and fetch supplies. Despite the busy ex schedule, a few of us got the opportunity to watch the England football match, travelling in TCVs (Troop carrying vehicles) with helmets.

The ex was near to 'end-ex' and a few of the guys from CSS Group played enemy for the dawn attack carried out by the infantry units. As expected, End-Ex was called followed by a group photo of CSS Group and de-brief from CSS Group OC. Everything was packed away and vehicles were lined up in packets ready to be driven back to the Seaport. Flight confirmation for the returning troops was announced and everyone was delighted to land in Manchester airport, as it would mean less of a journey home. This ex has prepared the exercising troops for what they have trained for. It has provided a great experience for many of the deployed personnel and an opportunity to work along-side NATO and other partner nations. With praise from exercising staff and well done from commanders in their de-briefs, the ex was a huge success.



CO **Lt Col A J Smith**  
RSM **WO1 K Mills**

#### SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Littlefield**  
SSM **WO2 C Shackelton**

#### 3 (UK) Division Gurkha Community Barbecue - by SSgt FofS(1S) I Limbu

3DSR Gurkha Community Barbecue was organised on Saturday 9 July for all Bulford based Gurkha soldiers and their families to get together in a relaxed, fun and social environment. It was an ideal opportunity to congratulate new promotees, including the Commanding Officer, bid farewell to the outgoing members, and introduce the regiment's hierarchy to the Gurkha Community.

The scheme of manoeuvre, yet minimalist, included a complete package for a splendid day out. Refreshing cocktail drinks welcomed the attendees followed by Gurkha delicacies for starters. Fun games then entertained both children and adults leading to **Maj Gurung's** address and presentations.



Family fun

The event finally concluded with a superb main meal. Needless to say, everyone enjoyed the event to their heart's content with lush food and excellent entertainment on display. Not surprisingly, it involved a lot of effort behind the scenes from small committee members led by myself. Notable mentions include the Gurkha ladies for preparing authentic Gurkha dishes; **Sgt Duncan** and his team for providing flawless food extravaganza; **LCpl Sundar** for serving cocktail drinks delight; and **Cpl Subba** and **LCpl Khatri** for organising amusing games for all attendees.

The event went exceptionally well. Not only did it achieve social bonding and cohesion, it nurtured Gurkha's ethical values by retaining our culture and tradition.

#### Normandy Officer's Mess 'Goodwood Revival' Themed Summer Ball Sat 16 Jul - by Capt Rich Carr

With the thoroughly indecisive British Summer now firmly upon us it was time for the traditional Officers' Mess Summer Party in Normandy Garrison Mess, Bulford Barracks. With all collective fingers of the mess crossed for good weather it was decided that the theme would be 'Goodwood Revival' or loosely; anything 1940's or 1950's with a hint of British racing heritage thrown in for good measure!

The Ball was headed up by **Capt Rich Carr**, Trg Offr and Sp Sqn 2IC, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, with the aim to bring together all the individual Regiments of Kiwi Barracks along with their parent headquarters on a beautiful summer's day in July. Given the recent good weather in late June, the forecast was proving harder to book than previously expected!

The event started in earnest at 1830 hrs at which point all were welcomed to a bunting clad, canapé stocked and Pimms overflowing entrance foyer to the mess where greetings were extended by all attendees. Thanks to the fine work on the transport plan by **Lt Andy Boyes**, NTP Comd, all were present



*Croquet outside the Marquee*

and correct on time and in a jovial mood to enjoy the celebrations. The first sight to behold the attendees was four replica vintage racing cars, courtesy of *Classic Race Simulators* in Farnborough. These four replica cars, bearing the hallmarks of **Graham Hill** and **Jim Clark** designs amongst them, were centre stage in the mess and allowed four prosecco enhanced guests to race each other on a classic circuit of their choosing! They also had the added value of enormous screens for the rest of the audience to enjoy their haphazard racing lines and rather ham-fisted overtaking manoeuvres.



*Lt Rose showing off his moves*

With dinner served in a marquee on the Officers' Mess lawn, surrounded by traditional mess games, now was the time for the entertainment. It was swing and jive all night from the '*Jive-aholics*' band and with ten professional dancers to fill the floor it was soon no-holds barred dancing in the marquee. With the majority of the guests enjoying the benefit of tips and pointers from professional dancers it was a rather classy affair, although some still preferred the more traditional dad-dancing displays of old. With a cocktail bar provided by professional mixers *NJAC Cocktails* and a free ice cream stand, the revellers had enough fuel to keep their passion for dancing uninhibited and their blood sugars high. Once everyone had applauded off the band after a riotous session, it was time for a suitably impressive fireworks display from *Pains Fireworks* before **Cpl John Stuart** finished the night off a treat with a banging DJ set.

Overall a thoroughly enjoyable night was had by all and it was exactly what was needed after an exercise laiden few months in the Division. Special thanks to all the mess staff from Normandy Mess, especially **Leigh** and **Alma** without whom the ball would have lacked the shine it most certainly had. With only a painful clean up the morning after it is now full steam ahead for the Iron Division to summer leave!

## 202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Moody**  
SSM **WO2 G Moffat**

### Exercise **JOINT VENTURE 2016** - by LCpl Deborah Hehir

Fridays are usually a day to look forward to; ready for a relaxed weekend away from work. However, Friday 17 June was not one of those days; it was a dark and wet 0430 hrs start down at the garages; ready to throw our kit in the minibus and jump into the MAN SVs in order to move down to Ex JOINT VENTURE 16.



*Land Component Command build*

At 0730 hrs the first packet of vehicles set off on the journey to RAF St Mawgan, Newquay. The journey itself went well with the only problem being people doing laps of the roundabout, while attempting to stop at Exeter Services. On arrival at RAF St Mawgan, we were directed to our exercise area and began to unpack. The initial main effort was to get all of the communications equipment set up as quickly as possible in order to meet our tight timelines. This was achieved even with **Cpl Nick Matthews** and **Cpl Rod Antoine** disputing whether specifically labelled cables went to their designated places or not. **Cpl Nick Matthews** won in the end on the basis that it was "his trainset" and if they were in designated places, it made fault finding easier. The remainder of the week was spent laying out rubber matting for flooring to place the DRASH tents on and wondering when the brew tent would be set up.

The ex went live after days spent laying out the contents of the HQ in accordance with the floor plan, including TVs, UADs, printers etc. The staff officers arrived and, more importantly, so did the brew tent. Documents were checked, logons distributed, and before long the service desk was inundated with requests to unlock accounts and reset passwords. The following days were busy with requests being made for additional UADs and for kit to be moved to different locations within the headquarters.

Meanwhile, the NER was getting more like a sauna as the days progressed, until the equipment overheated and we lost some services. The weather was too hot not to have the ECU on, but not quite hot enough to melt the build-up of ice within the system, which meant the ECU had frozen over so much that it wasn't distributing any cold air. Thankfully, my hairdryer was on hand to aid in de-icing the ECU and communications were re-established quickly.



*Cpl Matthews and Sig Ly looking happy*

ENDEX was finally called after another week and tear down began with the long process of Blanco-ing all of the UADs. This took the majority of the night, with some of the terminals still going when day shift arrived. The HQ came down just as quickly as it was set up, with all of the kit loaded back onto SVs or packed back into transportable ISO containers ready for the journey back to camp on the Wednesday.

With my first ex as a part of 202 Sqn over, now all that was left to do was turn the kit around in preparation for the Sqn OC's inspection; at least we had the weekend to do it...

### Operational Shooting Competition

The ability to shoot is one of the most valuable skills to have as a soldier. The Force Troop Command Operational Shooting Competition (FTCOSC) is held annually in April/May over Pirbright Ranges. FTCOSC enables firers to compete in more operationally focused shoots with the personal rifle, LSW and the Glock 17 Pistol. The training benefit gained from this competition is a far cry more than your average dull and repetitive range days that each of you know and love. FTCOSC saw more teams compete than previous years and the competition was tough. However due to the hard work put in both by the team and the staff who ran and organised our focused training, the team was well prepared for the competition. In preparation there were many range packages, from the Corps Concentration in Pirbright to the windy and shingle strewn Lydd and Hythe. Each range package saw an improvement in every individual's marksmanship and helped the team to bond. With each day of training the newer members of the team found their scores were gradually competing with their more experienced team mates and the range of quality was soon evened out. **Sig Smart** eventually got used to the idea of carrying weight, running up ranges and adopting more than just the prone position, something he was not used to from his days of rifle shooting and hunting back in Australia. The training was hard work but very enjoyable, as ever **Cpl Stanley** kept the morale high and **Sig Goodier** always kept his soap box to hand, ready for a political discussion.

This year was a very successful year for 3DSR, building on our success from the previous year the team managed to place 3<sup>rd</sup>, only 20 points (5 rounds) short of 2<sup>nd</sup> place and took home the coveted Kukri Trophy, given to the best non-QGS team. Congratulations are in order for **Cpl Subba** who placed within the top 8 in the Corps and was selected to shoot for the Corps in the Methuen cup, the team then went on to win the cup for yet another year.

With an excellent placing in the FTCOSC, 3DSR qualified for the Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC) in June.

The Regt team found little calendar space in which to train for the AOSC and so had to try and maintain their momentum from the previous competition, but still had high expectations and aimed to have as many firers as possible achieve the coveted Army 100 ranking.

The competition was a tough week of warm weather and plenty of running. Individual skills and teamwork were greatly tested but the well-rehearsed and gelled Regt team took everything in its stride. This year the competition was even harder, with an overall 4% increase in quality from the year before, meaning that in the end the team was disappointed not to meet their own high standards. Within the top 100: **Lt Shrubbs** finished 94<sup>th</sup>, **Cpl Subba** 65<sup>th</sup> and **Cpl Stanley** demonstrated exemplary marksmanship and soldiering ranking 34<sup>th</sup>; and alongside **Cpl Subba** being selected to represent the Corps in the Methuen Cup Match. **LCpl Kayhan** and **Sig Keates** ranked frustratingly close to the top 100 at 110<sup>th</sup> and 109<sup>th</sup> respectively.

The Regt has had a superb year overall for operational shooting but knows it still has more to offer, with more training next year we are looking forward to another excellent performance.

### 206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC      **Maj S Tucker**  
SSM     **WO2 M Turner**

### Exercise KIWI CONNECT - by Cpl Lee Evans

On 12-14 Jul 16, over 180 personnel from 3 (UK) DSR participated in a 18,818km cycle from Bulford to Linton Camp in New Zealand. The challenge was to do it in under 48hrs. The aim was to raise money for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund. The event was conducted on Watt Bikes and each individual needed to complete a minimum of 26.2km/h to achieve the target, which was 100km per person or more.



*The Corps Colonel gets the event underway*

The relevance of the cycle to Linton Cam, New Zealand, where 1 Sig Regt are now based, dates back to WW1. By the end of the War over 4,600 New Zealand troops were stationed here awaiting repatriation. Whilst waiting they were put to work carving the shape of a large Kiwi in the chalk of the hill which overlooks the camp, this kiwi still stands today on Beacon Hill. The relationship between the two units has continued over the years, with the kiwi emblem connecting the two armed forces.



At 0800hrs on 12 Jul, 228 Sig Sqn began the gruelling challenge, ploughing through energy gels and flapjacks for the 12 hour stint which each Sqn had been allocated. At 2000hrs, 206 Sig Sqn took over for the nightshift, each person fired up and ready to go; surely this wouldn't be the case all through the silent hours! Seeing as it was 'Two for Tuesdays' Domino's pizza was the evening meal of choice for the majority of the cyclists, its safe to say it was burned off! Throughout the night, 206 remained motivated which was reflected when they were presented with the winning Sqn at the end of event for cycling the furthest distance. **Cpl 'Stevie' Wheatland** put in an impressive performance, comparing the cycle to Lanyard Trophy, with the inability to walk the following day!



Working hard

At 0800hrs on 13 Jul, Sp Sqn took over with only 24 hours of the challenge to go. Throughout the Sqn were members of the Corps Triathlon team, including **WO2 'Bri' Saxton** and **Sgt 'Bobby' Coatsworth** who were in their element during the event. The final leg was then handed to 202 Sig Sqn, who had just returned from ex in Newquay that night. **Sig 'Westy' West** set the example for the Sqn by cycling the furthest distance in 1 hour which was 38km. At about 0500hrs, 202 Sig Sqn hit the target of 18,818km, however the race was not over yet and with the Commanding Officer ready to do the final hour at 0700 hrs they continued to cycle.



The CO, flanked by the Adjt and SSM 202, engaged in a 'cycle off' over Skype

The final hour of the charity event was completed by the Commanding Officer who had a 'cycle off' with the CO, 1 Sig Regt, New Zealand via Skype. He was 11 hours ahead cycling on his mountain bike around their local training area, with his iPhone and a head torch firmly black nastied to his bike, it made for a great final hour. All the efforts from 3 (UK) DSR finally paid off when the amount raised for the RSBF totalled over £1300, with a distance of over 22,000km covered in a 48hr period.

#### Exercise FLYING FALCON 2016 - by Sig Spencer

On the 19 June, members of Normandy Troop deployed to Beacon Barracks, Stafford to take part in Ex FLYING FALCON 16. Normandy troop's role over the four week ex was to assist 1 Sig Regt in achieving their CT3 status.

There were four phases to this ex, phase one of the ex consisted of units deploying to Stafford where an IBDP was conducted and carried under 1 Sig Regts guidance.

The second phase was a deployment to Barton Stacey training area, where units were to partake in a 3 day RSOM package prior to deployment onto Salisbury Plain training area. The RSOM package included briefs on a wide range of topics, such as camouflage and concealment, driver training, CIED and siting detachments tactically to name a few.

Phase three was the start of the tactical side of the ex. Falcon, Bowman and also armoured detachments were deployed to various locations across Salisbury Plain Training Area. This consisted of members from other regts integrating and establishing the VEG HQ, BSG and VJTF Headquarters. Once the Falcon network was established, various scenarios were introduced leading up to phase four of the ex.

Phase four was the validation phase, scenarios were introduced to test the robustness of the Falcon network and how debt commanders and crew could react to a particular situation. This consisted of detachments moving frequently to maintain and keep up the WAN.

Overall the ex was a success for everyone involved, Normandy troop worked hard throughout and helped maintain the network, which was highly noted from the CO and RSM, 1 Sig Regt.

To end the ex all vehicles were lined up on Old Carter Barracks for the Regimental photograph prior to most Regts leaving to go on the long drive back to Stafford.

#### 228 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC        **Maj R Limbrey**  
SSM      **WO2 S Riste**

#### Exercise TIGER ARMOUR - by Sgt Mike Paynter

Ex TIGER ARMOUR was the multi-activity adventure training package, spread over two weeks for 228 Sig Sqn. Everything was set for a brilliant package for all, set in the very scenic North of Wales. The base for the package being in the town with one of the longest names in the world, known to all of us as 'Indy'. Although everyone arrived in good time at the start of the package, the only thing missing was the good weather that had been requested through the Padre and QM's. Although the outlook for good weather was bleak at best, all involved were raring to get started and power through

regardless of how the skies looked. So, the groups were set, briefs delivered and admittedly some sense of humour had to be issued to the less enthusiastic. But in good old British fashion, we pick ourselves up and cracked on with what ended up to be a time fully enjoyed by all. The following are the highlights from each activity delivered.

### Mountain Biking - by LCpl Rich Wolfenden

LCpl "Buckers" Buckley and I chose Coed y Brenin trail centre for the biking. With suitably graded trails, a brilliant skills area, decent food and coffee facilities, the hour drive was well worth the wait and very beneficial to the riders.

Each morning started off with riding basics at the skills area, covering the riding positions on the bike to more advanced techniques of rolling up and off obstacles. Once we were happy, the groups set off on the 'Minotaur' blue route. The route provided a smooth introduction to mountain biking, with some simple obstacles it allowed people to practice the basics and get to know the bikes they were riding.

After lunch those who were confident set out on Cyflym Coch; a 12.6km red route which is the next progressive step up from blue. The introduction of more technical riding ensured there were plenty of stumbles at the start, but as the riders gained more confidence they started to enjoy the return leg in the increasingly arduous conditions.

Overall with the weather doing as it pleased over the 2 weeks, everyone enjoyed the riding with good feedback all round. With more or less everyone catching 40 winks on the way back, it's fair to say it took a little more out of them than they thought.

### Rock Climbing - by Sgt Mike Paynter

When it comes to adventure training, rock climbing is one of the more feared activities. This would prove to be no different with a few people being scared of heights or just a general fear of hanging off a rock on fingertips, with only a single rope to stop them falling. I am happy to report, apart from some pride there were no injuries and everyone gave it a go and started to say things like "this climbing thing is alright actually", "I could get into this" and "so we can actually do this on a sports afternoon...", even the SSM WO2(SSM) Steve Riste took a break from his favoured two wheeled transport and understood why people, like myself, love this sport and the challenges it never fails to bring.



*Capt Roberts supervising the climbing, again. I sure he must have some office work to do!*

Due to having rubbish weather most of the time, we were able to use the Indy indoor climbing wall to conduct proper climbing training and techniques coaching to a really good level. One other benefit from using the indoor wall was the ability to introduce the students to lead climbing. Instead of the rope being visibly attached to the top of the climb, climbers have to clip the rope into multiple safety points as they climb. This produces a completely, but purely psychological difference as fear multiplies, which for some is difficult to overcome. This was evident when students got to a point where they couldn't make it past a particular move, the next safety clip would then be pre placed ahead of them and by magic they could then make the move they apparently couldn't before.

All in all, a very successful time climbing with smiles, enjoyment and 100% effort all round. There are two memories I will take away, as I'm sure will the students. **Sig Lombardi's**, what can only be described as birthing noises as he climbed and how much Pokemon Go has taken over civilization as we know it, after every rest break involving what I understand as, Pokemon catching...

### Mountain Walk - Llanberis Slate Quarry and surroundings - by SSgt Drew McMahon

After carrying out a recce of the walking route, I established that it was relatively safe and that there was no one in either group who we would really need to save if it came to it. **LCpl RaJesh**, the other MLT, would accompany me, meaning we would double our numbers.

The weather turned to our favour on the wednesday and after a quick shuffle through Vivian Quarry (very easy on the eyes), we headed for the Quarry Hospital and up the woodland track to the summit! A mere 2300 feet above sea level (ASL). The gradient was nothing short of gopping and the majority of the group perspired to say the least! **Sig Simpson** was not happy!

Once at the top we found an interesting sign reading 'no swimming' attached to a high fence with what looked like a huge abyss behind. This was seen as a challenge to the majority of the group and once on the other side the view awaiting us was outstanding.

Soon we were heading down the 'Incline', a track the slate trucks used via Anglesey Barracks, the old worker's quarters, and the break house where we encountered a group of malicious mountain goats who bullied **Cpl Jim Hewitt**.



*Cpl Hewitt's Nemesis*

The bottom of the trail brought us out opposite Llanberis Castle, an old 13<sup>th</sup> century castle. Unfortunately, it didn't have a cafe so the slate museum won our visit.

All in all, a highly recommended and very interesting walk.



## 10th SIGNAL REGIMENT CORSHAM



### 81 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Milligan**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Blatcher**

**“Time Team” at Army HQ, Andover 7 May to 3 July**  
- by SSgt Steve Wadsworth

The first of four surge teams from 854 Troop, 81 Sig Sqn, based in Corsham, started their 2 weeks of an 8-week project continuing to identify, trace and map the underground pit and duct cable routes at Army HQ Andover. Accommodated at AAC Middle Wallop they travelled the few miles each day to Army HQ. Being a high profile site with lots of ‘rank’ sprinkled around, meant the teams got in plenty of upper body PT, constantly paying compliments to the many officers around the area.

The site although new in recent years, was partly built over an old RAF site. **Cpl Ed Badger**, who led the first team consisting of himself and **Sig Wilson-Smith** and **Sig Gibson** reported that it was unusually challenging, as many routes were traced into seemingly empty ground, where they had to excavate below the surface to discover the pit locations; revealing them again for potential future use.

A seemingly straightforward task was actually far more complicated as many ducts did not run in straight lines with underground bends of up to 120 degrees! Tracing the existing ducts which held copper cables running through them underground was achieved with Radio Transmission Detectors (CAT & Genny).

The volunteers being from a BT background were also able to utilise a few of their specialist tools from their civilian employer, which included rigid extension rods with a radio frequency generator attachment, (known as a “Sonde”). This allowed duct routes to be traced where no copper cable existed, which are either empty or running fibre optics. The task was often described as being like “Time Team” in terms of discovery!

The time flew past and before they knew it their two weeks were over and it was time to handover to the next team!

The follow-on team led by **Sgt 'Tomm' Tomblin**. Team 2 consisted of **Cpl 'Cautious' Bob Wells**, **Cpl Julie West**, **Sig Mark Johnson** & recently promoted **LCpl Nick Carlisle**, the latter who was on his last camp after decades of service as a reservist, the majority of which were with 81 Sig Sqn.

Taking over from party 1 they completed the majority of comms route survey records around the South site, where no previous records existed. **Sgt Tomblin** conveniently set up his “office” in a quiet corner of the Coffee Shop, while entering data and drinking a constant stream of brews while becoming hooked on episodes of *daytime television* in between record input. He called it VDU/DSE rest, as he rested his eyes from the VDU from time to time. Having found his comfort zone he was rarely seen outdoors! Hmmm.

**Cpl Julie West** was surprisingly quick to commandeer the clipboard and led the party on the ground annotating every detail and dimension of each pit before moving onto the next. Over the 2 weeks the team painstakingly moved from pit box to pit box, identifying the detail and recording the duct routes through the site.

Between stories from the past from **LCpl Nick Carlisle** and **Sig Mark Johnson** and **Cpl Bob Wells** constantly cracking jokes morale stayed high. At the end of the 2 weeks the main objective was met, the south site infrastructure was recorded in detail, and the hand over to **Sgt Phil Welch** (team 3).



*Sig Johnson and Cpl Wells looking into it!*

On the 5<sup>th</sup> June the third rolling team arrived under the leadership of **Sgt Phil Welch**. Phase 2 of the tasking commenced; the painting (numbering) of the pit lids, for easy identification on the ground from the plan previously produced.

The original canned masonry paint proved ineffective, producing a very flaky finish and work had to be suspended for a day while **Cpl Almond** used his persuasive cheeky northern charm to source the much needed spray paint from across two military camps. Both QM's here at HQ and at Middle Wallop were extremely helpful. After a short delay, the paint had finally arrived! Using their best Blue Peter skills they soon created painting masks to use with the brass stencils to ensure a clean spray job of the pits, inside and out.

Starting from the site perimeter and circling inwards towards the centre they quickly made progress and caught up for lost time. They also managed to gain access to some of the more difficult pits to open lids previously thought inaccessible to survey. Team 3 endured significant physical activity over the fortnight and were up each morning at the gym by 0600hrs ready to be put through their paces by **Sgt Welch**. With the

endorphins buzzing it wasn't long before the northern site was complete and it was time to go home.



*Pit Painting*

The final team arrived middle of June to take over and complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the task under the trusty guidance of **WO2 Ticehurst** who stepped in as team leader at the last minute.

South site was arguably the more difficult of the two due to the volumes of pits and their often close proximity, requiring each and every pit to be checked against its original survey photo before painting commenced. It was not long before the team was dispersed throughout the site with paint in one hand and stencils the other. Along the way they bumped into **General Crackett!**



The team was visited by the planner (**SSgt Wadsworth**) who carried out a quality check of the northern and southern sites. He had caught up with the team in the final few days. With quality checks and snagging complete, a comprehensive set of electronic records, complete with photos, updated site plan and future recommendations were provided to the resident Signals unit, 243 Sig Sqn.

During the fortnight each team participated in background PT (some more than others) along with reviewing the military history of the Army Air Corps at the Middle Wallop museum, packed with all kinds of interesting aircraft and other exhibitions depicting over one hundred years of flying in the army. (Free entry to those with an MOD90).

R&R was spent at the local seaside town of Bournemouth where some endured finer weather than others.



*Team 4 taking time out in Bournemouth*

All said, the task was of great value to the Andover site. The teams are looking forward to a deployment further south next year!

#### **Exercise 'Spliceman' 03 May - 28-Jun-2016 - by Sgt Aplin**

81 Sig Sqn were tasked to attend a support ex with 18 Sig Regt. The main aim of the ex was to provide trade training opportunities to develop and enhance the capabilities of the Installation Technician trade group within the Corps; enabling Class 3 tradesmen progression towards completing their Class 2 workbook and continuation training for Class 2 / 1 tradesman. The training provided was of the highest standard and fully supervised during the period by the experienced members of ESI.

The ex was split into 8 weeks with 4 different surge teams from across the Sqn attending and carrying out training and projects in support of 18 SR. This helped 14 personnel complete their camp for the year.

The four phases of the ex were conducted both within the barracks and on live tasks with training & stores provided by ESI personnel. This helped focus attention as the work completed was shortly to be used in anger.

On the surges, we had "responsible adults" in the form of **Cpl Phil Winter, LCpl Andy Dodson, Cpl Julie West** and finally **Sgt Paul Tyrrell**.

From the initial arrival, the ex phase got off to a good start, with admin firmly squared away, security briefings and keys issued for rooms etc. We carried out kit checks and cracked on with the daily routine for the first week with some revision of fibre splicing and hot melting. The guys were up for the challenging days ahead whereby we would be carrying out a project in several of the Sqn's geographically dispersed Operational buildings, often working nights.

On the project we were subjected to working in various environments, including under the floor as well as standard containment, with both fibre and copper cabling, and terminating not just in standard 19" racks but also in floor boxes.

The guys made short work of installation of cabling at the sites, including making adjustments to the building fabric

where required, then testing everything that they had installed with typical 81 Sigs determination, professionalism and with the purpose of getting the job done not lost on them.

During the final 2 weeks deployment after the installation of cables, the team had tested over 300 terminations with minimal remedial work to complete

On a social aspect, there was not much to report. Eat, sleep, work, was the motto of the weeks endured and the ESI personnel were more than happy with what we produced. There was great revision on aspects of the trade and fantastic teamwork throughout.

Our thanks go to **SSgt Dave Keen** and his ESI troop for a mutually beneficial deployment which saw new skills learnt and old friendships and skills renewed. All those who deployed reported that they had a great time and would return for future camps. We look forward to our next work with you.

#### **Brunei Surge June/July 2016 - by Sgt House**

After an around-the-clock journey, 20 July saw the arrival of 3 members of 81 Sig Sqn to join a team from 241 Sqn who were progressing to provide Copper and Optical Fibre cables to the existing network from Medicina Lines to Toker Lines (resident Battalion) and also provide communications to a new local community Centre. Myself, **Cpl McCrone** and **LCpl Hanson** took the place of 3 returning soldiers, 2 from 241 sqn and **Sig Carl 'Pops' Griffiths** from 81 Sig Sqn.

The first few days were gruelling to say the least, with high humidity and temperatures of around 38 degrees. The majority of the work was pulling in 3k of cable through constantly flooding under ground pits. Tough physical work especially during acclimatisation! **Cpl Toner** (241 project lead) and his team had found in the previous three weeks, that the best times for working was at the beginning and the end of the day to avoid the midday furnace. Starting at sunrise, 0530 hrs each morning sounds painful but we made great progress at this time of day.



*Cpl McCrone takes his pump for a walk*

There is a high level of rainfall in Brunei, so good investment had been made in some industrial water pumps! **Cpl 'Macca' McCrone** and the water pump were a perfect match. **Macca** moved the pump majestically across the pasturage, fuelled with a bottle of 100 plus and a Cornetto ice cream, the pits were sucked clean within seconds.

We soon got ahead of target for the task completion, which gave us the opportunity to cut away at the weekend to visit the crocodile farm. It was an interesting and bumpy drive to the crocodile farm, we drove the Toyota mini bus on fumes most of the way as we discovered more closed petrol stations due to Ramadan. We found one eventually to our relief, we paid about 9p a litre and not even mates rates!

In the second week of our deployment we gained momentum on the task with an excellent work ethic in our team. **LCpl Hanson** terminated a 100 pair copper cable at each end of the route and carried out 3 intermediate joints. We proceeded with an end-to-end test of the copper and achieved a 100% success.

At the second weekend **LCpl Hanson** and myself took the opportunity to take part in some impromptu AT as we went adventure Caving in Sarawak. Crawling through caves on our belly's with bugs and bats overhead doesn't sound appealing but this guided tour was not only physically challenging, the guides made it interesting too! With a good sense of camaraderie in an eight-person group we completed the tour in 4 hours, which included a short boat trip and a 4k walk through the jungle!

This deployment was a complete success, considering the amount of outside work in a hot climate and the short acclimatisation period. All work was complete and tested to a quality standard. Credit to all involved from 81 and 241 Sig Sqsns.

#### **Exercise FIRST LOOK - by SSgt Richie Lawrence**

Ex FIRST LOOK consisted of 2 days putting BT Management and Apprentices through a series of challenging Command tasks. Management can see what Army Reservists, employed by BT and released by them for 19 days a year achieve whilst in 'Green' and also what their employees as instructors can teach them.

The first group of BT Managers from the North West area went through 10 stands on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day beginning 0700hrs with a typical Army, calorie fuelled breakfast to help them with their arduous day ahead.

They arrived at Command task 4 where an introduction and the rules of the task were explained which consisted of a start and finish pallet, 30m apart. The teams had to collect 15 points from items ranging from ¾ filled water containers to an empty oil barrel. The items were placed on pallets and were marked with clearly visible numbers, each item's value in terms of points. The customary long plank and a shorter one, no touching the ground or a plank coming to rest on the ground between the pallets and a time limit of 15 minutes were the order of the day.

The unity soon became apparent as each one of the 4 teams chose a leader to guide a path to the finish line, the sun shone occasionally as muscles were found that hadn't been used for a while and soon beads of sweat appeared on each and every one.

One group kindly suggested making the task harder by rearranging the obstacles so the following group struggled to collect the 15 points in the allotted time.

At the end of the day all 4 groups had been put through their paces even with the added pressure of high ranking officials

from BT Management including the Apprentice and HR department attending the event.

All 4 groups managed to complete the task within the allotted time even to the extent of collecting every obstacle as they went. A superb effort thoroughly enjoyed by everyone giving us feedback of a high quality.

The Apprentices followed a day later using the same format; at the end of a thoroughly highly amusing week of entertainment provided by the volunteers the feedback was unanimous in the fact that the leadership skills they achieved in such a short space of time would be utilised in their day to day jobs.

Everybody benefitted from this and we look forward to repeating this event next year with some new groups of BT Management and Apprentices.



## 225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj O Finnie**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J Barrett**

### Royal Signals Sprint Triathlon - by 2Lt Learmond

On the 16 Jun **Maj Finnie**, **SSgt Darlington** and **LCpl Buckely** went to compete in the Royal Signals Sprint Triathlon hosted by 21 Sig Regt in Colerne. I came along to support or so I thought... Arriving on the day in blissful ignorance, it turned out that someone had dropped out and my OC asked if I wanted to compete. Not wanting to disappoint my new OC, I declared that I would love to! Shortly followed by my sure fire excuse that I had no equipment.

An hour later standing next to the pool wearing some strange outfit, I was looking down the barrel of my first triathlon. Starting off in the same wave and same lane, **LCpl Buckely** immediately began to pull away in the pool. 750m of hard swimming, he emerged as one of the first in the wave to leave the pool, following with the rest of the pack I hurried after him to transition. Throwing on socks, shoes and a token effort of sun cream we started the 20km bike ride, essentially 3 laps of the airfield. As **LCpl Buckely** became an even smaller dot on the horizon my bike started to lose control. Managing to stop without crashing I looked down at my rear tyre and realised that any hopes of catching him were gone. To make matters worse I was about as far away from transition as possible, had no bike pump and an already punctured spare inner tube. Watching the rest of the competition sail past while I waited for the race marshals. I eventually got a lift back to transition, where I was able to beg for parts and was just in time to wave off the OC (who started 30 mins after me) on his run. Eventually getting back on the road I finished the 2 laps left before swearing off bikes forever, my bike stage had taken

longer than most people's entire race! Heading off on the run I tried desperately to claw back some time and a shred of dignity finally finishing in what can only be described as a "while".

The rest of the team had a great race, **LCpl Buckely** proving that I never had a chance of catching him with a 1:19:07. Next came the OC with a very similar set of times, bar a 2min lead in the pool with an impressive 7:02. **SSgt Darlington** destroyed us all with a 1:08:37 and placing 9<sup>th</sup> in the Senior Males. It was a great event and with hindsight good fun. Just make sure if you find yourself doing one of these events you can fix a puncture, just in case!

### Exercise FINN COSTA - by LCpl Horsham

On 16 May, 10 Sig Regt sent a group of 13 personnel to Alicante, Spain in order to conduct a 110km trek in the Costa Blanca Mountains – a tough life some would say! The aim of the ex was to test people's physical ability in different climates and conditions from those which we are so used to within the various UK "mountain ranges" whilst concurrently promoting team work amongst the Regts often dispersed Sqns.

Throughout the 5 legs of approximately 20km which the trek was split down into, we all took turns to navigate, where some of us may have demonstrated that remedial training may be required!

Our first day of the ex was deploying to Alicante from both Northern Ireland and the Mainland to finally get the group together after months of planning, acclimatise to the local climate and conduct final equipment checks prior to setting off. Upon completion of all directed tasks– we were given the afternoon off to discover the local sights and food of Alicante. **LCpl Buchanan** navigated us to the beach where we were further able to explore the local sights along the infamous esplanade.



After an early night – for some, the group deployed the following morning to Villalonga via coach. Upon arrival **Maj Finnie** requested a volunteer to lead the first leg, an airborne warrior – we think he was airborne, chose to take the lead. Whilst we got to see some stunning scenery throughout the leg – we didn't quite get as much time to appreciate it as one would wish considering we pretty much double marched the first half of the route! A rest for lunch was a welcome break! At the end of the first day we arrived at our campsite

knackered but were treated to a BBQ cooked on the camp site grill which was much needed! This time it was an early night for all.



The second day was a pretty similar format – thankfully with a different person leading the group! Our lunch stop on this day consisted of a pretty similar meal to the first day – and we would soon realise that Spain could only ever offer bread, ham and/or cheese for lunch time which some of us could not see far enough by the end of the exercise!



On the third day however, the group was due to travel to Castell de Castells – whilst this looked like the largest town we would visit on the maps, upon arrival we soon discovered that in actual fact the town consisted of 12 inhabitants who we found pretty jolly in the local bar. They were kind enough to inform us that the local camp site and hotel were closed “because it’s Wednesday” and discovered that this Spanish culture would follow us throughout the remainder of the route! Some quick thinking (booking.com) identified a hotel in a “nearby” town – which resulted being 4\* self-catered apartments overlooking a Marina with some pretty expensive yachts. Awesome. Surprisingly, some individuals who had demonstrated questionable navigation skills all of a sudden were able to conduct map reces and identify that Benidorm was a 30 minute taxi ride away...



The fourth and fifth day consisted of more lengthy legs with the odd navigational embarrassment but ended with us in Alicante to conduct our equipment turn around prior to our return to the UK.

We were left to our own devices on the Saturday and went for a traditional Spanish meal consisting of 6 courses in a local vineyard – the food was amazing and the local surrounding scenery unlike anything some of us had seen before! Later that evening we discovered one of Spain’s best burger restaurants and a Gin bar which delivered the largest Gin & tonics some of us had seen!

All in all, it was an amazing experience with some breath taking scenery and an introduction to true Spanish culture – don’t work, all pensioners congregate in local bars... all day, put off what you can do today – until tomorrow!

#### Exercise WEYMOUTH ADVENTURE - by LCpl Clifford

Ex WEYMOUTH ADVENTURE was a multi-activity AT package for the personnel of 225 Sig Sqn. Activities included hill walking, mountain biking and paddle boarding.

On Sat 25 Jun the advance party set off for their epic 9 hour journey from Cairnryan to Weymouth in which, **Cpl Harker** had to drive the majority of the journey due to fearing for his life with **LCpl Hall's** complete lack of driving ability.

The remainder set off on Sun 26 Jun and were fortunate to get the overnight ferry to Liverpool and had a much less emotional drive than the advance party. Although they did have to put up with **LCpl Eccles** shouting “SONG!” everytime a good song came on the radio. We arrived at Chickereil Camp on Monday afternoon to find that the advance party had already set up the TV so we could watch the Euros. That evening **Sgt Rowe** gave us a brief on what the week would entail and split the group into three so that we could complete a round-robin of the activities. Group 1 was headed up by **Sgt Moore**, group 2 was headed up by **Sgt McKenna** and group 3 was headed up by **Cpl Harker**.

The following day we began the first day of activities. Group 1 was with **Sgt Rowe** for hill walking along the Jurassic coast soaking up the little sun we had all week. Group 2 set off with **LCpl Dawson** for an 8 mile loop around the local hills. Group 3 went around a local forest for the mountain biking. There were some sore feet and legs after the first day but everyone enjoyed it.

The next day the groups changed activities but unfortunately the weather did not hold out and there were a lot of wet and unhappy faces by the end of the day. At the end of the day we set out to get the essentials for the BBQ the following evening and then watched England get kicked out of Euro 16 by Iceland. There were some wet and unhappy faces again.

On our final day it was the last rotation of activities. The weather had brightened up ensuring we had perfect weather for our BBQ that evening. The next morning we packed up and set out early for some paddle boarding. We arrived at the water sports venue and got changed into our very flattering wetsuits, although **LCpl Ashton** somehow got his on backwards! After a short lesson on the basics we set out on the water, there were some very worried faces in the beginning and a few capsizes but we all eventually managed to stand on the board. We then went on a tour around the wharf and got worryingly close to some jellyfish. Following

the paddle boarding we began our long journey back to Northern Ireland.

Overall this was a great ex, learning some new skills, revising some old skills and pushing ourselves out of our comfort zone.

## 241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N Barrett**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) PJ Brown**

### Royal Signals Rigger Course - by LCpl Coster

On 9 May, Installation Technicians, **LCpl Dave Coster**, **Sig Steve Scoley** and **Sig Ianthe 'Ian' Weekes** from 241 Sig Sqn attended the 3 week long Royal Signals Riggers Course at the Aerial Erectors School, RAF Digby.

Having all recently passed the notorious mind breaking climbing aptitude tests, tests that would normally break personnel comfortable with heights we were feeling confident in ourselves and looking forward to the next 3 weeks of training.

The week started off with lots of interesting classroom theory lessons on the different types of antennas, frequencies and the equipment that we would be using throughout the course. Once the theory lessons were all out of the way we moved on to the 'Knot' test, a test that would send the most experienced boy Scout into a knot frenzy. With the knot test out of the way and now all highly professional 'Granny Knot' specialists we were away for the weekend.

The second week soon came around and we were split up into 3 man working teams, each tasked with taking on the role of 'Person in Charge', 'Climber' and 'Ground crew'. It was apparent **Sig Scoley** was a squirrel in a previous life, as I have never seen anyone climb a mast so quickly. **Sig Weekes** made a fantastic 'Person in Charge' with her confident personality shining through taking control of every situation, whilst **LCpl Coster** never tired of hauling countless antennas up and down the 30m mast. Once everyone had been through each role the remainder of the week consisted of antenna and equipment installations on different building types including Sangers.

The final week involved minimal input and interference from the directing staff which tested our skills and ability to work alone. We swiftly moved into the rigging at night phase which put us through our paces as there was no margin for errors. Before we knew it the three weeks were soon over, having learnt valuable lessons and a new skill, the course was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

### Exercise SCORPION RIDER - by Sig Addison

The plan was to spend the next 48hrs mountain biking with five other members of 241 Sig Sqn in order to expose ourselves to a mixture of cycling terrain, developing our cycling skills, testing individual courage and improve team cohesion. The chosen trail centre was Swinley Forest near Bracknell that was to push the individuals to the biking limits.

Day one saw the group excited to leave the chaos and normality behind, embracing the new challenge that lay ahead. After a quick brief from **SSgt Andy (Risk Assessment) Poole**, **Sig Steven (BMX) Addison** loaded the van with bikes

and people, and the group were on their way. In order to ease everyone into it we had a quick cycle around a gentle flat green, ensuring that everyone was warmed up and there were no hidden issues with the bikes.

The group was now ready to tackle the (fairly) tame blue route with the intent to progress safely onto the red (not so tame) route. It all started with reasonably flat ground that soon changed when we stopped for some coaching on our body position. In front of us is what I can only describe as a cliff face, which had the guys phoning up their PAX insurance however after some discussion and demonstration we all soon realised that the cliff in front of us was nothing more than a slight slope and became easy to ride down after being taught the techniques. After spending a bit of time here the group continued down the blue route, which on occasion would remind us about the proper gear selection prior to climbing hills. With sweeping berms and regular table-tops we were all enjoying the ride and the good weather. Approximately one and half hours had passed, we had reached a crossroads, and an important decision had to be made. Did everyone feel ready enough to tackle the red route as a group, which of course everyone said yes, not wanting to look weak. Steeper climbs and faster descents saw the group with smiles and laughter on their faces hoping the day would never end, however, eventually it was time to put the bikes in the van and head back to Bicester and see what delights the next day would bring.

The second day saw a few changes of people due to work commitments (more sore rear ends) and **LCpl Liam Fearn** eager to join the merry men for another day out of normality. The sun was shining but the day started slower than yesterday. We started again on the green route just to loosen up aches and pains of yesterday and allow new guys to shake themselves off for the day ahead. The day followed the same outline as yesterday but with more emphasis on control as speed was an issue to the familiarity of the routes. A really enjoyable day riding that finished with a hot cup of tea in the cafe and a chat about the last two days. Then it was time to pack the bikes and return to camp. Friday morning saw the group turn the bikes and have a well-earned rest.

After the 48hr mountain biking was finally over there was a sense of achievement had by all that participated as skills and confidence had improved massively throughout the group. I for one can't wait for it to be repeated. Happy biking.

## 243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Oosterveen**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M Beckett**

### Exercise Bruno Peninsular July 2016 - by Sig Skeet and LCpl Dowson

On Monday 11 July, 20 members of 10 Sig Regt embarked on a 5 day Battlefield Tour in Italy. This Battlefield Study would focus on the four battles for Monte Cassino in WW2, in particular looking at the strategic and tactical issues arise from the Italian campaign between Oct 43 - May 44.

After meeting our tour guide **Rob Deere** from "Staffride" at Luton airport we flew to Rome FCO and dived straight into the battlefield stands. Stand 1 was a visit to Mont Trocchio where we got an overview of the battles and orientation of the ground. As soon as we saw the extreme terrain you got a sense of how difficult this campaign would be.



Day Two started with a visit to the Cassino War Cemetery and Memorial. This is the final resting place of nearly 4,300 Commonwealth servicemen, of whom some 300 remain unidentified. At the heart of the cemetery is the Cassino Memorial which commemorates 4,000 soldiers who have “no known grave”. The design of the cemetery reflects an English garden, a sense of home for the fallen and a comfort for those who visit their loved ones and comrades.

Following on from the Cemetery we moved to a sweaty stand at St Angelo in Theodice and a discussion about how the 36<sup>th</sup> US Division attempted to cross the river. We then moved into Cassino Town and looked at combat in built up areas. What became clear is that the Italian Campaign saw some of the fiercest fighting of WW2. Alongside their American, French and Polish allies, commonwealth soldiers fought in winter snow and summer heat across the mountains, over ravines and rivers and through ruined streets, meeting German resistance at every turn.

Day Three began with a visit to The Rocca Janula, a castle originating from 949 AD. During WW2 this site became one of the main stages of battle between German and Anglo-American troops as they fought for the occupation of the Monastery. The Monastery would be our next stop; it was founded in 529 AD by St. Benedict and has suffered from a variety of attacks; natural and man-made. During the Italian campaign the hill of Monte Cassino was part of the German defensive line, but although the Monastery was initially given a 3 mile exclusion zone, the Allies soon became convinced that the German's were inside the building and as a consequence Monte Cassino became a target of assault and was finally destroyed by air bombardment. The Monastery was rebuilt after the war and is still used by the monks today.

From the Monastery we began our descent down on foot via the Cavendish Road. This road was expanded from an old mule track by 4<sup>th</sup> Indian Division for the evacuation of the injured and transport of provisions by Jeep. This was later extended in March '44 by the Sappers to allow the transit of tanks, which would carry out Operation REVENGE with the aim of keeping the enemy engaged as much as possible. Our walk down was rewarded with a pub stop, although we were now learning that Rob's distance estimates were very optimistic.

After our refreshments stop we went to the German Military Cemetery. More than 20,000 Germans are buried here and its design is in stark contrast to our Commonwealth counterpart. Placed on a hilltop to symbolise the struggle of life, leading to an array of mass graves, usually six to a headstone which bears little information about the individuals.

Day Four was our last in Cassino and we began by learning about the Victoria Cross awarded to **Fusilier Francis Jefferson** who by his own initiative took out the leading tank on the Gustav Line with a Projector, Infantry, Anti Tank (PIAT for short) gun. From here we moved onto the Polish Cemetery & Memorial at point 593 on Snakeshead Ridge. It was from this position during the 4<sup>th</sup> battle of Cassino that the Poles made history overrunning the enemy and capturing the Monastery. The Cemetery at the bottom of the ridge was built by soldiers who participated in the battle and 1051 Polish soldiers rest there.

Our final day in Italy was spent in Rome, where we were able to visit such sights as The Coliseum, The Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Piazza Venezia and The Vatican. It was also a

chance to try some authentic Italian cuisine and a perfect end to a thoroughly enjoyable Battlefield Study.

### **Tasking on the rock** - by Sgt Dan Tippen

2016 has been an extremely busy year so far for 243 Sig Sqn, not least IA Troop, Technical Surveillance Countermeasure (TSCM) team. With numerous high profile tasks up and down the country and two deployments' on Op TORAL, the team has become accustomed to living out of bags. The latest task saw **Sgt Ronnie 'Spy Finder' De-Bique** and **Sgt Dan '007' Tippen** deployed to the sun kissed rock of Gibraltar in order to give technical assurance prior to **Prime Minister David Cameron's** governmental visit.

The team deployed on 31 May for a week with several areas needing the team's sweeping expertise. Flying from Gatwick before the first sparrow had raised his head, the two members of 243 were less concerned about the black nasty holding the fuselage together and more about the landing in Gibraltar. It had been mentioned ten minutes prior to departure that the airport at the rock had just been voted in the world's top ten for dangerous landings. Needless to say putting the passengers of this flight at ease did not seem to be high on the crew's priorities.

On the teams successful arrival at Gibraltar and with their lives still intact we were met by our host and directed to the five star transit accommodation. Not wanting to waste any time the team set about completing the sweeping process of the areas that required our attention. Due to exceptional proficiency and superior time management coupled with some long days, the task was completed half a day early allowing some well-deserved exploration of Gibraltar. This small respite enabled the team to visit the infamous thieving monkeys of Gibraltar and gave **Sgt Ronnie 'Spy Finder' De-Bique** time to work on his tan.



### **Operational Shooting** - by Cpl Barr, 243 Sig Sqn

Having decided to try their hand at the Force Troops Command Operational Shooting Competition (FTC OSC), 10 Sig Reg began training in early March and ran until the last week of April. The aim was twofold; to beat local rivals 3 (UK) DSR shooting team and qualify for the prestigious Army Operational Shooting Competition (AOSC).

This year we were particularly successful at the FTC OSC. Of the six individual rifle matches, two soldiers won top shot taking gold for the team. Our team captain, **SSgt (YofS) Matthew Bradley** for the 'advance to contact' shoot and I for the 'attack and reorg' shoot; which I might add is by far the hardest shoot of the two. **Sig Josh Fletcher** was awarded the medal for the top young soldier in his match and **LCpl Leighona Landroit** was presented top female in the Royal Corps. **Sig Dan Evans** was bestowed with best looking guy, narrowly missing out on best endeavour and his banter was on point. All in all a good day for the team comprised predominantly of Installation Technicians.

To be the winning fire team at the FTC OSC is some achievement and when it began to sink in we realised we had romped it. Throughout the competition week we were obsessed with the scores and percentages. I kept a record of how we were performing and used the stats to maintain team focus for the upcoming shoots. In the end it paid off, **LCpl Moya** who had struggled to find his form throughout the week found his rhythm on the last day scoring heavily on the attack and reorg, as did the remainder of the fire team. The silverware was ours and now sits proudly in Andover as a constant reminder of our achievement. With the initial aims complete, 10SR had qualified to compete against the Army's elite, in the AOSC scheduled for June.



*Winners of the Attack and Re-org with the Furby Cup*

The AOSC followed a familiar format only this time we were up against the best and the scores reflected that. Knowing how proficient we were from the previous competitions we didn't let our nerves get the best of us as the competition ensued. The highlight of the week was watching **Cpl Taylor** attack an obstacle course prior to the shoot and then run onto the firing point blitzing all the targets like a pro' whilst in front of an audience. **LCpl Ross Meaden** was not so fortunate; his shooting suffering from a malfunction with his sight system. He had been our fastest man if not the competition, and carried on as best he could. The competition closed with three of our top shots averaging over 70%.



*Morale is high in all weather conditions!*

On the Wednesday evening there was a function for all members of the Royal Corps of Signals and the Master of Signals was in attendance. For our successes in combat marksmanship, **YofS Bradley, LCpl Coster** and I were proud to receive Corps Colours presented by the Master. We had finished in the top 100 from 420 competitors.

Upon reflection the training was intense. The days were long, and as a firer you need an immense amount of concentration. The range staff had nurtured our skills and eradicated bad practices. **Sgt Andy Jackson** and **Cpl Dave Kitchen** must take credit for the running of the ranges; both of whom had a direct impact that was echoed by our achievement. We had trained to hit a target from close quarter at 10m all the way out to 500m and had revised 15 matches for the competition. Having competed at this level for the majority of my career, I am proud to say this year was one of the most successful with 10 Sig Regt.

Across the Army's finest marksmen, the Corps men and women now represent 34 of the Army's top 100 shots.

### 251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Cox**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N Cansfield**

### Exercise BRITANNIA BOWMAN - by Sig Edwards

At the end of June, 251 Sig Sqn conducted Ex BRITANNIA BOWMAN. As the Sqn has no Bowman equipment, this ex was designed to remind and refresh the junior soldiers on basic communications skills for when they move onto a unit that deploys these systems in support of higher formations. The ex was split into two weeks, the first week on Gibraltar Barracks in Minley, with the exercising troops being taught elements of their trade that they may not have used for a number of years. This included voice procedure, antennas and propagation and how to start-up a detachment. Overall the teaching phase went very well with all the soldiers' grey matter being stirred up to bring old knowledge back to the forefront of their minds.

For the second week we deployed detachments to Bath, York, Pirbright, Sandhurst, Aldershot and Longmoor in order to use the different types of propagation to communicate, putting in to practice what had been taught the week before. The first

couple of days of deployment proved there were no issues establishing comm, gaining high signal strength pretty much straight away with minimal changes to antennae/radios. However, the idea of this ex was to challenge communications and see what the troops can do to engineer comms using various methods trying to pick up on specific types of propagation. This prompted the ex to include a few more locations to pick up some areas that would require more ingenuity to create a link between the detachments.

We had no major problems with Longmoor or Bath but

York proved to be a lot more tricky due problems with equipment. Whilst troops were busy trying to get communications in, **Cpl Roberts** decide to test out some impromptu methods of his own with just some copper wire. This proved far better than expected showing that you don't always need huge masts and particular methods of propagation, instead you could use this way and also keep a low profile leaving minimal ground sign.

Wednesday was the final day of the exercise with communications going well all morning and the exercising troops being confident both in the normal use and problem solving of the equipment.

**10 Sig Regt CO's Cup Swimming Competition 29 June 16**  
- by *LCpl Madden*

On 29 June members of 251 Sig Sqn organised and participated in the annual 10 Sig Regt swimming gala. We decided to make use of all the fantastic facilities the Aldershot Garrison pool has to offer including the Omega timing system which looked very professional and helped with the running of the event. The Aspire team were a fantastic help with the setting up of the pool including the complicated setting up of the timing system.

With the Regt based in various parts of the UK, the gala commenced at 1230hrs starting off with the individual events including the dreaded 50m butterfly which was easily won by **Maj Owen Finnie**, OC 225 Sig Sqn. Following on from the individual events were the relays which are always an exciting and fun spectacle to watch.

A last minute change of swimmer for 251 Sig Sqn's 50m freestyle relay team was **Cpl Menyangbo**. Totally focused and in the zone he pumped himself up by beating his chest as he approached the assembly area, he put in a strong effort on the 50m freestyle relay which brought the crowd to a dizzying crescendo towards the final stretch. His performance not only saved the sqn from disqualification but helped them to achieve 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the event.

With the final scores totalled up it was a clear victory for 225 Sig Sqn with many fantastic swimmers making up their team. Worthy of a special mention was **Cpl Graham** who performed solidly throughout several disciplines deservedly winning the majority of the available medals.

Overall it was a great event bringing members of the Regt together for a competitive challenge.



**14th SIGNAL REGIMENT  
(ELECTRONIC WARFARE)  
HAVERFORDWEST**



CO **Lt Col Stoter**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Robinson**

**223 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj Francis INT CORPS**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wellstead**

**Squadron Summer Function** - by *LCpl Luxton*

In the midst of a busy exercise season a window arose for the sqn to let its hair down. The plan was to go Go-Karting in the day, followed by a hog roast and refreshments in the evening. Upon arrival at the West Wales Karting track in Haverfordwest, we had the mandatory safety briefs, split into teams and chose team names ahead of the big race.



*LCpl Brooks attempts to overtake another team*

The race consisted of 7 teams of 7, racing against each other in a 2.5 hour endurance race, similar to Le Mans. The winning team was determined at the end by the amount of laps they finished. Unfortunately for myself, I had **Cpl Trevellyan** in my team, which you will find out why later was unfair. The race got off to a slow start, which gave **LCpl Brown** an advantage because he was in the lead from the start. In doing so he set a fast lap time which none of us could beat. Another strong member in their team was **LCpl Brooks** who then smashed his best time. However, whilst these 2 were setting best lap times, the rest of us were stuck behind **Cpl Trevellyan**, who, without a doubt, is possibly the worst Go Kart driver the sqn has ever seen. His lack of desire for speed had a queue of Karts behind him. Luckily there were limits for the amount of time on track each team member could have, otherwise we would have been taking home the wooden spoon!

Luckily my team didn't come last, we came 2<sup>nd</sup> from last! Due to **Cpl Trevellyan** not making an evening appearance we had to give worst driver to **Cpl 'Neon Blue' McCabe** who was almost as slow. **Cpl Jerman** deserves a mention due to his questionable driving. This led to a penalty and, on entering the pit lane for his time penalty, he didn't really slow down, almost running over one of the safety staff after hitting the pit entry barrier.

**Pte Whiteoak** was a surprise to us all. She was the best female driver of the day, and outshone nearly everyone. Building on a previous visit to a couple of other tracks she was like a pro and consistently set very impressive lap times. Wannabe Officer, **Cpl Yardley**, got the fastest lap time in the end. This apparently was his biggest moment in his 8 years in the armed forces! Needless to say **Cpl Yardley** deserved it. In the end there was one lap in it; impressive after 2.5 hours of racing! **LCpl Brooks** defended well against **Cpl Yardley** over

the dying laps and prevented the team in 2<sup>nd</sup> place from clawing the deficit lap back.

All in all, the sqn had an excellent day and enjoyed a few drinks in the evening. This was a great event and allowed a lot of the new sqn members to get to know their new troops.

### Regimental Patrol Competition - by Sgt Sexton

Exercise DRAGONS THUNDER took place between the 22-26 May 2016. It was a competitive Regimental ex designed to test as many different military skills as possible over the challenging terrain of Sennybridge training area.

223, 226, 237, 245 and Sp Sqn all entered teams in an attempt to win points towards the CO's Trophy. 223 Sig Sqn's team comprised of the leadership of **Capt Chris McGraw**, the experience of **Sgt Andy Sexton**, the flawless navigation of **LCpl Andy Tobin**, the constant alertness of **Cpl Alex Stevenson**, the 'UOTC-ness' of **Cpl Oliver Yardley**, the unbridled enthusiasm of **LCpl Callum Kerr**, the dominant cranium of **LCpl Bruce Swain** and the steely-eyed passion of **LCpl Steve McCallum**.

There were 10 stands upon which to be tested, the first being the command tasks. **LCpl Tobin** used deception and didn't navigate us straight to Stand One just in case the non-existent enemy forces were hot on our trail. The team worked well and completed the 5 tasks with little problem.

The route to Stand Two was challenging under foot and **LCpl Swain** moved tactically, often getting into the prone position, despite there being brambles and no real requirement to! The Vehicle Cam and Concealment stand took the full two hours allocated but was successfully completed. Stand Three tested our CBRN knowledge and, whilst the theory questions were answered well, there were a couple of areas that could have been improved practically. **Cpl Stevenson** was generous enough to allow the DS to test their CS spray directly in his face when his buddy failed to assist him getting his respirator back on. He took it in good humour and definitely didn't threaten bloody murder if it happened again! Stand Four tested our Recce skills and was completed without much incident. Stand Five tested the sections C-EO skills. Using Valon, marking safe routes, dealing with a casualty and extracting them were all dealt with as night fell, marking 15 hours since the section left the start line. A virtually flawless performance on the theory questions showed again that the team had prepared well.

Visibility was excellent and the weather was perfect so there were few complaints as the team made its way to Stand Six for the Military Knowledge stand. A bit of fatigue had started to hit so the food provided was well received. Dawn broke on day two as we arrived at Stand Seven for the Observation Stand. This point marked the start of the more physically demanding legs between the stands. Steep ascents and descents were the order of the day and people started to feel the climbs in their legs. Still, morale was high and the team was performing well. Stand Eight was a medical scenario where **Cpl Yardley** and **LCpl Swain** performed well being the first responders on the scene. The stand was completed in 35 minutes giving the team the first real chance to rest after 25 hours on the move. Stands Nine and Ten dealt with Anti-Ambush drills and Patrol Report writing before completing the final leg to a windswept trig point where there was a distinct lack of finish line, tea or medals. After 31 hours on patrol the triumphant 223 team was recovered back to

Brawdy for a well-deserved rest and given plenty of time to convince each other that they had definitely won. However, until next year, third place will have to do.

### 226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Watson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) O'Reilly**

### Exercise DRACOS FIRE 13 – 16 Jun 16 - by LCpl Barry

It was an early morning start for the Sqn heading off on a range package on Monday 13 June. All ranks met up for an early, albeit free, breakfast at 0600hrs to begin a coach ride from Brawdy to Castlemartin in the notorious Pembrokeshire traffic – tractor after tractor.

The four day range package would focus on GPMG firing; both mounted and dismounted, and would also include concurrent activity on the pistol range. It provided an opportunity for many of the Sqn to fire these weapons for the first time. The high spirits at the prospect of spending a week in the coastal sunshine firing GPMGs and pistols was soon tamed with menacing grey clouds, strong winds and a stereotypical June fog bringing everyone's morale back down to earth.

On the first day the group was split in two. A group would conduct either the GPMG ACMT or go on the pistol range in the morning and then swap at lunch. The horror bags claimed an early casualty in the form of **LCpl "D+V" Dean** who was grateful that the ranges had better than average toilet facilities! Another development on the first day was the arrival of **SSgt Blackburn's** mobile tuck shop. This proved to be a more than welcome addition to the ranges.



*The WMIKs during the static shoot*

The second day brought a chance to fire the GPMG from a static mounted position on a WMIK. Thankfully the grey clouds and fog cleared as the week progressed bringing with it higher temperatures and an even higher pollen count. Pollen turned out to be the greatest danger to the health and safety of the men during the week. This came as a surprise as prior risk assessments predicted the greatest danger would be posed by **LCpl 'What's a GPMG?' Kelly's** weapon handling skills. Hay fever attrition rates were high with only a handful of sqn members getting through the week unscathed.

The Wednesday shoot was again from a mounted position, however this time the WMIKs were on the move. Firer's preferred to blame **LCpl 'Driver' Pritchard's** driving for any targets they missed instead of blaming their own inaccuracy. Even the addition of a CBRN element didn't prevent this from being the most enjoyable shoot of the week. **WO2 (SSM) O'Reilly's** self-proclaimed 'SJAR moment' came on the final day

of the range package with a visit from the CO, **Lt Col Stoter**. The CO was shown around a mounted LEWT demonstration and briefed by members of the Sqn on how such a det would operate before being let loose on the GPMG range himself. It was during this shoot that the radio operator in the control tower **SSgt 'In trade; Mitchell**, received a message from a very scared **Tim Peake**, asking if the firer could aim a bit lower!!

The final shoot was wrapped up by Thursday lunch time and we then headed back to Brawdy. The most enthusiastic and efficient kit turnaround was completed on arrival to camp. This of course had nothing to do with the early kick off time of the England v Wales game but was down to the hard working and professionalism of the members of the Sqn.

## 237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Fogarty**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Peake**

### Exercise FOXES URBAN - by LCpl Done

In the beginning of July this year, 237 Sig Sqn undertook another exercise. However, on this occasion instead of the USA, Holland, Cyprus or our favourite stomping ground of Salisbury Plain, we took the unusually short trip to Cardiff city centre. As a sqn of the UK's finest Electronic Warfare (EW) regiment, we normally operate in rural locations, so this was a rare and unique opportunity to demonstrate the Royal Signals premier battle winning capability in a congested and contested EMS environment.



*Sellar keeping a silent listening watch over Cardiff City Centre*

We departed Brawdy on the Monday morning and arrived at 53 Sig Sqn (R) in Cardiff city centre at around lunch time. The first nuance of working in an urban environment was soon encountered, the limited real estate in which the Mobile Electronic Warfare Teams (MEWTs) could set up. After an initial look around 53 Sig Sqn (R) lines, **LCpl 'Harry' Harrison** decided his team would be ideally set up in the smoking area. The SGC headed up by **Lt Andrew Punter** also located themselves within 53 Sig Sqn (R) while the other sensors successfully achieved a baseline around the city, by setting up in a fire station and ambulance station.

Due to the obstructions of operating in an urban environment it was necessary for us to elevate our antennae on the top of buildings and in the case of the fire station, the drill tower where the fire brigade practice conduct their drill nights. Once operating, the main thing that stood out for us was how busy the EMS was. This made searching through the band quite intensive to find our targets. The targets were given the remit of operating on foot covertly in and around the city centre. Although they were operating covertly (in civilian clothing), they did encounter a few odd looks whilst sat in coffee shops discussing the co-ordination of ammunition on push to talk radios.

At the end of the last night of collect, we took part in a hearts and minds engagement with the local populace. The following day, we returned to Brawdy where we were informed that we would be participating in the CO's competition event of Crossfit. Needless to say, 237 Sig Sqn won the event before celebrating our win at the Regimental barbeque.

This sort of ex was a real eye opener and provided the lads with a new challenge. As the modern battle space looks like it will encompass working in urban environments more, I believe it is something that we will do more often.

## 245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Hodges**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Craven**

For those of you that have never heard of Exercise DRAGON'S TALON, it is a CT2 confirmatory exercise for those sqns from the Regt due to be held at readiness the following year. For 2016 those sqns are 226 and 245 Sig Sqns. 226 Sig Sqn provides tactical electronic warfare (EW) support to 16 Air Assault Bde. 245 Sig Sqn provides tactical EW support to 20 Armd Inf Bde which, come 2017, will be the UK's AI Bde at readiness.

For 245 Sig Sqn this ex was the opportunity we needed to test our new medium weight EW equipment, SELLAR. Some facts for you: this was the first time we deployed with all our sqn holdings; the first time we deployed with a fully staffed analysis cell; the first time exercising with a Danish EW baseline, with members of the USMC and with elements of Dutch EW; the first time against a sizeable EOPFOR including NATO JEWCS using electronic attack against us and all this with only 12 days of field trials prior to the exercise.



*RSOI*

The ex started well enough with surprisingly only one breakdown on the way to West Down Camp, on Salisbury Plain. On arrival we had the usual RSOI briefs late in to the evening and so it was the next day when we could finally deploy the sensors and set up the command, control and analysis elements remaining in camp. There was a wonderful air of expectation as everyone was keen to test our new capability.

Once the sensors had deployed and established the mesh network needed, the EW Control Centre were amazed by the vast amount of data picked up. The analysis cell were put under pressure to start going through all the frequencies, ruling out friendly forces and establishing the enemy forces;

build a target set of frequencies that our sensors could focus on and analyse the large quantity of G2 coming in and building the picture. The G2 scenario created was very impressive in its depth. The DRAGON'S TALON G2 team had been working non-stop for months to ensure that we as a sqn were pushed. Despite having never deployed our analysis cell before and after a rocky start the young 245 analysts were highly praised for their products and their levels of understanding and analysis.



*Promoting a US Marine to Sgt*

As with any ex, especially when exercising a new capability, there were a lot of lessons identified. These include but are certainly not limited to knowledge gaps such as fault finding; SOPs for working with other nations; location of the analysis cell so it can be best utilised as well as many others. However all this has certainly developed our understanding of this fantastic capability.



*245 Sig Sqn with the attached Danes and US Marine*

So it is clear that this ex has been a great success and that we have definitely entered in to a new age of EW.

#### SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Watts**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) O'Connor**

#### Under new management

Sp Sqn bids a fond 'farewell' to **Maj Mark Wilford** and a warm 'welcome' to **Maj DeDe Watts** as they hand over and take over the reins respectively. **Maj Watts** joins us from 16SR in Stafford which is where **Maj Wilford** has now gone; he has

taken up his rightful place as the grumpiest man in 16SR but now with the official tag of Quartermaster!

#### Exercise ATLAS DEVELOPER

29 Jun was a fun filled day for Sp Sqn after embarking on Ex ATLAS DEVELOPER. The day consisted of adventure training centred on the element of 'fun'. Designed to reduce the level of fear individuals might have had when dealing with heights, the group embarked on a series of tests and challenges at "High Ropes Tree Tops Adventure Trail" located at Heatherton near Tenby.

The Welsh weather didn't fail to disappoint initially and ensured the day was filled with rain from start to finish, with temperatures ranging from 9<sup>o</sup> to 16<sup>o</sup>, this did nothing to help build morale as we travelled to the location.

At 1030hrs we left Camp for Heatherton. You could notice some good interaction between personnel from different departments during the one hour drive which felt more like a quick ten minute drive with **Sig 'Gonzo' Dewhurst** at the wheel.



*Sp personnel on Ex ATLAS DEVELOPER*

Upon arrival at Tree Tops, we were led by **Sgt 'Uncle Buck' Clayton** who introduced us to the staff for a safety brief in preparation for the day's ex. As one would expect when visiting a location, we were well received by the staff, given some sound safety notes to read through and sign, acknowledging our understanding of the health and safety procedure while on the course. Signing your life away did nothing to ease the tension felt by some of the guys, namely **Sig Boyle** who admitted to being a tad 'uneasy' with heights.

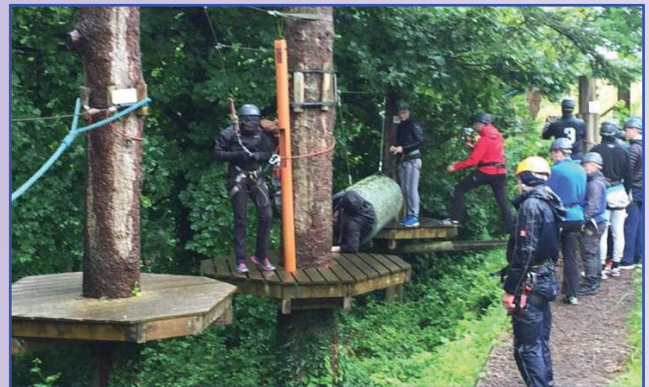


*Soldiers receiving the safety brief*

After the safety brief, our two instructors guided us through the course. Everyone had their helmets and straps issued with two karabiners that had red and blue labels on them. We were shown how to attach the karabiners on the high-wires and at the various obstacles that served as safety points. Upon completion of this demo, two points were retained by all, on arrival at each tree, we had to clip our red karabiner first to the red cable on the tree then the blue labelled karabiner had to follow on but the gates of the karabiners had to be in opposite directions.

We were then guided to the courses by our instructors and let loose on the obstacles. There were three Treetops courses to go through, each containing different challenges varying in difficulty. The nervous few among us (**Sig Boyle**) were now easily identified, with a few who shall remain unnamed turning back on occasion to regain some courage from terra firma. **Pte Alex 'the fish' Alufon**, who had earlier told the 2IC he planned on using his umbrella to keep out of the rain as he had felt no need to pack waterproof kit, could be seen enjoying sliding through the zip wire. No umbrellas were needed; we were all getting wet no matter what!!

Overall, the expedition was a huge success and everyone had more fun than they anticipated earlier in the day. Those who initially struggled to overcome any fear managed to find their reserves of courage and took to the course like ducks to water (pun intended) after a little encouragement, and all came to realise even a wet day is a good day out of the office. We arrived back on camp at 1600hrs wet and tired, but all feeling better for the experience and looking forward to the next challenge.



*Personnel going through the first course*



*Pte Alufon sliding through the zipwire without his umbrella*



## 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT (INFORMATION SUPPORT) BLANDFORD



CO **Lt Col OTB Courage**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) CJ Watts**

### RHQ & SUPPORT SQUADRON

With the summer manpower churn upon us, the Regt bids a fond farewell to the 2IC, **Maj Tony Barry** as he departs on resettlement and leave. We also bid bon voyage to the QM, **Maj 'Jock' Reid** as he embarks on his new role at BATUS. Last, but by no means least we say goodbye to the Adjt, **Capt John Howie** on promotion to Major as he becomes a student for 12 months and attempts to grow sideburns. We wish them all well. Replacing them, we welcome **Maj Adam Shakespeare**, **Maj Jim Alger** and **Capt Craig Tee**.

### COMMUNICATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS TRIALS & DEVELOPMENT UNIT (CIS TDU)

**Exercise BAVARIA TRAIL** - by *Sig Ben Collier*

Ex BAVARIA TRAIL was a Level 2 summer Adventurous Training package based in Drei Muhlen Multi Activity Lodge (MAL), Wertach over the period 12-24 Jun 16. The exercise participants were drawn from members of CIS TDU augmented by Phase 2 trainees from 11 (RSS) Sig Regt.

### Tue

Day 1 saw a first climb up the Grunten, a 12 km walk up a trail 15 minutes from the lodge. It was supposed to be a steady

break-in climb, although **Sig 'Sheila' Hurley** and **Ben 'Imhotep' Ryder** took no notice. We reached the peak, with a visit to the German Alpine Troop's Memorial. The final 1hr 30min was mostly downhill, in the rain, with the constant ring of cow bells driving us insane. We ended the day with some refreshing German beer and watching the Euros back at the lodge.



*The group reach the German Alpine Troop Memorial on day 1*

### Wed

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> climb was up Hoher Ifen. Shorter than the previous day however much higher. We continued at a good pace kept up by **Mel 'Sticks' Reveley** and **Matt 'Pampers' Taylor**. We ended up towards the peak, where rock-hard snow and slippery terrain meant that **Fred 'Get-Lost' Jones** inevitably fell on his backside. **Paul 'Bambi-Legs' Walton** also impressed by dressing like an Austrian local complete with boots, shorts and socks. Fog reduced visibility near the top of the mountain so everyone had to finish their lunch quickly and the descent down the slippery muddy slopes began in earnest

### Thu

Day 3 saw a walk up the Reuterwanne just a km from the lodge and an 11km steep ascent. It wasn't long before **Gaz 'Loves Noses' Venables** went looking for geocaches, taking out a branch with his face in the process. We stopped at a cafe, where I regretted trying buttermilk, and quickly wanted to leave after I sneezed (by accident) over a statue of the Virgin Mary. We were back at the transport at around 1400hrs, allowing us to get back to the lodge in time to watch England beat Wales in the Euros.

### Fri

The final climb of the week was conducted at Riedbergerhorn. It was a good climb, with frequent changes in the weather. During the descent **Darrel 'Smurf' Sheward** took a hush slip on the wet ground which resulted in a brilliant executed plank or as the rest of us like to think of it, ended face down in the mud. We spent the afternoon sightseeing in the picturesque area by Neuschwanstein Castle (as seen in Chitty-Chitty Bang Bang).

### Sat

Saturday was the 1<sup>st</sup> of our cultural days which began with a guided tour of Dachau Concentration Camp. The tour lasted two hours, which everybody found educational and humbling, despite the guide making everyone feel uncomfortable by laughing at really inappropriate moments.

### Sun

Today was a long drive in the rain to Area 47, a waterpark in Austria. Everyone thought it would be freezing, but with wetsuits on we were all actually warm. After **Sig 'Ben' Ryder** was launched a mile high on the blobby, the instructor decided on a same body weight ratio only rule. **LCpl 'Kirsty' Able** overcame a fear of jumping onto a blobby, but proceeded to jump on and fall straight off!

### Tue

This penultimate walk was led by **LCpl 'Freddie' Jones'** group. What should have been a straightforward trek turned into an epic journey, when Freddie took us on an hour-long "Nav check" before even reaching anywhere near the intended start point! The trek involved circumnavigating a picturesque lake, stopping at the half way point to admire the view of a 400m high waterfall.

### Wed

The final day's route whilst shorter was much steeper. The weather was glorious with temperatures reaching 27°C. The route was led by Kirsty's' group, with a sharp descent to Immenstadter horn followed by navigating past the Kemptener Naturfreundehaus and finishing at Gschwenderhorn. Upon return to the AT lodge the traditional lodge barbeque was laid on we prepared to leave the next day on our epic road trip home.

The experience has been thoroughly enjoyable and has given me the thirst to attend further AT packages upon completion of my Class 3 CSE Course. I also hope to be able to conduct some form of AT Instructors course which will open up even more AT opportunities during my career as a Royal Signals soldier.

I would like to personally thank 15 Sig Regt for giving us all the opportunity and experience.

### 233 (GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC      **Maj P Sutcliffe**  
SSM     **WO2 (SSM) N Harrison**

#### Regimental Tug of War - by WO2 (FofS) Petch

With the end of the Tug Of War season drawing near here is a recap of the team's recent successes.

The first event on the calendar for the team was the Army Indoor Championships, hosted at the RAPTC School in Aldershot. This was the first competition for most of the team but luckily there were still some very experienced members on hand to help steady the new guys. Despite missing some experienced 'tuggers', the team still put on an amazing performance and were able to walk away having been crowned Army Indoor Champions and 4 gold medals in the 680, 640, 600 and 600 4x4 weight categories and also a silver medal in 560 weight categories.

The outdoor season promptly followed and it's safe to say the turn out and effort from the team has been outstanding. There's been a lot of travelling involved with events being held in York, Scampton, Warminster and Tidworth. Despite some very tough opposition spirits always remained high and 100 percent effort was always given!

All the events were thoroughly enjoyable; despite many mutterings of 'my hands have gone', however our eyes were firmly set on the Morrison Cup. With the teams growing strength and experience confidence was high, and rightly so. With the hard work from the start of the season showing, 15 Sig Regt were able to win all weight categories. This performance resulted in **WO2 (FofS) Petch**, **SSgt Cameron**, **SSgt Beedon**, **SSgt (FofS) Tillman**, **Sgt Dilip**, **Sgt Slade**, **Sgt Rana**, **Cpl Clarke** and **LCpl Bryant** being selected for the Corps team.

As the season is sadly coming to an end there is only one event left on the 15 Signal Regiment Tug Of War calendar; the Braemar Highland Games where all teams will have the amazing opportunity to pull in front of the Queen! Hopefully we can cap off a fantastic season by bringing home some more silverware.

#### REGIMENTAL TRAINING WING

RTWO    **WO2 (RTWO) Flay**  
SSI      **SSgt Sheath**

#### Exercise MAU ACTIVE WARRIOR 26 – 28 Jul 16

This ex is aimed at providing Regtl personnel with CLM preparation. With both Junior and Senior CLM courses at Blandford fast approaching, 9 students from across the regt attended.



The first day started with the theory phase of the course and saw students get through some pretty heavy subject matter in preparation for putting it all into practice on the training area the following day.

Day two saw students receive their dry training revision which covered the Six Section Battle Drills and the Quick Attack Estimate. This phase of the course was delivered by **SSgt 'Phil' Eaves** and **Cpl 'Chris' Dowle**.

Training progressed smoothly after a tentative start and culminated in a well-orchestrated section attack on an enemy position led by **Sgt 'Gaz' Thorner**. All students had the

opportunity to conduct their own quick attack estimate. With the sun beginning to set there was still enough time left for some further weapon training with **Sgt 'Alex' Atkinson**.

Day three was an early start. After making their way to the gymnasium, students had their kit weighed and promptly set off on the AFT around the Blandford Garrison course. Following the AFT weapons were cleaned and we headed into the end of course wash up.

A successful, intensive three day package was enjoyed by all and will hopefully provide the perfect preparation for important career courses.



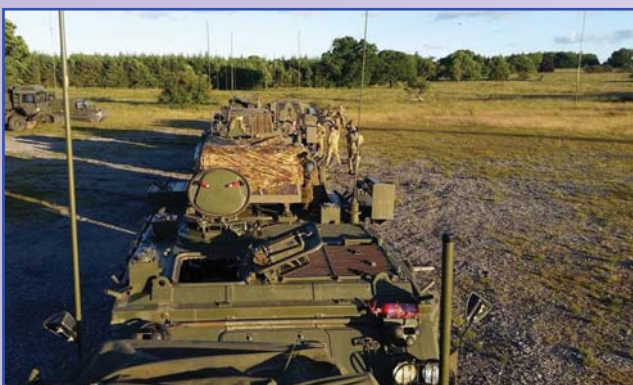
*AI X Main Headquarters established*

#### **Exercise FLYING FALCON 2016 - by LCpl Williams**

Ex FLYING FALCON (FF) 2016 was a Brigade level exercise run by 11 Sig Bde. The main effort of FF for 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn was to set up and maintain a robust Brigade Main Headquarters for the 12 Armd Inf Bde Staff who would be arriving on future exercises. FF consisted of two parts, PACEX and the main ex itself. Both 1 Sig Regt and 16 Sig Regt took part in the ex, with 1 Sig Regt based at Westdown Camp, Salisbury Plain and 16 Sig Regt at Marne Barracks, Catterick.

On 1 July, the main body of 16 Sig Regt moved up to Marne Barracks, Catterick, in preparation to deploy on 3 July.

The ex was two weeks in duration, and allowed the Regt to complete a thorough (and largely successful) test of their capability, from Reacher communications back to Stafford to skywave shots to 1 Sig Regt on Salisbury Plain. It gave ample opportunity to test the G4 chain, especially in their ability to think to the finish.



*Bulldogs from 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn ready to deploy*

For 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn, the Weather Gods were in our favour for most of the ex, making it a lot easier to set up the HQ with no problems at all, from the first set up to the last we were always shortening the build time, making us ever more effective. It also tested, for the first time, our ability to deploy and tear down at night, where the tactical measures were limited somewhat by the sound of poles hitting the floor.

Overall, the ex was a huge success for the newly arrived Regt, successfully demonstrating what has been achieved in a busy 9 months.

#### **Stoke Armed Forces Covenant Meeting - by Capt Dom Noone**

On Thursday 16 Aug, members of the Stoke Armed Forces Covenant working group came to MOD Stafford to visit 16 Sig Regt. These civilian guests represented various bodies within Stoke: the Royal British Legion, the County Council, Stoke University, SSAFA, the ABF, as well as the Mayor of Stoke himself. The visit started with a presentation from the CO in RHQ, to explain what an MRSR is, as well as the current role of 16 Sig Regt. Our guests then ventured back out into the British summer to be shown around the various communications platforms the Regt operates, as well as a Bowman detachment from our partner Reserve unit, 37 Sig Regt. Despite championing the armed forces for many years, this was a new opportunity for the visitors to get hands on and chat to the crews whilst looking around the equipment.

The visit also served a second purpose as the group moved to the Officers' Mess for the Armed Forces Covenant meeting itself. Preceded by a group photo and, most importantly, ending with a buffet lunch, the meeting seeks to ensure that members of the Armed Forces living in Stoke are not disadvantaged in the community for their service. Stoke is the hub of the Regimental Community Engagement Task Force

area so we gain significantly from having an insight into this region.

The visit was successful throughout and the Regt looks forward to hosting another in the future.

#### **Morrison Cup 2016 - by Lt Mason**

16 Sig Regt arrived on the start line at Morrison Cup 2016 with a smaller than average team. Due to the Regt being in its committed year we were down a few superstar athletes, others we had to rest with Rio fast approaching... Nevertheless we took to the start lines, runways and throwing circles with an impressive amount of success for such a small squad.

Notable performances include **LCpl Onderi** winning the javelin with throws that appeared to be double that of his nearest competitor. **Cpl Gray** placed second in the 5000m, disappointed with having ran on the front for too long and being beaten over the final lap he changed his tactics the next day for the 1500m. The effect was devastating, on hearing the bell he unleashed a burst of speed and then more importantly maintained it for the final lap, distancing his competitors in a **Mo Farah** like fashion. Other great performances included **Sig Malin** running the traditional combination of 5000, 3000m S/C and 100m, **Sig Eady** taking a less orthodox approach to long jump and attempting a long knee slide instead and **Sig Guy** practising his royal wave mid way through the 100m. 16 Sig Regt finished the competition in a very respectable 6<sup>th</sup> place from 10 in the major units. With the Regt handing over the commitments at the end of the year a much larger squad will hope to dominate in 2017.



*16 Sig Regt PTI's take a leap of faith!*

#### **16 Signal Regimental Birthday - by Sig Mardon**

On 14 June, 16 Sig Regt held its first British-based Regimental Birthday. The Regt celebrated with a series of competitive events from catapult building to cooking competitions and equipment races. It culminated in an evening BBQ with entertainment for all the troops and their families.

There was a buzz in the air during the build up as everyone began to get prepared for different events for the day, which would then be completed that evening. On the day of the birthday everybody went about their last minute preparations for the various inter-sqn challenges. Some chose to play basketball for their sqns while others had random tasks such as building a Catapult, an activity which 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn, led by **2Lt Josh 'The Bombardier' Carter**, excelled at. A log race around camp allowed various members of the Regt to try their hand at navigating minefields and stripping weapons blindfolded. A special mention must go to **Capt Andrew**

**'Rambo' Hutchings** for stripping and re-assembling his in a blistering 4 min 28 secs, congratulations to him! Other events included identifying and recalling military objects concealed around camp and finally a blind grenade throwing alley. Following this, many tired members of the teams were grateful to take shelter in the warm cooks tent to watch the food judging, where the teams had produced lavish salmon and mashed potato dinners for the judges' pleasure. It culminated in a tense catapult showdown, where after an astonishing victory from 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn, Sp Sqn learnt the important lesson that sometimes taking the rules too literally does not always produce the results you want.

As the sun (rain) started to go down in the evening, everybody gathered in the marquee where inflatable entertainment, a DJ and a BBQ had been set up. The night went on with activities such as 'Hierarchy Dunk Tank' helping raise plenty of money for charity. The food and entertainments were well received, with everyone in the Regt enjoying the evening despite the weather's attempts to dampen the atmosphere.



*2Lt Josh Carter proudly demonstrates his pride and joy*

#### **12 Armd Inf Bde Study Day 2016 - by Lt Tippett**

On 9 June a murder of crows (YO's) from 16 Sig Regt attended a conceptual training study day focussing on the threat from a near peer adversary. Held at the Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill it was attended by all the Brigade's main force elements.

The day started with an outline on how 12 Armd Inf Bde believes the conditions for a war between other nations and UK would come about in the near future. Having laid out the scenario, a series of briefs followed on the capabilities of enemy forces from SMEs within 12 Armd Inf Bde. The SMEs delivered interesting lessons identified that can be used to shape future training, such as the requirement to reduce electronic signature and HQ footprint. There was also a breakdown of an enemy Bde with a focus on how it operates and its integral capabilities.

There then followed a series of war-games, in which different options for combatting enemy forces were played out. These gave a good idea of what 12 Armd Inf Bde would be expected to do in the event of a conflict and how it could perform. The day culminated with a brief from **Lt Rosen** of the Int Corps which consisted of a number of case studies on how other nation's forces have performed in certain theatres, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses.

The day was highly informative and will be used to shape future training for 12 Armd Inf Bde and its supporting elements.



## 21st SIGNAL REGIMENT COLERNE



CO Lt Col M J Morton  
RSM WO1 (RSM) Kelly

### 204 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Gray  
SSM WO2 (SSM) Stowell

**204 Squadron AT Mountain Biking** - by LCpl Stewart, Alamien Troop

On the 12 July 16, 204 Sqn departed to sunny Dorset to begin our mountain biking AT. The aim of the Adventurous Training was to boost Sqn morale, develop teamwork and to give those unfamiliar with mountain biking a chance to experience it first-hand.

We set off from Colerne early in the morning to Blandford Camp which would serve as our home for the night, from there we set off into Dorset's sunny countryside for our first day of biking.

Day One was intended to get us used to the bikes and involved an eight mile round trip across various terrains. The weather was gleaming and morale was high and we set off at a good speed. Early mishaps involved me skidding down a sandy bank, **Sig Gibson** tackling a bog everyone else managed to avoid and **LCpl Nick 'Horseface' Horsley** soon realised that climbing hills whether on a bike or on foot is not for him. At the climax of our round trip we attempted to tackle various jumps and drops with **Sgt Rushworth** and **Cpl Eldridge** showing us how it was meant to be done, here **Sig 'Barrel Roll' Todd** demonstrated numerous times how not to handle a bike on any sort of undulating terrain.

Day Two promised to be a more difficult challenge and it lived up to this promise. We began at Corfe Castle and climbed the various hills leading to Swanage, morale started high though this dropped when we realised the challenge ahead of us! 300 metres into the ride we encountered the first of numerous morale breaking hills, climbing hill after hill while dodging the occasional cowpat or tourist. Upon reaching the summit however we realised it had all been worth it, the view of the sea was fantastic and the trail ahead of us was all downhill. Everyone tackled the downhill ride well with **Cpl 'It's too fast' Slater** demonstrating the technique of using your breaks for the entirety of a downward slope.

Arriving in Swanage our group feasted on fish and chips before setting off for the second leg back to the mini-van, the weather turned on the way back and it is safe to say we got a little wet! We struggled back up the hills we had just raced down and learnt to appreciate them in a whole new way, though again it was worth it as the downward leg was exhilarating and the thoughts of a nap in the mini-van would soon come true!

Our two days of mountain biking were great fun and raised everyone's spirits; I definitely learnt a lot about how to handle a bike over difficult terrain and cannot wait to experience it again in the near future.

### Exercise SHAMAL STORM 16 – Jordan



*Those who deployed on Exercise SHAMAL STORM take centre stage*

Ex SHAMAL STORM 16 (Ex SS16) is the Vanguard Enabling Group theatre entry test exercise in the country of Jordan. Elements of the British Army deployed on a large scale to practice deployments to a permissive environment. This year saw over 1600 troops and upwards of 300 vehicles deploy to set up a base of operations from which they could conduct a variety of live ranges and other training.

204 Sig Sqn deployed with support from 220 Sig Sqn on Ex SS16 in order to support 104 Logistic Support Brigade in their Vanguard Enabling Group role. We provided over 100 UADs and over 50 Falcon phones in support of around 150 staff users. Users had access to Housekeeper, DII Restricted and Secret and Magpie Nato Secret. This facilitated the users in planning, refining and executing each phase of the exercise, giving them connectivity to other users at different camps within Jordan and a constant link back to anyone in the UK either via email or phone. The link back to the UK was provided by Reacher satellite communications, with CCT120 (Swedish) bought as a redundancy if we experienced any problems with our primary reach back method. Housekeeper was of particular interest to the staff due to the system providing support to the G1-G4 function and thus facilitating the Sustain function of the Brigade.



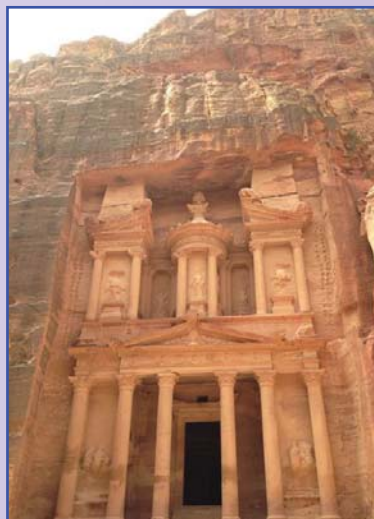
*The view of the headquarters during the exercise in Jordan*

Throughout the ex we also provided a service desk 24 hours a day. The job of the service desk was to provide assistance and fault finding with any problems users experienced. The service desk was also used to carry out IMPEX, allowing users to get the information they needed onto the Ex SS16 shared area safely and quickly. A small team from 21 Sig Regt also deployed to Jebel Batra further north in the country, where they provided OpCIS capability to 40 users. They deployed a Housekeeper node and various pieces of kit from Falcon to provide users with services from a lightweight and manoeuvrable platform. The reach back to the UK from this location was provided by CCT120. This service was integral to the smooth running of the exercise allowing constant lines of communication between the main effort at AQ1 and the staff users at JB.

Opportunities throughout the ex to go on a military course were taken advantage of, with the vast majority of us now returning as Team Medics. We also managed to attend a demonstration day, which presented the opportunity for us to see what other unit's roles and capabilities were. The first stand of the day was an impressive display from the Military Working Dogs. We had the privilege of watching a Belgian Malinois conduct a detailed search of the ground being commanded by his handler to search for the smallest parts of an IED. The dogs are capable of detecting anything from a piece of wire to batteries. An interesting fact which not many people were aware of is that the dogs are trained and commanded in Norwegian. There was also a short display from a protection dog, once again it was a Belgian Malinois but this time he was much larger. The demonstration saw the dog used to take down and incapacitate an aggressor. Other stands on the demonstration day included an interesting insight into the role and operation of a FET (Forward Exploitation Team) showing us the importance of gathering intelligence to help improve our methods and to provide units on the ground with information which may help them in their future ops. The final stand of the day was a brief look at the work of the Royal Engineers Search Team and some of the high tech equipment they use to detect and deal with mines and IED.

The ex was not all work and no play, the chance to go to Petra was given to everyone with most jumping at the chance to visit one of the seven Wonders of the World. It proved to be a very informative visit, with a local guide attached to every visiting group. There were also fantastic photo opportunities throughout the tour. The day was rounded off with a three course buffet meal at a local restaurant. It was brilliant to get this opportunity to visit Petra, as most of us unless we return with the Army, would never get the chance to visit such a place. There were other chances to get out for the day with a beach club being run on occasions throughout the ex which gave people the chance to spend the day at one of the local beaches in Aqaba.

21 Sig Regt's time in Jordan has been a good learning experience for us all. Not only in providing a large Headquarters with services but working alongside the Jordanian Armed Forces which for a lot of us, was a first. A lot of experience was gained from this ex and lessons have been learned. Overall it proved to be a very worthwhile training ex for us all.



*Petra – one of the Seven Wonders of the World!*

### **Jurassic Coast Hill Walk - by LCpl Wright, Messina Troop**

On Tuesday 4 July we left Colerne bright and early and headed off to the Jurassic coast in Dorset to start 204 Sig Sqn's 48 hour hill walking. The Sqn were split into two different groups. One group started in Weymouth and the other in Worth Matravers near the *Square and Compass* pub. Leading the way for Group One was **Sgt 'naving by contours' Pikendra**, making sure the guys were brushed up on MATT 5. He was extremely thorough as we stopped at least ten times before check point one for nav checks and testing.

On the other hand Group Two were making good progress even though walking half the speed of the other group. **Cpl Pacey** decided to test our group's morale by sending pictures of fish and chips at completion of their route (our group had not even made it to the half-way point). I had my patience and navigational ability tested through an extremely British misty and foggy summer's day. However we dug in deep to make it back in time for **SSgt Roberts** quiz night.

Day two, Group One woke up aching getting told we had a nice walk for the day, expecting it to be the same route as the others had completed the previous day. Thinking we would be done in no time at all and an early knock off, it soon became apparent this was totally unachievable. However Group Two appeared to enjoy a gentle stroll with an hour and 15 min lunch break at *The Smugglers Inn!* Both groups managed to finish miraculously at the same time.

### **215 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC        **Maj J Hooker**  
SSM      **WO2 J Davis**

### **Exercise CYGNUS WARRIOR 16 - by LCpl Rai**

"Before a Tradesman, You're a soldier first!" Having had this drummed into me during my PNCO, I deployed with 215 Sig Sqn on a very hot Monday 18 July for Ex CYGNUS WARRIOR 16. The aim of the ex was to hone our basic soldiering skills by spending a week living out in the field. With weapons drawn from the armoury and a kit check by **Sgt Perry**, we got on the coach and drove off to Salisbury Plains Training Area.

At the drop off point, having been given a safety brief by **WO2 Davis**, and with ammunition distributed amongst the sections, we headed off to our harbour location. With the sun out and the temperature in the low 30s, we were glad to reach the shade of a woodblock. Once we had occupied the harbour and posted sentries, we got into our work routine – shell scrapes, track plans, perimeter chords and all the good stuff. Due to the extreme temperature it was decided that all activities were to be conducted at night. We would be living nocturnal lives for the duration of the ex.

Each section conducted either CTRs or standing patrols each night. At dawn, every section had a chance to carry out a dead-letterbox resupply. Come Thursday, having done a section attack, the last phase of the ex was to commence. We were going to defend a

communications installation. **2Lt Heuston** delivered his orders to us and with morale high, all the guys got down to making defensive positions. There was then an unexpected halt - a couple of hours into the final phase, all of us were called into the middle where we were told that Bulford and Tidworth had gone into lockdown due to a presumed terrorist presence in the Salisbury Plain area. So, with renewed vigilance, we continued on with our task. Throughout the night we were pestered by the enemy's probing attacks - shooting and scooting. In the early hours of the morning, with less than thirty percent of ammunition remaining, we withdrew back to the redoubt to make our last stand. A short while later, a vehicle born IED burst through the VCP and exploded inside our perimeter. **2Lt Heuston** gave the fire control order and what seemed like the entire Sqn opened up, akin to the last stand at Roakes Drift and with the enemies closing in and only a handful of rounds remaining, the words we had so desperately been trying to hear all week boomed out, "ENDEX".

During the ex, since most of the activities were conducted at night, it gave us an opportunity to practice our night navigation and increase our experience of working in the dark. I think this ex was very rewarding, especially to those going away to do their CLM in the near future.

## 220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC        **Maj R Pledsted**  
SSM      **WO2 N Dinsdale**

### Exercise SCORPION WARRIOR 2 - by LCpl Morgan, Pristina Tp

On the morning of Mon 13 July, 220 Sig Sqn deployed a platoon to Hankley Common to begin the Sqn's CT2 ex. A great chance to confirm our skills and build a better team spirit before this year's Ex FLYING FALCON and the operational deployments that will follow for the majority. We started as ever by commencing our battle preparations where the Section 2ICs were issued ammunition and grenades. All of the Section Commanders checked their maps, confirmed the route and we finished off our prep. Once all the ammunition was loaded, the cam cream had been applied and a comms check on all the radios, we moved off as a platoon towards the location of the harbour area. We had not moved more than one kilometre before we came under contact. This was only a test of our reactions and the enemy quickly withdrew. After we had won the fire fight we carried on moving towards the harbour area. Upon arrival we conducted a stop short, occupied and established the harbour area and went into routine.

From there the three sections were sent on various patrols across the AO, conducting recces and maintaining a presence by launching reassurance patrols. It was not long before we received our next orders and we moved off to occupy the 'FOB Degan'. The next two days the Platoon went out again and again, coming under several small contacts both while out of the FOB and inside it.

On Thursday the Section Commanders received orders from the Platoon Commander and Sgt and things began to finalise for the final attack that would take place that evening. We left at 2000 hrs and patrolled forward as a Platoon up to the FUP. The gun group moved into position and at H Hr, to the second, the gun group started to suppress the enemy with rifle and LSW fire. One Section destroyed the first enemy position while Two Section held in reserve, continually

bombed up magazines in order to feed the gun group and maintain the rate of fire. The run around and up the hill to their position was a challenge which our Sqn PTI **Sig Marsh** thoroughly enjoyed! Two Section then moved forward to the second position which was swiftly destroyed. After a comprehensive re-org was conducted we patrolled back to the FOB and 'ENDEX' was called. It was a relief for everyone but we had enjoyed every minute of it. The ex had been a real test of everyone's fitness, stamina and previous operational experience serving to really bring the Sqn closer together.



*The Platoon inside FOB Degan after a tasty patrol*

### Exercise SCORPION AT 1 – by LCpl Simkiss - Bost Troop

220 Sig Sqn deployed on Adventurous Training Ex Scorpion AT 1 around Okehampton May, organised by **Cpl Laxman Rai** and **Sgt Tragner**.

On arrival we had a few briefs and had some time to get things ready for the adventure ahead. The Sqn was divided into two groups. One group would do hill walking which was instructed by **Cpl Laxman Rai** and the other group would do mountain biking, which was instructed by **LCpl Morgan**. On the first day, my group went hill walking. We went on a Tor circuit which included the highest point, i.e. High Willhays and other Tors which included Yes Tor, Dinger Tor and Steeperton Tor. The view was breathtaking. After the first checkpoint, we all took it in turns navigating from point to point with guidance from **Cpl Rai**. Some of us chose the track routes where others just chose the most direct route. We covered all sorts of terrain through marshy patches, almost vertical hills, through thick grass and metal roads.



*The beautiful view along our river walk on the second day*

Throughout the day we covered a total distance of almost eight miles around the Dartmoor area. At every point we would stop for a quick water break and also had long lunch half way through the day. After successfully completing a days exciting and tiring walk, we all headed to the pub and did a pub quiz organised by **Cpl Fricker**. The senior's team ended up winning the pub quiz consisting of the Sqn OC, SSM, **SSgt Becket**, **Sgt Marsden** and **Sgt Tragner**, thus demonstrating their high IQ levels!



*The downward slope was tricky on the knees but a race for fish & chips was on!*

On the second day we headed out on the mountain bike which was led by **LCpl Morgan**. Firstly we had a little walk through talk through of the bikes and then a little go around the car park to get comfortable. We soon set off on the area and sure enough the first thing was uphill which was quite strenuous. Most part of the tracks were very rocky and had raised curbs which made it quite difficult going downhill. We only had one person fall off. **LCpl Harvey** went down a rocky hill slamming on his brakes. The bike just went beneath him and everyone was in hysterics.

We even did a few river crossings with the bikes, where you used the bike as a sort of support while you balanced on the rocks trying to get across. Around about the half way point we got three punctures within twenty minutes. For the final bit of the day we were at the highest point where the tracks met metal road which took us all the way down back down to where we started. Due to the downhill nature of the roads we picked up a lot of speed, and for me that was the best thrill of the day.

## SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Overton**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dolan**

Sp Sqn has enjoyed a busy few months with commitments to various exercises, trawls and tasks. **Maj Karl Overton** is now firmly in the OC Sqn chair having handed over his QM(G) duties to **Maj Dave Smith**. The Sqn now prepares to depart on summer leave, but not before enjoying a families day and BBQ, which was organised by **Sgt Michelle Smith**, **Sgt Kirsty Burgmans** and **Sgt Godlove Fai**. A great afternoon was had by all and it was good to see so many soldiers and families taking time out to enjoy each other's company. Despite the odd spell of rain (inevitable for any BBQ) a great time was had by all. Sp Sqn looks forward to continuing to support the wider Regt on return from summer leave and maintaining our commitment to high-readiness.

## Exercise FLYING FALCON 2016 - by Sgt Watson

21 Sig Regt deployed to Rollstone Camp on 4 July, to participate in Ex FLYING FALCON. The deployment was to complete innovation testing on behalf of 11 Sig Bde, testing communications between OpCIS and TacCIS through the Land Deployed Gateway (LDG), using different Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) bearers.

After completion of the headquarters build phase, the TacCIS and OpCIS equipment was set up by various corporate and contracted engineers where Airbus set up Xebra, Mantis and GATR, their BLOS systems, which were used for most of the serials. General Dynamics were supporting the LDG, which is being brought into service to replace the Tactical Network Gateway (TNG). Detachment crews started configuring the equipment before starting the interoperability serials. Throughout the testing phases, all detachments were maintained and settings were amended accordingly in liaison with the relevant corporate engineers in order to retest any failed serials. The ToT **Capt Bill Bailey** and **Maj Scaife** from 11 Sig Bde Capability Development were heading the innovation piece back-briefing the Bde hierarchy where necessary.

Exercising personnel were drawn from across the Regt, with the bulk of manpower coming from 220 Sig Sqn to operate their Falcon and OpCIS. 215 Sig Sqn provided both LDG's and their trained detachment crews and 204 Sig Sqn deployed Bowman FFR's delivering their BCIP capabilities. Support Squadron deployed the Regtl Gene Bay to provide and sustain all power requirements for the duration. Engineering Troop also deployed providing Level 2 support where required with the subject matter experts heavily involved in the innovation testing.

Personnel from all Sqns worked well together to make the ex a success, completing the majority of serials between Jackdaw and BCIP. **Sgt 'G' Gurung** and **Cpl Laxman Rai** were relied upon to configure both OpCIS and TacCIS equipment respectively, throughout the duration of the ex. They both regularly worked into the night with other engineers from the Regt to test and confirm all configurations ensuring that it was all captured and documented.

During the ex there were a number of visits whilst personnel were working through the innovation serials. These ranged from Sqn hierarchy and engineers visiting to see the equipment and deployed troops, to a study day. The study day held on behalf of the Brigade Commander, **Brig Anderton-Brown**, was provided to highlight the current and future communication capabilities and how it could interoperate together.

The BLOS equipment was very impressive given its size and capabilities. The GATR was an inflatable satellite dish, which could operate with holes and easily be repaired in the field. The skin could be patched up with "black nasty" and the guy ropes could be replaced with paracord. Mantis was man portable, packing away into a large backpack. Xebra is the smallest X-band BLOS system, which is quick and easy to set up and could be used instead of BGAN.

The food was delivered by ESS and was reminiscent of the days before pay as you dine. At every meal you had multiple options of good quality food with loosely controlled portion sizes. We made the most of our 22 man room accommodation blocks and for the large part did not have to worry about snoring. The biggest exception to this rule is

**SSgt (FofS(IS)) Pope**, who was notorious for inhaling all of the air in his room and keeping everyone awake with his snoring!

The ex was a success on many levels with regards to interoperability of the comms systems but also between the Sqns.



*The Regimental Foreman of Signals (IS) posing with his coffee during Ex FLYING FALCON!*

#### **Exercise TEMPLARS TRIUMPH** - by LCpl Demery

The main objective of Ex TEMPLARS TRIUMPH was to train the Officer Cadets at the Royal Sandhurst Military Academy in civil disruption. I, and other members of 21 Sig Regt, deployed as civpop. When we arrived at Longmoor Camp, we were spilt into groups of nine and were then briefed on the week ahead and what was expected of us. The idea was each group of nine would make up a tribe and then move on to a village in which we would live for the week. We had specific beliefs and religions in which we had to role-play when in contact with the cadets. Our tribe was not keen on anyone in particular but also did not dislike anyone unless they aggravated us. So because of this, depending on the situation and how we were being treated depended on how we as a tribe would react.

Most scenarios were calm and peaceful but we had two stand out serials which kicked off massively. The first was a gathering of all the local tribes to a communications mast for the unveiling of it. It was there when one of the other tribes took offence to us and we started rioting. The cadets made the mistake of getting involved rather than task local police to sort out the situation. As the serial escalated the cadets struggled to control us as we drove them down the hill and isolated them. We grabbed at their rifles and caused as much drama as possible before we came under attack from "terrorists". As instructed by the DS, this was our cue to disperse from the shaken cadets.

The second scenario of note was one in which the enemy had come into our village and fired on the cadets. The cadets then fought back and killed the enemy. That was the ideal solution for the situation but after the tea and medals, the cadets had excessive bravado and began ordering us about in our own village. The cadets were quite aggressive towards us when doing this. Firstly, they made us go outside and lie down in the rain which we were not happy about then they kicked one of us while on the floor. My reaction was to get up and confront the cadet. He pushed me so I shoved him back. All of the action was caught on a go-pro which one of the DS had right in our faces which was really good fun. The rest of the tribes were all kicking off too and the cadets were struggling to control us. They did not take too well when

they started leaving rifles lying about which we picked up and waved about. All in all, a good few days and a good insight into some of the training the potential officers experience.

#### **Exercise TIGER SUPPORT** - by SSgt Moffat

Sp Sqn took a break from the realities of an MRSR in its readiness cycle for some Adventurous Training. It was decided that the best place for this would be the back end of June. Ordinarily a summer-ish month, ordinarily! The two week period was broken down into two one week blocks of multi-activity; mountain biking, walking, climbing and kayaking/canoeing. All the recces were tried and tested with a mixture of the UK's sub climates and with a hint of Weymouth micro climates.

The walkers would enjoy a number of routes along the Jurassic Coast including Lulworth Cove, Portland Bill, Hardy's Monument and the Jurassic Coast's finest chippy which I am reliably informed that **WO1(FofS(IS)) Ridley** thoroughly enjoyed. It's worth noting that his choice of attire would not have looked out of place in a reformed Village People tribute band. There was a deep routed theme in that particular group and their 'dress sense' when it came to walking. **SSgt Peck Ramsden** and **SSgt Niki Thompson** appeared to cause a little bit of a rebellion amongst some of the junior members of the group, a phrase of 'you've got a lot to answer for' also set a theme for the rest of their week. It was only a short walk but evidently not short enough. The groups from week two did not get the rub of the green weather wise. As they set off from Lulworth Cove the sun was beginning to show its worth, sadly as the walk went on the sun idea quite spectacularly vanished. As the group sought sanctuary in the Portland Visitors Centre the OC, **Maj Overton** invited the OpsO, **Maj Lambeth** to enjoy a fine summer's day walk back to Chickerell Camp. I am told the OpsO was most appreciative for the invite given the climate!



*View of Chesil Beach*



*Walkers heading towards Bats Head en route to Weymouth*

The mountain bikers, led by **Sgt Stu Payne** and **LCpl Callum Wright**, chose a route that would take them around Corfe Castle, Dorset, and nearby Swanage. Some hills were included and as a result the phrase 'you've got a lot to answer for' reared its head again. Despite the hills and the pains of being in the sun away from work for a week, the consensus was that it was highly enjoyable, more so once back on the transport returning to Chickerell Camp. It turns out 'it's like riding a bike' is not always a phrase to be associated with soldiers, with some members electing for an over the handle bar dismount. **Pte Silk** would tell you all about it but unfortunately he was caught up in a 'you've got a lot to answer for' loop. The senior elements of mountain biking week one took advantage of some inclement weather leading to a delayed start time. I am sure that had indoor biking been an option it would have been taken up in a flash. The group from week two were taken on a more intricate route around Wareham Forest. Despite this being a shorter route the feedback, again, was that all had a great time with a few who now consider themselves 'skilled' riders, physical exertion does affect reality differently for some.



*Cfn Billy the Kidd demonstrating his take on the perfect landing*



*Sgt Stu Payne leading his bikers through Wareham Forest*

The climbing was led by **Sgt 'Elf' Watson**, fresh from his bouldering wall skills display a few months back. Once the transport had arrived in Portland the groups then set off on an eight minute walk to location. The groups were presented with a precarious descent to the climbing area. At this point some members thought that an abseil into a climbing zone was extreme. In reality it was a small descent onto the cliffs of Portland to enjoy a break in the weather. Some 'enjoyed' the sun more than others to the extent that **LCpl 'Lobster' McConnell** was in danger of being fished and sold as the World's biggest crustacean. The Padre was allowing for some divine intervention whilst belaying the **OC LAD, Capt Bourton**. Never had a grip been so tight that there is now a permanent grip imprinted on the fine Portland Stone walls. For some the walk to the wall, the climbing and the weather was all too much, so much so that **Sig Hardwick** decided that further

ventilation was required in his trousers. Sadly with each leg movement the ventilation was getting greater and greater. Overall the location combined with some great weather provided an opportunity for some to push themselves beyond their comfort zone.



*Sig 'MO' Mathurin-Oranye getting his selfie in*

**LCpl Rich Shann** took the kayaking/canoeing which was located in Portland Harbour. Fortunately the weather was well suited for water sports with some SW sun making an appearance. There were more than a few who took a dive into the sea. **WO1(FofS(IS)) Ridley** deserves another mention after displaying the absolute essence of Selfless Commitment, without a second's thought he leapt out of his kayak to ensure the safety of **Padre Tom Hiney**, to prevent what danger no one is quite sure but it is the thought that counts. The groups were able to enjoy some basic skills in a kayak/canoe with some games thrown in. The competitive nature of individuals is never far from the surface, what begins as a bit of fun transcends into all out competition and individual races soon appeared. **Pte Silk** was on a mission to redeem himself from his mountain biking exploits by being one of very few not doing an impression of a buoy. No water based activity would be complete without someone demonstrating the 'how not to' capsize drill, this was perfectly demonstrated by **LCpl Ben Simpson**. Whilst the beginning of the drill went smoothly he neglected to be sufficiently in the water to fully carry out the drill, his paddle took the brunt of the movement.

It was not just the exercising troops that managed to get some good Adventurous Training in. **Cpl Asa Cannon** was completely at ease on the climbing wall, he ensured all around knew how much he was enjoying the climb with his vocal praise of the activity and **Sgt 'Spiderman' Fatiaki** who was belaying for him. There was also **Sgt Stu Payne** showing his extensive vocabulary as he scaled the wall. I believe the wall had offended or wronged him in some way.



*Cpl Asa Cannon demonstrating his calmness at heights*



**SSgt Peck Ramsden** was also on hand to show the instructors how he believed jumping should be done. Apparently it's a common method but not utilised by instructors or professionals.

A chance to provide a break from the norm was the forethought for the package, comfort zones were pushed and limits were tested. Ultimately a successful couple of weeks for all those involved.

Finally, no package is complete without a support team busy in the background making it all happen. So a big thanks to **WO2(FoS) Ross Beattie, Sgt Jone Fatiaki and Cpl Asa Cannon**. Between them they ensured that everything ran as smoothly as it could, making for a good all round package.

#### Chippenham Dragon Boat Racing - by SSgt J Bambury

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Chippenham Dragon Boat Race took place on the 16 July. Another great day was in prospect for competitors and spectators. The event involves a series of sprints between two teams, each comprising 16 paddlers and a drummer, culminating in a grand final between two teams

who posted the fastest times throughout their heats. 12 teams entered this year's event with ten civilian and two military teams.

21 Sig Regt racing with only 14 personnel due to some last minute tasking of personnel posted the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest time of the day during their second heat. With a guaranteed finals place the team were competing against the other guaranteed finalist 9 Regt RLC. The heat was a preview of the final in which 9 Regt RLC with a full team won by a small margin of half a second. During the lane draw the team captain **SSgt (SSI) Bambury** requested that 9 Regt RLC (who had been practicing with the dragon boat company earlier that week) reduce their numbers to match ours and in the spirit of racing they complied. The final was a serious affair with everyone expecting a close race and they could not be more right, after a ferocious race neither team nor spectator knew who had won. During the presentations from the mayor and local MP eventually announced the result 21 Sig Regt had won by 1 pixel on the photo finish.

The event raised over £4,000 for local and national charities. The Regt will be looking to enter a team for next year looking to defend its new title.



## 22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO      **Lt Col AR Fawcett**  
RSM     **WO1 (RSM) DJ Seymour**

#### SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC        **Maj N Pollitt**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) J Jennings**

#### Race The Sun 16 - by SSgt Cairns

On Wed 25 May four Admin Staff & eighteen fighting fit members of 22 Sig Regt embarked on what was to become an arduous 12 hour, 15 leg sporting bonanza held in and around the city of York.

Despite the bad weather and a 0400 hrs wake up call for some, spirits were not dampened and adrenalin was pumping for the event. 252 Sig Sqn started the day's events with **Cpl Hopkins** finishing in a strong position in the Run/Canoe event, who then handed over to **Cpl Clowes** for the 12km river run. Later in the morning **LCpl 'Laffs' Lafferty** took part in what was the most insane hill run ever created, as proven by the minibus being unable to make it to the top!



From there the impressive results kept on coming, from **Sgt Steve Lord** in the Forced March, **Sig Bahadur Gurung** in the Moor Run, **Cpl Bhim** in the Half Marathon, and **SSgt Phil Dransfield** who stepped in as a last minute competitor to complete the 24km Mountain Bike cross country event. **SSgt Dransfield** put in so much effort that once at the finish line he literally fell off his bike consumed with cramp, lost all colour in his face and couldn't walk for fifteen minutes (we didn't laugh or take photos...)



From then on the events just kept on coming with a 10km Forest run completed by **Sgt Matt Wilson** and Cycle Orienteering by **LCpl 'Stocky' Stockdale**. The open water swim was completed by **WO2 (SSM) 'Pat' McGeever** who gave it his all, so much so that at the end his legs almost failed to get him onto the jetty and up to the finish point.

The Stretcher race around Imphal Barracks at the end of the day is one of the shortest distance races, but is without doubt the most testing. However, despite four of the six man team still fatigued after competing in other arduous events that day, they still managed to finish in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. **LCpl 'Laffs' Lafferty** thought he would show off for a photo opportunity at one point and decided to run backwards whilst holding the stretcher (PTI's, you can't take them anywhere).

Performance of the day was shared by two individuals. First was **LCpl 'Dan the Pocket Rocket' Gray** who despite starting late after a delayed HO/TO set off at lightning pace. The admin staff then drove to the next checkpoint hoping to have a brew, some scoff and a chin wag before watching him come in. You can imagine the surprise as we pulled in to see the Pocket Rocket racing in 1<sup>st</sup> position across the line without a drop of sweat on him, an outstanding effort.



Second has to go to **SSgt 'Carl the Triathlete' McMullen**. A PT Corps legend who pushes himself to the peak of fitness and thrives in any physical situation, or so we thought. The Admin team drove past this legend on a road by himself who went on to ask "Where am I?" It later turned out that he had missed one of the marshals (obviously because of his lightning speed) and continued for 11km in the wrong direction.

An excellent performance by all those individuals who represented the Regt.

### Three Peaks Challenge - by LCpl Coward

Members from Support Squadron embarked on an arduous mountaineering expedition over the period of 28 Jun - 1 Jul 16. The AT consisted of climbing the 3 highest peaks in the UK over a period of 24 hours. We arrived at Glen Nevis camp site, located in Fort William, just a few minutes drive from our start point for Ben Nevis. The camp site itself had the basics we needed such as showers, toilets, shop and a nearby restaurant complete with a bar for us all to dull our nerves in. Whilst putting up the tents and being eaten alive by mosquitoes, **SSgt Dransfield** asked "why have we not got guidelines?" to which **WO2 '2 and a half peaks' McGeever** replied "because the canvas is inside out you dimwit", turns out you can teach an old dog new tricks.

Before Ben Nevis we had a quick nav check led by **Sgt 'Teeth' Lord**, so we all knew where we were on the map at that point, then at 0900hrs we started our climb. The weather was fantastically clear at the start and for most of the climb until we reached the summit where it dramatically changed to cold, cloudy and wet. We reached the top by 1130hrs and had a Sqn photo taken by one of the locals and started our descent. Once at the bottom we had a quick turn around

with help from our admin team and then straight onto the journey to Scafell Pike. This took longer than expected due to rush hour traffic around Glasgow and some lads with old man bladders needing toilet breaks.

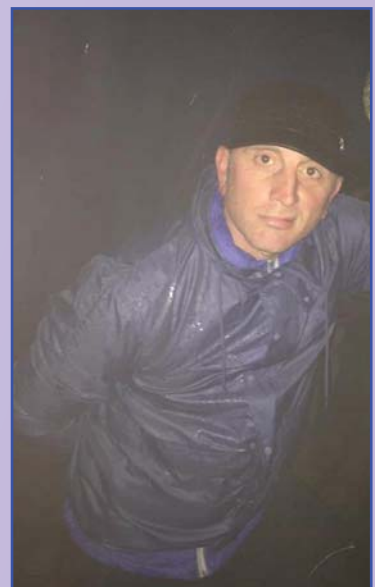


With time against us, we had less time to climb Scafell Pike than scheduled. This climb was a bit more of a challenge than the first peak due to the weather conditions. With the darkness and weather against us, the race was on. As we got closer to the summit the weather changed from bad to worse, sideways torrential rain with the added bonus of zero visibility tested the MLT instructor's leadership and map reading skills. We had no other choice but to don our head torches and almost hold hands. Feeling tired, wet and cold we had another quick turnaround and started our journey to Snowdon.



On the way to Snowdon we were all pretty tired so the lads decided to get their heads down for the duration of the journey to our final peak. We had about 3 hours left to complete Snowdon and finish our challenge; the race had stepped up a gear. Compared to the last peak the conditions for the climb were good, enabling us to make back some of the time we lost traveling between the peaks. As we reached the summit **WO2 (MTWO)**

**Middleton** didn't actually complete Mt Snowden due to standing 5m away from the top with his interest focused on supplying port to all those that completed this final climb. Once the last



man reached the summit it was a mad race down led by **LCpl Stockdale** who finished with 30 minutes to spare, with the last man finishing with 2 minutes to spare; the team were ecstatic that we had done it!



A big thank you goes to **Sgt Bolton** who organised such a great event.

### 248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj B Price**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Laxman**

#### Exercise JOINT VENTURE 2016 - by LCpl Vivake Gurung

On the 13 Jun, members of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed to RAF St Mawgan for a month long exercise supporting the EXCON element of Ex JOINT VENTURE 16 by providing robust CIS and helping exercising staff officers to achieve their missions and tasks within specified timelines. It was a comparatively tough challenge for the Sqn as it was the first ex supporting the SJFHQ (Support Joint Forces Headquarters), which itself was a newly introduced concept in the British Army and being a high priority ex. Moreover, due to the hectic schedule of the Sqn, it was tough to focus only on the ex and at times the Sqn felt the pressure on manpower.

Nevertheless, the preparation for the ex kicked off 2 weeks prior to deployment during which the Sqn conducted IBDP and PACEX of all the kit and detachments in order to prove their serviceability and rectify any faults. Personnel with differing amounts of experience, skills and knowledge worked together during the 2 weeks to successfully prepare for deployment. The process was co-ordinated and overlooked by **Sgt Shankar** who ensured all the objectives were achieved chronologically and in a timely manner. Meanwhile, those not involved in IBDP and PACEX were busy packing up the rest of the exercising kit under the co-ordination of **Cpl Bhesh**. After the successful completion of the preparation, the vehicles were parked and lined up in convoy: ready to depart.

On the day of deployment, all the exercising troops left the camp and reached RAF St Mawgan by evening time where we were fed and accommodated. On the following day, troops started unpacking the kits from the vehicles and started building the EXCON element. A company of force protection and real life support were also there to support the build. As a result, the build was completed in a week which provided us with ample time to prepare for the upcoming SRC (Staff Readiness Checks). The following week, we had a successful series of SRCs which was the result of hard work and dedication put in by the whole team. During the ex, troops were all assigned to relevant departments predominantly the NER (Network

Engineering Room and Service Desk. The NER team were responsible for maintaining the communications network and provide 2<sup>nd</sup> line support to the exercising staff officers. The Service Desk provided quick and resilient communication and information services and also provided 1<sup>st</sup> line support in case any faults arose. For the duration of the ex we were busy working long hours but a shift system ensured we all had a bit of downtime. During the off-shift time, we had some fun by involving ourselves in organised activities like surfing, fishing and coastal walks. In this way, we didn't even realize the ex end was already near.

Hard work and professionalism shown by the members of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn led to a very successful ex which was admired by all of the staff officers and higher chain of command. Now, the last objective was to account for all the kit and equipment, pack them in the vehicles and safely recover back to camp. Overall, the ex ran quite smoothly with good mutual support and co-ordination amongst the exercising personnel. Personally, I learnt quite a lot which will help me enhance my employability as a tradesman in a wider range of roles. I am looking forward to deploying again on such exercises in the near future.

#### An Invaluable Educational Visit - by LCpl Dipesh Thapa

2016, a calendar year crammed with three big Sqn level exercises, other troop level exercises and many other commitments. With the business of Sqn life everyone in troop, even more so troop staff, **SSgt Jagatram Rai** sensed an utter requirement for a break from work for the troop. Consequently, N-Tp 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn planned an educational visit over the 26 and 27 of May to the University of Cambridge and the Houses of Parliament with the aim of enhancing team bonding and educating ourselves on the educational and parliamentary system of the United Kingdom.

Finally the day arrived, on the morning of 26 May everyone with happy faces and bright smiles assembled in the parade square. Quick head count and our journey to Cambridge University began. At around 12 noon we arrived at Cambridge University where we were received by our tour guide. During our 2 hour long guided tour, our guide briefly touched on historical and cultural aspects of the city and married it with the perspective of Cambridge University, highlighting how a symbiotic relationship exists between the city and the University and how well the two complement each other and have prospered embracing one another from the early medieval period until now.

We came to know there are 31 colleges affiliated to Cambridge University with more than 18,000 students from all walks of life and all corners of the world, nearly 9000 staff and 150 departments, faculties, schools and other institutions. Colleges are self-governing and teaching staff carry out much of the daily administration at Cambridge. The University is governed through central bodies, principally the Regent House, the Council and the General Board of the Faculties. These bodies include representatives from the Colleges across the University. The Council is the principal executive and policy making body of the University. It also closely supervises and deals with issues and relationship between the University and the Colleges. The Council includes 16 elected academic members, four external members and three student members. The Vice-Chancellor is chair of the Council. Our guided tour was primarily focused on King's College and Trinity College where our tour guide went into detail on day to day life of the students, where they study, live and eat. All of

us were stunned when our tour guide pointed to one of the rooms of the Trinity College and said it was the room where **Sir Isaac Newton** had lived himself when he was a student. We also noticed an apple tree in front of the room though it was not the original famous *Newton's Law of gravity* apple tree but it was grafted from the same apple tree where **Newton** used to study lying underneath. After two the guided tour we departed from Cambridge University and headed to Aldershot where we were staying overnight.



*Team in front of Sir Isaac Newton's replica of Apple tree*

On the morning of the 27 May, at 0700hrs we were already on route to London for the visit to the Houses of Parliament. At around 0900 hrs we arrived at the Houses of Parliament and we went through initial security checks and into Westminster Hall where we were met by our tour guide.

During our 90 minute long guided tour we learnt about the historical importance of the Palace of Westminster and the significance it carries and has carried since the premature Parliamentary system that existed in the medieval period compared to today's well advanced and structured Parliamentary system in the United Kingdom. We also came to know that the Palace of Westminster caught fire in 1834 and was reconstructed in Gothic style to preserve the medieval look it previously had. The interior of the Palace reflects the very same fact that the Palace must be built hundreds and hundreds of years ago and has been well preserved since then because when it was reconstructed every care was taken to preserve the medieval look it had. Highlights during our tour of the Houses of Parliament included being shown Westminster Hall, the Queen's Robing Room, the Lords Chamber and the Commons Chamber. At every section of the Palace of Westminster we were stopped by our guide and she would cover on the ceremonial importance that each section of the Palace has on important days such as the state opening of Parliament. The tour guide also briefly touched on the three functional parts of the Houses of Parliament, two of them are House of



*Big Ben and a Troop of Gurkhas*

Lords and House of Commons and the third is the Monarch, the Queen as of now.

At around 1200 hrs we departed from the Palace of Westminster to return to Stafford. We arrived at Stafford at around 1500 hrs and we all could sense that the outcome of the Educational visit was nothing less than a valuable experience and knowledge gained by all over the two days on the educational and parliamentary system of the United Kingdom. Truly a worthwhile educational trip for all of us.

#### **Exercise STAFFORD CASSINO STONE** - by *Cpl Suman Shrestha*

Ex STAFFORD CASSINO STONE, led by **Capt Rajeev Shrestha** and coordinated by **SSgt Damber Gurung** took place during the period of 23 – 27 May. Eighteen members from 22 Sig Regt and a tour guide participated in the battlefield study tour to Monte Cassino, Italy. The aim of the Battlefield Study was to introduce personnel to the battles of Monte Cassino in order to develop their understanding of the all arms battle and challenges presented by contingency operations.

Early Monday morning, 23 May, two minibuses departed Beacon Barracks, Stafford towards Heathrow Airport, London to catch the British Airways flight to Fiumicino Airport, Rome. After two hours in the air, we got off the plane to step onto Italian soil and met a pre-arranged tour bus that was ready for our welcome. The bus took us to the Best Western Hotel Rocca at Monte Cassino. The four star hotel was just in the right place for beautiful views of the Abbey through the windows. The day closed to an end with study leader **Capt Rajeev's** initial brief, covering the program for the week-long battlefield study tour.

The first day started with fine weather over Monte Cassino town and after breakfast at 0800 hrs local time, we were taken to a viewpoint located on high ground. The viewpoint overlooked the surrounding landscape with some key ground features used by German and Allied forces during the battles of Monte Cassino (12 Jan – 5 Jun 1943). To set the scene, tour guide, **Dr John Peaty** orientated us to main ground features such as Mt Trocchio, Mt Kairo, Liri Valley, the Abbey, River Rapido, Castle Hill and Route 6. We had an opportunity to glimpse the Gustav Line, which was the strong German defence line during the battle. After setting the general scene from the viewpoint, the group was led to the edge of Mt Trocchio which was a dominant feature with high ground stretching for miles that provided OP locations and perfect screening for the Allied forces from German OPs located at high grounds of Monastery Hill, Point 593 and Mt Cairo. After the visit to Mt Trocchio, the next stop was St Angelo where the notorious Rapido River flowed along. As the name suggests, during the first battle of Monte Cassino, the natural obstacle of the river

had caused a number of fatalities for the Allied Forces. It was hard to imagine how difficult it must have been to attempt to cross the river in winter months without adequate resources and training. The next stop was the German War Cemetery situated in Caira, 3 kilometres north of the town of Cassino. The graveyard was created on a hill for 20,027 soldiers that fell in action.



Monte Cassino Abbey

The next point was Cavendish road which is a long stretch of narrow road built by Indian and New Zealand engineers for tanks. The road starts from Caira village and leads to a forming up area between Phantom and Snakeshead ridges that would facilitate an attack on Monte Cassino in the middle of March 1944. As we walked along the road under soaring temperatures, we started sweating in no time. The feeling of exhaustion was enough to imagine the difficulties the Allied forces had to face while supplying resources along the road under constant fire from German defensive forces. After about 3 hours of uphill walk, we reached the Polish cemetery that holds the graves of over a thousand Poles who died storming the bombed-out Benedictine Abbey atop the mountain in May 1944 during the fourth battle. The scale of mass graves was enormous and being in the very place was emotional. The day ended with a group photograph before heading back to the hotel by bus.

On the second day, after breakfast, the group was taken to Point 593. We had to walk a few hundred metres up the hill after the bus parked near the Abbey. As we got closer to the hilltop, a Polish monument appeared in the distance. During the battle, the hill was used as a German defence position that overlooked the Abbey and Liri Valley below. It was a crucial location to take over before mounting an attack on the Abbey. The surrounding view of the landscape was astoundingly beautiful. On each point we stopped, **Dr John Peaty** provided us with detailed information about the events that took place during the battle and we had an opportunity as syndicates to discuss further the events with current doctrine we use today in the British Army. After Point 593, we headed towards the Abbey, which was completely destroyed by the Allied Forces bombing on 15 Feb 1944. The Abbey, located at Monastery Hill was captured by the Polish Divisions during the fourth battle. Built on the dominating high ground, it overlooked the surrounding landscape of Monte Cassino. The Abbey was rebuilt in the same appearance and structure by the Italian government and is seen clearly from distance due to its enormous size and distinctive shape. We had an hour to spend inside the Abbey which we realised was not enough as we walked along the corridors full of spectacular artwork and ancient marble works. The fine details on the structures and sculptures were worthy of full appreciation.

After visiting the abbey, we walked down towards Hangman Hill in the shadow of the monastery where the 1/2 and 1/9 Gurkha Rifles had managed to capture and occupy the hill for eight days during the third battle. Hangman Hill had a very steep slope with little vegetation for cover and was littered with German mines. Despite all the odds, they fought valiantly and secured their objective. The troops could only take out their casualties and bring in supplies at night; even then they were under shellfire. Being in that place and imagining the battle in the severe winter months was unbelievable. After spending about an hour in discussion at Hangman's Hill, the tour bus drove us down the hill about halfway. The plan was to walk 45 minutes down the hill towards Castle Hill for the final stop of the day. A brief by the tour guide about various actions that took place during the battle at Castle Hill concluded the day before heading back to the hotel by bus.

The final day of the tour started with a visit to a place at Rapido River. The tour guide briefed us about the difficulties Allied Forces had to face and methods used to cross the river during the fourth battle. The famous Bailey bridge designed in the 1940s was constructed in 12 hours under intense enemy fire. The bridge allowed Sherman Tanks and Allied forces to cross the river quickly to mount attacks against German defensive position that ultimately led to German withdrawal from the Gustav line.

The final destination of the tour was Cassino Memorial and the Cassino War Cemetery. There are 4,271 Commonwealth servicemen of the Second World War buried or commemorated at Cassino War Cemetery. Within the cemetery stands the Cassino Memorial which commemorates over 4,000 Commonwealth servicemen who took part in the Italian campaign whose graves are not known. It was very emotional to see the huge number of soldiers that perished during the conflict. We observed a minutes silence to pay our respect to those fallen in war. **Capt Rajeev** and **Sig Pedal** took the honor of laying a wreath at the memorial. The final day was over and we headed back to the hotel for the tour leader's final debrief to wrap up the whole tour

Finally, the next day, it was time to head back to the UK. We took an opportunity to walk around Rome before taking the flight in the afternoon. On 27 Jun, after an early breakfast, we left Monte Cassino and headed towards Rome by bus and train. During the constrained time of 4 hours we managed to visit the Vatican City, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Castel Sant'Angelo and Spanish Steps. After a visit to some amazing places in Rome, it was time to catch a train to Fiumicino airport. We arrived back to in UK safely in the evening.

It was a very interesting and educational battlefield tour to Monte Cassino that was well organised throughout. We were provided with huge insights into the Battle of Monte Cassino prior to the tour that helped to relate the stories with actual ground and locations. It was an excellent opportunity to gain knowledge and an understanding of such a fascinating series of battles.

**A Road to Glory: Army Operational Shooting Competition 16**  
- by LCpl Yogesh Ale

Army Operation Shooting Competition (AOSC) is an annual event that runs as part of the Defence Operational Shooting Concentration (Def OSC) where both Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Navy (RN) also conduct their own Operational Shooting competition to crown their individual and unit

champion for the year. This year the competition was held in Pirbright and Bisley Range complex from 19 – 23 Jun 16.

All together 52 teams from all cap badges across the Army took part in the AOSC 16 having qualified through their own Brigade/Division competition. 22 Sig Regt also qualified for the competition as the Champion Unit during the Force Troop Command Operational Shooting Competition (FTC OSC) 16 held earlier in Apr 2016.

14 members of the Regt shooting team travelled down to Brunswick Camp on 31 May 16 for the pre training under incisive mentoring from **Sgt Vijayraj Ghale**. The team spirit was very high with the recent successful performance in the FTC OSC 16. However, the message was clear to everyone, if we want to be successful in this competition, then we have to raise our standard to an even higher level as we will be competing against the best across the whole Army. We concentrated our training on not just our individual shooting skills but also on team matches as this would be the key to success.

After 3 weeks of training, 8 members of the Regt were selected under Team Captain, **Capt Bharat Shrestha** to represent the Regt in this year's AOSC 16. The team continued to perform outstandingly both individually and collectively in all matches throughout the 4 days of enthralling competition and finally managed to secure the title of AOSC Champion Unit for 2016 beating the defending champion 1 RGR with a respectable score line. This was a very proud moment for all of us especially for the Regt as it was the first time the Regt has managed to achieve this in its history.

Besides this, all 8 members of the team secured spots in the top Army 100 and 5 members were shortlisted for the British Army Combat Shooting Team (BACST) 2016/2017 to represent the British Army in the international matches.

As a young firer, it was a great experience and achievement for me. I learnt a lot from the more experienced team members and coaches over the weeks of training and competition. Effective shooting was so much more than the basic marksmanship principles that we used to think. A high level of concentration, dedication and hard work is equally important to develop our shooting standard both individually and collectively. Having been a runner up on the new firer category in the competition and being selected for the BACST selection phase, I very much look forward to further improving my shooting skills and representing the British Army in international competitions.

## 252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N Coombs**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) B McLean**

### ARRC Field Gun - by Sig Lewis

Not knowing much about the Field Gun Competition and following a great deal of persuasion from **Cpl Alex 'Orse' Hopkins**, I eagerly turned up for training and with no waiting around we went straight into the beginning of the drills. I was placed on the back of the box which at this point, only involved two hours of sprinting and deadlifts, oh the joys. After the first training session, and before I had even decided whether I enjoyed it or not, **WO1 Owen 'NO1' Trimble** had eagerly taken my shirt size and signed my evenings away for the next three months.

As the endless weeks went on, we starting preparing for a public display of a full run through; all the way out and back home, in front of the COMARRC and a small group of people from ARRC PHQ and supporting units that could join us. Unfortunately for the crew, we had only completed our first complete run the evening before the display, the pressure became too much and a wheel or two may have fallen off. Luckily people watching the display assumed it was part of the demonstration and we carried on like nothing happened. This filled us with great confidence for the upcoming competition.

Arriving at HMS Collingwood, we were the newbies of the Field Gun world and felt like we had something to prove. Training consisted of seven forty-minute sessions each day for the first two days. For some unknown reason, all the drill just seemed to go wrong and tiredness seemed to be rife. Members of the team tried to do exercises to try and improve their drills, such as **Sig Johnny 'Stupid Hands' Walsh**, who would practice catching a tennis ball to improve his hand eye coordination. However by the third day and a lift in everyone's morale, things just started to click and everything seemed to be going smooth. So roll on the competition.

The qualifiers consisted of six timed heats, where six teams compete at getting the quickest time with the least amount of penalties. The atmosphere was starting to build and excitement started to grow, and marching out to our first heat, we were calm and collected. As the heats went on we knew we could improve and were determined to break the one minute thirty seconds barrier but nerves would get the better of us and we just could not prevail. Luckily this time the wheels did not fall off so we were thankful for that.

After the heats, we eagerly awaited the results that determined which final we were going to be placed in. To everyone's surprise and a lot of hard work and determination, we made it into the Plate Two Final. This was the first time in history for a brand new team entering the competition to be placed in Plate Two but we did not let this phase us.

The Plate Two final shortly commenced and we were pumped and raring to go! This is what we had been training for the last few months and we were not going quietly. At this point the crowd and atmosphere were increasing and after a few nervous toilet breaks, excitement soon kicked in. We stepped



*The Team on the day of the Competition*

up to the line eager and ready to give our everything. Halfway through, I heard the announcer say we were neck and neck with MOD Corsham, and as we crossed the finish line it was hard to tell who crossed it first. Much to our disappointment, we did not finish first but we were very ecstatic that we still came in second place and by only half a second, beating a lot of other, very good teams who were a lot more experienced!

However, we did not go away empty handed, as our No1 won 'Best No1 of the Competition' award, this was the first time in the history of the competition that a No1 from the British Army had been awarded this. Not bad for a first time crew.

### Olympic Fever Hits 252 - by Sig Wright

It's mid-summer again which means the Morrison Cup is finally upon us once more giving 252 Sig Sqn participants the chance to flex their muscles, suck in that stomach and compete alongside the rest of the Regt to showcase the speed, strength and the power that the PTI's have gifted us with over the last year.

22 Sig Regt's female team showed great resilience, clearly not as young as they once were but still oozing with all that experience and passion to still compete against the younger generation the Corps had on offer. **Sgt Sarah Ball**, our one and only competitor in the Javelin proved a point by placing 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and added crucial points to the overall standing.

**LCpl 'Give it a Go' Sutton's (AGC)** quill ink was clearly beginning to run dry after competing in the majority of the female events, but that didn't stop team Sutton... I mean 22 Sig Regt putting in a very valiant effort in completing the 1500m & high jump. After Coach **SSgt 'The Screamer' Martin** had finished horrifying her tug of war team with tactics she had previously used during the Cold War, and with their tears left on the bench along with their clothes and only a pair of

Royal Signals Y fronts protecting their modesty they stepped onto the scales and weighed in at 680kg. The team achieved a robust 4<sup>th</sup> overall in the tug of war competition and a mighty 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 4x4 discipline.

The male team entered **Sig Watson** in the 1500m final stalking the 3<sup>rd</sup> to last man for 3¼ laps then pounced with the speed of a thousand gazelles to cross the finish line in front of his prey. Going from the steeple chase and 5000m events with very little time to recover, proved as tough as promised with a mid table finish for **Lt MacLachlan**. However he managed to keep his head above the water unlike one of the other competitors who clearly thought he was doing the butterfly during the steeplechase judging by the amount of time he spent in the drink!

A very exciting 4x100 relay for **Sgt Ball, SSgt Martin, LCpl Sutton & Capt 'I'm a Vegan' Roberts** keeping a very competitive pace as if winding back the years and chasing that ice cream van down the street; they summoned every ounce of energy to not allow their opponents to extend the gap and they finished in a respectable fourth place overall with grace.

The best run of the event came from young **Harper**, daughter of **SSgt 'Foghorn' Roberts** who made a break for freedom with an impressive sprint down the track to collect some daisies for her mother. A notional 'GET OFF THE TRACK' came from the well humoured PTI... it's good to see there is at least one of them in the Army.

Resulting in 5<sup>th</sup> place finishes for both male and female teams and a chance to meet up with old acquaintances it proved to be a good two days, at a very well organised event that delivers lots of excitement and drama until the end, a very well done to all those involved in the organisation and running of the event.



## 30th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRAMCOTE



CO **Lt Col M Fayers**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M Witham**

### The White Swan Bar Project - by SSgt Kelly

I am not sure if many people have been to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at Bramcote in recent times; if you have, you may have noticed the horrendous décor in the Scruffs bar. It was painted a lime green colour and over time it had come to look like it had been applied with bare hands. Coupled with this, the bar was not fit for purpose; it had light switches which activated no lights, sockets that appeared to have been thrown at the wall and affixed where they had made contact and a bar so small that a child would have had issues working behind it.

When I took over as PEC of the Mess in Jan 16, the PMC, **WO2 (SSM) Paul Munslow**, and I agreed that something drastic needed to be done. We proposed the bar project to the RSM, who was in agreement that the bar had to change. After securing funding at the following mess meeting, we started pitching ideas for how we were going to attack the mammoth task of revitalising the Scruffs Bar.

A small nucleus of workers manned the project throughout. The team consisted of: **SSgt Matt Lee**, our resident electrician, **SSgt (FoS IS) Phil Sills**, **Sgt McClarence**, **Sgt Richie Allen**, **Sgt Kirstie McDermott**, **Sgt Pete Wright** and **Sgt Phil Mulligan**. The first thing we agreed on was that the green walls had to go. We decided that we were going to build a raised stage area on which the new bar would sit and that we were going to build a bigger, more accessible bar.

With all the best intentions and absolutely no plan, we began to turn the bar into a workshop and got cracking. None of us had any prior DIY experience, all planning decisions were made on the spot and we generally just "cracked on". We had some old tools (**Paul Munslow's** mum lent us her jigsaw and circular saw probably bought around the same time **Paul** was born) but they got the job done. It has been a long process and as a team, we encountered many problems, all resolved with a quick discussion and a lot of trial and error!

What began as an idea in March became reality in June; there have been some very long, very late nights in this three month period but we got there in the end. The bar now looks fit for purpose. With the aid of the Corps Mess Fund we

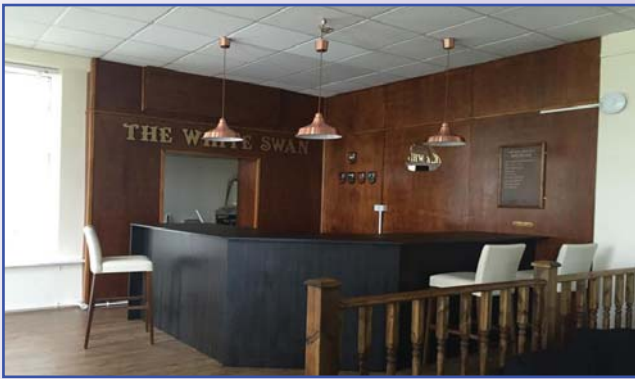
acquired some new fridges, installed all new lighting and electrics, bought new bar furniture and made the place fit for the WOs' and Sgts' Mess members.

It has been a labour of love. Whilst I am glad we have achieved what we set out to do, another part of me is sad that it is over. Whilst there were obvious frustrations throughout, a big part of me has thoroughly enjoyed the task. I have worked with some great people and have found out that I have more skills as a DIYer than I previously thought.

The new bar has been named "The White Swan" and everyone involved could not be more proud of what we have accomplished. Most importantly, we now get to enjoy the fruits of our labour.



*Out with the old!*



*Project Complete*

## 244 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AIR SUPPORT)

OC **Maj O Ford**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Cloney**

### Exercise SWIFT RESPONSE 16 - by A/LCpl Carter

In Jun 16, Romeo Tp prepared for deployment on Ex SWIFT RESPONSE 16 in Germany to Support a Joint Helicopter Force Headquarters with our ICS capabilities. The ex was a multinational exercise, which was designed to seek interoperability opportunities with our French and American colleagues. For the majority of the Troop, it was our first opportunity to exercise in Germany and our first road move through Europe.

The exercise began with a three day road move guided by the Army Air Corps. Day one went to plan as it was a simple journey to the Port of Felixstowe for an overnight ferry to the Hook of Holland. Arriving the following morning, there was a brief lull before we started the road move to Germany. On our initial exit from the Port, there were a few confused looks on the faces on some of the more junior members of the Tp... driving on the right hand side of the road rather than the left took some getting used to. Compounded with unfamiliar road signs and the picturesque Dutch scenery, the drivers found concentrating a challenge.

The last leg to Grafenwoehr Training Area was the longest, but the smoothest leg due to us all taking on board the experiences gained during the journey. In true exercise tradition the heavens opened up and gave us a little tease of what Germany's weather had to offer with a magnificent downpour and thunder storm.

The first phase of the ex was an excellent chance to hone our skills in a new environment. Providing services to just a small number of staff officers for a few days eased us in to the ex. With only such a small number of staff to support, we used this opportunity to refine how we could build the headquarters in phases, increasing services as we went. This confirmed that the work we conducted on our tp's overseas ex to Cyprus earlier in the year and gave our new Tp Comd, **2Lt James Clark**, a chance to see the Tp in action and afford him the opportunity to change things as he saw fit.

When the main body of the Staff arrived the pace began to increase. The Tp obtained some real time ICS faults which presented an excellent opportunity to experience what can go wrong in the HQ environment. This gave us invaluable knowledge and the chance to ensure correct procedures were in place. Although initially the headquarters was sedentary in one location, as the ex developed, our location moved, mimicking what would occur in a live operation.

During the forward tactical phase the pace became frenetic. We were issued with our TES (Tactical-Engagement-System) and deployed to a forward HQ position at Hohenfels Training Area, where we would stay until End Ex. The HQ position, Objective BEAR, was a dusty FOB situated on top of a hill surrounded by a small village and Bavarian countryside.

We began with a night build of our NER and quickly established communications. Unlike our previous HQ this position was at high threat from an attack from an active enemy force. We operated fully tactical and were briefed on an imminent CBRN IDF threat. As a result our respirators were always close to hand. They became increasingly useful as the time went on.

During our forward deployment, routine began again as normal. Stag rotations were established and our services continued to support the Staff in their planning process. Each day had its own little eventful twist; one of the first days in location we found ourselves continuously stood to due to small arms fire and IDF. A memorable moment was a sweeping attack from an enemy attack helicopter not long after reveille.



*Supporting JHC*

As the tempo of operations increased so did the events around our HQ. At one point we heard a significant amount of small arms fire. We stood to in our defensive positions, our line of defence facing south. We did not have sight of the enemy but it was apparent that there was a substantial threat as our western defensive line was returning an increased rate of fire towards the enemy. Out of our right of arc an enemy Humvee with a top gunner engaged our defensive line shortly followed by two enemy Main Battle Tanks! These fired at our position and passed quickly out of our left of arc.



Given the tempo of the events going on around us, it came as no surprise that we took a casualty. What was surprising was the fact that it was our very own Tp Comd. Our team medic was quick to react and it was established that he suffered a (simulated) pelvic fracture and required an immediate casualty evacuation. **Lt Clark** was flown to the field hospital where he was treated accordingly and miraculously returned to fight another day only six hours later.

The kinetic nature of the ex was a big eye-opener for us as it took our training one stage further. Previous exercises had been solely focussed with delivering communications whereas this one blended our trade abilities with core soldiering outputs. After a series of exercises over the past six months, we now find ourselves ready to deploy in any environment.



*Romeo Troop at End Ex*

#### 250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Lish**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Indra Thapa**

From Grafenwoehr to Devil's Dyke, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn have had a typically demanding few months both on ex and in camp. In May, W Tp augmented by members of X Tp and SHQ, deployed to Bavaria on Ex STONEY RUN; this tested their @R capability, and also gave the new Tp Comd her first experience of deployment with the Tp. They conducted a successful interoperability and partnership exercise with 44<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signals Battalion culminating in three days of sports and cultural visits – the Bayern Munich Football Stadium proving a firm favourite!

SJFLogC deployed to RAF St Mawgan for an extremely successful Ex JOINT VENTURE, prior to the whole Sqn heading to the South Downs for the legendary Ex TRAILWALKER. It was an extremely slick and effective ex, testing the Sqn and concurrently raising a huge amount of money for the Gurkha Welfare Trust and Oxfam. We took part in both the Freedom of Blandford and Freedom of Nuneaton parades, conducted a cultural programme during the Bramcote Station Open Day, and have provided pipers to numerous Brigade of Gurkhas functions. Two members of the Sqn have also been selected for the British Army Combat Shooting Team (BACST) for competitions in Canada.

The OC's Challenge Cup has continued with highly competitive football, swimming, and basketball competitions. These have often culminated in enjoyable Sqn functions such as the Hawaiian theme BBQ and the OC's Sqn farewell. There have been a number of changes in SHQ and we have welcomed a new OC, 2IC and Ops Officer in the last month. **Maj David Lish**, **Capt Nim Pun** and **Capt Alex Booth** are all eagerly awaiting the return from summer leave to get stuck in.



*Maj Walton wishing Capt Matt Bennett luck as he leaves the Sqn*



*Capt Nim Pun presenting Maj Walton with a Kothimara Khukuri*

#### 256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Kirk**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wildman**

##### **Exercise RAM PEAKS** - by LCpl Wilkinson

On 20 Jul we set off from camp towards Horton on Ribblesdale in Yorkshire, where we would embark the following day and complete the Yorkshire 3 Peaks. This is an event that many civilians seek out and train to complete. It is a feat to complete such a challenge and should not be taken lightly. Most people in the Sqn had never completed more than an 8 mile AFT before and so for some people 24 miles seemed a bit far. Our efforts were to raise money for and awareness of the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

We got ourselves into teams of 6 and received a brief from the SSM, **WO2 Wildman**. He told us anyone that beat his personal time and completed the event in less than 6 hours would receive a special "SSM's Prize". Naturally everyone thought the prize would be a day off and so everyone wanted to win.

My team comprised of myself, **SSgt Warrel**, **Sgt Briggs**, **LCpl Evans** and **Sig Cole**. Although we picked up a stray in the form of the OC, **Major Kirk**, along the route! Morale remained high within the team with **Sig Cole** acting as DJ, playing music off of his phone as we walked. Walking the three peaks was not an easy feat and proved a bit much as we lost a few members of our team to the heavy inclines.

The finish point of the walk was back at the campsite where the SSM waited with certificates and to give us our time. More importantly, the chefs had prepared a BBQ feast so that

we could all fill our stomachs after the long walk! Despite the Sqn's best efforts, no one had beaten the SSM's time and his satisfaction was plain to see.

Completing the three peaks gave many people an event to add to their list of achievements this year. After the Sqn had been heavily committed on Ex JOINT VENTURE this event was a brilliant opportunity for the Sqn to spend some time together out of the SUMA, whilst also raising a good amount of money for a worthwhile charity.

## 258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Long**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wood**

### Exercise JOINT VENTURE and SWAN EDGE 16 - by Sig Brown

258 Sig Sqn have been given the task of reinvigorating Early Entry Headquarters for JTFHQ. With that in mind on a warm sunny morning in July Foxtrot Tp, having packed the bags (strictly in line with policy) and sent the freight to Brize Norton, started the journey by road to meet the HQ at RAF St Mawgan. This was quite a momentous day for both the Troop and the HQ as it marked the first time since its conception 2 years prior that the HQ will be exercised with the Staff. The guys and girls of Foxtrot (especially the Tp Comd) found themselves strangely apprehensive but keen to demonstrate the results of their hard work.



SSgt FofS(IS) 'Yogi' Yogendra

After many, many, many hours in a 'heli-bedford' we arrived to find the HQ already there, which was excellent as I did not fancy a rest anyway. Keen to show our wares to the wider Regt and Staff we started straight to work. As the Staff, Regimental personalities and the Troop get to know one another the Lessons Learnt sheet grew considerably as each component of the headquarters became accustomed to working together. Although initially wary of the Staff, our working relationship with them grew closer as the ex progressed.



Sleep tents complete

Although, this process might have been aided slightly by the JTFHQ led BBQ on the beach and the friendly Tug of War competition that Foxtrot Tp won (but as bragging is so uncouth we did not dwell on it). By the end of the 10 days the HQ had evolved from what we perceived the user wanted to what they actually required.



Foxtrot Tp beach sports champions!

On 7 Jul after the Staff had left and we had completed a 'hot wash-up', we packed the HQ and eagerly set off for camp. One torturous drive later we arrived at Bramcote and up goes the HQ to ensure nothing was damaged in transit. The whole experience was a new one for the Tp and although it has been difficult getting to grips with working with Staff and meeting their requirements, the end result was a worthwhile one. Just as we start to relax the news something might be happening in Africa comes in and the HQ is dropped to 12hrs NTM. But as I said earlier, I did not fancy a rest anyway. Life in 258 Sig Sqn is full of surprises, which will only continue for the rest of the year.



HQ interior

## SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Eastman**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Munslow**

### Bramcote Station Open Day 2016 - by WO2 (SSM) Munslow

Bramcote station Open Day was held on 10 Jul. Situated on the outskirts of Nuneaton, Gamecock Barracks could often be unnoticed by the local community. The annual Bramcote Station Open Day aims to forge ever closer relationships with the surrounding area and increase the Regiment's visibility within the towns of Nuneaton and Hinckley.

It was back in Oct 15 that Sp Sqn took on the planning to ensure we improved on the previous years but more

importantly re-introduced a strong military theme to the event. This was the main effort of our Officer Commanding, **Maj Matt Eastman**. With that in mind we set about booking events and attractions. At the top of the wish list was a Military Band. Beyond our hopes we did indeed manage to secure a 40 strong marching band from the Royal Logistic Corps. We also secured a Battle of Britain Spitfire flyover, Jump 4 Heroes Parachute team and the mighty Squibb Freestyle Moto X team. On top of all of this our LAD, led by **Capt Marcus Mason**, embraced the task to get as many military vehicles as possible – we were not let down. From an armoured Mastiff to the REME Enduro Team, they were all there in spectacular fashion. Other vehicles that made it to the day were vintage fire engines and farm machinery.

As the day of the event approached, it dawned on us that as much of the Regt was deployed in support of Ex JOINT VENTURE, we had to cast our net far and wide for all the resources we would need. The use of Bicester's loan pool eventually resolved most of the issues with a few days to spare before the build phase commenced. However, we did not have the same luck when working out the power requirements. Thankfully our resident class 1 RSE **LCpl Mohan** came to the rescue, along with some friends from AGGREKO temporary power solutions.

The build phase was conducted under the watchful eye of **SSgt MacKay**, with the thankless task of erecting copious amounts of tents in the rain. At the same time **SSgt John Axtell** took on the task of ensuring the parking plan would cope with thousands of cars trying to gain entry to our open day. Behind the scenes was **SSgt Johnson, Sgt Al Mousley, Sgt Allen** and many more were involved in the administration side of ensuring the success of the event. There was only one thing that could quite literally dampen the day, the weather.

After a nervous start, by 1000 hrs the sun started to break through and most of our stall holders had set up and were ready to greet the public. 1100hrs arrived and the public swarmed through the gates. After the Mayor of Nuneaton had opened the event, the spectators witnessed a myriad of displays by both military and non-military personnel. As the day progressed it became apparent that our very own Pimms stall organised by **Sig Dodd** was gathering momentum. For those that did not want explore the events and stalls of the day, they were able to relax in the Pimms Garden whilst enjoying the Wimbledon men's final on one television and the Formula 1 at Silverstone on another. **Sgt Rogers** also ensured that no one was left feeling peckish with a selection of foods on the Jerk Chicken stand.

After what had proven to be a very busy day, the Regt could take pride that the event had attracted several thousand visitors and provided them ample entertainment for the afternoon but more importantly an insight into what the Regt does. We look forward to next year, where we hope to make it bigger and better.



Visitors walking around the vehicle displays



## 32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT GLASGOW



CO **Maj S Lockwood**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J Blowes**

### 40 (NORTH IRISH HORSE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Stevenson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L Gamble**

**Exercise SOMME FINN - 28 June - 3 July 2016 - by SSgt Ian Robson (SPSI)**

Realising that the 100 year commemoration of the Battle of The Somme was fast approaching, a recce was organised by **Maj Derek Irvine** to plan a battlefield tour. Also on the recce were **WO2 Glenn Campbell** and **SSgt Anthony 'Dusty' Miller** which took place during September 2014. With the battlefield tour upon us, it was expected that all participants were to have a good understanding of the battles and areas being visited, so pre-tour lectures and visits were planned. All participants had to prepare and deliver a 15 minute presentation on WW1 events which were delivered over a series of training nights. A RTW was organised by **SSgt Tony Muers** which included a lecture from a member of the Somme Association, on the Battle of The Somme. We visited Grey Point Fort which is a WW1 gun emplacement situated on the

shores of Belfast Lough, and the Somme museum at Conlig near Bangor.

### Day one

With pre-training complete and specially designed Polo shirts handed out (big thanks to **SSgt Ricky Lindsay**), it was time for the tour to begin.

At 0130hrs on 29 June, we boarded the coach to Dublin



*Mr Paul Grimley imparting his extensive knowledge to us*

Airport. After a quick roll call by the SSM we started to exit out of the gates, when we realised we were missing somebody (yes after the roll call), which turned out to be none other than the OC himself. After a quick search he was found fast asleep in his office.

A quick flight from Dublin to Paris and we were met by our, soon to be infamous, tour host **Paul Grimley**, who was an all-round WW1 enthusiast (he

refused to be called expert), and rally-coach driver, **Andy** (Galín Tours). We all gained tremendously from **Paul's** well researched and informative WW1 knowledge.

From the airport we set off, not in customary holiday style to check into our hotel, but straight to our first tour stop of the trip, Thiepval Wood. **Paul** wished to keep us entertained as we made our way there, by playing a number of documentaries about the war effort in the areas that we would be exploring throughout our time in France. Some watched for interests sake, others used it as an aide to catch up on much needed rest. A quick walk around the Ulster Tower and a cup of much needed coffee was had, before we tagged onto the end of the tour by one of the volunteers. He explained what each type of trench was and what it would have been used for. It was difficult to imagine that so many men could fight in such confined spaces but our guide brought the story to life. The poppies growing in the wheat fields either side of the Tower made it a very emotive and poignant place to be. A quiet, and lonely place, even with all the hussle and bussle around, in preparation for the 1 July commemorations. As our schedule was very tight, we had to move on to our next port of call, which was Vimy Ridge. A fantastic feat of design, sculpture and architecture. In the absence of a local guide, **LCpl Jason Clarke** provided a concise briefing. The great towering memorial was dedicated to the many Canadian soldiers who fought gallantly to take the area. Passing through the woods on either side, before getting to the site, we saw cordoned off areas that still contained unexploded devices. Never one to miss an opportunity, **LCpl Kyle Carse** spotted a French tourist with a set of bagpipes and entertained troops and other visitors with nice set. A beautiful place, though full of sorrow, as reflected in the stunning sculpture of mothers clutching babies to their chests.

After the evening meal, during a walk round the town square, some of the groups heard a ringing noise coming from one of the restaurants. Further investigation revealed it was **SSgt Chris Wilson** ringing the bell; great timing!

## Day Two

We were up early and travelled to the largest of the Commonwealth cemeteries at Tyne Cot. Again learning about the area and the geographical relevance to the battle. We moved onto Essex Farm and saw the medical area where **Lt Col McCrea** composed the poem 'In Flanders Fields'. After lunch near the Hooze Crater cemetery, an interesting visit to Langemark German Cemetery followed which allowed for some photos at the spot where Hitler was photographed in 1940. Watching relevant DVDs while travelling provided further background to the tour and this was especially complimentary to the Paschendale visit, explaining **Rudyard Kipling's** connection to the story. Timing being of essence, we toured on to Ypres to be in place to appreciate the Menin Gate Ceremony which is still conducted by the Fire

Service there at 8pm every evening. While at the Menin Gate our guide stated that of all the times he has seen the service, not once has it been the same! That evening's service was started off by pipe bands from Ulster, then the Last Post was played by the buglers. Culminating with a soldier playing *Amazing Grace* on the bagpipes. The Menin Gate was packed with visitors, witnessing a really emotional ceremony.

## Day Three



*Maj G Stevenson sounds the whistle, going 'over the top'*

On 1 July 1916, the day of the Battle of the Somme began. The Sqn assembled at a French war memorial, in the town of St Quantan, at 0715hrs to pay tribute to the start of the battle. Two minutes silence was then observed under **WO2 (SSM) Les Gamble** formed up in front of the memorial and at 0728 the OC Squadron, **Maj Gordy Stevenson** blew a whistle to signal the commencement of the commemoration. A short service was conducted by our tour guide in the absence of a padre, then **WO2 Gamble** then laid a poppy wreath on behalf of the Sqn.

We then made our way to the Ulster Tower near Thiepval wood to take part in the main Northern Ireland official commemoration. The service started with the arrival of the VVIPs, **HRH the Prince of Wales** and **HRH the Duchess of Cornwall**. Several dignitaries from Northern Ireland were in attendance including the Secretary of State for **Theresa Villers** MP and First Minister **Arlene Foster** MP. The Archbishop Of Canterbury led the service and there was some dulcet tones coming from **SPSI SSgt Ian Robson**, pity he was singing the wrong verse to everyone else as the television camera passed him. The weather was inclement to say the least and thanks

to the plastic bags that the lunch came in, **SSgt Lindsay** managed to get his over his head to keep dry. The purchasing of several **IBIS** umbrellas also helped but he decided to adapt and overcome. There was a ceremony where **LCpl Darren Browne** laid the Sqn wreath and **Sgt Ros Colhoun** laid a wreath on behalf of the North Irish Horse. The event was rounded off with the Sqn photo taken in front of the Ulster Tower to commemorate this momentous occasion.



*The members of 40 Sig Sqn gather at Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth grave in the world*



*The members of 40 Sig Sqn gather at the Battle of the Somme centenary event*

#### Day Four

On the final day of our tour, we set off towards the village of Serre, which was one of the most strongly fortified locations held by the Germans at the beginning of the Battle of the Somme.

The walk up to the cemetery was drenched with mud, much like it would have been in 1916. **SSgt Lindsay** showed us all why those soldiers never wore flip-flops to battle by slipping head over heels and covering his clothes, life, pride and dignity in mud.

The area of Serre is closely linked with the efforts of the Northern 'PALS' battalions who suffered very heavy losses in the attacks made here. The PALS battalions were formed in specific towns and cities, so many of those who enlisted were friends, colleagues or relations. The idea was that by enlisting together they would stay together and fight together during their service. The Somme offensive meant that many of them died together.

It was a sobering thought to realise the devastation which the 1 July caused to the PALS communities back home. Most fell within the first hundred yards of 'No Mans Land', yet there was no wavering or attempting to retreat. The bravery displayed was truly inspiring and 40 (NIH) Sig Sqn proudly placed a wreath of remembrance in their cemetery.

Our next stop was Sucrierie cemetery, which is the resting place of **Rfn Williamson**, the youngest Ulsterman to have died in the Great War. Belfast-born **Samuel Williamson** of the 36<sup>th</sup> Ulster Division joined the Army aged just 14 before he was ambushed and killed by a large German patrol when he was only 16. Granted, there was a huge scramble for troops in WW1, but I found it remarkable that Britain could let thousands of young men like **Samuel** fight on the front line when the legal limit for armed service overseas was 19.

Throughout the day, we visited more cemeteries and learned the stories of soldiers who never made it back. Amongst them are father and son **George** and **Robert Lee**, who died together in 1916. We also paid our respects to **James Miller**, a Victoria Cross recipient who upon being shot through the stomach, delivered a vital message and returned with the answer before dying. His story reminded us of the very real problems with communication in the Great War.

#### 50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N Coatsworth MBE**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D Ross**

**Employer Engagement Evening - 16 July**  
- by **WO2 (SSM) Dave Ross**

On the evening of Saturday 16 July, 50 Sig Sqn hosted an Employer Engagement Reception and Dinner to thank our soldiers' employers for their support and encourage the employment of Reservists amongst other organisations. After weeks of meticulous planning **SSgt (SQMS) Jon Kielty** and **Sgt Graham Belt** were let loose and began putting together capability demonstrations in readiness for the guests' arrival. Flying a gazebo like a kite, as it turns out, is a capability none of us knew we had until that day. Fortunately **Sig Alex Ayre** is well-versed in the art of rounding up SNCOs and somehow managed to restore calm to the situation and the event was well established in plenty of time for our guests arrival.

With a camouflaged Bowman det escaping the caretaker's pruning shears by the narrowest of margins, a ration demonstration that only just survived contact with the guests during pre-dinner drinks and a tour of the Ops Room and Military Training environment; there was plenty for our guests to see and they certainly enjoyed being shown around.

In no time at all, the Royal Signals Northern Band Bugler sounded the ten minute call to dinner and soon we were all sat enjoying the fine cuisine prepared by the Master Chef, **WO2 Steven Tinney** and his team. The eclectic mix of guests meant there were some interesting conversations taking place, none more so than listening to the local Police Superintendent describe how a murder scene is handled. Rather worryingly one or two spouses appeared to be paying rather too much attention to the detail surrounding the disposal of bodies. The evening was rounded off by the OC **Maj Neil Coatsworth MBE**, delivering his key-note speech and the excellent Royal Signals Northern Band playing a final selection of traditional 'toe tapping' tunes, including the Post Horn Gallop, of course.



*OC 50 Sqn Major Neil Coatsworth MBE presents a Regt Plaque to 'His Worship, The Mayor of Darlington' and his Good Lady*

His Worship, The Mayor of Darlington and his wife were the first to leave, declaring that they had both enjoyed an outstanding evening. This view was echoed by other guests as they departed, many asking when the next event would be held and all promising their continued support. Roll on the next one; I hope I am around for it as my wife seemed very interested in what the Superintendent had to say.

**Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge - 17 June 2016 - by Sig J Duncanson**

On the morning of 18 June, some foolhardy members of 50 Sig Sqn unzipped their tents, yawned, stretched, put on their hiking boots, ate a sausage and bacon sandwich and headed off to take on the Yorkshire 3 Peaks challenge. From the campsite at Horton in Ribblesdale, our chefs **Sgts Maurice Johnson, Mark Adams and Pte 'Smudge' Smith** waved us off and went back to bed, claiming they were worn out from cooking breakfast. The chosen few meanwhile, at around 0600 hrs took the first of many thousands of steps towards their first peak – Pen-y-Ghent.



*SSgt's Sean Sweeney and Stu Jones stand proudly in front of the improvised shelter they have just built in the wilds of Yorkshire*

Teams had been split into ability groups with our 'mountain goats' accepting the OC's challenge of completing the 24 miles in under 8 hours and the remainder looking to complete the challenge in under the traditional 12 hour target.

Thankfully, the weather was perfect for the walk, cloudy with patches of sun.

The 'goats' set out towards Pen-y-Ghent in good spirits taking about 1hr to reach the first peak, shortly after arriving however, we were joined by the OC, **Maj Neil Coatsworth**, who had started with the second group but decided to jog up to the top, adopt a cheesy grin face and ask us why we had taken so long to get there. After leaving peak one, a couple of us began to realise life in the fast lane was not all it was cracked up to be and decided to opt for a more leisurely pace with the remainder of our colleagues. Ignoring all references to the "Retreat From Moscow" the descent of Pen-y-Ghent and 10 mile trek to Whernside began and everyone remained in good spirits.

The 'mountain goats' had reached Whernside peak within their projected time limit and were yet again flabbergasted to discover that the OC appeared shortly afterwards, this time with **LCpl Kyle Robson** in tow. Apparently **LCpl Robson** had wanted to depart with the 'goats' but munching an extra sausage sandwich had meant he missed the departure gate. The 'goats' now had a new member.

It was around this time that **LCpl 'Bruce' Forsyth** and myself began to struggle with the pace; I was suffering with cramp in both thighs and **Bruce** just has very short legs. Needless to say, in true 'Top Gear' fashion the 'goat's left us in their wake so we decided to enjoy our packed lunches at the top of Whernside before setting out again for the final peak – Ingleborough. If our calculations were correct, it was still possible for us to meet the 8 hour target, so with renewed vigour we set out for the base of Ingleborough only to be greeted by a view reminiscent of the wall in 'Game of Thrones' – a huge seemingly endless wall of rock that disappeared into the clouds. We looked for oxygen tanks but there were none, we looked for ropes and crampons but there were none – we were on our own..... so up we went.

Our small group finally made it back to Horton-in-Ribblesdale having completed the route in 8 hrs and 20 mins, the 'goats' finished somewhat quicker. Congratulations must therefore go to **Capt Ian Flannery, SSgt Dave Graham, SSgt Patto Paterson, LCpl Kyle Robson, Sig Phil Golden and Sig Alex Ayre**. Congratulations also go to the remainder of the Sqn; everyone managed to complete the distance in under 12 hours. Last but not least, thanks also go to **SSgt Guy Bufton, SSgt Sean Sweeney and Lt Mark Jolley** for organising the whole event – please don't do it again.



**37th SIGNAL REGIMENT  
REDDITCH**



CO **Lt Col T J Downes**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Morrison**

June and July have been exceptionally busy for the Regt on all fronts, from military exercises, training and International Exchanges, through to Airshows and charity bike rides. **Maj Gen T R Urch CBE**, General Officer Commanding Force Troops Command (FTC) visited the Regt on 26 July and presented 6 VRSMs, 1 D Pers Admin and 7 GOC Commendations to members of the Regiment that had been awarded over the past 6 months.

Congratulations to all recipients and thanks to family members for their support.



*GOC presenting a Certificate of Meritorious Service award to WO2 Reynolds (ROSWO)*



*GOC addressing members of the Regt and family members, with recipients in the background*

One of the main focuses for the Regt in this period has been the culmination of Exercise WINGED LION, a 388 mile cyclothon, that saw the CO, RSM and a group of 7 other riders (including Reserves, Regulars, FTRS and Civilian staff), complete a Tour of 37 Sig Regt Army Reserve Centres during an 8 day period (19-26 July 16); improving fitness, supporting recruiting and civil engagement activity, whilst also raising money for the RSBF and local charities at the same time.

The event was extremely successful overall and the team cycled over 380 miles, climbed 13744ft (including a demanding cross Pennines route that took in part of the Tour de France route), participated in a variety of Sqn challenges and visited a number of prominent sites along the way, finishing at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA).



*Exercise Winged Lion crossing the Pennines*

In summary, the exercise raised over £7000 for charity, conducted 4 Civic Engagement Receptions at the Sqn HQs, completed 20 recruiting/CE events and raised the profile of the Regt across the AO including our social media presence - Visit our Facebook site or follow us on Twitter @37SigRegt for more great pictures and updates.



*Ex Winged Lion Team and Presentation of the RSBF Cheque at the NMA*

## The Spanish Peninsular Wars – The Salamanca Battlefield Study 1 – 4 July 2016 - by Capt Adrian Moran, 33 Sig Sqn

I too always had a wry smile on my face when I heard of members of the armed forces going on “Battlefield Tours”! so it was rather disconcerting to see the very same smiles from friends and colleagues when trying to explain the value of “this” particular battlefield tour that my fellow 33 Sig Sqn colleagues **Cpl McGarry**, **Cpl Hardy** and I, were fortunate to have been selected to attend.

The fact is, until you have been on such an experience you really cannot provide a sufficiently robust argument to the challenges from individuals who have pre-conceived ideas that such trips are “Jollies”. The funny thing is, in many ways they are right, because this battlefield tour was truly interesting and jolly great fun, providing all 23 members of the group with military historical knowledge, great memories and of course stories to share.



*Uniform from the Peninsular Wars*

If you have ever listened to a real story teller or any provider of information, you may well have asked yourself how they managed to hold your attention? An individual who with both words and movement, bring events to life. My personal thoughts are that the art of conveying a good story or piece of history, is in the detail and the belief that the story teller was actually “there”!

To be actually “there”, as we know from the importance the army places on “recces”, is second to none, and provides a much more detailed overview that cannot be conveyed in draft. Being “there” allows depth and richness of detail in both orders and subsequent questions from an audience. Being “there”, makes you at one with the story or the intent you are conveying!

The recipe of historical facts mixed with the ingredient of anecdotal stories from you and colleagues, provide all who attend such tours, the rare opportunity to sit down with fellow soldiers, friends or family and to gift them the opportunity to relive historical moments that provided pivotal historical outcomes effecting millions of lives; possibly preventing unimaginable alternative outcomes.

History shows us that it has the nature to repeat itself, so if battlefield tours can be informative, thought provoking and provide wisdom as well as being fun, then “yes”, they may well be seen by all as “jollies”, but hopefully also seen as “JOLLIE” good value and investment in our training programme and soldiers career development. I urge all to experience such a jolly and challenge you to tell me different.



### 37 Sig Regt on the Salamanca Battlefield Study

So in short - The Spanish Peninsular Wars demonstrate:

**French Perspective** - Why you should not upset your Spanish friends providing you with strength in depth, by replacing their king with your own brother! Such an action is likely to lose such friends and for them to seek new alliances with their once foes; thereby leaving you over exposed on a number of fronts.

**British Perspective** – To ensure its overall objective of naval domination is maintained allowing wealth and power of its empire to continue to grow. Demonstrating ongoing commitment and defensive support to the historical strategic Portuguese military alliance; thereby preventing its enemies (France/Spain) access to the large Portuguese fleet and so deny France the opportunity to strengthen its depleted naval capability (following Battle of Trafalgar). Also a demonstration on how to take military advantage of the French betrayal of their Spanish friends, to forge a new, though somewhat shaky, military alliance.

### 54 (QOWWY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Dewfall**  
SSM **SSgt P Hall**

#### Exercise ICE FIX - by Maj Sandy Hennis

Ex ICE MAIDEN is an all female British Army team aiming to cross the Antarctic landmass via the South Pole in November 2017. There are currently 12 females from across the Army both Regular and Reserve who are training for one of the 5 places on the main team. As well as their own training, the Ice Maidens meet up once a month for essential training and team building. The June training weekend was held in Yeovil and covered essential skills for living in the Antarctic such as tent repairs and maintenance and use of stoves. An Ice Maiden training weekend would not be complete without plenty of PT and this one did not disappoint.

Arriving by 2100hrs, I had time for a catch up with the other team members before getting into our three man tents for a good sleep prior to a 0700hrs circuit session. Waking to wet miserable weather made no difference to the program and we were soon drenched and covered in mud as we did round after round of burpees, sit ups and numerous other evil exercises on the grass. An hour and half later, once power bags had been lifted, lunged and pushed, it was time for a quick shower and a large fry up before starting lessons.

In Antarctica, your small humble stove is more than just a way to get a morning coffee. The stove is your only source of heat to warm the tent when toes and fingers have frozen in temperatures as low as -80°C. It's heat also melts snow to provide the only source of water used to drink and rehydrate lightweight food. It is essential that it works properly so we not only practiced filling and lighting it but also practiced stripping it to component parts, cleaning it and replacing seals. Tent repairs were also a big focus as without the shelter of a tent, team members will soon succumb to the cold in strong Antarctic winds. After research into the bonding properties of different glues and tapes at very cold temperatures, we practiced repairing poles. Not a hard task sat in sunny Yeovil but a different matter in thick mittens with howling winds!

The afternoon was spent on Weymouth sea front, the only place we could find somewhere flat enough to practice roller skiing. Yes this does exist! With the lack of snow in UK we need to find other ways to practice and improve skiing techniques. Nordic ski boots are clipped into short skis with wheels at both ends. A very strange concept at first which didn't feel anything like being on skis, especially as I was melting in shorts and T-Shirt. However, we soon had the hang of it and progressed to roller skiing whilst pulling tyres.



*Maj Sandy Hennis and Pte Rin Cobb RAMC get to grips with roller skiing in Weymouth!*

This simulates the pulks (small sledges) we will pull on the expedition; although a completely normal concept to the girls, the local population of Weymouth were understandably bemused by our activities and we spent rest periods explaining to curious passers-by that we weren't actually insane. After all this exercise, the sea looked very inviting but looks can be deceiving! Executing a spectacular balancing act to change into swim suit whilst holding a small towel, I ran to the sea expecting warm southern waters. The reality was much colder although not quite as bad as ice breaking drill in Norway! Returning back to our tent base in Yeovil after our ice baths, we had a relaxing evening and the rain held off long enough for a protein rich BBQ.

The following day started with a stretching and body balance session to help tired muscles recover from the previous day. Lessons for today centered around Satellite phones and discussions on power requirements. With 24 hr sun shine, solar panels are the only option on the expedition, but any electronic equipment will suffer in such harsh conditions and cold temperatures, so careful consideration needs to be given to what type we use. We had a brief pause from lessons for a



photo shoot to say Happy Birthday to Her Majesty the Queen, before the final task of the weekend. This was an in depth brief on the Saunders Mountain Marathon, our next training event in 3 weeks time. The Ice Maiden team will be competing in the two day endurance event as two man teams, carrying all our camping equipment and food as we navigate over the difficult Lake District terrain. For many of us this will be our first multi day endurance race so there were lots of questions on what equipment to take and how to pack it so we can still run. Watch this space for how we get on.

### 33 (Lancashire) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC        **Maj A Bowdler**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) Jolliffe**

#### **Trailwalker 2016** - by *SSgt Myers*

The very thought of running two and half marathons back to back over rolling hills would leave most sane people cowering in a corner. For some however, this was seen as an achievable challenge; either that or a ridiculously bad idea to escape for a few days!

Over the weekend 22-24 July four members of the Regt came together to form Team Winged Lion, 37 Sig Regt entry into this year's arduous 100km Trailwalker event, held over the South Downs Way. Led by the Regimental Foreman **WO2 (FoS) Ishwor Gurung** the team, additionally made up of **WO2 (SSM) Suresh Gurung**, **SSgt (SPSI) Gaz Myers** and **Sgt Anton Kenny**, had gone through months of intensive training, preparation and fund raising to ensure they were raring to go.

With an early start time of 0600hrs on the Saturday, the team travelled down the day before to ensure registration and gain some much needed rest prior to stepping off. Under the direction of their two man support crew of **Cpl Ritchie Murphy** and **Cpl Dave Makin**, the minibus left Liverpool shortly after midday. After a couple of pickups en route and some epic traffic issues, the team arrived at Queen Elizabeth Country Park to register late on Friday evening. Despite the time, the registration area was a hive of activity, with military and civilian teams from across the UK greeted by crowds of over excitable Oxfam volunteers and the uplifting sounds of the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas. Once through the registration process the team enjoyed some complimentary pasta Bolognese, before making their way back to the minibus to make the short journey to their overnight accommodation in Fort Blockhouse.

An early start the following morning did nothing to boost morale as the realisation of what the team was about to do set in. A wholesome cooked breakfast an hour before the start time did manage to raise a few smiles though. No sooner had the team reached the start line than the siren had gone off. Unfortunately at this point **SSM Gurung** was still in the portalo! Eventually the group did get away and immediately tackled the first hill. Although the game plan prior to the event was to walk up hills, the first hill was tackled at pace to ensure we passed as many teams as possible to open up the route ahead. By the time we arrived at CP1, roughly 10km's in, the team found itself ranked well in the Top 10 teams. This good form continued through to CP2 and CP3 so much so that the team barely stopped at each one; quickly grabbing water and nourishment before rolling on to the next one. Eventually, at CP4 they decided to have a short rest period although this decision may have been swayed by **Cpl Murphy** greeting them with freshly prepared

pot noodles. By now Team Winged Lion had covered almost 40km of the route but unbeknown at the time, this would be the last time they would see the support crew.

On leaving CP4 the team travelled less than a Km before they were greeted by a steep 200m climb. Not ideal after a prolonged stop, however, the team pushed on and reached CP5 by midday. They were now halfway, 50km down in 6hrs and cruising in a fantastic 7<sup>th</sup> place. A feat made even more remarkable by the fact they seemingly stopped every 40 yards to let **FoS Gurung** to take photographs! From this point onwards however things would take a turn for the worse. On arrival at CP5 the support crew were nowhere to be seen. Assuming they had become geographically challenged the team pushed on to CP6. It was between these two CP's that **SSM Gurung** had a recurrence of an old knee injury. Initially, the pace never really dipped and he was hopeful his knee brace, held on the support crew vehicle, would ensure the issue wouldn't get any worse. Once at CP6 though, there was again no sign of the support crew! Whilst there, **Sgt Kenny** received a phone call from **Cpl Murphy** informing him that their vehicle had broken down shortly after CP4. Despite the setback, the guys were determined to finish and pushed on although the pace now restricted to a mere walk.

Shortly before CP7 things took another turn for the worse as **SSgt Myers** rolled his left foot over a rock and suffered a ruptured tendon. With half the team now limping, our arrival at CP7 must have proved comical for the crowds amassed to welcome them in; however they were greeted like heroes and handed multiple "hi 5's" from Oxfam workers sporting giant foam hands. This CP proved to be a massive morale boost as it provided a prolonged rest period and allowed time to enjoy another complimentary meal, this time in the form of a chilli pasta dish. At the same time both **FoS Gurung** and **SSM Gurung** used their native tongue to pull in favours from their Gurkha colleagues, gaining additional supplies of fruit and water to keep us going. We left CP7 in pain but with a renewed sense of vigour. The short route to CP8 went by quite smoothly although the need for vaseline in certain areas of the body was clearly evident! Luckily, the Gurkha marshals at CP8 pulled through and managed to acquire a tub that the team could grease their reddening parts with.



*37 Sig Regt Ex Trailwalker Team*

At 13.8km, CP8 to CP9 was by far the longest stage of the whole event and with over 200m of ascent, it was a real test. It was at this point that **Sgt Kenny** may have even finally broke into a sweat! The stage was made even more difficult by the fact that they could see Brighton and the finish line in the distance for the majority of the leg. Like all the CP's before it, CP9 was a mass of activity, but this one was by far the most vibrant. The whole area had been turned into a

scene from the Himalayas with the CP resembling a Nepalese Village. The team were again welcomed in by cheers, clapping, fist pumps and even a Gurkha piper. Under the realisation that they had less than 10km to go the team passed straight through the CP without stopping. The final leg of the route saw a further two ascents, each of around 100m with the remaining 10km split with a water stop halfway. The team trudged along the last part of the South Downs Way before moving into the suburbs of Brighton itself.

The daylight now dwindling away, Team Winged Lion focussed on the brightly lit floodlights of the famous old Racecourse that would see them complete the epic route. Once on the racecourse, the common consensus was such that, despite the pain, they would conduct a sprint finish and run over the finish line. After a little argument over which furlong marker post this sprint would begin at, the team "sprinted" in to be greeted by crowds of cheering people. More importantly they were reunited with the support crew they hadn't seen for over 60km!!!! Once over the line, the team were placed onto a podium to be presented with their well-earned medals, before retiring into the stadium for an even more well-earned curry and a beer. A final time of 15hrs 33mins and a creditable 19<sup>th</sup> position overall, despite all the issues encountered, this proved a great achievement and one which the team are keen to improve upon next year. The journey North soon followed with sleep being the chosen method of pain relief!

#### **Cpl Dom Seery, 37 Sig Regt -Army Reserve Football**

Army Footballer, Social Care Worker, Reservist Systems Operator, **Cpl Dom Seery** from 37 Sig Regt has to balance his demanding civilian role with service to his community as a local soldier. Despite this he has found time to take advantage of some of the opportunities of Reserve Service. In May he was one of 16 footballers to be selected for the Army's recent Reserve Representative Football Team's Cyprus Tour.



*Cpl Seery Army Reserve Football Tour - Cyprus*

**Cpl Seery**, who now serves with 37 Sig Regt based in Liverpool, joined the Army Reserve and was eventually recommended to take part in trials for the Representative side where he has represented the Army Reserve at football for eight of his seventeen years' service. The chance to attend the tour in Cyprus was one he did not want to miss as **Cpl Seery** has decided to retire from the Representative Team at the end of this season, saying "It's been great to be involved with the setup for the last eight years, and I have decided it's time to concentrate on playing for my unit and the Royal

Signals Corps side", he added "Over the time I have played there have been some great players but the current squad is the strongest I have been involved with".

During the week-long tour, the team were involved in three very challenging fixtures playing the RAF, Army and Combined Services Cyprus. In the match against the Army Cyprus side, **Cpl Seery** dominated the left hand side of the pitch. He was solid in defending and also provided many pinpoint crosses and supporting play that started many of the attacks. The game finished 4:2 to the Army Reserve and **Cpl Seery's** performance was called out as one of his best.

In June he will be part of the Armed Forces Day celebrations when the Army Reserve Men's and Army Reserve Women's teams kick off the week with matches against Cleethorpes Town; the town will be the centre of the National event in 2016.

**Army Reserve Football** - Football continues to be the largest participation sport in the Army Reserve. Over 30 units competed in the Challenge Cup which was first won in 1923, the current holders are 71 Engr Regt. In the summer the sixes competition, now in its third year, there are both a men's and women's representative team that are made up from the best football players from units across the UK. For more information on Army Reserve Football please contact the Secretary Army Reserve Football, **Maj Steve Clout**, [ResFootball@ascb.uk.com](mailto:ResFootball@ascb.uk.com)

#### **48 (CITY OF BIRMINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC      **Maj S Cherry**  
SSM     **WO2 (SSM) Fowler**

#### **Support to the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT)**

*- by Sgt Eileen Monaghan*

Following in the very big footsteps of **Maj Dave Fraley** TOT (Retd) and **Capt Adrian Sharman** (Retd) who had both run Exercise RED ARROW for many years, this was my 7<sup>th</sup> expedition to RIAT!!! Call me crazy, but I actually do enjoy it, but this year saw me leading the military team to work alongside a civilian team in installing the Comms at the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT); which is the biggest military Airshow in the world.

Both retired officers were now civilians but still very much involved in the Comms for the RAF Charitable Trust. Along with a team of 11 soldiers from across 37SR and one from 32SR, I delegated personnel for tasks, ready for the commencement of the installation of both Telephony and IT alongside the civilian team. This all needed to be completed and tested by the Thursday morning ready for Ex WINGED WARRIOR which would, when completed successfully, allow the Airshow its licence to operate over the period of 10-12 July. Overall the ex went very smoothly and with much praise from their civilian counterparts for everyone's professionalism and commitment to completing the task. Below are some of the accounts from soldiers supporting RIAT this year.

**LCpl Webster, 64 Sqn:** Working with civilian telecoms experts, staffing a Comm Centre, co-operating with the RAF, seeing the latest cutting-edge military technology ... for all this, there are few opportunities better than RIAT. A group of 11 reservists from 37 Sig Regt plus one regular staff instructor from 32 Sig Regt assisted at this year's RIAT in RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire, from 2-13 July. Leading the inexperienced

team was **Sgt Eileen Monaghan**, who had in-depth knowledge of the RIAT requirements.



*Visit to RIAT by Maj Gen Crackett*

The RIAT organisers, many ex-military, told us they welcome an Army contribution to their high-profile event. Messages are passed quickly and accurately (as per the Corps motto, *Certa Cito*) and there is a uniformed military presence in case of emergencies. RIAT has run since 1971 and become a premier Airshow in the UK. Attendance in 2016 topped 150,000, with all the tickets sold out. Amongst the VIP visitors were the **Duke and Duchess of Cambridge** and **Prince George**. Tasks were diverse; **Sgt Don Hammett** from Nottingham Troop ran an efficient logistical operation distributing 876 Motorola radios to event staff (military and civilian). His team also fitted out VHF radios to seven Landover defenders (the follow me vehicles for aircraft on the runway), thereby converting them to FFRs. The only unfortunate incident was when the team 2IC, **Cpl Scott Guymer**, sat down on a plastic crate and promptly fell through the lid!

The 'Badger Team' was led by **Sgt Tony Hadley**. His team, made up of **LCpls Birmingham, Kelly, Myzak, Roberts** and **Webster**, who set up communication nodes in key points around the airfield, linked by line-of-sight SHF dishes. This ensured Wi-fi connectivity for ticketing, merchandising and public use at various locations across the airfield. Meanwhile **Cpl Beasley-Wood** and **Sig Rahilly** helped to install telephony in the Comms centre including the Emergency Control Centre (ECC) which was a Silver Command at the MOD Police Station for Gloucestershire Police and quite a complicated task.



*Manning the RIAT Control Centre*

When the show opened to the public, we manned two Comm centres: SOC (the Show Operation Centre) and the Flight Centre (a mini airport dealing with pilots, arrivals and departures). As the messages flowed in, we got a good overview of all the happenings in a major public event,

including medical emergencies, lost children, reports of suspicious packages and vehicle accidents. In charge was **SSgt Mark Lane (SPSI)** from 32 Sig Regt, who impressed the team by getting his photo taken with **Carol Vorderman!** Fairford has one of the longest runways in the UK and is ideal for showcasing the latest aircraft, big and small. This year saw the debut performance of the F35 Lightning II, which will become the UK's top air superiority fighter, operating from the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers. The F35 was incredibly agile, able to take off vertically, hover and manoeuvre with precision. Also shown was the USAF F22 Raptor, another advanced stealth fighter, which was under 24-hour guard. Display teams from Croatia, Italy and the UK's Red Arrows delighted the crowds. Heritage aircraft were also on display, from early biplanes to a spitfire and sea hurricane.

RIAT was diverse, at times demanding, but also fun event. It was a real test of our skills. From the start, we were made to feel welcome. Above all, we felt honoured to play our small part in making this hugely impressive event a success.

**LCpl Birmingham 33 Sqn:** Exercise RED ARROW saw us deploy to RAF Fairford. The main role while we were there was to work in a mixed Civilian and Military environment. We set up and maintained the Badger Units which enables Wi-Fi and phone communications in various locations on the airfield for the Airshow, from the Lockheed Martin Stand to the Media Tent and so on. Once that was complete I then moved into SOC (Show Operations Centre), which was dealing with any emergencies on the Airfield to various phone calls and even dealing with not so impressed locals about the noise around the airfield!!! On the teardown phase I was located in the South Tower which dealt with any issues on the IT and Comms, ensuring everything would be good to go for the following years display. This teardown was pretty rapid from the Monday morning to the Tuesday evening in readiness for us to head home on the Wednesday. This was an enjoyable experience in a different environment and well recommended to anyone to do it next year.

#### 64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj McHenry**  
SSM **WO2(SSM) Howes**

**Update - by WO2 (SSM) Howes**



*Sig Casey meets the Inspecting Officer*

A couple of days ago the sqn had another soldier, **Sig Stuart Casey**, proudly complete his CMS (RES) Phase 1(B) Consolidated Pass Off Parade. Alas, due to circumstances and commitments elsewhere (more on Ex Winged Lion in this issue I'm sure) neither myself nor the OC were able to attend. However, that's not to say the sqn wasn't represented; **LCpl Graeme Casey** was on hand in Grantham to watch his little

brother pass off and welcome his family into the wider Corps family. Congratulations and welcome to the sqn, **Casey** the younger.

At the other end of the experience scale, a welcome is also extended to **Sgt Jim Burnham**, fresh from his 22 years with the Corps. That will come in handy at 887 (Nottingham) Troop whose ex-Regular contingent seems to grow with each passing year.

#### UK/US Exchange 2-18 Jun 16 - by Cpl Vince Fountain

I was lucky enough to be selected to take part in the UK/US Exchange programme for 2016/17 and last month I travelled to join Charlie (Signals) Company of 173 Brigade Engineer Battalion for their Annual Training exercise which equates to our Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE). After a journey lasting a few days with my travelling buddy, **Sgt Harinder Gurung** - 39 Sig Regt (and a few stop offs at the United Service Organisation lounges) via London, Washington, Baltimore and Chicago, we finally landed at LaCrosse airport in Wisconsin where we were met by a contingent from the Brigade who took us to the FOB at Fort McCoy (via a Walmart/Asda for supplies), where we would call home for the next two weeks.

It took a few days for the ex to swing into action and be set up properly but once it was, it was pretty impressive. A lot of the kit was similar to ours but on a much grander scale. The FOB had air conditioned tents with proper mattresses, beds and lockers, there were toilets, sinks and showers, a medical clinic, a PX shop, a really good cookhouse, an omelette wagon and even a burger van! The actual Fort was only a short drive away as well, so as if all that wasn't enough, troops were doing daily runs for further supplies. I thought I'd be popular and take cold drinks and stickies out to the outstations I visited (as the temperature was in the high 40's), but they were all fully stocked with cool boxes and fridges and they were just happy someone was visiting them anyhow.

I dipped in and out of the Brigade Ex as **Sgt Dillon Lang** (my 'handler' for the two weeks) took me out a few times in the first week to conduct a range package which included the M4, M9, M590, M249 (SAW), M240 mmg, the Browning .50 cal machine gun and UGL's. I even got to learn how to load and fire their artillery's Howitzers. Like me, **Sgt Lang** works at his unit during the week and he took me up to see his state of the art base in Wassau and explained his typical week. This was followed by a 'Fish Fry'... basically Fish 'n' Chips! The next morning we went for a walk in the Rib Mountain National Park to see if we could spot any bears, but none were to be found! Later that week I was fortunate enough to take part in some Humvee rollover training. I had been waiting to get my hands on one and **Sgt Lang** obliged, taking me out for some driver training to see what they could do. Slightly slower than our Land Rovers but still a pretty good machine cross country.

The Brigade Commander requested I give a PowerPoint presentation towards the end of the first week on the

perceptions, differences and similarities between our forces. This was to be a short 15 minute interest piece, but with a packed house and questions it ran to well over an hour; whereas my voice could normally send most to sleep in that time, the Americans were fascinated by my accent. So much so that other units were requesting I go and give a talk for them, which I happily did as the big tents and buildings had the best air-con.

During the second week I was invited to go and watch a demolitions display but once I turned up they gave me a load of C4, demolition cord, a detonator and the formulae for calculating how much explosive to use, before letting me crack on blowing stuff up! They also demonstrated how to make homemade bombs from coffee cans and old tins which had varying degrees of success.



Laying a charge. DEFINITELY do not try this at home I was told...

All of the UK and German Exchange soldiers were rounded up from the ex and taken to sample a baseball game one afternoon. The local team was the Milwaukee Brewers (formerly Braves) who had not been doing too well. They

were playing the New York Mets and the atmosphere was amazing as the Brewers unexpectedly won the game. Although at one point it got quite surreal as they paused the match in-between innings to allow six people dressed as sausages from around the world to have a race around the stadium! I noticed afterwards, in the foyer, you could actually buy replica shirts of the sausages... what?! It was nice to break up the long hot days on ex in full body armour and

helmet with these little excursions. My final trip out was to see the State Capital of Madison. It was nice to put some shorts on and have a leisurely day sightseeing around the city, its state capital building and one of the local museums.

Every evening in the FOB I was invited to take part in their Company Leaders meeting and give a brief on what I had done during the day; as well as give them a chuckle by inserting some "Britishness" into the proceedings such as



Humvee training with Sgt Dillon Lang USNG

how I was there to reclaim America for the Crown! They were pretty tempted to switch, just so they could roll their sleeves up before 1800hrs and wear a stable belt (which they were all obsessed with, I think it's because they're shiny!). When the ex came to an end, we travelled up to their base at Camp Douglas to carry out cleaning and maintenance, prior to getting ready for their end of ex 'enforced fun'; I was told it would be a boring 'two can rule' type of affair. However, when we rounded the corner to the place it was held I was quite taken aback. The venue was a ski lodge with a few large balconies and grassed areas to the front. Everyone was out playing Volleyball, football (ours and theirs), Tug of War or just generally chilling in the sun. The kegs of beer kept flowing and there was a big BBQ and grill on to satisfy our hunger. I partook in a game of barefoot football with my mixed team soundly beating the all American team (although our best player was American), but sadly we were just edged in a contest of tug of war. It was a pretty perfect afternoon and it was good to get to know the rest of Charlie Company better as well as meet pretty much all of Wisconsin it seemed.



*Cpl Fountain, Sgt Lang USNG, Sgt Dekker USNG and Sgt Alderson AGC*

The next day was their Brigade Change of Command ceremony at Fort McCoy and I was honoured to be the only foreign national to be invited along to participate. I found their drill really easy, but gave our own salute when the time was right, rather than theirs. I must have stood out like a sore thumb with my sleeves rolled up, shirt tucked in, stable belt on, ironed uniform, polished boots and a beret in complete contrast to the US soldiers. It was then back to Camp Douglas to say my goodbyes and thank all of Charlie Company for making me feel so welcome, whereupon they again asked me to join the company and get my US citizenship. I felt very at home with them and Wisconsin (which is basically like Yorkshire but with bears) but politely declined. I promised to return and visit again one day thinking to myself the US is pretty great, but so is the UK. It brought me back to a quote I always remember, 'To be born an Englishman is to win first prize in the lottery of life'. Hasta la vista USA, I'll be back...

### **Exercise HORSESHOE HAWK 01-03 July 2016**

*- by Sgt Nick James*

Just as the end credits ran on the Somme Memorial on BBC Breakfast, we received the call to stand up for Ex HORSESHOE HAWK. This call was part of an incident response exercise for our RHQ at Redditch. Apparently a marauding group had attacked Birmingham Airport and other parts of that fine city. We agreed a convenient time of 1930hrs to tip up to our ARC in Sheffield; a little bit of excitement after a long uneventful day of civilian employment. I noted the complete media blackout regarding things happening in Birmingham; however Defence Connect (DC) was alive with rumours and supposition!

I arrived slightly later than planned, which necessitated a superman style change into uniform. That done we loaded up and headed south to a traumatized Midlands. On the day that a hundred years prior had seen Welsh soldiers march out to face the guns in Mametz Wood in the defence of Belgium, it was quite ironic to listen on the radio, to their descendants now firing shots and attacking that very nation, all be it this time with a football in the 2016 Euros.

On Arrival at RHQ we were given a small space of garage to set up and pacex the equipment in. We also had to hand in all sorts of information from serial numbers to blood groups, despite having done all this on the previous Tuesday with **WO2 Kev Tharby MBE**; he must have amazing powers of telepathy to know these details would be needed! It was good practice so we were told. To complicate matters, Dii appeared to be like the rest of the normal world... it had knocked off for the day. Still, we carried out all the required tasks and went to get our heads down in our allocated area. Despite the late arrival of the "camp bed drop and erect team", we did get some sleep that night... eventually.

Saturday morning breakfast was provided by a serving hatch optical illusion of the headless **Master Chef WO2 Paul Holland RLC** assisted by the diminutive **Sgt Karren Dilly RLC** (We suspect she was stood on a box to see over the counter). After breakfast we were called into a briefing as things had escalated in the scenario. This meant that we had to move to Swynnerton Training Area and meet our Staff users.

After an hour and a half's drive we reached Swynnerton and found the camp staff helpful. Not so helpful was that our assigned area had been taken over by another unit who, blissfully unaware of our raging scenario, were running a PNCO course and were in no mood for our banging of vehicle doors and the addition of trailing of cables all over the place. We therefore established ourselves in a different building of opportunity and began our Persreps and Locstats, as we had for real during Op Shaku during the Christmas floods six months ago. Our calm and serenity was soon shattered by the arrival of **LCpl Michael Morley** and CST B who we promptly established in a different room as far away as possible – if you've ever heard him whilst he's asleep you'll know why. Around lunchtime it became clear that CST B was having a few teething issues. After a little direction they found life easier and established Comms. **LCpl Jez Clarke** went to bed in preparation for his night shift. It was suggested that we draw up a duty roster. The drivers were excluded and the six LCpls strangely produced twelve different lists between them, so, before losing all sense of proportion and reality, I did the list myself.



*LCpl Morley does his best to move at the speed of a startled gazelle when the stag list is mentioned!*

The scenario's bad guys clearly slept at night and they left us alone to send in our scheduled R2, well at least we did, nameless others might have drifted to sleep. It remains to say, in a blind panic, they sent a flurry of slightly delayed reports... and then the power went off! Well, I say off but we really only received an email to say that there was a power outage due to undisclosed reasons. Switching to generators we carried on, only to receive another email saying that the user still had Dii. **LCpl Michelle Woods** fought valiantly to tell Zero and organise a solution to assist that user to get their comms back and working, not once asking how they were still sending so many emails. Confused, so was I?

By mid-Sunday morning the bad guys had melted back in to the minds of those that had come up with the scenario, and

our traffic slowly dried up. At around mid-day we were told that we would be leaving and returning to our respective ARCs. Then began the telephone game of Rock, Paper and Scissors as to who would travel the hour and a half back to pick up **Sgt Louise Birch AGC** from RHQ down in Redditch. This time our SPSI Tech, **SSgt Dave Williams**, lost: In this game, mini bus beats crew bus and that beats car. It's a Trimble thing!

Amusing stories aside, when it comes down to it, we can deploy our CSTs at short notice and provide our users with the information services they need in times of National Emergency.

Job done, until next time...



## 39th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRISTOL



CO **Lt Col N C Bruce**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P Griffiths**

**43 (WESSEX AND CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj R Nixon**  
A/SSM **SSgt I Stott**

**Exercise WESSEX CHALLENGE 16 - by Sig Stewart**

On 8 Jul members of 43 Sig Sqn gathered at Bath ARC to embark on the annual AT weekend. The first task was to get down to Weymouth which we did so only after **Sgt Palfrey** had been suitably ribbed over her wardrobe and **Lt Morris** and **SSgt Downs** had insisted on silence for their viewing of "Love Island". Eventually we arrived at Chickerell Camp and settled into the accommodation.

We all woke up in the morning ready for a full day of AT, starting with climbing and abseiling up and down the coastal cliff faces. We were presented with varying levels of difficulty for the climbs each with their own challenges, but everyone attempted the climbs and pushed themselves out of their comfort zones. Some did, however, struggle getting over one ledge which required one pull up to get onto the wall, providing much to the enjoyment of the increasing numbers of spectators.



Moving into the afternoon we got our wetsuits on ready for kayaking and having had a quick brief, we rushed to the water. It was at this stage it became very apparent we had some "less skilled" kayakers in the group such as **Sig Gazzard** and **Sig Hawkins**, both of whom capsized almost immediately from coming off the slip. When we eventually managed to get past the first 5 metres we paddled along the coastline against the prevailing wind. The most notable effort was seen from **Sig Rees** who ended up paddling for two people in his double kayak. Our return journey proved easier with the wind behind us and at the end some of us had the chance to practise capsizre recovery drills with some success, but only after numerous attempts.

Having finished with the AT for the day we all used the spare time in the evening to take advantage of Weymouth with a visit to the local fish and chip shops and then some socialising into the evening. I think everyone had a great time bonding as a sqn and importantly celebrating **SSgt Hill's** birthday (I won't say how many years).

In the morning we were treated to 'Battle' yoga PT which helped to freshen up certain individuals and provided ample amusement for all those involved with the aid of positions like "down dog" and the playing of pan pipe music. There was also the inaugural 43 Sqn Tug of War competition with Team Hill proving comprehensive winners. The return fixture is eagerly awaited next year.

Overall everyone enjoyed the weekend and got a lot out of the training with more interest in courses and future AT exercises as well as some people leaving with strong tan lines from the “suns out, guns out” wetsuits. Special mention must go to **Sgt Palfrey** who will be leaving the sqn and this weekend will be her last with 43 Sig Sqn. And of course thanks must go to **2Lt Bruce** who organised this AT weekend and ensured we all got the most out of the training and importantly enjoyed it!

## 53 (WALES AND WESTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt S Webb**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Knock**

### Armed Forces Day 16 - by LCpl Mulreid

This year soldiers of 53 (Wales & Western) Sig Sqn participated in the Armed Forces Day tri-service parade through the town of Caerphilly. For the majority of the Sqn it was a first to parade through the streets of Caerphilly and the castle grounds. The vast turn out and warm reception from the local residents made it a welcome change from our normal parade of Cardiff and Coopers Field.



Alongside the events of the parade and service 53 Sig Sqn's Recruitment Team were hard at working setting up a recruitment stand amongst other tri service colleagues. The recruitment team as always delivered a high standard of insight to the public of Reservist life, the kit we use and the job roles we perform.

After the parade, soldiers of 53 Sig Sqn were free to enjoy the many stands, displays and food stalls set up by other units and charity organisations such as the Royal British Legion, Royal British Legion Riders Branch, Help for Heroes and Scotty's Little Soldiers.



It is safe to say on behalf of all 53 Sig Sqn members that Armed Forces Day 2016 was a privilege to take part in and a day thoroughly enjoyed by all members of the Armed Forces and the public alike... especially considering it was topped off by a free Sunday carvery for all forces members at the Toby Carvery!

### Exercise WELSH ADVENTURE - by Sig Harding

Members of 53 Sig Sqn had a fantastic time participating in Ex WELSH ADVENTURE – an adventure training weekend conducted in Pembrokeshire, West Wales.

Leaving on the Friday evening (but not before **Sig Tyrrell** could manage to lock his keys inside his car) the group made their way to Cawdor Barracks, home of 14 Sig Reg (Electronic Warfare) and their base for the weekend. Rising in time for breakfast on Saturday, the group then split up into the rock climbing contingent and those going mountain biking.

#### Rock Climbing

**LCpl Lewis** and **LCpl Mulreid** were joined by **Sigs Gayther, Harding** and **Tyrrell** in the rock climbing group which was conducted upon the coastal cliffs of Penally. The group enjoyed abseiling down the first cliff face, where **LCpl Lewis** promptly managed to have both climbing shoes drop off into the sea below never to be seen again. They then took it in turns climbing the cliff faces, acting as climbers, belayers and safety, with two ropes set up which differed in difficulty and one more for practicing vertical ascents using friction knots. It was great to learn the different techniques and knots available and how each one affected the climbing capabilities, as well as getting a hands-on demonstration and experience of coastal rock climbing.



With the tide receding, to end the experience the team climbed down onto the now-available beach and spent a few minutes exploring the caves burrowed into the cliff side. A deeper abseil through an overhanging sinkhole unfortunately had to be abandoned due to time constraints, but by this time the group were all more than happy with the experience they had enjoyed already.

#### Mountain biking

The day started off by meeting our Instructor, an individual worryingly called '**Lucky**'. The weather was typical of the British summer: wet, cold, grey and miserable. Not to be deterred we saddled up and headed out. The first section was uphill, no surprises there, followed by the second stage, which was also uphill. The third stage was no better and so it continued. Considering we were close to the coast and not in the mountains of Wales, this place seemed to be one

permanent uphill. Soaked right through but still managing some smiles and sometimes pushing!! **Captain Webb, SSgt Humphries, Cpl Little, LCpl Williams** and **LCpl Cartwright** looked like drowned rats. Questions started being asked: 'Lucky, are there any downhill around here?' But with a big beaming smile he carried on. Finally, enough was enough, with visibility down to 10 metres we embarked on a fab downhill section only to be followed by another uphill! We ended up back to the start point, soaked but smiling. It was a little bone jarring but it gave the bikes and riders a good workout. For all of the uphill, it was thoroughly enjoyable so thank you, Lucky!

Sunday morning saw the Sqn pack up their kit and board the minibuses ready for the final activity – coasting at Abereddy Beach and Blue Lagoon, run by a local company called Adventure Beyond. It was a fantastic day consisting of traversing the coastal rocks amidst beating waves that often swept many unlucky members off into the drink. Having rounded the first headland and practiced some small jumps along the way, the group then took turns leaping off the jump points at the famous Blue Lagoon; a beautiful twenty-five metre deep pool filling a former slate quarry. They also had a go at 'the toilet'; a funnel-shaped rock enclave so named due to the rise and flush of the waves coming in and out; a great way to get voluntarily bashed about by the crashing waves. Finally, after a quick ice cream by the beachfront, it was time to board up and head home; the reluctant end to a brilliant weekend.

### 93 (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Morris**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vise**

#### Exercise WESSEX WANDERER - by Capt Topps

An early start on Saturday was followed by a trip to Portishead, North Somerset to the start of the Gordano Round, a 12 mile coastal and ridge walk with spectacular views and history and a few hills for good measure.

**Capt Gaz Topps** kicked off the day with an enforced stop for everyone in the local café for breakfast and coffee, allowing **LCpl Tom Watson** to join the team following a night shift at work #commitment. Now sustained, 16 members of the Sqn set off to take on the "round". The walk took in the historic battery point where a famous fish was once caught.

**Maj Andy Morris, Capt Gaz Topps** and **WO2 (SSM) Rich Vise** were able to offer a potted history of local sites and scenes throughout the day such as the Nautical School, Black Nore Lighthouse, Clevedon Pier and Cadbury Camp. It was also great to have our resident chef **Cpl Emma Fox** released from her normal kitchen duties to get involved with the remainder of the Sqn.

During the walk there were several opportunities taken to get maps out in order to identify our location and test map reading skills. **Capt Gaz Topps, WO1 (SVWO) Rich Ayling** and **SSgt Pete Stainforth** assisted the groups with their map reading and very soon they were able to identify their positions to within 10 metres without the use of a compass: no easy feat, as we all know.

The final part of the route took us through a stable where carrots were delivered by **Sgt Kerry Hill** and **Sgt Pat**

**Pocklington** to feed the horses. It was the first time **Pte Kirsty Rockett** had fed a pony, but she was brave and managed to overcome her fear! Following some light refreshments at the Black Horse we retired to the ARC in Bristol for a BBQ and light entertainment.

The next day the team set off to Burrington Coombe, near Cheddar, Somerset. The agenda involved caving and climbing. **Maj Andy Morris** and **Maj Penny Mell** were well up for the challenge of the caving, but soon realised their days of crawling through tight gaps in the dark have passed. Not the case for **Pte Kirsty Rockett** whose passion for caving was ignited after her first time underground. The climbing and abseiling was also a challenge with sheer walls being offered in lieu of the easy routes on offer. **WO1 Marv Dyer, WO2 'SATNAV' Stockwell** and **Pte Hawkins** attacking the wall with some real skill and athleticism.

Ex WESSEX WANDERER was two great days of hard graft, with lots of fun, challenging pursuits and team bonding. The aim of AT was well and truly achieved.

#### R SIGNALS Clay Pigeon Shooting Championships - by Sig Corcoran

For the second year running, 39 Sig Regt competed in the Corps Clay Target Shooting Competition in Colerne, hosted by 21 Sig Regt.

Upon arrival, **WO1 (SVWO) Richie Ayling; WO1 (Yofs) Mick Durrant; Signaller Wayne Corcoran** (who all competed in last year's competition) and **Mr Oli Holburn** were greeted with smiles, glorious sunshine, and a palpable sense of excitement.

After the initial briefing, **Oli Holburn**, the virgin shotgun shooter, began the day by attending the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association Shotgun Skills course, whilst **WO1 (SVWO) Richie Ayling, WO1 (Yofs) Durrant; Signaller Corcoran** began their own little competition. The standard of shotgun shooting within the Royal Signals is such that the real competition for 39 Sig Regt was against their fellow teammates. This year, as was the case with last, the coaching was of a very high standard. In particular, **SSgt Gaz Hamilton**, who commands a shotgun with the precision of a surgeon and the reflexes of a fighter pilot, gave our team performance-enhancing advice.



The final two days of the four-day event comprised the competition proper. **Signaller Corcoran** got off to an excellent start, and by lunchtime he and **WO1 (SVWO) Ayling** were neck and neck. However, **WO1 (SVWO) Ayling** consistency saw him comfortably win day one of the (39 Sig Regt competition) competition. On day two, **Oli Holburn** and **WO1 (Yofs)**



**Durrant** pulled off some good shooting but it was not good enough to come close to catching team captain **WO1 (SVWO) Ayling**. The team had an extremely enjoyable four days' shooting, and all team members are looking forward to competing in next year's Corps (and team competition) Championships.

#### 94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Ukpai**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Anderson**

#### Op FORTIFY

Op FORTIFY remains a priority and key focus for the Sqn. **SSgt Steve Welsh** (ex-Regular Royal Signals) and **Sig Elliot Smith** (previously a Reserve Royal Signals Soldier) join **Cpl Dave Brownlees** to reform a strong and robust recruiting team. Their combined skills provide a wealth of diverse experience, attracting and retaining a great deal of interest. Led by the RUSUO, **WO2 Chapman**, ex-Sqn SSM, the recruiting team has worked hard to attract and manage the next generation of Berkshire Yeoman through the various interviews, endorsements and training. Working closely with the Army Careers Centres in Reading and Aldershot they have executed a packed calendar of recruiting events across Berkshire, Surrey and Buckinghamshire and Hampshire, especially focusing on Slough, Reading, Bracknell, Windsor, Camberley and Brooklands. Their hard work has paid off and we are now reaping the rewards, with two new recruits completing their Phase One training this month. Congratulations to **Sig Crawley** and **Pte Payne**. We have a very healthy pipeline of 50 potential recruits and on training night, the drill hall is packed! Great effort by the team!



*Congratulations to Sig Crawley and Pte Payne!*

#### Skinner's Corpus Christi Election Day Procession

On 26 May 16 **WO2 Chapman** and **Cpl Brownlees** attended the Worshipful Company of Skinner's Corpus Christi Election Day Procession on the Feast of Corpus Christi, from the Skinner's Hall, Dowgate Hill, London to St James, Garlick Hythe. This was a fantastic opportunity to visit our adoptive Company and meet members of The Court, The Livery, The Freedom and Apprentices. Key members were The Hon. **Mrs Emmeline Winterbotham** (Master), **Mr. James Leahy** (First Warden and Master Elect), **Col William Fell** (Second Warden and Honorary Colonel of 39 Signal Regiment) and **Major General Andrew Kennett** (Clerk/Chief Exec).

#### A view from the ground - by WO2 Chapman

After an entertaining journey into London requiring both navigation and negotiating skills, we arrived at Skinner's Hall for a quick change into MTP and lunch with **Col William Fell**, the Honorary Colonel of 39 Signal Regiment, who kindly gave us a brief history of The Skinner's and the Skinner's Hall. **Col Fell** also introduced us to **Maj Gen Andrew Kennett** who was very keen to get an update on the status of Army Reserve Recruiting and offered their support in recruiting the next generation of Berkshire Yeoman! **Col Fell** offered access to Skinner's Hall, originally built in the 1300's and **Maj Gen Kennett** offered support with Employer Engagement, especially sky diving activities at Netheravon!

Following lunch, we joined the procession along Cloak Lane to St James, Garlick Hythe. We were asked to try to keep the older gentlemen in step and heading in the right direction to get them to the church on time. After the Corpus Christi service we returned to the Skinner's Hall.



**For the historian's:** *"The Skinner's Company was formally incorporated with a Royal Charter from Edward III in 1327. As a religious fraternity it was dedicated to Corpus Christi and so this is its major feast day when the Company elects its Master and the four Wardens who will assist him in the leadership of the Company in the forthcoming year. The Feast of Corpus Christi - always the Thursday after Trinity Sunday - does not commemorate a particular event in the life of Jesus but rather celebrates the Body and Blood of Christ."*

#### Workplace Engagement Events

In June, the Sqn with strong support from the other squadrons of 39 Sig Regt and our paired unit 21 Sig Regt, ran a number of events across Hewlett Packard offices in Bracknell and Hook to raise the profile of the Corps and specifically 94 Sig Sqn in the local area. The events consisted of lunchtime military fitness sessions open to all staff, across all sites and were very well attended.

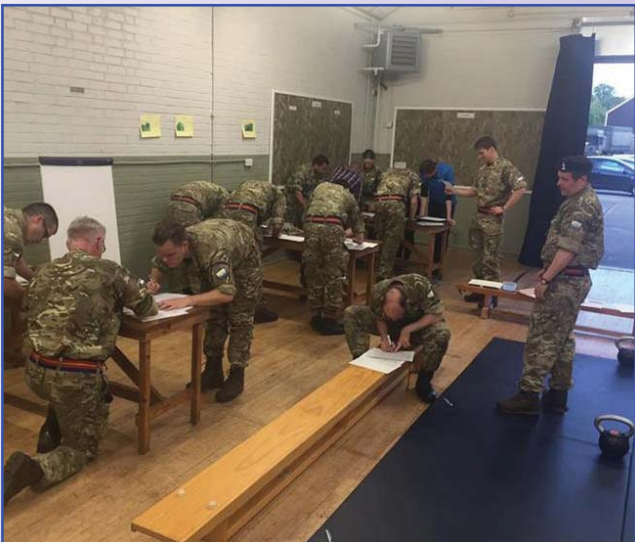


These events led to a major recruiting event, supported by the Corps Colonel, showcasing FALCON, Bowman and other communications assets and military lifestyle, displaying kit, equipment, food and weapon systems. The event sparked a huge amount of interest and a similar program will be run at SERCO and Virgin Media in Hook.



### Music to the 2ICs ears...

With the cancellation of Ex LYNX CANTER, **SSgt Dale Sterry**, Tp Comd 885Tp, and his troop decided to use the weekend as an opportunity to pull out all the vehicles and conduct EC and run some A&P lessons, catch up on MS and complete all the MATT 5 modules! There was a great turn out by the troop, finishing with a much deserved Troop social on the Saturday night! The following drill night as I inspected the garages, I found the vehicles gleaming and the troop re-charged – needless to say, energy levels and morale were high.



### A soldier's story: My Reserve Journey - by Pte Payne

The first time I entered an Army Recruitment Office I was 19, but with family sway I ended up going to University instead. However, at the young age of 37 I have finally gone 'green' and joined the Reserves!

In preparation for my Phase 1 training, I attended Regimental training weekends where we are introduced to Battlefield Casualty Drills, Skill at Arms, Weapon Cleaning and Navigation Skills. I felt a pull towards the RAMC and decided to become a Combat Medical Technician.

The nine day Alpha training was fully packed with military lessons and physical training. I was particularly pleased with the progress of my weapon handling skills and very happy with the report I received from the Training Team. During training an old injury threatened to flare up, but luckily my ankle held up and I was able to complete the training. Some wise words for anyone who is getting themselves ready to go on the Alpha or Bravo training: *be fit and ready for the physical tests*, if you have an injury that interferes with running or marching you will struggle.

The sixteen day Bravo proves that when the going gets tough, the training gets tougher! Top tip for anyone getting ready for Bravo; *be prepared to step up the pace!* There will be tough long days, with very little time for anything during the first week. The pace does slow down a bit during the second week, but you will be bombarded with huge amounts of information that you will be tested on.

As always, training brought highs and lows. The lows were exhaustion from the combination of long days, carrying a heavy weight bergen, constantly getting up and down from knee and prone position and the uncomfortable feeling in the CBRN suits and respirator. The highs included Skill at Arms and reducing my groupings, getting the platoon's high score for the navigation test, bayonet drills, and physical fitness during the output test loaded march where I felt so much fitter than my input test. However, undoubtedly the proudest moment was the Pass Out Parade with the RAMC Army Band.

For anyone currently preparing themselves for recruit training here are a few hints:

- Read your admin joining instructions, not just once but check and re-check! Once you are on camp, you are on camp, and it is not easy to find time to 'pop to the shop' and buy anything you may have forgotten.
- Be physically prepared! Know the physical test criteria for your cap badge as this varies quite dramatically.
- Learn to filter information when you are being told something!
- Remember the key facts; where you need to be, what time you need to be there, and what you need to take with you.

That is my journey so far and I have enjoyed every moment. It is now time for Trade Training and the future challenges that await! It's been tough, sometimes really tough, but I am now tougher and it has been worth it. I have already learnt many skills, improved my fitness, met some interesting people and made so many friends. I feel like I have earned the privilege of wearing the uniform.

### Somme 100

On 19 July the Sqn held an open evening for Squadron members, past and present, friends, family and neighbours, to raise awareness of the importance of the Somme Offensive which took place 100 years ago. The operation resulted in the British Army's most significant loss of life in one day, 57,470 casualties in all, 19,240 of whom were killed. The Somme presentation package, part of the national act of remembrance spearheaded by the Royal British Legion and the Imperial War Museum (IWM), was brilliantly delivered by **Lt Col Connelly**. The 80 strong audience sat in silence, watching original footage and listened to the heroic stories

that affected so many lives. After the presentation, the bar was open and it gave everybody the opportunity to reflect on past and present operations.

### **Squadron AT: A Tale of Two Exercises** - by *Sig Grant*

The day started with a hearty power breakfast at Blandford, which was to be our home for the duration of the weekend. We ate merrily; spirits were high with anticipation of the day's events.

Following a brief by **Lt MacInnes** and the SSM, we drove to our start point at Swanage for a spot of coastering, which on the face of it was met with excitement! As we got suited and booted we took a leisurely stroll to the sea front, looking across the sea with delight at the adventures about to unfold ... little did we know the real adventure that lay ahead.

As the 9 of us (**Lt 'Fearless' Mac; SSM 'Dance Machine' Anderson; Sgt 'Unflinching' Grace; Sgt 'Invincible' Gurung; LCpl 'Heroic' Plater; Sig 'Daring' Smith; Pte 'No Fear' Payne; Sig 'Valiant' Riglar** and me, **Sig 'Gritty' Grant**) all boldly went where not many Berkshire Yeoman have been before: straight into Mother Nature's natural wave machine, her way of saying "You don't belong in here." The weather was overcast but rather warm. We swam like keen fish through the sea, climbing onto the rocks then into the sea again. The instructors spotted a 'nice little alcove' tucked in a corner with a good size ledge for us all to stand on. This is where the challenge increased. As members of the team mastered the art of beach landing with the help of 7 inch waves, we soon realised that we had bitten off more than we could chew. We were soon battered against the rocks and taken back out to sea time and time again, which did not deter us from soldiering on in a true British military fashion. Hugging the landscape like amazonian tree frogs with the fear of God in our eyes, tumbling around like clothes in a washing machine then at times put on maximum spin, and swallowing our body weight in sea water, we took it upon ourselves to "Get out of Dodge". We all bravely survived our mission to conquer the Washing Machine with brilliant team work engaging our super hero abilities to "Go Go Gadget hand grabber", plucking each other out of the drink. The remainder of the time was spent investigating caves then swimming through holes within the caves reaching freedom on the other side, as well as jumping from 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7m heights. Overall, this was a brilliant team building session with many

laughs, good team spirit and an excellent way to welcome new members of the Sqn.

After a spot of lunch we drove to another location to take part in kayaking. This was a welcome rest and yet another good way to fuse team bonding, we paddled about carrying out little exercises, both standing up and paddling, sitting as close to the front and as far to the back as possible, inevitably taking a bath. We met up with a team of civilian ladies who were reluctant to join in the games. However after the look of sadness on some of our faces, they joined us. We flipped our kayaks over and started to have confidence building races running along the bottom of the kayaks.

That evening we had a lovely Gurkha Curry, courtesy of **Sgt Gurung** and some team building activities led by the SSM. Best not to comment on the SSM funky moves on the dance floor later that evening!

We started our journey back to Windsor stopping off at Fort Nelson. Full of big boys toys with big guns ranging from the 1400s, Napoleonic times, WW1, WW2, The Falklands, First Gulf War and Saddam Hussein's Supergun. It was definitely worth the visit.

What a fantastic weekend – well structured, informative and a lot of fun; undoubtedly these are the 'daring' weekends we will go on to tell our grandchildren about.

### **And as if that wasn't enough...**

Another busy month for the Sqn; preparing vehicles, kit and equipment for ADE and the updated PD215. In sweltering heat, there is just no stopping our dynamic trio, who are the backbone of the Squadron successes: SQMS **SSgt Walton**, SPSI **SSgt Simpson** and PSI(Eng) **SSgt Torode** – who have been in the garages, in the armory, in stores, pulling out and prep'ing kit and vehicles, ensuring we are ready to go!

In order to exercise the Sqn, SPSI **SSgt Simpson** and PSI(Eng) **SSgt Torode** put our two comms troops to task to set up a CST in their respective troop offices and establish as many services as possible within 60 minutes. Both 886 & 885 troops worked well, and did in fact establish and test most services (less VTC) ... however, the winning troops establishing the most services goes to **Sgt Gurung** and 885Tp! Many lessons learnt along the way, and a few cobwebs dusted off!



## **71st (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH**



CO **Lt Col HJ Scott MBE**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P Robertson**

**31 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY AND PRINCESS LOUISE  
KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj Alexander Orr**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Simon May**

There have been a number of celebrations over the last few months; congratulations go to **Capt Cooper** and his Fiancée

**Emma**, may the planning for their 2017 wedding be both jubilant and successful. Congratulations must also go to **Lt Osment** with the birth of his son.

The Sqn is preparing for their AT weekend, involving some skiing, mountain biking and a bit of indoor skydiving thrown in to boot. **Cpl Hennigan** is doing a fine job on the recruiting front and has organised the attestation of 3 recruits with a further 8 in the pipeline, so well done to him. **Sig Gill** has passed his Bravo course and is now on course to begin his trade training.

It is also good to see some old faces returning – in particular **Sig Brookes**. Keep up the good work!

### Young Reserve Officer Workshop (YROW) - by 2Lt Roberts

The Young Reserve Officer Workshop (YROW) took place in Madrid under the direction of the Spanish government, who at the last minute had volunteered to host the Inter-allied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR), YROW's parent association.

The pre-workshop at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst was where **2Lt Haron**, and **2Lt Roberts** were introduced to the remainder of the cohort. The Royal Signals were represented by five Officers and there was a mixture of cap badges from all three services. At RMAS everyone received detailed briefs from senior Reserve Officers before conducting their own research on the host nation's political, military and economic state.

The YROW started on the Monday morning; first up was the country briefs which provided an opportunity to compare UK forces to those around the world. The UK brief discussed some of the topical aspects facing UK armed forces such as FR2020 and the primary role of the Reserves in the UK. The presentation was given by **2Lt Atkinson**, **2Lt Wilson** (both 37 Sig Regt) and **2Lt Roberts**. The remainder of the week took the shape of NATO simulations, a joint symposium, leadership discussions and the final NATO scenario, which provided an opportunity to view issues from the other party's perspective and escalate scenario based training to an international level. In the NATO simulation all members were assigned a NATO country to represent; **Capt Freeman** was particularly tenacious and true to his adopted country by refusing to come to a consensus on the given agenda, pointing out the consequences it would have on his nation. A topic quite close to home given our geographical location at the time!

Hosting the event was an opportunity for Spain to display some of its culture and despite long training days, evening activities included a wreath laying ceremony, a parade at the armoured infantry school, a bull fighting display and a formal Mess function on Saturday night. On the final Sunday it was time to head home, albeit with a slight hiccup at the airport, at first we thought we might have to leave a soldier behind after a misplaced item left at Burger King, but with swift negotiation skills (probably learnt during the NATO scenario the previous day) **2Lt Haron** was able to make her way off the plane and back again in a flash just in time for the take-off. Phew!



Young Reserve Officer Workshop

Overall the workshop was thoroughly worthwhile. Networking was one of the keywords and many young Reserve Officers came away from the workshop with national and international contacts.

### 36 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Rowson**  
SSM **WO2(SSM) Elliot**

### Exercise PHOENIX RIDER - by SSgt (SQMS) Thumwood

It all started on Sat the 5 Mar 16 when six soldiers from 36 Sig Sqn attended Ex PHOENIX RIDER, a Mountain Bike foundation course at ATC(s) in sunny Scotland. Everyone met at Colchester Army Reserve Centre (ARC) and was briefed by **SSgt Thumwood** prior to starting the long journey to Inverness. 2 Sig Regt had kindly given us accommodation for Saturday night to break up the journey which only left a 7 hour drive on Sunday.



The crew from 36 Sig Sqn

After a long journey and several stops en route everyone finally arrived at Cameron Barracks at 1530hrs, and after a quick arrival brief and accommodation sorted, settled in for what everyone hoped would be a cracking and enjoyable week of riding.

It soon became apparent that one or two members of the team had not been on a bike for a while, however once all were sized up with the correct bike the team headed out into the Scottish hills for the first day out.

Day 1 mainly consisted of learning the basics on how to brake properly, correct use of the gears and riding positions. The instructor then took everyone around a small circuit, riding over small mounds tree roots and to check how people controlled the bike when descending.

Day 2 was not just about riding the bike but leadership; planning a route plays an important part. **LCpl Johnson** took the lead for the first part of the ride and subsequently changing around within the team. Everyone discovered very quickly that modern Mountain Bikes are capable of riding over most terrain but on the odd occasion, when the navigator missed a turn off, they had to carry their bikes through thick woodland to get back on track.

As much fun as it was coming down the hill, there were some rather steep up hills. However, being in the correct gear made life much easier, with most people getting to the top without having to walk their bikes up. About 24 miles throughout the day was covered, while learning how to ride over several types of terrain.

Day 3 was spent at the skills park and covered cornering safely at speed, small table top jumps and riding over rocky terrain. **LCpl's Lowe** and **LCpl Johnson** were the stars of the day mastering the art of rock riding very quickly. A star was born with **Sgt Philips** being the teacher's pet for the day for getting the highest on the jumps. At one stage **Cpl Wright** managed to snap his chain but on lessons taught earlier in the week he managed to carry out a successful repair.

After a bright and early start on day 4, and after a full English breakfast, individuals prepared themselves for the last full day in the saddle; the team drove to Aviemore, more usually known for skiing than Mountain Biking, and once in the car park **LCpl Fleming** took everyone through the check on the bikes. Once ready, the riding started with a big climb to get into the hills. Once everyone had all made it the views were pretty spectacular, with snow covered hilltops in all directions. Again the day consisted of different members of the team taking their turn to lead and navigate for the group. The riding skills and route selection had improved from the first attempts earlier in the week and for this the group were rewarded with some fast flat riding and a bit of downhill which they all enjoyed.

The day finished by riding down the enormous hill we rode up earlier that day! It was great fun and in places quite fast, with one person who will remain nameless managing to come off his bike and cut his hand but thanks to **LCpl George's** first aid skills he managed to patch him up so he could complete the ride.

A great week was had by all who attended the course and we believe a few of the team will carry on with the mountain biking. The MBF course is the first course in the mountain biking series. Its hard work and requires a good level of fitness and leadership. Only a small amount of time is spent in trail centres. For those that want to continue onto the next course, the MBL course, you must be able to maintain your mountain bike log book and record at least 10 rides, we are sure one or two members of the team will be applying for it.

#### **Adventurous training in Lydd - by Sig Able**

The weekend of 15 -17 July 36 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn travelled to Lydd Camp in Kent for an Adventure Training weekend. There was a significant turnout from both Colchester and Chelmsford troops and a sense of friendly rivalry from the start.

Some of the newer members of the Sqn were excited to be off on their first Adventure Training weekend; activities rotating throughout the weekend consisted of Archery, Climbing, Abseiling and Kayaking.

**Cpl Hughes**, who organised the weekend taught a novice class for Kayaking, starting off with basic manoeuvres before encouraging a little friendly competition to help improve the steering. Being on the first rotation for the Kayaking **Sig Able** can confirm that there was no greater wakeup than plunging into the icy waters which run through the training ground at Lydd Camp. **WO2 (SSM) Elliot** proved himself to be a proficient kayaker winning the tug of war against **SSgt Aldridge** with ease. **Cpl Denton** followed **Mr Elliot's** lead and decided that Kayaking was too main stream and opted to turn their kayaks into submarines. Whether this was intentional or not remains unconfirmed although due to the warm weather, everyone has their suspicions.



*Cpl Hughes, the Instructor*

During the abseiling, those with a stomach for heights took the time to appreciate the view from the top of the tower, while **Sig Rideout** and **Sig Polley** made abseiling a competitive sport, with **Sig Rideout** making it down the tower with two bounds compared to **Sig Polley's** three. **Sig Vigor** found his calling belaying on the climbing wall and assisted **Sig Smith** reach the top where she discovered a natural ease with heights. **Sig Polley's** competitive streak shone through and he managed to climb to the top of the climbing wall in under 40 seconds.

**Sig Kerlan** may have slowly been turning the same shade of red as that on the target due to the sunny weather but his skill at archery improved considerably once **Sgt Kelly** pointed out that the marksmanship principles were transferable to the bow. **Cpl Chalcraft** showed he was a natural with a bow while **Cpl Urand** became rather skilled at locating arrows in the long grass behind the targets.

The Saturday evening was an opportunity to explore the local area and in one bar a covers band was playing and it was here that the majority of the Sqn decided to remain for a quiet drink, whilst **Capt Amis (PSAO)** and **SSgt Ingoe** did a great job organising the BBQ on the Saturday evening and food enough to feed twice the number was served up. **Capt Monk** acted as the Sqn photographer over the weekend and ACF members **Danny** and **Mark** deserve a big thanks for running the activities. **Cpl Hughes**, who organised a very successful and enjoyable weekend, deserves a mention too!

#### **68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC        **Maj Trevelion**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) Cullumbine**

#### **Drapers' Company Church Service**

The Drapers' Company church service on 6<sup>th</sup> July was attended by representatives from 71 (City of London) Yeomanry Sig Regt. The Service at St Michael's Church, Cornhill was enjoyed by **Capt Donaldson**, **SSgt Allen** and **Cpl Broadbent**. In this visually impressive and historic setting the service flowed and the choir was, in all of our opinions, simply superb. After the church service we followed the congregation to The Drapers' Hall and enjoyed the usual excellent hospitality of the Drapers' Company. If any guest left feeling hungry or not suitably refreshed they only have themselves to blame.

It was a great privilege for all of us to attend on behalf of 71 (City of London) Yeomanry Sig Regt as one of the Company's

affiliated Armed Forces units. The Regt has been formally affiliated with the Company since 1982 and we very much enjoy being associated with the Drapers. We have spread the word to the wider Regt on what an enjoyable occasion the church service was. Hopefully other members of the Regt will attend should the opportunity arise in the years to come.

## 265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY (SHARPSHOOTERS)) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Baker TD**  
SSM **SSgt Haskell**

**OC UPDATE** - by *Maj Paul Baker TD*

The highlight for the Sqn was undoubtedly hosting the Veterans Day here at the ARC Bexleyheath. It was humbling to meet so many veterans with service going back as far as the Malayan Emergency. The National Servicemen in attendance were particularly interesting to talk to given that the last of them were discharged some 53 years ago in May 1963; all of our citizen soldiers since then have been volunteers. The significance of this for today's Army Reservist is you have to be the OC's age to have a parent who served at a time when military service was expected or compulsory, such as his father who served in the Scots Greys in the early 1950s. This is why it is so important to maintain our links with the veterans and through them and our families' society in general.

### Exercise PHOENIX VETERAN

On 23 Jul 16, association members from the three main London Royal Signals Associations from the South, East and West London, the five main 71 (City of London) Yeomanry Signal Regiment Squadron Associations (The Sharpshooters (265 Sp Sqn), The Inns of Court (68 Sig Sqn), The Essex Yeomanry (36 Sig Sqn), The Middlesex Yeomanry and the Princess Louise's of Kensington (31 Sig Sqn), and the Bexleyheath & Welling branch of the Royal British Legion and the British Army Associations (with attached Ghurkha members) were invited by Commanding Officer, to a delightful veterans day out hosted by 71 (City of London) Yeomanry Sig Regt.

The aim was to provide an update on the role of the Regt, Operations, Exercises and the way forward and a series of exciting stands manned by Reservists and Regulars. In addition, presentations from three Reservists were given on their experiences of Army life and operational tours.

The weather was near perfect, if not a little too hot for the veterans, but they were not to be deterred. Armed with freshly pressed blazers, chinos, shirt and Regt / Sqn tie, highly polished shoes and Panama hat the veterans were ready to begin their day in earnest.

A plethora of VIP visitors had been planned for the day which included the **Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP** (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), the **Rt Hon David Evennett MP** (MP for Crayford) and the new Mayor of the London Borough of Bexley, **Clr Eileen Pallen** with the

Deputy Mayor of the London Borough of Bexley, **Clr Val Clarke**. All four were met by the Commanding officer, RSM and Adjutant and were briefed on the day's activities, aims and objectives.



*Members of the Regiment with the VIPs*

The day started with an informal gathering after a reception controlled by the Sqn Admin Officer, **Miss Simmons**, who ensured each veteran was fully briefed and guided to the refreshment stand. The initial welcome presentation was given by OC 265 Sp Sqn, **Maj Baker TD**, followed by the PS AO, **Capt Slaney's** mandatory H & S brief. The Commanding Officer was next on and delivered a presentation on the regiments operations, pairing, exercises, training and the way forward. The crowd now totally warmed up was treated to a series of three presentations from **Cpl Harries** (265 Sp Sqn), **Sgt Kelly** (36 Sig Sqn) and **Sgt Warren** (68 Sig Sqn) on their personal experiences of life in the Reserves and their own operational tour experiences. These were well received by the veterans and appreciation was shown with rapturous applause.

A series of stands followed and were provided by members of 265 Sp Sqn supported by additional manpower from the 3 outer squadrons. Equipment demonstrated included a fully working REEBOK, CST, 2 x BOWMAN, VHF Man-pack stand, a fully functional Field Kitchen, Medical stand (including a BFA), Clothing & Equipment, Weapons stand and finally an impressive patrolling and harbour base set up by members of the 107 Royal Signals Tp Army Cadet Force. The veterans had ample time to look at the kit, reminisce and ask questions to the presenters and staff. Half way through the stands there was an interruption for an excellent curry buffet provided by **LCpl Akarbil**, **LCpl Hagger** and **Pte Burbridge**; this was gladly received by the very hungry Veterans. The VIPs found time to go around and meet the Veterans, Reservists and Regulars through the lunch and afternoon session and thoroughly made their day very enjoyable and informative. At the end of the day the mandatory photograph was arranged and taken with over 80 veterans and guests in attendance. A great day was had by all.



*Members of the Regiment with the Veterans*

# OTHER UNITS



## UK MOD SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM



### Cirque D'Sangcom - by WO2 (Fofs) Richards

With a summer function to organise and a circular function room available, our resident interior designer **Mrs Emma Foster** suggested, "wouldn't it be fun to hold a circus..." in Riyadh! With only children's entertainers available, nowhere to buy décor or props, no chance of finding a fortune teller and a date in the middle of Ramadan, what could possibly go wrong? Luckily, what we lacked in resource, we made up for in enthusiasm. So, with our crazy plans in place we set up a human statue and fire breather to wow the crowds and waited with baited breath to see what would turn up. As the doors opened, it became quickly apparent that SANGCOM has an abundance of performers, freaks and oddities on tap. Strongmen, knife throwers, bearded ladies and more mime artists than a record breaking game of charades, all turned up to experience the spectacle. After an initial warm welcome by the boxing kangaroo, the guests were free to wander the carnival street, play the sideshow games and eat at the Marriott provided food court. Clearly with so much talent on offer, the circus wasn't going to miss out and auditions were held to recruit future entertainers. Kudos goes to **Maj Neil 'Leggings' Taylor** for his display of super elastic skin, **Capt Kieron 'Budget Outfit' Scott** for asserting his juggling prowess and **Brig Pete 'Caveman' Drew** and **Capt Graeme 'Jester' Campbell** for being good sports in the custard pie challenge.

With the auditions and prize giving completed (well done to **Capt Jim Healy** for winning a meal at a restaurant 500 miles from home), it was time to get the disco in full swing. The highlight of which had to be **Maj Robin Foster's** clown based horn dance and a fantastic rendition of *Footloose* delivered by **Brig Pete Drew**, **Maj Neil Taylor** and American guest, **Lt Col Tom Denis**.

Finally, a word of advice for future event organisers from our industrious clean-up crew: hay and carpets don't mix!



*Capt Jim 'Strongman' Healy taking on the boxing kangaroo*



*Making full use of the photo booth*



*Footloose*

### Reflections of a first year in post - by Maj Robin Foster

When I first learnt that I was being posted to Riyadh to join the Saudi Arabian National Guard Communications Team (SANGCOM) I couldn't have been happier. When I shared this news with one of my friends, he asked with genuine concern, "why do you want to be posted to Saudi Arabia?" At the time I wasn't able to give him a convincing answer but now, some twelve months later, I'm able to articulate my reasons a little better.

Before arriving in SANGCOM, I knew the basics; the Royal Signals has a presence in the Kingdom in order to work alongside the National Guard Signal Corps in defining, acquiring and supporting modern information and

communications services for the National Guard. What I didn't know was that SANGCOM has a rich history of working with Saudi Arabia. Established in 1978 under a memorandum of understanding between the British and Saudi Arabian Governments, SANGCOM has been a key element of the United Kingdom's Defence Engagement ever since. I was also pleasantly surprised to learn that the SANGCOM Team has a diverse mix of MOD personnel. Apart from the 20 Royal Signals officers and warrant officers, there are two officers from the Royal Engineers and AGC (ETS) respectively. 37 UK Civil Servants and 26 locally employed personnel compliment this make-up providing the necessary financial, commercial and managerial expertise necessary to ensure the success of the Team. What is also little known is that the majority of the team members are accompanied by their families and at any given time there can be up to 90 accompanied wives and children.

From a professional point of view, I have been hugely impressed by the challenge that faces the SANGCOM team. To outsiders, a posting to Saudi Arabia can sometimes seem like a sleepy "sunshine tour" but nothing could be further from the truth. The National Guard are a professional and demanding outfit who expect an expert level of service support. Combine this with a myriad of unexpected challenges, such as language barriers, and it means that the pace of life and workload are easily comparable to any regular unit in the UK.

Equally pleasing have been the opportunities for professional development. In my short time with SANGCOM I have completed a number of project management and service delivery courses including ITIL, APM and Defence Safety Acquisition courses. An Arabic language course and MSP course are planned for the future with a number of team members enrolled in these. Still others are working nights completing degrees in Communication Management, Cyber Defence and Information Assurance and MBAs to name a few. Where appropriate, the team provides support for T&S as well as the flexibility for taking leave to do exams.



Training in action

Personally I have developed in areas that I hadn't realised I would but which will stand me in good stead in the future. As the SO2 in the Operations Portfolio, I work as part of a team to ensure the managed service for the National Guard Signal Corps communications network is delivered in accordance with the contract. Simply put, this means dealing with the multifaceted issues thrown up on an hourly basis inherent with keeping a communications network running. Our SANGCOM mission is to support the UK's commitment to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by acquiring and supporting modern

C4I capabilities for the Saudi Arabian National Guard in order to meet our international Defence Engagement objectives and secure SANG mission success. From an Ops perspective this means building upon our successful service delivery approach and focusing on contract management. As a result my exposure to the MOD's commercial and financial practices have increased and improved my all round experience.



National Guard Signal School



Comms Tower



Support to Hajj



Key to the success of SANGCOM is balance and I am constantly impressed with the amount of extramural activities on offer. The Riyadh Road Running club hosts road races twice a month in varied and interesting locations. The Riyadh triathlon club boasts some impressive events with fierce rivalry across the club. Squash, rugby and football teams are well supported with regular fixtures throughout the season. Team members take full advantage of the large swimming pool and modern gym in the residence grounds and phys sessions are a daily occurrence. Mess functions provide welcome opportunities for team members, wives and children to socialise in a relaxed environment, usually with some very good food. Geographically, Saudi Arabia affords excellent travel opportunities to the east and it's fair to say that SANGCOM team members and families are exceptionally well travelled.

There is so much more I could say about my first year in Saudi Arabia. I'm reminded about the time I ate delicious local food at the Janadriyah festival while being mesmerised by camel racing. I recall the unexpected help from Saudi's in shopping malls and supermarkets and their generosity of spirit during Ramadan. And so I find myself asking what I have I learnt from my time in Saudi Arabia. 365 days into my tour, it seems a fair question. A lot of what I was wary of before coming out here seems to have disappeared; the alien cultures, different religions and foreign way of life. And perhaps that is the biggest lesson of all; the fact that living and working in Saudi Arabia has been more rewarding, professionally and personally, than I ever thought possible.

Go on, ask me again why I wanted to be posted to Saudi Arabia.



## BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT KENYA



SO3 CIS      **Capt C Karumba**  
 CIS Tp Cmdr    **Lt B Cauldwell**

### Visit to Samburu National Reserve - by LCpl Prakash Pun

Less than three hours drive from Nanyuki (BATUK Main), situated at the south-eastern corner of Samburu District in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya is Samburu National Reserve. It is bordered to the south by Ewaso Nyiro River, which separates it from the Buffalo Springs National Reserve. The reserve covers an area of 165 Km<sup>2</sup> and is located around 120 Km from Nanyuki.

Making time in a busy schedule between the Battlegroup exercises **SSgt Jennings** organised trips to Samburu National Reserve for BATUK CIS personnel. Our visit lasted over the weekend from 18 - 19 June. On the 18 June we left Nanyuki early morning and were all tired from the drive to reach the Samburu national reserve gate. From the gate it was another 30 min drive to the Samburu Game Lodge where we were to stay.



Samburu game lodge is set in pristine riverside forest on the western bank of the Ewaso Nyiro River. It was quite a scene by the bank of the river, without which the population of wildlife animals in Samburu would not have survived. I've never thought that there would be such a beautiful and comfortable place to stay in the middle of a wildlife reserve. After lunch we jumped into the pool to cool ourselves down but the monkeys did not allow us to relax as they were looking to rob food and drinks from us.

After dinner we were eagerly waiting to feed the crocodiles, who come to the bank in the evening for some food, but to our disappointment the crocodiles did not turn up due to the low water levels in the river.

We were all packed up the next morning. After breakfast we waved goodbye to the cheerful staff of the lodge and left for a safari ride. As we drove through the reserve we came across wide varieties of wildlife. Herds of deer were running all over the place at the sight of our vehicle, a troop of baboons staring at us from a giant acacia tree, giraffes foraging the tallest trees in the reserve and elephants bathing in Nyiro River, which we all enjoyed a lot.

It was only once that we went to Samburu but the memories of the Samburu National Reserve will always be in our thoughts. The excitement and happiness I had from watching the wildlife in their natural habitat was great.

By Monday we were fresh and ready to go back to the busy life of BATUK. It was a necessary break from the hectic schedule of work. I hope everyone gets the opportunity to live and see the beauty of nature in Kenya.

### Notes from BATUK community project 6 Aug 16 - by LCpl Wiles

On Saturday 6 August, members of BATUK CIS Dept (consisting of soldiers from 2, 10 and 14 Sig Regt) took part in a community project in Nanyuki, Kenya. The aim of this project was to integrate members of BATUK with the local community through meet and greets; supervision of work, meals, entertainment and a Q&A set.





The morning began with a meet and greet session, where we met with a local man named **Henry**; someone who does this every Saturday for the local homeless people. With this, was approximately 30 junior children and 15 teenage children. There were also approx. 10 homeless adults that take advantage of **Henry's** weekend work.

Following a short meet and greet, breakfast was served using meals from the British Army 12 hour ration packs provided by BATUK. A container full of orange juice was also provided and was quickly finished off by all; a rare treat for underprivileged children.



Utilising protective gloves and some bin bags, we escorted the children through Nanyuki whilst they conducted a litter sweep through the town. This was **Henry's** way of teaching the children that they have to work for their rewards; which in this case was food and drink. Throughout the walk, we started to get to know different individuals through general chatter. It was surprising to us all that not many of them could state their age, or even an approximate age; adults included.

Once the litter sweep was concluded, we all congregated around **Henry's** shack for lunch. Again, this was in the form of more meals from a 12 hour ration pack. Then followed a short period of time where everyone just mingled amongst the groups.

Afternoon entertainment was provided by the sacrificing of a goat for a curry and a small party where local community members conducted a talent show with dancers, music artists and gymnasts. This is where we left the group and returned to camp.

The effort on this day was also supported by local shop owners who run projects similar to this EVERY weekend; allowing the local children time to eat and play in a safe and monitored environment.

All CIS members felt this experience was humbling and a real eye opener to the way that some people live in the Nanyuki area. BATUK CIS members will continue to support and engage in future community schemes.



## 1<sup>ST</sup> NATO SIGNAL BATTALION



CO **Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU A)**  
RSM **CWO Steve Base (CAN A)**

**Life on NS2T** - by Sgt Gary Westmoreland

The flights were booked, the paperwork was done and the duty driver had been requested. And so it was that at 0500 hrs on the pleasant summer morning of 27 June I found myself stood outside the HQ building alongside **Sgt Mark 'Gibbo' Gibson** (who was flying to France to conduct a recce), **Cpl Adam Wilson** and **Maj Renee Kall (DNK A)** ready to jet off to Turkey. **Adam** and I were flying out on HOTO while the CO, **Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU A)**, who was meeting us at the airport, and **Maj Kall** were throwing in a morale



*The beautiful Sabanci Mosque where an astonishing 25,000 people can pray at one time*

visit and conducting some battalion business.

One minibus ride, two flights and several hours later, everyone arrived in a hot and humid Adana and we were greeted by **SSgt Dave Tuck**. A few minutes more and we were safely ensconced in Incirlik Air Base and booking into our accommodation; bags were thrown in rooms and everyone reconvened for welcome drinks and a bite to eat at the bowling alley.

NATO Support to Turkey (NS2T) is the rebranded name of Exercise ACTIVE FENCE and is a long term commitment for M&S Coy and the various DCMs of 1NSB. Adam

and I were taking over from **Dave** and **OR-4 Cees ‘Ninja’ Nijlaan (NED A)** who had finished their 8 week deployment. Things got off to an alarming start as Istanbul Ataturk airport, where we had passed through just the previous day and where **Dave** and **Ninja** were due to fly through the following day, was blown up by ISIS. A short but nervous delay ensued but eventually **Dave** and **Ninja** made it back to Germany and **Adam** and I settled into the job at hand. Already in place were **OR-8 Johan Seutens (BEL AF)**, **Cpl Damon ‘Damo’ Seymour**, **MCpl Brad Glavin (CAN A)**, **MCpl Johnathan Leger (CAN A)** and **LCpl Jake Mitchell** who, with the exception of **Johan**, all had two weeks left before they would also return to Germany.

Things proceeded nicely, everyone continued working well and **Damo**, **Brad**, **John** and **Jake** were moving into their final weekend of shifts when on Friday 15 July news arrived of an attempted coup in Turkey with Ankara and Istanbul both being occupied by military forces. The base was locked down, security status was elevated to Delta with no movement in or out and a couple of hours later the power was cut off. We didn’t know at the time but it would be five long days before power was restored which led to an uncomfortable hot and humid week.

After an initial few hours of uncertainty things returned to as close to normality as possible, albeit without the usual accoutrements of electricity and hot water. The host nation generator that was in place at our work site had turned on but promptly ran out of fuel leaving our humble little NATO-supplied generator to pick up the slack and get us through. By the third night of the power outage we were spending our free time at work; the lights and air con offering a welcome respite from the heat and darkness. Things were further compounded by the announcement that the base was running low on water and that we were to limit our usage to as little as possible.

Slowly, various parts of the base started to come back online, the lobby of the *Hodja Inn* where we were accommodated saw power returned (which had people flocking there as Wi-Fi returned with it) as did the Turkish Arkadas market and the US Commissary. A 40 hour test of the camp’s generators was implemented returning power to most of the base; at the end of the 40 hours whatever had caused the power outage was resolved and commercial mains was restored to the whole camp.

While all this was happening we were trying to discern what was occurring outside the camp to varying degrees of success. The reason for the power cut was never explained although many people had their own suspicions for why it had happened. The elevated security status and lack of movement on or off camp had delayed the arrival of **Sgt Greg Smith**, **Sgt Mike Brightwell**, **MCpl Constantine Polechuk (CAN A)** and (newly promoted, congratulations!) **Cpl Paul ‘Tommo’ Thompson** until it was deemed to be safer. Flights were rebooked and five days later than originally planned they arrived.

The main emphasis on NS2T has been to finish moving to a new location within a secured class 1 area while continuing to supply the Recogniaed Air Picture from Ramstein AB of Syrian missile launches to the Spanish Patriot missile battery which is co-located with us. **Dave** and his guys had done a lot of the work leaving just the movement of the E1 lines and DSGT for the new crew. The E1 lines had been delayed several times and were pushed back further by the holy month of Ramadan

as Turk Telecom was unwilling to undertake the task while its employees were fasting. The delay was used to everyone’s advantage however and the double man power of the HOTO allowed us to get all the heavy lifting done and the DSGT was moved to its final location ready to take up the link when the E1 lines were moved. A lot of legacy equipment was found during the move and the crew has worked hard alongside **OR-8 Cristian Mangu (ROM A)**, the NS2T S4 chief, to get things ready to be shipped back to SHAPE and Brunssum as well as setting up a DIY sun-shade across the porta-cabins, in addition everyone was grateful for as the temperatures continued to rise.

**Damo**, **Brad**, **John** and **Jake** finally managed to leave on 25 July leaving **Greg**, **Mike**, **Constantine** and **Tommo** to settle into their shift routines alongside **Johan** and **Adam**. After weeks of delays Turk Telecom finally arrived one day, completely unannounced, and under the studious eye of **Johan** the E1 lines were moved into the final location. After the excitement of the airport blast and coup along with the hard work from both crews moving all the equipment in the Turkish heat, we’ve moved into August which has seen the temperatures regularly rise into the 40s during the height of the day and things settled into a quiet routine.



*The Crew*

Shift work means the whole crew is rarely together so regular BBQs are used as a way for everyone to mingle.

#### **Exercise WESEL ADVENTURE (13 – 23 June)** - by *Cpl Navin Gurung*

Ex WESEL ADVENTURE was an adventure training package conducted 13–23 Jun in Wertach (Germany) for the British personnel from 1 NATO Signal Battalion organised by **SSgt Turnbull**. There were 12 personnel split into two different groups, one was RCF (Rock Climbing Foundation) and the other multi-activities. RCF was a five day course run by **Mr Burat** (Civilian Instructor). The multi-activities included kayaking, mountain biking, rock climbing and hillwalking. We also had instructors from the battalion. **Capt Wall** was the mountain biking instructor. **WO2 Crossley** and **SSgt Turnbull** were MLT instructors. **LCpl Thompson** took us for kayaking and rock climbing. We assembled in the Wesel estate for 0715hrs, loaded the equipment onto the vehicles and then we set off for Wertach. It was a long arduous journey and the weather wasn’t at its best. En route we took a few short breaks before we arrived at the Drei Muhlen lodge in Wertach after nearly six and half hours of driving.

Kayaking was conducted on a nearby lake named Gruntensee approximately ten minutes’ drive from the lodge on Day 1 and

Day 5 of the exercise. The instructor taught us the basic skills of kayaking to the capsizing drills. We paddled around the perimeter of the lake. One of the important drills that the instructor wanted us to practice was the capsize drill. It was slightly cold but good fun during the practice. We also had a few games of water polo.

Mountain biking on Day 2 and Day 8; we were shown the basic skills required. We all practiced the drills before we set off for nearby hills in Wertach. It was challenging but achievable. It also got a bit adventurous when **WO2 Crossley** and myself had a few falls on the slopes. There were plenty of stops to capture the beautiful scenery and the opportunity to take photographs too.

Rock Climbing on Day 3. The indoor climbing was at In Form Park in Oberstdorf (Germany) and the outdoor climbing in Tempen and Nassereith (Austria). We all started with beginners' climbs and finished off at the intermediate level.

Hillwalking on Day 4. There were three MLT instructors in the group so we decided to go to Konigschlosser also known as Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Castle and then to Sauling for the ascend. It was a 45 minutes' drive from Wertach to the Konigschlosser car park. We started hillwalking from the car park. It was about half an hour's walk to the castle. Once we got to the castle, we took a few pictures and then headed towards Sauling. The hillwalking started with a nice gentle walk to an adventurous one. At one point, **SSgt Turnbull** came across a crevasse as we ascended towards the top of the hill. The descending route wasn't an easy one and definitely not good for people who were scared of heights. At just over the halfway point of the ex, we had a day's rest. We made it worthwhile by visiting a Water Park named Therme.

On the morning of the final day, we handed in all the equipment borrowed from the stores and the rooms. After our breakfast, we got our packed lunches and made our way back to Wesel. Upon arrival at Wesel, we did a quick turnaround of the vehicles and kits. It was a good opportunity for all of us to take part in Ex WESEL ADVENTURE. It was also a good break from the daily routine jobs and a good team bonding experience, improving personal and team skills. The exercise had a successful outcome.



#### 628 SIGNAL TROOP

OC **Capt Sam McEvoy**  
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris McKechnie**

This has been, once again, an extremely busy period for the troop, with exercises, adventure training and Trailwalker UK, and finally siting the rock outside of the Troop lines.

There has been a considerable churn of manpower as we bid a fond farewell to the following; **Capt Craig Tee** as he pursues his G1 dream as the Adjt at 15 Sig Regt, **SSgt Adam Stares** who remains in the NATO family and moves to 1 NATO Signal Battalion in Wesel, **Sgt Rich Beasley** on promotion to SSgt and posted to 11 (RSS) Sig Regt, **Sgt Steve Gaylard**, on promotion and posted to the Corps Engagement Team, **Sgt Freddie Wynter**, on promotion to SSgt and attending his Foreman of Signals course, **Sgt 'Scouse' Wilkes** attending his Yeoman of Signals course, **Sgt Damo Morris** who is transferring to the AGC, **Cpl Andrew Marshall** posted to HQ 20 Armd Inf Bde and **Cpl Gary Tweddle** posted to 11 (RSS) Sig Regt.



*Making their mark in Blandford*

We are pleased to welcome the following to the family, **Capt Sam Mcevoy** having been poached from RMA Sandhurst, **Sgt Andrew Madden** leaving 11 (RSS) Sig Regt on promotion, **Cpl Adam Mcvinnie** leaving 3 Div Sig Regt, **LCpl Hywel Davies** arriving from 21 Sig Regt, **LCpl Simon Evans** arriving from phase 2 training on promotion, **LCpl Lewis Jeffrey**, returning to service after a short break on civilian street, **Sigs Matthew Bishop** and **Katherine Wood** both arriving from phase 2 training, **Sig Thomas Mortimer** arriving from 3 Div Sig Regt and finally **Sig Keegan Houston** arriving from 1 Sig Regt.

#### Exercise STEADFAST COBALT 16 - by Sgt Wilkes

On the 26 April Deployable Communications Module (DCM) D (628 NATO Sig Tp) deployed from our peace time location at Blandford Camp to begin Ex STEADFAST COBALT 16, which is one of two major annual NATO communications exercises. Whilst Trident Juncture is about C2, Steadfast Cobalt's primary aim is interoperability and proving communications amongst the member states of the alliance.

After a three hour trip to Heathrow Airport we checked in and boarded our flight to this year's exercise location; Bucharest, the capital of Romania. Due to there being no military accommodation available our home for the next six weeks would be the Ramada North hotel in Bucharest's Sector 1 neighbourhood.

Our exercise area was the barracks housing one of our sister DCMs, DCM E of 2 NATO Sig Bn (NSB). After the usual exercise in-processing and ground briefs it was straight to work, unloading our equipment, which had been commercially moved from the Bn HQ in Wesel, Germany, and figuring out our exact layout and ground plan. Whilst the majority of the DCM made a start on building our comms shelters and building razor wire fences, Satcom Sect under **Sgt William 'Scouse' Wilkes** began erecting the unit's sat link and our electricians **Sgt Steve Gaylard** and **Cpl Hywel 'Gorgeous' Davies** began running power cables in numerous directions and trying to figure out where exactly the mains power the Romanians were providing us was coming from!

At the end of our first day our compound was looking in pretty good shape and even the FofS, **WO1 (FofS) Pete Fraser** and the Ops SSgt, **SSgt Adam Stares** had been observed breaking a good honest sweat!

After three days hard work, and 2 days ahead of schedule our compound and comms set up was completed, with only the cabling to our end users outstanding, a job that was performed with only the smallest use of polite language by **Sgt Richie Beasley** the Cable Sect head, and Training Cell co-ordinator, who took great pleasure informing us all that he had brought his MATTs DVDs box set with him!

Our server stacks unfortunately decided at this point that 'computer says no' and provide further hard work for Network Exchange and LAN/WAN sections under **Sgt Rob Jones** and **Cpl Will 'What's daylight' Hillyard**.



Alongside us in the same compound were the Bundeswehr manned DCM C, it is not often, due to the geographic spread of the Bn, that we are able to co-locate and work alongside our German colleagues, however they quickly set about disproving the myth that Germans have no sense of humour! Dotted amongst the Germans were a few other members of the Bn demonstrating the international make

up of 1NSB including our Belgian S4 representative and a member of Bn S3 from Greece.

Once we had established our battle rhythm we were joined by the OC **Capt Craig Tee** who had been delayed in the UK on business. After a few days he decided that gaining a cultural appreciation of our host nation was important; (as long as we were meeting our work commitments), and that cultural visits were the order of the day. To start the ball rolling **Sgt Matt Hunt** organised a visit to Bran Castle, which is believed to be the inspiration for the evil lair in **Bram Stoker's** 'Dracula', with interest high two trips had to be organised. Each involved a three hour drive through rural Romania and up into the Carpathian Mountains, giving members of the troop a view of life in Romania we wouldn't have gained if we had only stayed in Bucharest. As well as these trips several others were organised including a city tour of Bucharest by **Cpl Bantha 'BM' Magar** and a trip to Snagov Monastery and the British Military Cemetery by **Sig Pete Bradley**.

In addition to our main effort, as part of the interoperability component of the exercise we also provided the control station for several Europe wide HF nets. Aply manned by **Cpl Mark Newton** and **Sig Tom Mortimer** this provided several challenges, notably getting different national radio systems working to each other over several modes, the engineering at times proving extremely challenging, however with a lot of hard work and co-operating with troops from eight nations we were able to get all nets in and working with only a few distant ends failing to establish comms to us. All of us involved gained useful experience and insights into multinational working that will no doubt come in useful in the future.

Towards the end of the exercise members of the DCM were utilised to escort VIPs who visited the location. Guests included the President of Romania, the Romanian Defence Minister and numerous Generals from all nations represented on the exercise. There were escorted around the various DCM locations representing all 3 NSBs providing them an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of them all.

During the exercise we received several visitors from our Bn HQ, including the CO **Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (Bundeswehr)**, the Bn 2i/c **Maj James Lyons** (Royal Signals) and the RSM **CWO Steve Base** (Royal Canadian Signals), who were all pleased to see the level of output and the extra tasks we had managed to achieve.

Sadly after six weeks it came to the point where all testing had been achieved and the exercise came to an end, after two days hard work packing and manifesting for transport back to Wesel and Blandford Camp, we left Bucharest for Blandford Camp with many fond memories of our time in Romania.

#### **DCM D's trip to Lulworth Cove 18 Jul 16 - by LCpl Tape**

On a very warm Monday morning, DCM D's finest embarked on a trip down to Lulworth cove, where they would partake in the sport of kayaking. The drive down was uneventful, although most of the seniors jumped in **Sgt Ritchie Beasley's** minibus/padwagon and ditched **WO1 (FofS) Pete Fraser** and left him to join the rabble in the minibus, the "rabble" were asleep for the majority of the trip so there was very little rabbling.

After **LCpl Hannah Roberts** had finished attempting to kill the passengers in the minibus we arrived at our destination at Lulworth cove. The weather was very hot and everyone donned their mark 1 sunscreen. We met **Tim**, our guide for the day and after some very short training sessions we headed down to the cove and began our adventure out onto the seas.



*The team sea kayaking*

We travelled along the coastline of Lulworth coves, and stopped at various points to tell us very interesting and valuable information on the formation of the coves, although I can't remember anything he said at the time of writing this I know it was information I would keep forever. Whilst traversing to the half-way point **SSgt 'Dusty' Binns** and **LCpl Hannah Roberts** were in aggressive moods, ramming myself and **LCpl Ant Hurlock** off our kayak and into the cold sea, instead of helping us everyone had a good giggle at our expense. Just before the halfway point though **SSgt Dusty Binns** decided to tip his own kayak into the water plunging

himself and **LCpl Hannah Roberts** into the water, **LCpl Tombs** followed suit and annoyed a now very cold and wet **LCpl Lewis Jeffery**.

At the halfway point we sat on a beach and chomped on some chocolate biscuits and drank some refreshing water before having a few races on the way back. **WO1 (FofS) Pete Fraser** and **SSgt Chris McKechnie** seemed to do well in all of these races; I feel they were given a more streamlined kayak and oars, but that's just my opinion.

Once back we all dusted ourselves off and changed, then treated ourselves to some good quality fish and chips before the seniors decided that they needed to go back and do "work" this time with the FofS in tow. With **Sgt 'Freddie' Wynter** left as the only senior we decided to overthrow his power and get an ice-cream to end the day before heading back to the minibus and once again leaving our lives in the hands of **LCpl Hannah Roberts**.

### Rock Climbing Foundation Course - Bavaria - by LCpl Tombs

On Sun 12 Jun, three intrepid adventurers, **Cpl Stu Blakeley**, **LCpl 'Tombsie' Tombs** and **Sig 'Bradders' Bradley**, from 628 Sig Tp departed for Drei Muhlen lodge, Wertach, Bavaria. Drei Muhlen lodge is a military funded establishment run by members of the Armed Forces, in which all Tri Service personnel can attend Adventure training and courses. The particular course that we were attending was the Rock Climbing Foundation Course. Our journey started at 0800 hrs from Blandford Camp, where we set the all-important SatNav and began our 2 day journey. This would involve the crossing to Calais, France, through Belgium and finally stopping at Wesel, Germany where we would spend the night. This was a long and tiresome journey especially for **Cpl Stu Blakeley**, having to put up with the youth of today's music selection and volume levels.

The next morning we met up with the remainder of the course from 1 NATO Signal Battalion and continued the last segment of the journey to Wertach. Once we had arrived we conducted the mandatory briefs and instructions, followed by being shown our rooms as the cries of "Shotgun the bottom bunk" were heard down all the corridors. This was it; the start of the course, I was



*Cpl Blakeley and LCpl Tombs having reached the top*

secretly very nervous of heights but made a conscious effort not to let anyone know. We met our climbing instructor **Borut** and headed to the wilderness. We started off with the basics, slowly progressing as each day passed. The climbs increased in difficulty requiring more preparation and technical skill. Despite my fears of being the first to fall off, **Sig 'Bradders' Bradley** took that honour (cheers mate!). After the fifth day as a group we were becoming more competent and we achieved our Rock Climbing Foundation. On our R&R day, we had a day visit to Therma Spa where we relaxed in saunas and the water park to rest our aching muscles.

For the remainder of the time in the beautiful Bavarian region we were able to continue climbing as the instructor was there for the entire period. This meant we were able to climb in a more relaxed environment and push ourselves further. We were also able to visit Castle Neu Schwanstien, which is the world famous castle that Walt Disney based his Disney castle on. It was soon the end of our fantastic trip and we were all grateful that we were able to experience the Beautiful Bavarian region.



*Neu Schwanstien Castle*

### Trail Walker 2016 - by Sig Wood

Saturday 23 July - Training for Trail Walker 2016 started the week before the event commenced, coinciding with my posting to DCM D NATO Signal Squadron, an auspicious start to my Army Career!

The day before Trail Walker we ticked off the final items on our kit list; blister plasters, deep heat and spare socks. Our team consisted of, **Sgt Damien Morris**, **Cpl Stew Blakeley**, **Cpl Chris Macdonald** and **Sig Katherine Wood** expertly supported by **Cpl Ashley Spooner**, **Cpl Will Hillyard** and **Sig Keegan Houston**.

We travelled via minibus to Queen Elizabeth Country Park ready to be part of something amazing. The sight of vehicles and fellow campers filled us with excitement and a little trepidation. After being ushered to our camping spot, we erected a 12x12 tent and set up our camp beds whilst sorting out our individual admin boxes. After this we headed to the administration tent to sign our relevant paperwork. We were given our competitor numbers and attached our electronic tags. The aroma of the 'Pasta party' guided us to the food tent where we gorged ourselves with carbohydrates which we will be relying on the following day.

0430 hrs, we were woken with tents coming down around us heralding an early start. We headed straight to the field kitchen for a hearty breakfast before our 6am start time. The

atmosphere was electric as we bimbled to the start line. Oxfam volunteers cheered us on and gave us words of praise. The bagpipes sounded as we tagged ourselves in, imminently awaiting the starting horn. The crowd started to move, people jested, voices cheered and we were on our way to 100km. Up through trees, hopping over the tree roots we completed our first check point in 1hr and 09 mins. After a quick pit stop as we guzzled down a bottle of Lucozade each and headed off. After 20 km we were now at check point 2. We tagged in and located our admin team who had our 1 NATO Battalion flag. A quick change of socks, a mouth full of salted nuts and away we went again.

The heat started to pick up so did the gradient of the hills which we ascended. A rival team of females were making themselves known as they “yoyo’d” past us on the flats and we overtook them on the hills. 28.3 km down we had check point 3 in our sights.

As other competitors closed up, the atmosphere was a positive one, with a little banter being swapped between groups, before getting back to business. Check points 4 and 5 down, 49.9km to go. Our bodies started to ache and our ankles were screaming as the rough terrain took its toll. We shuffled across the flats, pounding down the hills and tabbing up the inclines we were almost at our half way point. As morale was starting to snap slightly, **Sig Katherine Wood** decided that the event was far too easy; clumsily taking a

tumble and hitting the floor with her knee. Once the remainder of her team had stopped laughing, they established that she was okay and the team soldiered on to check point 6, albeit with a bloody knee and a whimper.

Morale was high and coincided with an increase of pace, as we worked our way past many other teams. Check point 8- Jack and Jill, Check point 9-Kingston Hollow another 3 hrs 26 mins completed.

One final check point until we reached our target. Unfortunately, at this point **Sgt Damien Morris** picked up an injury, tearing his calf muscle. 1 hr 33 mins later we crossed the finish line of Trail Walker 2016 with the 1 NATO Signal Battalion flag flying high. The bagpipes were sounded and voices cheered. We could finally stop running!

We completed the course in at 15 hrs 16mins. We were guided to the podium where we were rewarded with our completion medal and Khata scarf. Pictures were taken and we shook hands signalling the time to stretch off before our long journey back to Blandford camp.

Trail Walker is an amazing experience, difficult both physically and mentally but the work ethic of both competitors and support crew saw us through. I would definitely recommend the event to anyone and hope the money raised for OXFAM and the Gurkha Welfare Trust helps make a difference.

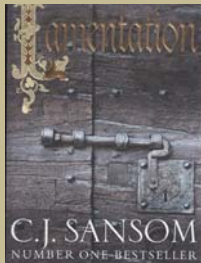
## BOOK REVIEW

by Lt Col (Ret'd) Phil Osment, Director, Royal Signals Institution

**Lamentation** - by C J Sansom

Lamentation is the latest in the medieval detective series centred around Shardlake, a lawyer working in Lincoln's Inn during the reign of Henry VIII. For those of you who have read Sansom's work before there will be the familiar detailed descriptions of life in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and the appearance of key characters who have appeared in earlier instalments. It all reeks of authenticity and, even if you haven't read the earlier instalments in the series, there are enough back story explanations to fill in the gaps. Indeed this aspect of the book is part of the problem for me and I suspect for the author too. The Shardlake character has led such an eventful life and woven such a complex series of relationships together, some at a very high level indeed, that explanations and recaps are necessary. This makes 'Lamentation' a reasonable stand-alone read but can prove frustrating for those of us who have read earlier books who then have to wade through these recaps.

The book has a twisting storyline that throws in interesting sub-plots that never threaten to derail the main tale. The tempo rises and falls and this makes the various twists and turns unpredictable. Sansom brings to life the customs, attitudes and mind-sets of the protagonists so that their actions appear logical and reasonable set in the context of their time. The overwhelming importance and influence of religion in everyday life in that period is hard to appreciate but I came away with a far better understanding having read the book. The plot centres round England's religious tensions and



fear of conspiracies that characterised Henry's declining years. The manoeuvring of various rival factions at the royal court and the issues surrounding the succession to the throne drag our hero into the action as he struggles to solve a seemingly unremarkable murder that takes on enormous political importance. Refreshingly Shardlake does not always get things right and not all loose ends are neatly tied up. In short, the 'baddies' don't always get their just desserts but this statement should not be regarded as a 'spoiler'. The plot kept me engaged but I don't think this was one of Sansom's best. Some of the plot mechanisms are becoming a bit worn to me but for someone less familiar with the genre the quality of the writing should appeal. Sansom still managed to surprise with this ending however and deserves credit for the clever finale. I would recommend the book if medieval 'whodunnits' are your thing and even for hardened Sansom fans this book should not disappoint.

Grading: 4 stars out of 5  
ISBN 978-0-230-74420-2  
Paperback edition 2015

### Request for Information – Bretton Hall, Wakefield 1939-46

I am writing the history of Bretton Hall, Wakefield and searching for information or photos of the time when 39 Signal Regiment requisitioned Bretton Hall in 1939-46.

If you can assist please contact me at:

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# BRITISH ARMY RACE CAR TEAM

by Cpl Dan Tedstone

## Donnington Report 18-21 March

Donnington Circuit was the first port of call in the Tri Service challenges race calendar. Over the weekend of 18-21 March, 25 competitors entered the race and amongst them were two members from the Royal Corps of Signals, **SSgt Chris Wood** and **Cpl Dan Tedstone** both of 251 Sig Sqn, 10 Sig Regt.

The weather was certainly booked for Donnington as it was a glorious weekend of sunshine which meant for brilliant racing conditions ahead. **SSgt Wood**, now a 3 year seasoned race veteran, was well accustomed to the goings on in the paddock and as ever was as cool as a cucumber. He found himself showing the newer guys the ropes with regards to where to be for signing on and drivers briefings.

**Cpl Tedstone** on his debut season and debut race was taking it all in, anxious for the event but excited nonetheless. Just making it to the event was a relief as two days previous his Honda Civic Type R was having running issues. However, after some fault finding it turned out that a faulty crank shaft sensor was to blame and was swiftly fixed!

Qualifying went reasonably well for both Royal Signals representatives, **SSgt Wood** managed to qualify 10<sup>th</sup> (4 seconds behind the leader) and **Cpl Tedstone** came in 14<sup>th</sup> (6.5 seconds behind the pace). Despite the heads up from **SSgt Wood** no amount of words could describe the feeling of keeping the throttle fully pinned into Craner Curves; a flat out high speed esses downhill that bottoms out then comes back up. Like a rollercoaster ride it certainly requires some minerals to fully commit to full throttle!



*Cpl Dan Tedstone taking the lead into the Apex*

With the grid now set, all that was left was the 40 minutes endurance race. **SSgt Wood** took no hesitation in flying off the line and into the first corner, battling for the top positions from the off. Having raced at Donnington before, he knew where time could be shaved and the best lines for overtaking. He eventually finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in class, bagging a trophy. Not a bad first race! **Cpl Tedstone** was a little unsure how the first tight corner would go with 25 cars flying full speed in and decided to ease off the throttle slightly and let the cars have some space before finding his nerve and giving it the full beans for the rest of the race. Some brilliant battles with other cars eventually ended himself finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in class. A brilliant result on a debut race on a track that he had never set tyre upon.





**SSgt Chris Wood making the most of track limits**

mainly YouTube, helps a lot it can never prepare you for the feedback and speed of each corner. **SSgt Wood** and **Cpl Tedstone** arrived a day early and had the chance to walk the track and get a feel for the place. Armed with an umbrella (as it was raining) and a bottle of Corona, they made their best race car noises and strolled around the circuit.

Qualifying went reasonably well for the Royal Signals drivers. **SSgt Wood** managed to find himself in 5<sup>th</sup> and **Sgt Ashmore** in 7<sup>th</sup> despite only making two laps and having to pit due to mechanical issues. Meanwhile **Cpl Tedstone** found himself 10<sup>th</sup> on the grid despite snapping gear linkages and not finishing the session. Luckily **Sgt Ashmore** managed to rectify his running issue with a bit of trackside soldering rectifying a fuel pump issue and **Cpl Tedstone** managed to sweet talk someone at the track with the same car as him to borrow their linkage for the race, which they very kindly did!

With 22 Tri-Service cars lined up for the grid, the sun was now shining and the track was dry, we once again needed to thank whoever booked the weather! The lights went out and the drivers all gave full throttle down to the first corner. **Cpl Tedstone** got off to a flying start and beat 4 cars from the stand still (despite nearly being pushed in to the pit wall). Meanwhile **SSgt Wood** and **Sgt Ashmore** found themselves bumper to bumper for the first half of the race. **SSgt Wood's** BMW E36 and **Sgt Ashmore's** Honda Civic EG6 are two very different cars but equally matched. Meanwhile **Cpl Tedstone** found himself pulling away from the drivers behind and battling with a Toyota MR2 and BMW M3 Compact. Unfortunately, both **SSgt Wood** and **Sgt Ashmore** had to retire for cooling issues. The BMW's radiator gave up the ghost and the Honda's front brakes caught on fire...nothing to do with the fact the front brake pads were down to the metal before the race...

So unfortunately the only Royal Signals driver left was **Cpl Tedstone**, who despite coming off the track a couple of times due to a severe under steer issue, managed to finish the race 3<sup>rd</sup> in his class and secure himself a trophy. Although a victory, it was soured as the tracks rough surface had taken its toll on the car shredding the tyres to nothing and rendered a set of brake pads completely dead.

From an Army team perspective, we did well and better than at Donnington. On an individual basis, all three Royal Signals drivers were licking their wounds from the damage done to the cars. However, rebuilding the cars back up is half of the fun and will be ready to race in a months' time for Snetterton 300 which also includes a celebration of Armed Forces Day.

All in all the weekend went well for both drivers and the Army was represented in the highest form. Despite the RAF having the most experienced drivers on the grid, and walking away with the top prizes, the future looks good for the British Army Race Car Team.

### Croft Report 20-23 May

The next meeting in the Armed Forces Race Challenge was far up north on the outskirts of Darlington at Croft Racing Circuit. As before **SSgt Chris Wood** and **Cpl Dan Tedstone** were present and they were joined by **Sgt Will Ashmore**, who managed to fix his car just in time to journey up the M1.

Croft was a little different to Donnington in that the circuit is an old airfield, and as such, makes for a flat racing track as opposed to Donnington's undulating racing specific setup. Regardless of that, Croft was equally as challenging in different ways with more technical hairpins and double handers requiring good driving ability.

Croft was a track that nobody within the Army team had ever driven before and although research, via



**Cpl Dan Tedstone qualifying**

# ROYAL SIGNALS TRIATHLO

Currently we are half way into the triathlon year and Royal Signals triathlon is growing at a rate that warrants a performance review. With triathlon growing across the UK faster than ever and civilian events selling out as quick as Glastonbury tickets, it is worth recapping on how our athletes are performing but more so where and at what level.

Whilst most triathletes were still in winter hibernation, an early season duathlon (Newent Duathlon - Gloucestershire) tempted the majority of the tri-committee out to test the base training. Winter miles = summer smiles and this race resulted in a 1<sup>st</sup> Open Male and 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Female results, leading nicely into April and the start of the Sprint phase of the season.

## APRIL

April was a busy month as people shed their long trousers and beanies in favour of the new Corps Tri Suits and Cycling gear. We had Corps athletes racing at Sprint events in East Leake, Hereford, Halesowen and Mold. Our duathletes performed well at the Inter-Services Duathlon Championships held in Abingdon and we had a number of triathletes tackle early Half Ironman events (70.3) in both Florida and Cyprus.

## MAY

The Royal Signals Novice Triathlon Camp and Corps Sprint Championships held at 21 Sig Regt were conducted in early May. The sprint Tri held on the Thursday saw **Sgt Nick Drabble** of 18 Sig Regt crowned the Corps champ. A plethora of short sprint races from Tewkesbury to Worcester were also well represented, the Corps Champ taking 4<sup>th</sup> place at both. May was



*Capt 'Dom' Noone - prior to the Double Savage Triathlon*

also the month in which the National Championships commence, it was awesome to see both seasoned athletes and novices racing side-by-side, tackling these events. **Sgt Sarah Hardy** finished 12<sup>th</sup> in her category at the National Open Water Aquathlon Championships and **WO2 Jay Jennings** bagged a qualification spot for the European 70.3 Champs in Austria racing for GB as an age-group athlete at the Grafman National Middle Distance (70.3) Championships. This race also saw **Maj Graham Inglis** don the Corps kit and **Maj Nige Clay** race his first middle distance triathlon in preparation for Ironman UK in August.



*Novice athlete at the Corps Triathlon Camp learns how to dismount quickly*

The Slateman Savage (Llanberis Wales) was tackled by **Capt Domic Noone**, this race is two separate races on consecutive days over the harsh Welsh terrain, cheeky to say the least! Wearing their GB suits for the first time, **WO2 Jay Jennings** and **Capt Loyd Dobson** took on the European Sprint Triathlon Championships in Lisbon, Portugal and the International Dualthon Championships in Aviles, Spain.

## JUNE

As the weather warms and the triathlon bug starts to bite Corps athletes are creeping out and are being seen flying around races across the UK. June has seen representations across the race distances and other additional endurance events. *El Capitan*, **Maj Dave Phillips**, bagged 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Jubilee River Swim (10K Marathon solo swim) in just over 2 hours with a Corps triathlete relay team in tow made up of: **Maj Ben Psaila**; **WO1 (FofS IS) Jon Colbert**; **WO2 (SSM) Jay Jennings**; and **Cpl Dave Kane**. The Middle distance season has also kicked off this month with athletes tackling, amongst many others: Ironman Staffordshire 70.3 (**WO2 Ewan Darlington**, **Sgt Nick Drabble**, **Maj Dave Phillips**, **Sgt Dafydd Evans**); ITU Standards Leeds (**WO2 Jay Jennings**, **Cpl Ricky Henstock**, **WO1 Jim Mcgory**); Chester Deva 70.3 (**Maj Ian Peers**); and the Chester Tri (**Cpl Chris Derrick**). A Corps athlete was even spotted on the podium as part of Team Army relay at Ironman 70.3 Exmoor...!



*Capt Tom Collins at the Lakesman full distance Triathlon*

To the best of our knowledge we have only had one long course completion currently, **Maj Tom Collins** completing Lakesman. More long course action later this year with **Maj Chris Foggarty** and **Lt James Cooke** racing IM Wales (rather you than me!), **Maj Nige Clay**, **WO2 Michelle Margrie** and **Maj Terry Harrison** racing IM UK, and **Maj Dave Phillips** heading to the World Long Course Champs in USA and then IM Sweden with **LCpl Mike McNeil**.

# ON – MID SEASON REVIEW

## JULY

The Army Standard Distance Championships opened in July and was the first race that as a Corps we have turned up on mass and raced as a squad. 25 triathletes spanning 9 different regiments represented the Corps. Many other capbadges commented on the 'sea of blue' but more importantly the inclusive nature and mutual support we displayed before, during and after the event. After a great race, which saw all our lads and lasses perform out of their skin, fairly and positively, **WO2 Jay Jennings** and **Sgt Nick Drabble** were selected to race for the Army at the Inter Services event later in the month.



*WO2 Lee Green flying Army Colours at the Newent Duathlon*

Regt, ready for the Inter-Corps competition in Aldershot. Additionally there will be Army swimming camps both before and after Christmas. Get in touch with any of the committee, shown below, in order to highlight your interest (don't worry about how good you are at swimming, let us deal with that).

To finish, a few stats (all as at 11 July 16):

- 105 races have been entered by our athletes (that we know of).
- 6 GB Age Group vests have been achieved, in 4 different distances, with more to come.
- Every rank from Signaller to Lieutenant Colonel has represented the Corps so far – come on you Red Tabs...!
- 25 Corps athletes were representing at the Army Standard Triathlon – more than any other capbadge.

Committee:

- Secretary – **Maj Dave Phillips** (AHQ)
- Team Manager – **WO2 (RQMS) Michelle Margrie**
- SQMS/Assistant TM – **WO2 (SSM) Jay Jennings** (22SR)



*Corps Triathlon Team at the Army Standards*

Focus now for the committee is to highlight our talent and look to build on the successes of the initial 2016 performances. The aspirations of Corps athletes are many and varied, be it a GB 'vest' at an age group event; qualifying for Kona from a full IM; completing a first triathlon; or simply racing for racing sake on a Sunday morning. The committee is here to support and develop R SIGNALS athletes as best we can.

## AUGUST+

The next race to be focused on by the Corps is the Sprint Relays, held on 14 September. We will be looking to enter a Corps team into this race but everyone is encouraged to attend, **WO2 Michelle Margrie** will be in touch with the team details.

As we all know in order to be a triathlete an athlete must be able to swim (kind of). To this end everyone is encouraged to get involved with R Signals and Army Swimming. In Q3 of this year there will be a Corps swim camp held, probably at 30 Sig



*Maj Nige Clay hunting down a PB at the Blenheim Triathlon*



*New Corps Ironman triathletes*

# ROYAL SIGNALS

Royal Signals Cycling and Triathlon Personalities			
President	Brig	J	Cole
Chairman	Maj	N	Purdy
Road Secretary	SSgt	R	Gibson
Mountain Biking Secretary	Maj	F	Tedby
Triathlon Secretary	Maj	D	Phillips



## An update from the Royal Signals Road Cycling Team...

Ex **WELSH EPIC** was the Army Cycling Union's annual pre-season training camp in North Wales. The 5 day exercise saw members of the Royal Signals Cycling Team get a chance to blow out the cobwebs after the cold months in order to practice their group riding and hill climbing; in preparation for the 2016 Army Cycling Union Road Racing Series (ACRRS).



Ex **JURASSIC RIDER** was the Royal Signals Road Cycling 2016 training camp. The training camp was held at Blandford Camp, Dorset and was designed to increase the skills and confidence of all existing and prospective Royal Signals Road Cyclists interested in competing in the various events held throughout the 2016 race season.

The **ACRRS** has this year included races at Larkhill, Sennybridge, Milton Keynes, Abingdon, Redbridge, Curborough but most importantly Bramcote. With riders from the selected teams and new riders alike racing in these fun Wednesday races, there have always been blue jerseys racing in the A, B, C and female league races.

These races are open to anyone regardless of ability and new racers are always welcome. Your unit cycling OICs and the ACU MOSS pages will have all the details and we always welcome new riders to the races, so please feel free to get involved. Race registration usually opens at 1000 hrs and prizes are usually presented at 1600 hrs.

## Future Plans

As the 2016 season draws to a close the team will begin the winter training packages after the ACRRS Championship at Redbridge on 12 Oct. These training sessions will be held at various regiments across the Corps and all are welcome to attend. The sessions will include winter riding, indoor cycling and other strength training sessions and will be tapered for all abilities.



## An update from the Royal Signals Mountain Biking Team...

Ex **LAPIERRE RIDER** was the Royal Signals Mountain Biking Team's overseas sports tour in Morzine, France. The week was aimed at Corps riders looking to develop and practice their skills in an arduous environment. The week consisted of 5 days riding and a competition day where the team took part in the Portes Du Soleil 80km endurance race; and a total of 12 riders from across the Corps took part during the week organised by **SSgt Mark Whittaker**.



An early start greeted the team on the morning of the Portes Du Soleil race. For the keen mountain bikers within the group, the prospect of riding across the Alps was a great feeling and the promise of lift assisted hills was a welcome addition. The route was brilliant, with a variety of trails and off-piste riding even though the weather had turned fields into bogs in places, which caused riders to fall like dominoes, spinning comically as they fell.

The utterly civilized race included cheese and chocolate food stations along the ride and a lunch stop in Morzine itself. Interestingly, a trip to Morzine is never without some celebrity rider spotting and we managed to spot **Greg Minaar**, a South African World Champion mountain bike racer and **Manon Carpenter**, a professional racing cyclist who rides for the Madison Saracen Downhill team.

# CYCLING TEAM

The exercise concluded with a few days for riders to test their skills in the bike parks of Chatel and Les Gets. Riders successfully negotiated road gaps, gap jumps and wall rides before packing up and returning to the UK.

Ex LANARKSHIRE RIDER was the R SIGNALS mountain bike training camp held in Glasgow, Scotland and was aimed at all Corps riders looking to hone their skills, again in an arduous environment. The exercise consisted of 4 days riding under the direction of experienced leaders in order to negotiate the demanding trails of the Forest of Ae, Glentress, Dalbiettie and Kirroughtree.

The riding groups ranged from novice to experienced, all with different aims and goals for the week. Under the guidance of **Capt Donoghue** and **Cpl Evans**, the novice group started with the very basics and worked up to the successful completion of red trails by the end of the week. This was a fantastic achievement for the riders who have never experienced the demanding trails in Scotland.



Under the guidance of **Sgt Payne** and **LCpl Easter**, the advanced groups focused on developing their already established skills. No amount of experience can stop the fury of the Scottish trails though and riders still experienced mechanical issues and a few cuts and grazes. Determined not to be discouraged though, these set-backs only fuelled better performances, as the advanced groups tackled the tough downhill descents.

## Future Plans

Ex CYMRU RIDER is the next training camp for the team and will be held in North Wales in November 16.

Additionally, following the success of Ex LAPIERRE RIDER, there will be another similar exercise conducted in 2017.

If you are interested in getting involved with these events or in Mountain Biking in general then please do not hesitate to contact **Sgt Mansell** at: [carl.mansell765@mod.uk](mailto:carl.mansell765@mod.uk)



The Royal Signals Cycling team is always looking for new competitors across every discipline. So whether you prefer fat wheels, skinny wheels, or jumping onto your wheels after a swim/before a run; as long as you are **#ProudToWearBlue**, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Email	<a href="mailto:Rsigscyclingroadracing@gmail.com">Rsigscyclingroadracing@gmail.com</a>
Facebook	RSignals Cycling RSignals Triathlon
Twitter	@RSIGSRoadRacing
Instagram	Royalsignalscycling



Ex JURASSIC RIDER was the Royal Signals Road Cycling 2016 training camp. The training camp was held at Blandford Camp, Dorset over the dates 24 – 29 Apr 16 and was designed to increase the skills and confidence of all existing and prospective Royals Signals road cyclists, interested in competing in the various events held throughout the 2016 race season.

There were 3 key aims to the exercise, all designed with the 2016 competitive season in mind: Firstly the exercise was designed to promote competitive Road Cycling at all levels within the Royal Corps of Signals. The Corps Road Cycling team has recently begun to drive forwards its new #GrassRoots initiative, in which novice cyclists are the focus. As Corps sports can sometimes appear cliquy and elitist, the team has focused on continuing to develop a welcoming and positive environment in order to build a successful team and foster a true, Esprit de Corps.

The second aim was to develop the selected Royal Signals Road Cycling squad prior to the start of the 2016 racing season. As a bountiful training ground, with the home of the Royal Signals at its heart, Dorset provides the challenging landscape required to test the experienced riders and develop the skills and tactics required to race within the Army Cycling Union Road Race Series (ACRRS).

The third and final aim was to provide the unique concentrated training for all Corps Development and Regimental competitors, which can only be achieved through an intensive training week. Getting the team together to train, race, laugh and enjoy cycling is integral to building the ever more successful cycling team.

In order to achieve these goals, throughout the week, British Cycling accredited coaches led the ability groups and focused on the three key areas of cycling: knowledge, skills and attitude. Through long rides, skills based training and of course, a good competitive race at the end, the team were able to develop and grow together, whilst climbing and descending the hills of the Jurassic Coast.

The instructional team consisted of **Sgt Calladine, Sgt Jerney, Cpl Henstock, Sig Dickinson** and the 11 Sig Regt PT staff, **Mr Abbott and Mr Geddes**. From chain gangs racing into Blandford to long climbs out to Lulworth Cove, the team steered and instructed the 25 strong cohort through the key skills they would need to become better cyclists and racing machines.

During the course of the week the team were to accumulate over 200 miles of good quality cycling, with the rides progressively becoming longer and faster. The geography of the region ensured that this mileage incorporated over 8,000ft of



# EXERCISE JUR





climbing and some fast riding, which really pushed the riders to Strava glory. For those readers who have never heard of Strava, it is a downloadable app used for recording cycle rides, comparing riders against other riders who have raced along a specific segment of road. The online leader boards were used as a key element of our external motivation as the thrill of the competition is a great driving force. The prospect of winning the Queen/King of the Mountain award worked well as an over-arching goal for each day.



The training camp ran over 5 days and each of the elements of the training was broken down as follows:



Day 1 started with a combination of cycling safety videos and back-to-basics maintenance lessons to ensure that everyone was prepared for the week with thorough baseline knowledge of the mechanics of road cycling. Starting with how to properly change an inner tube, each group received a basic fault finding and maintenance lesson as well as a cleaning techniques demonstration; essentially, the level 1 maintenance schedule for the road bike. Although it was largely revision for most of the riders, it was still an important morning to get into the correct mind-set for the week and was well received by the groups.



After a carbohydrate loaded lunch, each group then set out to the surrounding countryside in order to stretch their legs after the long journey on the previous day. The groups rode at different speeds to allow people to be best placed to ride in each peloton. The novice group started at a steady 12km pace whilst the intermediates and expert groups pushed up to 16km per hour. Each group covered approximately 40km on this all important “shake out” ride and soon found out where the niggles, sticking breaks, ill-fitting cleats and extra padding requirements were.

Day 2 saw the riders set out for the first long ride of the week. The ride route encompassed the all-important STRAVA hill segment designed by the team. This day was designed to introduce the riders to the competitive element of road cycling and to demonstrate just how much can be achieved when using the correct muscles and gears on a tricky climb, but even with helpful messages chalked onto the floor it was still an emotional ride up the 18% incline.



Following the trickier route on the previous day, day 3 was designed to be a slower, smoother long distance route. That is, with the exception of the infamous Gold Hill in Shaftesbury. An iconic, extremely steep, cobbled hill was the challenge for this days ride. With both physical and psychological pressure the hill got the better of some members of the group but provided the climbing challenge that a number of the teams’ “mountain goats” were chasing.

As if the epic ride was not enough, some of the racing snakes of the team were able to participate in a local, civilian organised, 2Up Time Trial race courtesy of the Gillingham Wheelers Road Club. **LCpl Royals** and Army Reservist **LCpl Tier** displayed their excellent racing flair during this event as they raced around the undulating countryside, riding as a pair, regularly taking turns to sit in the uncomfortable position of being the front rider.

# RASSIC RIDER



Day 4 was designed to test the long distance ability of the riders and was the most scenic ride of the week. The 80km ride saw the groups riding out as far as Lulworth Cove and then back past Corfe Castle. It was most certainly a long hilly day but a fantastic way to bid farewell to the hills of the Jurassic Coast.

The novice group also used this day to show what they were really made of and displayed some excellent grit and determination by bridging the gap between their front rider and the rear rider of the intermediates group during the route back in. This was no mean feat considering that many of the group had never ridden for more than ten miles before the camp and were not aware of correct pedalling technique prior to the week.

Day 5 was the culmination race and was a stark contrast to the undulating rides throughout the week. The flats of the Henstridge Airfield introduced a whole different challenge, but were a welcome relief for the sprinters amongst the group!

In addition to introducing racing skills to the team, race day was also to be the final deciding factor in selecting the team members who were to receive their new team strip. With sponsorship kindly provided by Smartnumbers and CNP, the new sought after kit was to be awarded to the top 8 A league riders, the top 4 development team riders and the top 4 female riders. Therefore the stakes were high at this windy technical airfield course.

As was to be expected, the more experienced A-League riders displayed a fast confident start as the starter horn sounded. Shortly after, the B-League and novice riders also began their 40 minutes + 3 laps; the standard race laydown for any Army Cycling Road Racing Series race.

The ACRRS is the league in which the Royals Signals Cycling Team competes in on Wednesdays during the season. The races usually begin in March and finish with a championship race in October. During these races riders from across the Corps compete against riders from across the Army in up to 10 races, at different locations around the country.

For the female racers, following a new Army Cycling Union ruling, they raced alongside their male counterparts in the B and novice races. The new rule which allows females to race in male races provided a different challenge for the riders who are usually only allowed to race in gender separate leagues.

The race was a fast and furious race, with a number of technical corners and sprints into the headwind. However, as the riders raced to the finish line, the excitement and the adrenaline was more than enough to overcome the adversity as they sprinted to victory!

The Royal Signals Cycling Road Racing Team is always looking for new members and will soon begin their winter training programme. If you are interested in getting involved with the sport please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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Twitter	@RSIGSRoadRacing
Instagram	Royalsignalscycling





# ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Sports and adventurous training play a key role in Army life; it allows officers and soldiers to develop teamwork, leadership, fitness, initiative and endurance outside of operations. Sailing offers personnel used to terra firma a whole new challenge that other activities can struggle to provide. The Royal Corps of Signals wants to maximise the opportunity to all ranks of the Corps, encouraging them to take up sailing, and continue a long tradition of successful teams in various sailing disciplines.

Many members of the Corps may be unaware that we have our own Yacht Club based in Gosport, which has three disciplines namely dinghy, windsurfing and offshore. The various sections of the Club allow officers and soldiers to sail in competitive events ranging from Transglobe (the around the world expedition) to windsurfing competitions and Seaview (a dinghy event based on the Isle of Wight).

The RSYC currently operates 3 cruising yachts, Quicksilver, Skywave and Petasus, which are available to members at a concessionary rate. Club Membership is open to all serving and retired members of the Corps and their families. Further details can be found on the website, link below.

Skywave is the club's racing yacht and it participates in a range of events, for example in the Round the Island Race, the Army and Services Offshore Regattas and even in the Azores and Back Race (2015). The offshore section also organises two Sail Training Weeks per year (Spring and Autumn) and other events / expeditions. Details are promulgated via the RSYC Facebook site, which is administered by the Corps Boatswains (contact details below).

The RSYC Dinghies and Day boats (D&D) section runs a 3-4 crew SB20 and 4-5 crew J80. These boats are raced at fleet events both in the UK (principally in the Solent, such as Cowes Week and the Hamble Series) and internationally. These are both serious race boats and are challenging to sail for seasoned inshore and offshore sailors alike.

In order to cater for those new to sailing, we organise annual RYA level 2 training in Laser 2000 Dinghies, leading to training weekends in the larger boats. We also compete in other D&D events such as the Southport 24 hour race, our annual meet at Seaview on the Isle of Wight and the Inter-Corps Dinghy Championships.

## Contact Royal Signals Yacht Club

**SSgt Al Smith** - Senior Corps Boatswain  
**LCpl Jeremy Bennett** - Junior Corps Boatswain

Telephone: 02392 765668

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So get in touch, you never know it could take you literally to the ends of the earth on adventurous expeditions.



*Our racing yacht 'Skywave' flies her spinnaker on the RORC Easter Challenge Race*



*Corps Boatswain demonstrates the 'Don't Panic' Drill while conducting valuable drills with HM Coastguard on the Sail Training Week*



# EXERCISE ALGARVE WATCH



On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, six members of 16 Sig Regt assembled at Beacon Barracks, ready to depart on Exercise ALGARVE WATCH. An exciting sailing exped in the Mediterranean which would see us deliver a yacht from Gibraltar to Albuferia, in Portugal.

The crew was made up of **Capt Craig Hickmott**, **LCpl David Robotham**, **Sig Danny Hughes**, **LCpl Shaun McGuire**, **LCpl James Poulter** and **Sig Alex Orr**; only **Capt Hickmott** had sailed before. After a relaxing flight out to Gibraltar we arrived in the evening and proceeded to find our accommodation before we ventured out to find some food.

The next morning we were up bright and early for a historical military tour of Gibraltar led by **WO2 Peter Jackson** of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment. **Peter** is an avid caver and has lived in Gibraltar for many years and is a veritable expert on the Rock and its military history. Much of which is still visible as the Rock is a giant defensive position that has had hundreds of gun emplacements and tunnels (32 miles worth) dug over the hundreds of years that it has been occupied. Getting inside the WW2 tunnels was very exciting especially getting to see the scale of what was excavated by some very manual digging techniques. We met a few of the locals in the form of the Barbary Apes that live on the Rock, curiously they have more rights than you do. Be careful with your food around them, as they are very quick and partial to a sandwich. Whilst ascending the Rock we caught sight of the yacht that was to be our home for the next week, sat calmly in the harbour.

After a long day walking all over and inside the rock we arrived at the harbour to board the yacht. It was an Elan 333, which is a 33ft yacht, called the Spirit of St George. It happens to belong to the Royal Logistics Corps who have transported the yacht to Gibraltar to be used for off shore sailing charters in the region. As well as the six of us there was the Corps Bosun of the Royal Logistics Corps, **Cpl Andrew**

**‘Woody’ Woodward**. As a result space on the yacht was tight, to the point where **Sig Orr** and myself preferred sleeping on deck; which was nice with the weather being a balmy 26 degrees during the day! That first day was spent becoming familiar with the yacht. We took her out for a brief sail to practice basic manoeuvres and how to recover a ‘man-over-board’. The next task was to buy enough food for seven ravenous sailors to last the week! Even trickier was storing it on the boat; every small space had food hidden in it. You would open a cupboard to find a random bag of rice or pack of crisps stowed away.

Finally Thursday had arrived and we could begin the first leg of our journey. Our destination was the port of Tangier in Morocco. The route we had plotted was approximately thirty nautical miles in a straight line. However at sea you cannot always go in a straight line as the wind does not always co-operate, plus there were the shipping lanes to avoid. After setting sail at about 0600 hrs we arrived in Tangier at about 1430 hrs, with only **Sig Alex Orr** falling victim to sea sickness. Although as many of the crew declined lunch, I suspect they were all suffering really! Unfortunately the brand new marina that we had been promised would be open in Tangier was not yet complete and at that stage was a series of posts in the area that had been dredged for it. With no safe space to berth for the night we made the decision that after a quick passport stamp we had to set sail for Barbate in Spain; another 30 miles away! It was here we had the first instance of comedy steering, whilst **‘Woody’** and I were checking the chart we heard some shouts. Returning to the deck we were surprised to see the yacht facing Tangier again, somehow **LCpl James ‘Jay’ Poulter** had managed to turn the yacht 180 degrees, but he was not sure how! Once we were facing the correct direction again, the wind was perfectly placed off our starboard and was blowing a steady 9 knots, enough to give the yacht a good (but perfectly safe tilt). This elicited many screams and gasps from the inexperienced crew on the yacht,



**LCpl Dave Robotham, "suns out, guns out" whilst adjusting the sheets**

much to the amusement of **Woody** and myself. However it propelled us across the straights of Gibraltar at 7 knots and then up the coast to Barbate. We eventually arrived there at 0030 hrs, our first easy leg had turned into an 18 hour epic, but the entire crew had dug in and worked hard to get there.

We decided to give the crew a bit of a lie in on Friday and set sail for Cadiz at 1100. Again this leg was about 30 miles. Awkwardly the Cape of Trafalgar was in the way so we had to sail a dog leg out to sea, to enable us to tack onto a clear run to Cadiz. Some interesting steering from **Sig Danny Hughes** made for a nervous time on the chart plotter, however we successfully avoided the headland and turned for Cadiz. Unfortunately the tide and the wind placed the waves behind us, which meant it was a rocky journey with the yacht rolling from side to side. The crew did very well keeping the yacht going in the correct direction and managing the swell. As we entered the mouth of the harbour in Cadiz, the sun was just starting to set making for a beautiful vista. At this point a member of the crew who shall remain anonymous said, "Oh look, there must be a club as it has one of those rotating lights showing you how to get there". I looked at him in a bemused manner and said, "No, that is a lighthouse!"

Cadiz is a beautiful and ancient city, which boasts the title of the longest inhabited settlement in Europe, dating back over four thousand years. It has a strong sea faring tradition as it was the main sea link between Spain and the new world. Its heritage has been preserved with the old town left largely as it was with a more modern settlement having been built inland. The local food was excellent, with many a tapas being consumed. We took Saturday as a rest day for the crew to recharge and explore the history of Cadiz, or get sun burnt on the beach; depending on your preference.

After a refreshing rest we prepared for our longest leg yet, 100 miles across the bay of Cadiz to Villamoura in Portugal! The evening before I sat at the chart plotting the most efficient route across the bay. We departed at bang on 0600 heading out of Cadiz, locating the safe water marker which was to be the start point of the charted route, set our sails and dug in for the long haul. Initially the wind was in a good position but as the day progressed it moved further and further around to be head on, slowing our progress. By this point the crew were well accustomed to eating whilst on a boat that is bouncing over waves. So we were well fed and watered throughout the journey. We eventually arrived at our destination at 2200 hrs, thoroughly exhausted after a long, hard day at sea.

After a rest in Villamoura we prepared for our last leg at sea, a comparatively short leg of 8 miles to Albuferia. However, before we left Villamoura we did spy a celebrity **Charles 'Tywin Lannister' Dance**. However, he did not want a photo with **Sig Hughes**, we all think he missed out there.

Despite the short distance for the final leg the wind was well placed to practise some more technical sailing; tacking and gybing up the coast, which made for some more interesting sailing. A gybe (Jibe if you are an American) is a type of turn where the wind passes through the stern of the boat and is more dangerous due to the way it can flick the boom around. As a result you have to be very careful when you perform this manoeuvre, it takes the entire crew to control the boom and work the other sheets to turn safely. A tack is more gentle with the bow of the boat passing through the wind, but still requires focus and team work from the crew to complete safely. We negotiated the tricky entrance to Albuferia and moored up for the final time. All that remained now was to clean the boat; both inside and out. For the final evening we all went out for a final meal, mostly to spare us from more of our own cooking.

Overall Ex ALGARVE WATCH was an exciting and challenging offshore sailing exped. All those who participated learnt a great deal about sailing and thoroughly enjoyed it. Plus we visited four countries/territories covering over 200 nautical miles under sail, which is no mean feat.

I would like to thank the RLC yacht club for allowing us to hire the yacht and the assistance of the RLC's Corps Bosun, who was key to the delivery of this exped.



**Sig Danny Hughes; loving life on the helm**

# MOUNTAINEERING

by LCpl Willett

**E**xercise DRAGON CHILEAN VOLCANO is a 30 Sig Regt Level 3 AT package to Chile taking place January 17, with the primary aim of being the first military expedition to reach the summit of Ojos Del Salado (6,893m). Ojos Del Salado is the world's highest volcano and was active as recently as the 1990's. Only 25% of attempts on the mountain summit are successful, due to the extreme weather conditions and altitude. Volunteers from 30 Sig Regt have to attend a number of pre-training serials (SMF, RSF, WMF and a high altitude first aid course) before they can gain a place on the expedition. To aid squad development all these courses are being delivered as Distributed Training by unit instructors. All attendees, and reserves, are gaining valuable AT experience and qualifications that will enable them to progress through the AT mountaineering schemes in the future.

Members from across 30 Sig Regt took part in a Summer Mountaineering Foundation course 19 - 24 June to develop everyone's base knowledge of map reading techniques, navigation and general experience in mountain walking.

We set off on Sunday to Indefatigable, Joint Services Mountain Training Centre in North Wales, to get settled in to our accommodation and prep for the coming week. On day one we split into three groups under three different instructors; **WO2 (YofS) Toby Dudley**, **SSgt Col Kingshott** and **Sgt Pete Wright**, and proceeded to ascend Moel Siabod which is the highest mountain in the Moelwyhion mountain range at 872m. Each group, along with their instructors, focused on the fundamentals of basic navigation, learning and refreshing on things like speed, distance and time calculations, grid and magnetic bearings and conventional signs. We also learned the 5 D's of mountain walking. No not Dodge, duck, dip, dive and...dodge, but distance, direction, duration, description and dangers. I think it's safe to say that almost every single one of us struggled to maintain a 4 km per hour as we are all so used to just tabbing it out. It made sense after a while as we soon discovered to maintain that pace was not really realistic over long distances on the kind of terrain we were traversing.

Days two and three saw us swap over instructors and develop our knowledge base of the local area, learning about the landscape and correct pronunciation of the welsh landmarks and also wildlife and the habitat at large. It may sound daft to learn about but it is handy to know which plants are poisonous and what purpose they serve or what they can be used for. That being said it became apparent that none of us were very good at general knowledge when quizzed by **SSgt Kingshott** about peaks within the UK, something that I think he may have got a little upset about. The weather proved to be on our side throughout the course, even when on the Snowdon Massive range. Highlight of the two days was summiting Mount Snowdon.

Day four introduced the next stage of mountaineering, which saw us summit various peaks in the Carneddau Mountain Range followed by an overnight stay, sharing the outdoors with the entire welsh population of midgets. Throughout the day we each individually navigated legs of the days journey, we also revisited pacing's for 100 metres, taking into consideration the effect that an incline and decline would have on how many steps would equal 100 metres. The mountains we covered that day were as follows:

- Carnedd Dafydd
- Carnedd Llywelyn
- Foel Grach
- Pen yr Helgi Du

The list actually goes on for another four summits.

The final day had the instructors task each group to set out a different route to the previous day back to where the mini-vans were, needless to say it took a few attempts to pull one together that was approved.

Overall the SMF course was very beneficial giving the group a base qualification to now pursue mountaineering further, and to apply the skills to the coming expedition to Chile.



# ROCK CLIMBING

by LCpl Willett

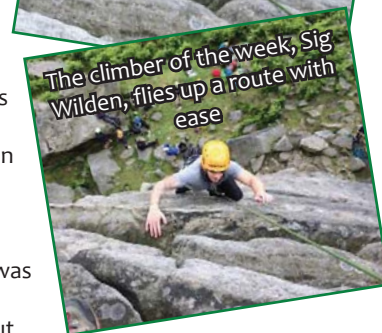
**M**embers from across 30 Sig Regt took part in a Rock Climbing Foundation course 4 - 8 July giving everyone a base level knowledge in single pitch climbing techniques.

On day one we set off nice and early to travel to 21 Sig Regt's indoor rock climbing facilities to have an introduction to rock climbing in general. We covered the basics of putting on a harness, tying in the rope and belaying. We also went over basic foot placement on the wall and also hand placement under the ever watchful eyes of **SSgt Col 'the pro' Kingshott**. The wall at 21 Sig Regt proved to be too difficult for a few of us but special mention should go to **Sig Dan 'show off' Wilden** who picked everything up very quickly as if he had a natural ability, probably because he weighs two stone.

On Tuesday we travelled to the Peak District, specifically Stanage, which offered a wide range of climbing routes of varied difficulties on gritstone. Although we had an introduction to climbing the previous day, climbing on actual rock needed an additional introduction. One of the techniques we were introduced to was hand jamming; essentially placing out fists and hands into cracks within the rocks, queue, innuendo bingo. This proved to be invaluable as many of us were struggling initially to climb the rock faces, some of which were 20 metres high. It was a good opportunity for us to put our skills in belaying to good use from the previous day.

Day 3 saw us return to Stanage but this time in a more difficult area to push us further in what we'd learned so far. **WO2 (YofS) Toby 'Anchor' Dudley** set up various routes with different levels of difficulty for us to ascend and descend. Working in pairs, progressing now onto the correct call methods like 'on belay' and 'take in' which if anything made us feel that little bit more like the pros. Additionally we were shown different safety equipment 'nuts and cams' which basically were older and new ways of slotting solid equipment into small to large cracks that meant that if you fell, the rope that is attached to your harness would catch and save you from plummeting to your death or compensation, which was a valuable lesson for some (not the compensation).

Days 4 and 5 saw us develop our skills in differing areas as we travelled to The Roaches in Staffordshire on day 4 and back to Stanage on day 5. We were shown abseiling in different ways varying from traditional abseiling and stack abseiling which proved to be too scary for some, but all persevered and went through. We also went through lead man drills which meant we had to place 'gear' (equipment) into the rock face to demonstrate that we could 'clip into' the equipment that had been placed and climb competently and with confidence. All in all the RSF week held by 30 Sig Regt was a very good experience and pushed every person there beyond their comfort zone and also better prepared us all for our expedition to Chile in the New Year.





Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Brig DA Hargreaves

# Royal Signals Association



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## RSA Annual General Meeting

The 73<sup>rd</sup> AGM of the Royal Signals Association will be held in the Victory Services Club, London on Sat 18 Mar 17. All Life Members of the RSA are eligible and welcome to attend the meeting, which starts at 1030 hrs. Any points for the agenda, by email or letter, must be received at Association HQ by 01 Feb 17.

The Memorial Service at the NMA in July was again well attended despite a rather overcast day. On behalf of the 17 Branch Standard Bearers and over 150 members of the Corps family thank you to the piper and members of the Corps band who added another element to the service of rededication at the Corps Memorial.

After the service, there was a very hospitable interlude with refreshments before we made our journeys home. The photographs show the memorial flanked by some of the standard bearers and the assembled congregation ready for the service to begin. The service will be held again next year; details will be published on the RSA website (events and notices) and in the Association Facebook group. All RSA members are welcome to attend.

The next event to take place, as I write, will be the annual Gathering of the Clans at Horden on 28 August 2016. **WO1 (Corps SM) Jon Atwell** will be attending from Blandford and will I am sure have a good time. Following this, I will be at the Royal Hopsital Chelsea with the West London Branch RSA for the parade, chapel service and lunch; and then later in September, on 26<sup>th</sup>, I hope to be able to attend the service at All Saints Church Exmouth and support the Exmouth Branch when they lay up their standard. Following on from this, the diary of Association events include the Opening of the Field of Remembrance on 10 November and the Cenotaph Parade on 13 November. All the places to attend both the Opening of the Field of Remembrance and the Cenotaph parade have been allocated for this year. Names for 2017 will be collected from the New Year onwards.



For other information about the Association either email me at [rsa@royalsignals.org](mailto:rsa@royalsignals.org) or look at our website which can be found at <http://royalsignals.org/>

**New Life Members** A warm welcome to the following members, enrolled since the last edition of the WIRE:

SSgt Harry Baxter	1966/89	Cpl Kenneth Griffiths	1979/93	Sig Peter Reid	1977/88
Cpl Samuel Billich	1987/89	LCpl Lee Hankinson	1993/01	SSgt Jason Roberts	1991/09
Sig Adrian Burgess	2001/09	Sig Douglas Hawkes	1986/92	SSgt Brian Robson	1987/10
LCpl Charles Byworth	1960/62	Sgt Robert Hicks	1983/96	Sgt Hilary Rogers	1969/79
Sig Carl Cairns	1979/86	Cpl Kelvin Jones	1978/98	Sig Neill Rutherford	1970/78
Cpl Brian Carr	1958/67	Cpl Arthur Kettley	1954/56	Cpl Raymond Peter Swallow	1947/49
Cpl Patrick Constance	1942/47	Cpl Raymond Lovegrove	1955/62	Capt Donald Swift-Hook	1950/64
Cpl Stephen Sean Cooke	1980/87	LCpl Robert McDermott	1971/79	LCpl Peter Walker	1956/58
LCpl Patrick Downing	1981/89	LCpl Alan Nesbitt	1962/71	Capt Mark Ward	1983/16
Sgt George Garside	1958/73	Cpl Richard Nicholl	1995/02	LCpl John Woodruff	1971/84
Sig Quentin Gatens	1985/91	Cpl Lindsay Pulley	1960/62		

## ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Noel Moss**  
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

For our twenty-second annual Quiz Night, we returned in May to the splendid facilities of the new St Omer Barracks, Aldershot. There we were able to assemble 90 past and present members of the Corps living and serving in the area. These included a strong contingent from 251 Sig Sqn, a team from Fowler Sqn of the Army Training Regiment at Pirbright and teams from our old friends in Winchester and West London Branches of the Association in addition to our own branch members – a total of 21 teams.

Our long term Quiz Master, **Neville Lyons**, set five rounds of questions to suit the expected levels of knowledge for ages ranging from 18 to 80. Half way through the evening, we enjoyed a curry supper of outstanding quality kindly provided by 27 Regt RLC.

As for the Quiz results, top honours were taken by the Winchester Branch team, **'The Repeaters'**, an appropriate name considering they have been among the top three teams for the last three years! Second place went to a slightly hybridised 251 Sig Sqn team, **'Universally Challenged'**, their success being perhaps due to the inclusion of not only the Sergeant Major but also **Professor Donald Swift-Hook** who will go down as the oldest person ever to be included in a serving team. He carried out his National Service in the Corps and it was a great pleasure to have him with us on this occasion. **'Team Google'**, whose members all serve in 251 Sqn, took the prize for first serving team.



The raffle arranged by our indefatigable secretary, **Mary Pagan**, raised the excellent total of £300 for the RSBF.

On 21 June, a group of members and guests visited Brooklands Museum, the well-known Home of British Motor Sport and Aviation, to be greeted by **Bob Webb**, our very

enthusiastic host and guide. **Bob** is one of our valued branch associate members and a long-term Brooklands guide.

Our tour, starting in the famous Club House, led first to the Wellington Hangar, housing many vintage aircraft, but predominantly the Wellington bomber, recovered from Loch Ness and lovingly restored some years ago. A recent addition is a Hawker Hurricane used by the Soviet Air Force during WW2. It had crashed and lay in ruins until recovered from Russia some 15 years ago and now restored to taxi-ing condition by Brooklands volunteers. The Hangar itself, built in 1940, is a listed building, soon to be moved to provide a clear space for the Finishing Straight of the original race track, on which it stands.

Among the fleet of Vickers aircraft in the western section of Brooklands, we explored the VC 10, donated by the Sultan of Oman, with all its luxurious trappings. The highlight of the tour has to be the Concorde, the initial British production model and the first aircraft to carry 100 passengers at twice the speed of sound. Before going aboard we visited a superb Concorde Simulator, previously used by British Airways to train its Concorde aircrew. We had the unforgettable experience of simulated flight in the pilot's cabin, the take-off from Heathrow, the flight above the clouds, the descent over London, even through Tower Bridge (!) before a final smooth runway landing.



Another new Brooklands feature is the London Bus Museum, transferred from its previous home at Cobham. We viewed a collection of around 20 buses dating from the early horse-drawn vehicles to those that we all remember, including the famous Green Line coaches. Those who felt sufficiently energetic then took to the Motoring Village, where we were able to see some of the racing cars that had participated on the famous Brooklands circuit in those pre-war days.

With so much to absorb in one visit, we were grateful to **Bob Webb** for selecting and enthusiastically demonstrating the real highlights of Brooklands.

## CATTERICK BRANCH

Honorary Branch Secretary **Iain Scrivin**

On a cold wet and windy Wednesday 11 November a small gathering formed up at the Howes Woods Memorial in Gaza barracks, Catterick to remember the fallen. As we started to chill (to the bone) a small group of junior NCO's passed us and one of them asked if they could join us rather than stand at the back of the LDG's ceremony.

After our service some of the branch members spoke to the soldiers asking where they had come from. We were very surprised to hear that Support Company 1 MI Battalion had taken up residence in Gaza Barracks. From that initial contact we got to know **Maj Dave Smith** and **Capt Jim Alger** the QM. They and a few of the company attended our meetings and our relationship blossomed.

At the same time as we were enquiring as to how best to clean up the memorial, RSA RHQ were tackling the same problem from a different point of view.

To our great delight **Capt Jim Alger** organised the removal and refurbishment of the bench seat that had almost disappeared under the overgrown hedge. He then set to having the hedge removed and the end result is as you will see from the photograph.



It gives us of the Catterick Branch great pleasure to report that the Corps is back in Catterick and still looking after its history and retired members. Sadly **Jim** has been posted on promotion to Blandford and **Dave** is also due to leave soon.

We are immensely proud of what our young men and women are continuing to achieve in the name of the Corps and are just awaiting the adoption papers to come through so that we can formally take Support Company 1 MI under our wing.

On behalf of the Branch very very many thanks for all your efforts!

## NEWCASTLE BRANCH

President **Harry Duncan**  
Secretary **Albert Reid**

**Annual trip to celebrate HRH Princess Anne's birthday  
15 August 2016**

As our **Colonel in chief** we at Newcastle RSA always celebrate with a day out in the borders, this is one of the highlights of our year and always draws in a good attendance from our membership

The trip takes in the border counties of England and Scotland finishing with a fabulous meal, then on to a late stop in Northumberland to raise a glass and give a tribute (delivered by President **Harry Duncan**) for **HRH Princess Anne's** birthday, unfortunately there was a little hitch as our coach had a malfunction, but in no way did it spoil our day, in fact it gave us more time to enjoy the scenery ( more about this at the Gathering of the Clans).

We must give a big thank you to **Derek Thorpe** for organising this great trip



### Hartlepool Gathering of the Clans

28 August saw our annual trip to one of our fellow North-east branches, Hartlepool hold a yearly meet of Gathering of the Clans, which is great for meeting old and making new friends.

Newcastle RSA always have a good showing, always arriving prompt and leaving late.

The food and entertainment put on by **Tony** and his committee plus all his helpers make it a day not to be missed.

Following on from **HRH princess Anne's** birthday trip we decided to have a belated birthday toast. A glass was raised and a happy birthday was announced by President **Harry Duncan**, also thank you to **Derek Thorpe** for his organising of coaches.

A great day! Roll on next year.





## NEWARK BRANCH

### Armed Forces Day

A member of the RSA Newark branch, **Major (Retd) Ray Vasper** was asked if he would be willing to take the salute from the combined services parade on Armed Forces Day in Newark on Trent on Sunday 26th June 2016.



Having retired from the Royal Signals exactly 30 years earlier, he dug out his full service uniform, Sam Browne, medals and sword from his wardrobe hoping that he would still look the part. On the day all went very well and the salute was duly performed in true military fashion. Other dignitaries on the saluting dais included the Mayor of Newark and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire.

**Major Vasper** was the President of the Newark branch and an area representative of the RSA for many years.

## LAST POST

Cpl M Bennett	1942/46	05-May-15
Cpl I Bin Dollah	1956/67	01-Jun-16
Peter Boardman	1954/59	25-Aug-07
SSgt V Brown	1943/74	01-May-15
WO2 H Bullock	1939/46	25-Jun-16
Maj W Buxton	1962/81	??-Sep-16
LCpl R Cank	1962/71	??-Jul-16
WO1 GB Clark	1962/85	24-Jun-16
WO2 BC Cole	1945/73	22-Jul-16
Sgt D Dickason	1954/68	??-Jul-16
Lt Col DG Dudley	1959/91	17-Jul-16
Cpl T Geldart	1954/62	28-Jun-16
WO1 AF Glover	1969/94	04-Aug-16
Cpl N Graham	1972/91	17-May-16
Sgt A Henderson	1962/77	08-Jul-16
Cpl GA Hukin	1978/95	08-Aug-16
Raymond Kings	1953/60	01-Jun-16
WO1 J Loveday	1949/76	17-Jul-16
Sig G Moules	1959/61	05-Mar-16
Cpl S Parr	1986/97	23-Apr-16
Sgt J Parry	1948/53	19-Aug-16
WO2 CWPeach	1962/87	10-Apr-16
LCpl J Roberts	1951/53	09-Jul-16
Cpl D Simmons	1955/61	18-Jul-16
Sig R Smallman	1954/56	23-Jun-16
Sgt MR Stanley	1970/81	21-Mar-15
Maj Gen H Sturge CB	1946/80	02-Aug-16
Sig IDAC Taylor	1958/??	08-Jan-16
Sig W Tonner	1971/80	24-Jun-16
WO1 K Williams	1943/77	01-May-16
Sig L Wooff	1956/59	10-Jul-16
Sgt AE Wylde	1939/46	16-Jul-16

## Leave a Gift in Your Will

### Your legacy can help us safeguard the Royal Signals Community

Every year the RSBF helps hundreds of serving and retired Signallers in need or distress. This includes serving Signallers injured on operations, the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, members of the Corps who need assistance with specialist medical care for their children, or veterans who need help in maintaining their mobility and independence.

#### *Help others in their time of need*

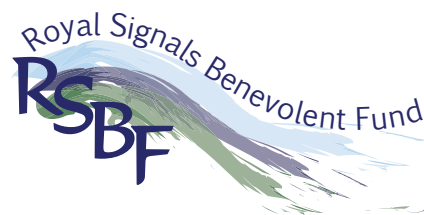
There has been a long-standing saying that the "Corps looks after its own" and we help wherever we can. In the past five years the RSBF has granted approximately £2 million to help fellow serving and retired signallers and their families in times of need.

We help anyone who has served or is serving with The Corps, officer or soldier and their dependants. Any case brought to us will be considered with expert support from any of SSAFA, The Royal British Legion and the Army Benevolent Fund.

You can help too - by leaving a legacy in your will. It's simple to do and can make all the difference to someone who has worn the same cap badge.

If you would like to make a difference please contact the RSBF or RSA. We will be happy to provide information on how to leave a legacy so that others from the Corps might benefit from your generosity.

Contact [enquiries@royalsignals.org](mailto:enquiries@royalsignals.org)



# RSBF Fundraising Challenge



When it comes to fundraising the RSBF, like most charities, is grateful for every single penny raised. There's a lot of competition for people's hard-earned time and cash; with that in mind we asked our fundraisers and others to share their top-tips.

## Plan, produce, educate and excite to extract that much needed cash

- Tie your fundraising to an activity and do your best to involve and connect others to the cause.
- Try to look for a unique or different angle.
- Time it right.

## The cause

- Let The RSBF know you're holding the event so you can be helped and supported.
- Explain the RSBF's mission to your supporters so they understand why it matters.
- Showcase individuals and groups that have or will benefit. (Maintain confidentiality of course).
- Present anecdotes to increase interest and awareness.

## Make donating easy

*Aim for a generous first donation - those giving online are often influenced by previous donors*

- Allow for online and mobile giving (Just Giving and Text donations) as well as collection tins/ buckets.
- If you're no longer part of the military ask your organisation if they'll sponsor you or match the money raised in some way.
- Have wristbands and branded merchandise to hand so people can visibly show their support.

## Publicise and promote

- Generate interest by promoting and publicising your event. Go local, national, global and virtual. Don't forget obvious avenues such as supermarkets and social media as well as press and TV. BFBS are always on the lookout for good news to share too.
- Share your progress in words, pictures, by video, vlogs and blogs... Don't wait until the event - show your supporters, the planning and graft.
- Don't forget to let people know how much was raised and to thank those who helped you.

Most importantly, enjoy yourself!

To find out more about the RSBF or to tell us about your fundraising event contact:

Sandra Hutchinson [rsbf@royalsignals.org](mailto:rsbf@royalsignals.org) Tel: 01258 482819

For benevolence help, advice or assistance contact:

Linda Sizeland [RSBFgrantscoord@royalsignals.org](mailto:RSBFgrantscoord@royalsignals.org) Tel: 01258 482089

**Donate By Text: Text RSBF11 and the amount eg £2, £5, £10 to 70070 to donate to Royal Corps of Signals Benevolent Fund and make a difference today.**



# HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS



In the build up to the Corps Centenary in 2020 we intend to publish a series of articles on objects which have formed part of the history of Signalling in general and the Corps in particular. This will be a challenge and we may not achieve our target in the time available but the aim is to entertain and inform and we will use a combination of The Wire and digital media to do so. Whilst the bulk of the objects are held by the Museum, some will not be and we would be happy to consider short articles with photographs of other objects from serving or former members of the Corps. We hope that you enjoy the series.

Certa Cito!

No 1

## No 1 Wireless Set



Copyright: Ray Robinson

The No 1 Wireless Set was one of a range of wireless sets brought into service following the formation of the Corps in 1920. In 1929 a new series of Army wireless sets was formulated and in 1933 the Wireless Set No 1 was introduced into service for use by Infantry and Artillery Brigades. Early sets were manufactured by *Standard Telephones and Cables* and designed to be vehicle or horse mounted to facilitate mobile communications. Limitations in the original design made the set unsuitable for large scale production so in 1935 Ferranti Ltd submitted a proposal for a redesign and these revised models were tested in 1936 but proved a failure. The primary disadvantage was the limited working range and as considerable progress had been made with the design of the No 11 Set no further orders were placed. It is estimated that overall around 1800 No 1 sets were manufactured, the last sets delivered as late as 1938.

## RSI R SIGNALS APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

The Royal Signals Institution in partnership with Apprenticeship Training Provider and Professional Institutions recognises the value of our apprentices with an award to the R SIGNALS Apprentice of the year.

These awards will recognise the excellence and commitment of R SIGNALS soldiers enrolled on or having completed their Apprenticeship reflected in their contribution to their Unit. The award will reveal the personal journey conducted by our Apprentices during the concurrent progression of their Military Career and R SIGNALS Apprenticeship.

The RSI, Wiltshire & Somerset Colleges Partnership Ltd, Institute Engineering & Technology and the Chartered Institute Logistics & Transport (UK) have agreed to co-sponsor the award of R SIGNALS Apprentice of the year. The award will identify the top Apprentice of each R SIGNALS Career Employment Group with a prize of £250 for the top Apprentice Logistician, Electrician, Operator, EW Operator, Technician and Engineer. From the 6 CEG Apprentices of the year, one award will be presented to the Corps Apprentice of the year with a total prize of £1000.

All R SIGNALS Soldiers who meet the criteria are eligible for this award. The selection process commenced September 2016 with a presentation ceremony here at the Headquarters Griffin House 8 Dec 16 hosted by the Corps Colonel. For more information see RSIN 012/16.

