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Editor: Amy Petersen

wire@royalsignals.org (preferred for submissions) SO3 Digital Communication and Publications:

Stephanie Hamlett

depcomm@royalsignals.org

RHQ R SIGNALS, Griffin House, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8RH Mil: 94371 2817/2818 Civ: 01258 482817 /482818

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These will be inserted free to all past and present members of the Corps.

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Front Cover: WO2 James Lycett presenting a TRF with the Corps Colonel, Col Hutchinson MBE ADC Back Cover: 2 Sig Regt - CASEVAC waiting helicopter support on Ex Lion Sun

Note from the Editor



Welcome to the Summer edition of the Wire magazine! A packed edition with lots happening around the Corps including the Royal Signals Association Reunion and Families Day (page 56), an annual event held at Blandford Camp followed closely by the Morrison Cup (page 54). You'll also find plenty of sporting updates and various Adventure Training reports.

A huge Congratulations also goes to all those mentioned in the New Years and Birthday Honours List – full details on page 109.

Once again we have had many submissions for the magazine and we are limited to 112 pages so rest assured if your article is not in this edition it will feature in the October edition

Enjoy the rest of the summer months and keep sending your submissions to wire@royalsignals.org. If you would like to see any other articles included please contact us with your thoughts or if you would like to volunteer for a book review please get in touch!



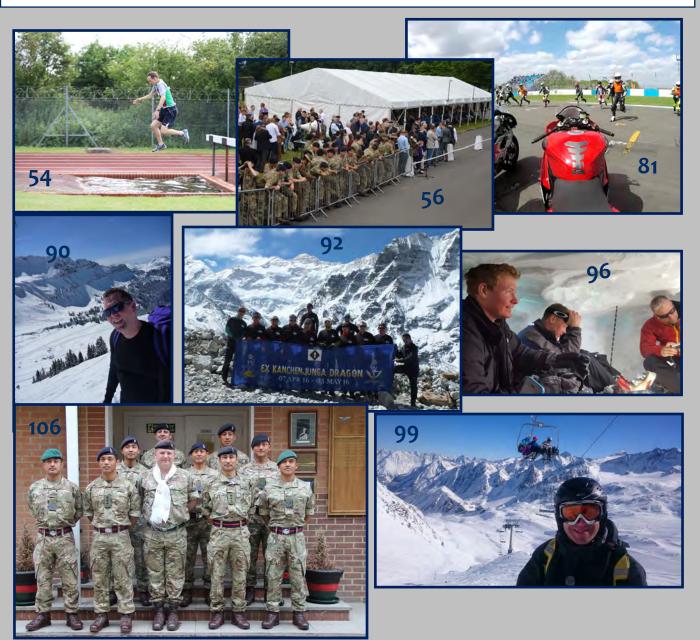
SO₃ Digital Communication & Publications

Mrs Stephanie Hamlett 01258 482818



Subscriptions

Mrs Jess Lawson 01258 482087



NEWS FROM TRAINING



11th (ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS) SIGNAL REGIMENT BLANDFORD



2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC Maj L Kelly SSM WO2 J Wignall

2 Squadron Dinner Night - by Cpl Nima

On 20 May 2016, the 2 (Catterick) Sqn formal dinner night was held in Helles Club at Blandford Camp. The purpose of the dinner night was to maintain social bonding among the permanent and civilian staff within the Sqn and to introduce JNCOs to mess conduct and etiquette in a formal setting. At the same time, the Sqn also took the opportunity to welcome new members and bid farewell to the outgoing Sqn Sgt Maj WO2 (SSM) Sherwin.

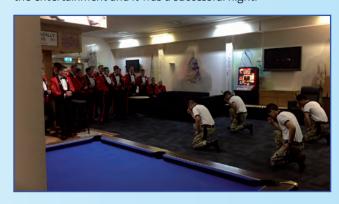
A Gurkha theme was selected for the dinner night which was organized by **Sgt Kiran Ale** who was also the PMC during the event. I had the honour to be Mr Vice for the evening. Since it was a formal dinner night it was quite tricky to arrange the serving of the Gurkha menu especially with different choices of curry. With the help of the catering manager and the Gurkha chef **Cpl Deepak Gurung**, we finally agreed on the menu and how it was going to be served. To add some more flavour to the night we thought we would organise a few Gurkha dances performed by the young trainees in the Sqn.

The night started in the bar with a couple of drinks followed by the incoming WO2 (SSM) Wignall's brief to JNCOs on mess etiquette. We were honoured with the presence of our Officer Commanding, Maj Kelly. After the final dinner call, everyone was stood behind their seats waiting for the top table to be seated. Confused by mess etiquette, Capt Lianne Robinson took her place at the top table before the rest of the party arrived, causing mass confusion/panic; reasons for this mis-coordination remain clouded in secrecy to this day.

After my grace, momos were served for the starters. As everyone eagerly waited for the meals to be served, the main course was a really big hit - it was really delicious, both pork and chicken curry. A comfort break was only planned after the dessert and some people were really desperate by that time! We could easily see it in their faces. After the comfort break, I tried to return to my seat but I couldn't see my chair - it was already gone and so was my toasting glass. I was in panic mode trying to find a chair and the glass and I was lucky enough to find them just before the toast was called by the PMC. As the PMC tried to grab the attention of the room by ringing the bell, it promptly fell apart. This was actually more efficient at getting everyone's attention! Despite this setback, he finally managed to quell the room and the toast was successful.

After the toast, the OC welcomed the new personnel into the sqn and then the main event started by bidding farewell to WO2 (SSM) Sherwin. A few momentos were presented, followed by a raunchy and unforgettable speech by WO2

Sherwin. The final part of the night was a Gurkha cultural show. **Sig Rupesh**, **Sig Ashis**, **Sig Bikky** and **Sig Avinesh** performed a Khukuri dance and a modern Nepalese dance to end the night. They managed to captivate the attention of everyone with their talent. Everyone enjoyed the meal and the entertainment and it was a successful night.



Gurkha dances performed by the trainees of 2 Sqn

Exercise BEACON STRIDE 13-18 Mar 16 - by Cpl Mitchinson

During the week of the 13 – 18 March 2016, six members of permanent staff from 2 (Catterick) Sqn and 10 Phase 2 soldiers, deployed to Brecon Training Area on Ex BEACON STRIDE, a week long Navex.

After arriving and settling into the, wonderfully palatial, accommodation that Sennybridge Camp has to offer, a quick kit issue was conducted with a briefing to confirm our activities. Once this was completed, we all retired to the local pub, only to find we were the only ones in there!

After breakfast on Monday, we set off for the Storey Arms to take on Pen-Y-Fan as a refresher on map and compass skills. A walk followed with **Sgt Fox** and **WO2 (SSM) Sherwin** guiding the junior soldiers on some basics of map reading.

Tuesday saw another sunny day and this time a much more challenging little jaunt around the back of beyond, highlights of which were some excellent route finding skills by a few members of the group. This culminated in **Sgt Fox** having to trek up a riverbed with four Phase 2s to ensure they did not get into any difficulty. He was unimpressed with the whole idea.

Wednesday saw the arrival of OC 2 Sqn, Maj Kelly, and the new SSM, WO2 Wignall. They certainly brought the weather with them, clag reduced visibility to almost nothing combined with the standard Welsh drizzle. A quick map recce at the start showed however, that being able to see might not be a great idea as everywhere we looked at the route seemed to be a solid block of contour lines.

After a reasonably easy start we reached what could only be described as a former waterfall. After a fun little climb, one of the Phase 2s was heard to mention, much to the amusement of the rest of the group, that if he ever complained about being sat in RTW for the day ever again, someone should shoot him.

It became apparent after a couple of hours of walking that SSgt Gaz Weatherhill and Sgt Stu Barley had perhaps overhydrated the night before. Our suspicions were confirmed when we were moving to low ground before beginning another climb. The clag lifted and the 'hill' we were going to climb came into view. At this point Sgt Stu Barley was heard to complain, "great I've seen it now, I can't unsee the bloody thing".

Thursday gave the group the opportunity for a final gentle little stroll around Brecon just to confirm that it still had not got any flatter. To our great relief it had not. I am sure that there were many good points brought up during the PXR discussion, however no one seemed to remember any of them.

A great week of training was had by all, some skills either learned or refreshed and most importantly a week out of the office.



If we bunch around to the left they won't be able to see the bigger hill in the background

3 (HARROGATE) SQN

OC Maj R Jacques-Grey SSM WO2 (SSM) C Deal

Welcomes and Farewells

The Sqn has had some churn recently. It is with great sadness that after almost two years of tireless work commitments and delivery we have to say goodbye to the Sqn Second in Command **Capt Steve Spink**, good luck with the new job!

We welcome **Capt Mat Darby** as the new Sqn Second in Command, albeit for only two months, and **Capt Paul Wright** fresh from 14 Sig Regt (EW) as the new Chief Instructor.

Exercise HARROGATE FOLLY

Ex Harrogate Folly is a Basic Close Combat Skills (BCCS) ex aimed at phase 2 soldiers within 3 (Harrogate) Sig Sqn conducted over the period of 18 – 20 Mar 16. The ex took place on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA), specifically in and around the FIBUA village at Copehill down.

The aim of the ex was challenging the phase 2 soldiers in various command and leadership roles in order to prepare them for PNCO training in future. They were taught and reminded of Basic Close Combat skills; and concepts of command appointments for future Command Leadership and Management training.

The exercising troops were broken down into 3 Platoons, each containing 3 sections. Defensive orders were given on deployment and each platoon occupied the FOB (Forward Operating Base) and went into a defensive routine on Friday evening. Training objectives were clearly set out to exercising troops so that they could achieve by Saturday and Sunday. These training objectives included developing skills in section attacks, building clearance, casualty triage, night patrols, casualty evacuation and rhino rig.

Rhino rig introduced the basic tools and methods to gain entry into buildings through doors. This was used to ensure that they can work together in order to gain entry and secure a room/building. This was an element of training that the phase 2 soldiers found very enjoyable.

The confidence course was also introduced and run by **Cpl Downey** and **LCpl Lockey**. This course has received best feedback from the soldiers and was well utilized throughout the ex. The course was designed to challenge the leadership and teamwork, whilst also helping them overcome fears of heights and confined spaces. Each Platoon went through the course as individual sections.

The section started with a 10 minute 'warm up' to get the blood flowing and a sense of urgency installed into the section. A 10 foot wall was then to be tackled before gaining entrance into the row of buildings via a ladder into a window. Several obstacles linked the buildings together including balance beams. This was one of the more difficult obstacles to complete mentally and claimed a few setbacks. Words of encouragement did not work for every soldier. Another part of the course involved going down into the sewer system and crawling for over 100m before popping out of a man hole at the other end. Everybody came out of this part of the course soaking wet and covered in filth. The final part of the course was crawling on the belt buckle through a maze tunnel system in one of the buildings. This required constant communication between the section and a lot of encouragement to get the weaker members through.

Overall the ex was a great success and everyone involved managed to develop as a team and individuals. The focus of this ex was to prepare phase 2 soldiers for their PNCO course, in conjunction with their continued development as young soldiers. The intent further was to challenge all exercising troops, particularly those in command roles.

Exercise HARROGATE REFLECT

During Ex HARROGATE REFLECT members of 3 (Harrogate) Sqn, along with other 11 (RSS) Sig Regt personnel, completed a battlefield study of the Battle of the Somme. This was achieved through visiting various locations of significant interest in order to gain an insight into what life would have been like as a soldier during the battle, tactics used throughout and the key events during the battle.

Departing early on day one we journeyed across the channel by ferry before entering France, amid reports of fuel shortages across the country. After some navigational misfortunes, we finally arrived at the Somme region and began recces of the sites of each lesson that would be delivered the next day. Arriving at Snowden House, our accommodation, we realised we were staying in a lovely farmhouse in a small village at the centre of the battlefield. After settling in we ventured into the City of Albert for dinner, with a few adventurous souls partaking in the escargot (snails), causing much disgust amongst those of a weaker disposition.



Snowden House

The next day started with breakfast at the Old Blighty Tea Rooms, a quaint ex-pat tea room which on first appearance seemed more like a museum. A hearty breakfast consumed we set out for the first lesson of the day. The first briefs covered the employment of Pals battalions at Sere and the tactics that were utilised in trench warfare. This was an eye opener for the team as many did not appreciate the sheer scale and brutality of the conflict.

We travelled two miles away to an unassuming wooded crater atop a small hill. Following a short climb we learnt that this was the central point in the attack on Beaumont Hamel on the first day of the Battle. It was here that one of the mines below the German lines was detonated creating the crater. This region saw in excess of 5200 casualties from 29th Division alone on this one day. We had the opportunity to visit a recreated trench and get a feel for the realities of the conflict when we visited the Newfoundland Memorial Park. The Park was a peaceful and sombre area, still in much the same condition as it was during the conflict. It allowed us to walk the length on no mans land and get a feel for what the advance would have been like.

The attack on La Boisselle was our next stop. Here we covered how command and control was utilised in the trenches, and the initial attacks of the day. This included a visit to the Lochnagar crater, a scar on the landscape that was created by the first mine detonating below the German trenches on 1 July 1916, the scale of the crater is staggering.

We visited the Devonshire trench next, recounting a sad tale of the 8th and 9th Devons who were buried in the Trench they held valiantly. Here **WO2** (**SSM**) Chris Deal recounted the story of his ancestor, who fought in the local area, and provided insight into how the widows back home were informed of deaths and how they were memorialised. Our final stop took us to Deville, or Devil's, Wood and painted the picture of the brutal hand to hand fighting that occurred within the small wood. So fierce was the bombardment and combat that only a single tree was standing when the woods

were captured. The day ended with a BBQ back at the house and the regret by a few that there was not a good sausage to be had in the country.



Thiepval memorial

We packed our bags and departed the accommodation on the final day and enjoyed another mammoth breakfast at the tea room. We headed for Thiepval and the memorial to the missing. This monument has inscribed upon its walls the names of all those that were never found. Here we laid a wreath in a small ceremony and took some time to reflect on the enormity of the conflict in this small area that caused 1.2 million casualties.



The team at the memorial

Royal Signals Benevolent Fund Donation

3 (Harrogate) Sqn has conducted various charitable events over the past few months and were proud to donate £175 to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund. The RSBF was the chosen charity for the Sqn because it is close to many peoples hearts and has recently helped a number of the soldiers in the Squadron.

Signallers Thomson, Reveley, Hurley and Ashford were honoured to accompany Maj Jacques-Grey and WO2 (SSM) Deal and present the cheque to the Corps Colonel and Sandra Hutchinson from the RSBF.



Sigs Thomson, Reveley, Hurley and Ashford accompany Maj Jacques-Grey and WO2 (SSM) Deal to present the cheque to the Corps
Colonel and Sandra Hutchinson from the RSBF

Whilst fund raising and charity work can be an onerous task it is important to give back as it is a fantastic organisation that does so much for the soldiers.

Armed Forces Day 2016 Ringwood - by SSgt Stu McCreadie

Despite the Sqn's usual community engagement town of Swanage not mounting any celebration of AF Day, it was decided that the Sqn still wanted to show support in the local area. Following **SSgt McCreadie's** liaison with various event organisers throughout Dorset, the most suitable local event was identified as Ringwood. This was a relatively new site and had only been holding these celebrations for two years, so the organisers welcomed the contribution that the Sqn offered.

Deployable Systems Troop (DST) provided the assets and the manpower to make the event happen with **Cpl Aaron Butler**, **LCpl Nathan Lockey** and **LCpl Crowe** volunteering to support with a WASP detachment in Carvers Field in Ringwood, under the watchful eye of **SSgt McCreadie**. This proved a success with most of the attendees at the event, although members of the public were not allowed to enter the back of the vehicle. One slight downside was the fact that the recruiting brochures from the nearby Rifles Recruiting team kept finding their way into our tent!

Of more interest to the kids at the event was LCpl Lockey's mini assault course, which introduced any potential soldiers of the future to pudding mats, hurdles and leopard crawling. Healthy competition was prevalent throughout and some of the young boys and girls went round several times in order to try and beat the 30 second record. We made enough of a good impression to have LCpl Crowe interviewed live by Forest FM radio. We clearly accorded him appropriate celebrity status from that point onwards. Overall the event was extremely successful; it provided a good opportunity to engage with local people of all ages, and the free brews provided by the refreshments van was welcome and showed a good understanding of what soldiers enjoy!



LCpl Lockey after quickly doing 50 press-ups in the back of the det in order to "buff up"



LCpl Crowe attempting to vary his ridiculously monotonous voice for Dorset's radio listeners



few dropped off and we had 14 participants turn up on the day – however, they were dedicated, hardworking and enthusiastic, they made it worth everyone's time. The ex was a great success from the perspective of the directing staff, but what better way to describe the experience than from a participant. Kathryn Minett gives her side of the ex below:

At 1900 hrs on Friday 13 May, fourteen nervous and excited ladies gathered in front of the Gym full of trepidation as to what might occur over the course of the next 24 hours on Ex Harrogate Endeavour.

Upon arrival at 4 Sqn woods we were briefed as to the intention of the exercise which was to provide insight and basic training whilst building community spirit in a military environment over the course of two days.

From the moment we arrived and erected our Basha's, learnt about life in the field from a woman's perspective, cooked our ration packs (number 5 was a clear favourite) until the last stragglers departed from the Mess on Sunday morning we all had an absolute blast. The activities were addictive, well thought out and pushed some of us out of comfort zones as was their intention. For those individuals, fears were met head on, conquered and in some cases smashed to pieces. From those that discovered their inner snipers or morphed into Rambo at the DCTT, those that rocketed up the climbing wall like Spiderman and those of us that turned into Katniss Everdeen at the archery, we all became engrossed in the activities, cheering on our team mates and generally feeling a huge sense of personal achievement at having accomplished something worthwhile and fulfilling. Laughter and merriment was prominent from the beginning (the odd bit of contraband that we smuggled in may have helped slightly) of course when necessary we behaved ourselves in an appropriate manner, well as much as fourteen women can do.

The team that looked after us, mentored us and boosted our morale sky high was perfect. The highest praise possible needs to be bestowed upon SSgt Loynes, SSgt Nash, Cpl Wireless (Willis), WO2 Cowley, Mr Gary Ledger and Mr Paul Wise for their enthusiasm, encouragement and humour throughout the exercises, they really are a credit to the Garrison and played an integral part in making the weekend what it was, also as was mentioned at Formal Dinner, there were a lot of people behind the scenes that made the weekend possible, our thanks to those individuals too. Finally but by no means least a huge thank you to Capt Jess Baxter and Maj Becky Jaques-Grey for dreaming up, implementing and executing with perfection the weekend that literally has everyone buzzing. Words cannot convey what we've all taken away from the ex, from talking with everyone at the Dinner, not one piece of negative criticism could be heard, suggestions as to what could 3 Sqn do differently next time ranged from two nights camping under the stars, drill classes to demonstrations at the FOB, nothing critical but all activities designed to push us further. New friendships have been forged, confidence has grown and fourteen women walked away from the Dinner on Saturday that little bit taller, their heads held slightly higher and huge smiles on their faces having bettered themselves.

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC Maj G Dunn

SSM WO2(SSM) Easterby-Jackson

4 Squadron BBQ

Thu 02 Jun was the day of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn's annual family barbeque, the day started out breezy and overcast, but by lunchtime the BBQ weather arrived on cue ready for what was a really enjoyable afternoon. We had a variety of fun games for the families which included coconut shy, balloon popping and a bouncy castle which proved popular with many of the children as well as other stands running. The food was on the money with a wide variety of classic BBQ food, as the night went on and the drinks were flowing, guys and girls were taking part in a game called nails which proved frustrating and comical for some of those playing as well as being absolutely nails to play. We also had some 5-aside football on the go and human size Jenga.

This event also marked the last social event for **Capt Shakar Gurung** and **SSgt Niki Harrison** with the Sqn as they are all soon to be moving on to their respective Regiments. On behalf of all Sqn personnel, good luck and all the best with your next assignment, its been an absolute pleasure.

Race the Sun 2016 - by Sgt (SI) Chris McGuire

We deployed from Blandford early on Wed the 25th May ready for a long trip up to Imphal Barracks, York. On arrival we were met by the admin team who provided everything that we required for our stay. Accommodated in the Gymnasium on camp cots with approx 50 other squaddies we knew that there would be at least one snorer to keep us all awake. As it turns out, it was one of our own in **Sgt Ads 'Foghorn' Milson** who received many tuts and frowns at the 0400 reveille the next morning.

The first event was the Kayak and Cpl Andy Madden performed brilliantly in a strong field to hand over in a 6th place to Sgt Chris McGuire for the river run. Sgt McGuire again did well, gaining two places to hand over to the WO2(QMSI) Cowley and Sig Hazzard on the first of the bike legs. They gained another 3 places and handed over to Cpl 'The Lung' Smith, who was up next for the horrendous hill run leg. As expected Cpl Smith powered up the terrain and moved the team into first place. Sgt Ads Milson then had an exceptional forced march leg, maintaining the teams' advantage. Next up was Sgt Mitchell and the Adjt, Capt Ed Adams on the moor run. They again performed well keeping the team in 1st place ready for the next phase of the competition.

Cpl James Maosa was primed and ready to go for the Half Marathon mass start at 0900 and completed it in a commendable 1 Hr 20 mins, placing the team in 7th place.

SSgt Chris 'Army Champ' Loynes was up next for the Mountain bike. As expected he annihilated the course and moved the team back into 1st place. SSgt's Gaz Stewart and Rob Vaughan were next for the second moor run and with some strong teamwork, motivated each other around whilst keeping the team 1st. The next leg was orienteering and having limited SME's within the Regt, SSgt Paul Steel was the man to stick his head above the parapet and volunteer. Having never tried the sport, but being the most rigid man in the Corps, his pre-learning certainly assisted and he finished in 3rd place. Cpl's Andy Worthington and Lewis Laval-

Chesterton were next for the forest run and again put in maximum effort to bring the team back to 2nd. Cpl Chesney Rogers then had the unenviable task of the cycling orienteering leg. Hampered by a puncture and a slight nav error, he brought the team to the end of phase 2 in 7th place.

The next mass start was the swim with **LCpl Whyte** and **Sig Fitch**. In a strong field consisting of many Army level swimmers, **Sig Fitch** finished 4th and handed over to **Cpl Shaun Thomas** for the bike and run leg. In a field of tattooed 'Ironmen' with particularly expensive attire and equipment around, **Cpl Thomas** finished in an impressive 7th.

The last phase of the event involved the six man stretcher race. The team was selected and set off with the 40 Kg load. Although short, the race is known to be particularly savage due to the pace involved and this year was no exception. The team finished in an excellent 2nd and collapsed in a huddle after many high fives and chest bashes.

The event was then concluded and the Regt were 2nd overall, a mere 8 minutes off the winning team's time. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and we look forward to competing again next year.



SSgt Steel and the team powering forward

Education visit to the Fovant Badges - by Cpl Thomas

After conducting the Sqn photograph, members of 4 (Mil Trg Sqn) deployed to the quaint village of Fovant, as part of the Sqn's ongoing commitment to conduct community engagement and raise awareness of the historic society.

We were met by our local historian **Richard** whose subject knowledge of Fovant Badges and the surrounding area was second to none. The visit included a guided tour of the local area, in which he set the scene as to how the badges were engraved into the local hillside by comrades who had gone before us. We then got the chance to trace those footsteps of our comrades and see exactly how they constructed "Jimmy" into the hillside through ardours activity with both the pick and shovel.

Richard also explained to us the reason that "Jimmy" was looking fresh faced and standing proud on the hillside was due to the fact that the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund provide financial support in order for its maintenance throughout the year.

As part of the centurion piece Fovant have invited members of the Sqn back to excavate a 25ft poppy into the local hillside.



What a fitting way of remembering comrades gone before us, soldiers from the modern day, volunteering to give up their own personal time to complete this piece.

On the whole a thoroughly enjoyable day had by all and as a gesture of our appreciation the OC Sqn presented our tour guide with a Sqn Plaque as a momentum.

As part of our Regimental Community Engagement, this was an excellent opportunity for 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn personnel to have a break from day to day business and participate in a significant educational visit.

This visit will not only raise awareness about these historic badges, but also provide an excellent opportunity to recognise and appreciate the voluntary work The Fovant Badges Society conducts to maintain and raise awareness.

NOTICE TO THOSE WHO HAVE TRANSFERRED INTO ROYAL SIGNALS – SERVICE DAY'S PAY GIVING

Transferees into the Corps should note that their voluntary Service Day's Pay Giving (also known as the Day's Pay Scheme) subscriptions will **NOT** automatically change to their new cap-badge's charity on transfer. This is an individual responsibility, but it has become clear that many people are not aware of this, including some who have transferred from Queen's Gurkha Signals to the Corps.

If transferees wish to change their Service Day's Pay Giving to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund the procedure to do so is straight-forward and can be carried out with the help of RAOs.

All that is required is that individuals complete two copies of JS Form JPA E014, the first to STOP payment to the old Regiment/Corps or Service (including the Gurkha Welfare Trust for Gurkha personnel) and the second to START payment into the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund. The first form should be sent to RHQ or equivalent of the original Service/Corps/Regiment and the second to RHQ Royal Signals.

If you are not sure whether you are paying into the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, please contact your RAO or the RSBF Subscriptions Officer, Jess Lawson by emailing subscriptions@royalsignals.org.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS



1 SIGNAL BRIGADE



Exercise RACE THE SUN 2016 - by Sgt O'Brien

On Wed 25 May 16 the HQ 1st (UK) Sig Bde team deployed from Imjin Barracks hoping to emulate a fantastic performance the year before. Probably the most challenging part of the event this year was getting people to the event as there were literally team members all over Europe. Although this was like 'herding cats' at times it also showed the dedication to the team that the competitors showed in a very busy period for the HQ.

This year we were accommodated at Queen Elizabeth Barracks (Strensall) which was very comfortable compared to previous years in the gymnasium or garages at Imphal Barracks. Once all personnel had arrived from various places around Europe I gave everybody all the details I had received in the team captain's brief, this included letting WO2 (AQMS) Collins know that after being pinged for the mountain bike leg there was some concerns for safety on the route.

After a few hours of sleep the team moved from Strensall to Imphal Barracks to cheer on Lt Col Fowkes on the first leg which was a 600m run followed by a 6k canoe (upstream). Lt Col Fowkes did extremely well to get a very good start for the HQ and handed over to Lt Col McCreath who gave a competitive effort on the 12k river run. WO1 Sheppard then put in a brilliant performance on Leg 3 which saw our very small HQ slogging it out with some of the larger units in the competition. After a good start we had more success with Maj Terry putting in an improved performance from last year in his final jaunt for the HQ, Capt Jones and LCpl Akplu also put in hard fought performances to leave the team in a great position at the halfway point.

It was then to the second mass start and **SSgt Skene** ran the half marathon in respectful time to keep the momentum going that was created in the first half. Next was the dreaded mountain bike leg which saw **WO2 Collins** battle hard to finish a very difficult leg at short notice. Although **WO2 Collins** performed admirably, this did leave **Brig Nesmith** at the start line of the fell run for some time, however this only made

the Brig more enthusiastic to get going and she put in a solid performance whilst being able to see some of the fantastic views the Yorkshire Moors has to offer. Brig Nesmith then handed the baton over to Maj Bentley who gave a stellar performance as expected in the Orienteering only to be whisked away to compete a leg later in the cycle orienteering by Sgt O'Brien. Meanwhile Capt Perkins went well in the forest run and handed over to Maj Bentley who set off on what would be a very respectable performance in his second leg of the day.

The third mass start saw **SSgt Skene** step up to the plate and complete the swim which would be a difficult leg on any day but even more so after a half marathon, he then handed over to **Maj Davies** who brought home another great team effort back into Imphal barracks.

The only task left was to pull together a team for the eagerly anticipated final leg, the dreaded stretcher race, the team was extremely tired but were buoyed by the enthusiasm of **WO1 Sheppard** who won the 800m run at the start of the race at a canter. Needless to say the team pulled together and the stretcher race was completed in a respectful time.

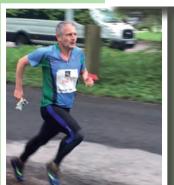
After the race had finished the team took time to enjoy a well-deserved drink and a fantastic Nepalese curry whilst waiting for the final results to be announced and the presentations to be given. As team captain I was delighted to see the commitment shown by the team throughout the race and would like to thank those who stepped up to help the team at short notice. All in all this was a great couple of days out of the office for the HQ staff and an event I have taken great pleasure in organising over the past 3 years



WO1 Sheppard looking relaxed before the 35km bike leg



Capt Jones handing over to LCpl Akplu after the bergan run



Maj Bentley during the orienteering leg



Maj Davies during the gruelling bike / run leg



The HQ staff pulled together to complete the final leg



11 SIGNAL and WEST MIDLANDS BRIGADE



Engagement in the West Midlands

One of the key components of the Bde's delivery of the Firm Base in the West Midlands is the Engagement activity coordinated by the G9 branch. The engagement activity is wide-ranging and includes Community, Employer, BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) and Youth Engagement as well as Transition and Reserve Recruiting. The activities are most ably supported at the local level by the new Civil Engagement Task Forces (CETF); West Midlands based units with CE responsibilities for their local areas and include the Royal Signals units in the West Midlands (1, 16, 22, 30 and 37 Sig Regts).

Duke of Cambridge Unveils Birmingham's VC Paving Stones

The Duke of Cambridge visited the Hall of Memory in Birmingham on 7 December 2015 to unveil ten commemorative paving stones in honour of local Victoria Cross (VC) recipients from the First World War. This is part of a nationwide campaign to honour WW1 VC recipients by laying a commemorative paving stone in their home towns. He was hosted by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham and the Brigade Commander (Brigadier Robin Anderton-Brown). The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals provided musical support and service personnel from across the region were represented to assist with the unveiling of the stones and host the VC recipient's families. The Duke of Cambridge laid the wreath, unveiled the stones and spent time meeting the families and service personnel. A hugely successful and high profile Operation REFLECT (WW1 centenary commemorations) event for the Brigade.

Princes Trust which has been operating across the West Midlands for the last two years and was recently praised by the Prince of Wales during his visit to the region.

From 18 - 22 April 2016 twenty eight teenagers from Sneyd Green's Excel Academy and Thistley Hough Academy threw themselves into a week of military based challenges and activities in an environment away from their home pressures to broaden their horizons, build team cohesion whilst mentally and physically challenging them.

WO2 Ray Miller and WO2 Prof Proffitt, both Youth Engagement Warrant Officers for the Brigade, instigated a robust tried and tested programme of activities, supported by Stoke-on-Trent Police and school staff. There was a marked positive difference in the attitude and resilience of the pupils from the start to the end of the programme and the feedback from visitors, staff and pupils alike was hugely positive.



Another successful LifeMAPs completed – not sure about the hair and makeup

Army West Midlands Look at Life - Reserve Challenge

So far this year the Brigade HQ has run three Exercise RESERVE CHALLENGE with a fourth planned for September. The exercise is run in partnership with local businesses, employers, universities and the Job Centre plus teams across the West Midlands. The ex focuses on leadership development and confidence training but also provides an insight into Reserve service. For some it also provides an opportunity for a job interview with an Armed Forces supportive employer. Already in 2016, 95 candidates have



LCpl Wong assisting a candidate from Birmingham University at the 37 Signal Regiment stand at Exercise **RESERVE CHALLENGE**



VC paving stone for Sgt Albert Gill of the King's Royal Rifle Corps who heroically died during the Somme campaign

Pupils Get a Taste of Army Life at Army Camp

Pupils from two Stoke-on-Trent schools were given a taste of military life after Brigade and local police joined forces to deliver a five day residential course at Swynnerton Training Camp for youngsters to boost confidence and self-esteem but ultimately reduce disruption in school and crime. This was the latest of the successful LifeMAPs (Life Multi Agency Partnering Solutions) courses originally developed with the

attended the ex from both the public and private sectors including Jaguar Land Rover, National Exhibition Centre and West Midlands Police resulting in 57 Expressions of Interest to join the Reserves.

Sikh Memorial Unveiling, National Memorial Arboretum

The West Midlands holds the second largest population of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people (BAME) in the Country. The Brigade seeks to engage actively with local communities, primarily of the Muslim, Sikh and Hindu faiths and the Brigade has focused on engagement activity in Birmingham, Coventry, Stoke on Trent and the Black Country. On 1 November 2015, the Brigade delivered military input and support to the unveiling of a First World War Sikh memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). The memorial was unveiled by Major General Patrick Sanders CBE DSO, business tycoon Peter Singh Virdee and the monument's chairman Jay **Singh-Sohal** at a ceremony which fused religious traditions from the Sikh faith with British military pomp and custom. Speeches were made honouring the sacrifice of the 126,245 Sikhs who fought during the Great War – before a parade led the congregation to the unveiling site. An ardaas prayer was recited and after the traditional Sikh war cry, a one-minute silence was observed by the 300 people present.



Sikh Armed Forces Personnel from across the West Midlands present at the unveiling of the FWW Sikh Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

Battle of Canal, Comines, Belgium (28th May)

In May 1940 the 7th and 8th Royal Warwickshire Regiments took part in fighting as part of a delaying action during the British Expeditionary Force's retreat to Dunkirk. The units were both part of 143 Bde and fought at Comines. The town of Comines is at the end of the Ypres to Comines canal and the battle is commemorated annually by the Patriotical Association. Following the amalgamation of 143 (West Midlands) Bde with HQ 11 Sig Bde in October 2014 the Bde HQ's has maintained the link with the Patriotical Association



Standard bearers at the Canal commemorations

and at 2016's commemoration, Maj John Scott and Capt Luke Cawston travelled to Belgium to represent the Brigade Commander on 28 May 2016, they visited sites where fighting took place during the Battle of Passchendaele in the First World War and the



11 Sig & WM Bde wreath at the Menin Gate

Battle of the Canal (Battle of Wytschaete) during the Second World War. Wreaths were laid at the site of the Battle of the Canal and at the Menin Gate.

Race The Sun

The Brigade Headquarters entered a team at 2016's Race the Sun competition. With minimal training, the team performed extremely well, taking fourth place in the minor unit competition. Most importantly, the headquarters were 41 minutes ahead of HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde at the end of the event. Particular praise goes to WO1 (FofS) Steve Read for winning his stage in the orienteering competition and Sgt Danny Woolridge for competing in the kayak and open water swim events.



Capt Elliot Moore getting ready for the cycle orienteering



HQ 11 Sig & WM Bde team for Race the Sun



The end of the stretcher race for the Bde HQ

NEWS FROM REGIMENTS



1st SIGNAL REGIMENT **STAFFORD**



RSM

Lt Col PRD Muir MBE WO1 (RSM) D Corcoran



Valuable goalkeeping advice being given to members of the workshop

The Royal Signals Goalkeeping Workshop - by LCpl Nicholas

On Tue 8 Mar the Royal Signals Football Association conducted a goalkeeper coaching workshop which saw the Academy Goalkeeping Coaches from Stoke City Football Club come to MoD Stafford. It was a befitting occasion that reignited memory of The Royal Signals connection to Stoke City goalkeeping legend Gordon Banks who served with The Corps for his National Service.

Ten R SIGNALS goalkeepers along with 2 RAF goalkeepers were put through their paces in a 3 hour training session by three fantastic Stoke City coaches; Jack Day, Duncan Gilchrist and Paul Salvatore.

It proved to be an incredible experience for all those involved and the younger keepers were exposed to lots of new drills and techniques. The first hour was supposedly just the warm up, although it proved to be an absolute thrashing which both the keepers and coaches thoroughly enjoyed. The approach of the coaching staff was very modern, reflecting today's game, as they concentrated on footwork and passing drills usually associated with outfield players. The message from the coaching staff was that attacks can start from the goalkeeper and how essential it is for the keeper to have good feet; the modern "sweeper keeper".

The coaches were extremely grateful to be given the chance to coach service personnel and they commended their attitude, hard work and enthusiasm. There is a genuine interest to repeat the event again and even make the day a regular occurrence. So in summary an excellent morning for goalkeepers and coaches alike, and a great engagement into the local community with links to a Premiership Football Club firmly established.



Those who were a part of the excellent workshop

Royal Signals Corps Triathlon Novice Training Camp 3-4 May - by LCpl Hood

03 May - We set off from Beacon Barracks, Stafford on the Tue 3 May at the crack of dawn to represent 1st Sig Regt down in Colerne the home of 21st Sig Regt. In attendance were Capt Hollingsworth, LCpl Bullard, LCpl Royals and LCpl Hood. We had arrived and when all the formalities had been completed it was straight into a two-hour swim session, consisting of a variety of techniques aimed at making us more fluid in the water, pardon the pun. Once we had all gained something from that it was on to a sixteen length (400M) swim best effort to establish what waves we would start in on race day; Capt Hollingsworth pulled out a particularly strong swim time to set him up nicely for the race day event.

Following dinner, we moved into transition training which essentially is moving from the swim phase out onto the bike in the quickest smoothest possible fashion, queue people falling over one another and creating mass hysteria.

Once out on the bikes familiarising ourselves with the route the mighty 1st again ran into trouble, Capt Hollingsworth managed to snap his rear derailleur completely off and LCpl Bullard became the only puncture victim of the day, breaking down at the furthest most point away from transition. LCpl Royals managed to save the day with a strong showing and proving why she is a Corps cyclist. The day finished with a nutrition brief and general triathlon tips for future reference.

4 May - The day started off with more transition training, this time practising returning from the bike leg into the run phase; again aimed at being as quick and efficient as possible. Once that drill was picked up it was onto BRICK training, specific to working hard on one of the events and then directly into another discipline then repeating as required, this proved to be quite hard work but ultimately great training value!

After a much needed dinner break to recharge the batteries, it was back up to our training area where we carried warm up techniques for running prior to an event or just general day to day running. This period of instruction was particularly useful and everyone was keen to learn as much as they could.

Finally rounding the day off with a small taster of putting all that we had learned together in a mini triathlon. This encompassed a 200m swim backed up by a 4-mile bike and a 1.5 mile run. This proved to be invaluable to the majority of the competitors as it gave us an experience of what the triathlon on race day will feel like.

5 May - R SIGNALS Corps Championships - We arose to the smell of freshly cut grass on race day; hay fever was in the air coupled with that sickly feeling of what lay ahead. The four of us arrived in the transition area at 0815 to prep our bikes and drop our kit off needed to complete the day. LCpl Royals was to set off first followed by LCpl Bullard then Capt Hollingsworth and then LCpl Hood. LCpl Bullard was plagued throughout his swim with dodgy goggles appearing to be leaking water faster than the Titanic (for future reference spend more than one pound on goggles). Once all four of us had entered the bike phase we seemed to finally have a day where no incidences negatively occurred for us. The only drama was a poor rider who incurred a flat tyre on the first lap, he still hadn't corrected the issue by the time I was completing my third and final lap.

Now by this point the sun was beaming and it was into the home straight; many races are won and lost at this stage due to the sheer amount of effort put into the first two disciplines but all four of us managed to bring it home in good fashion and to the relief of most tri-athletes on the day it was over.

Fast forward to the medal ceremony and rewards for top performers, our star corps cyclist **LCpl Royals** took the award for best female novice in a time of 01:17:22 secs, **Capt Hollingsworth** picked up a very impressive 3rd place in the male novice category with a cracking time of 01:09:21. **LCpl Bullard** and **LCpl Hood** picked up the happy clapper's awards with times of 01:26:17 and 01:15:38.

All in all, a thoroughly enjoyable week and the bug appears to be in full swing. On to the next one!



Pre-race nerves from the 4 triathletes

200 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj F Pearce

SSM WO2 (SSM) D Jackson

Exercise PREMIER CAPSTONE - by LCpl Fleck & Sig Gardiner

2016 has been a busy year for 200 Sig Sqn. With back to back exercises supporting 20th Armd Inf Bde HQ preparing for its readiness year in 2017, military skills exercises, promotion

courses and all the other usual commitments. The sqn has done a great job in balancing all those tasks whilst still performing its duty to fulfil the diverse and difficult role in achieving 1 Sig Regt's mission.



Sig Howlett manning the radio on Ex PREMIER CAPSTONE

Ex PREMIER CAPSTONE was to be the foundation exercise proving the capabilities of the sqn and more largely the regt prior to deployment on Ex FLYING FALCON. 3 field sqns and a sp sqn were deployed to NESSCLIFF TRAINING AREA providing TacCIS, ICS and reach back capabilities via SATCOM. Soldiers and officers of 200 Sig Sqn deployed to establish 20 Armd Inf Bde Main HQ and Forward HQ with a wide area network spanning across the NESSCLIFF TRAINING AREA.

Within 10 minutes of the bulldogs arriving on the training area, Alpha Tp was in a convoy and on our way to the first location. The first step was to pull up and mark the area of the Main HQ with the Sustain and G6 vehicle. Then the BFOT comes out. All hands are on deck as the BFOT is the equivalent of two 18x24 tents plus five 12x12 tents all attached into one super tent. With the frame built and the canvas draped, next comes the camnet. Weighing nearly a ton and held together by cargo nets and ratchet straps, it's a 10 man job to get it up and erected on the canvas. Almost an hour and half had passed, by this time everyone had a huge sweat on but there was still hours of work to go. Despite this LCpl Corcoran wandered around with his hands in his pockets chilling out and Sgt Hamilton remained in the corner having a weirdly tender moment with his cat 5 cabling.

With the Main HQ built, it was time to install the TacCIS, on previous exercises this was the section that everyone hated as usually there would be 8 dismounts remoted with over 127 cables, not to mention the terminals at the other end of the cables needing HDD's and keyboards; sometimes taking up to 10 hours to lie out. This was a painful experience but not anymore thanks to the genius work of **Sgt Hamilton**; he and a team of technicians spent hours building and testing a switch that would allow the same amount of terminals to be connected to one dismount. And even better for us no more dismount cables, everything now connects over Cat5 cable. I have seen this being used in other units before in the form of BOATs (large shelving units containing bowman) but these were heavy and required more than one for each staff cell. **Sgt Hamilton's** technical box of magic is no bigger than an MFO box and could be placed away from the staff working areas but still provide any amount of terminals and users needed by 20 Brigade Staff.

After the initial PACEX phase the HQ received an order to move, with pre-cut lengths of cat 5, the layout plan and a team of dedicated people, the Main HQ found itself from being collapsed and moved to being built and at FOC capability in 6 hours compared to the previous 12+ hours; a huge leap forward in both capability and troop morale.

Ex PREMIER CAPSTONE was a unique chance for the sqn to deploy in both a low and high pressure environment and test ourselves as a team in meeting staff officer led deadlines. Time was on our side and on the second build we had the freedom to allow junior commanders and tradesmen to establish the HQ and engineer comms on our own; but not without some much needed advice from the senior ranks. The lessons learnt and training development of all trades and cap badges were undoubtedly priceless. The Regt and the Sqn pushed itself technically and logistically to the edge of its comfort zone and the outcome was a very successful exercise. All of this was ably assisted by the field kitchen set up by the RLC bringing the standard issue black forest gateau and frozen jammy donuts for morale.



The new SWE set up thanks to Sgt Hamilton's hard work

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj P Andrews

SSM WO2 (SSM) R Horsbrough

Exercise JURASSIC RIDER - by Lt Hurst



The team at the start of the exercise

The final week in April saw Lt Hurst and LCpl Royals deploy on Ex JURASSIC RIDER, the Royal Signals Road Cycling 2016 training camp. The training camp was held at Blandford Camp, Dorset over the dates 24 Apr – 29 Apr 16.

On arrival, they met with the other hopefuls who were also trying out for the 2016 Road Racing Team. After much bike admiration and a number of conversations to compare which

energy gel to use, which gilet to wear and most importantly which kit to wear on day 1, everyone was split into suitable ability groups.

The week began with in-depth bike maintenance lessons to help us understand the mechanics of our bikes. Once the whole group was confident in telling apart the crank arm from the brake calliper, we then set out for our first "shake out" ride.

The ride difficulty progressed throughout the week and the days included many famous rides such as the Gold Hill climb in Shaftesbury and the Lulworth Cove - Corfe Castle - Blandford loop. All were meticulously logged on Strava, in order to keep tally of who was winning in each segment, as part of the on-line Royal Signals Strava leader board. LCpl Royals stormed ahead in the race for the Queen of the Mountain (QoM) accomplishments, often matching the King of the Mountain (KoM) times and speeds.

With nearly 200 miles of riding under their belts and over 8,000ft of climbing, the final challenge for the 1 Sig Regt females was the Henstridge Airfield Race. Having found out the night before that they had both been awarded places on the Ladies Cycling team, it was an exciting opportunity to race together and be #ProudToWearBlue (the Royal Signals Cycling Team motto).

The Henstridge Airfield course is renowned for being fast and technical, but with the added difficulty of a strong headwind they rapidly realised that they would have to work together as a team, if they were to succeed in racing alongside the B-League riders. Luckily, they found their rhythm and worked together for the 40 minutes + 3 laps race. In the last lap, after a moment of deliberation, they decided to work together until the final sprint. As they turned the last corner, Lt Hurst powered through, ever so slightly faster than LCpl Royals, crossing the finish line a bike's length ahead. After an exhausted high five, they then returned to pose for a quick photo, before the long drive back to Stafford.

Lt Hurst and LCpl Royals have been training together as part of the 1 Signal Regiment Cycling Team for the past 12 months. Having completed an endurance cycling event across Europe and a number of races as part of the British Army (Germany) and Army Cycling Union Racing Series, they have built their success together. The team is always looking for new members to join (female and male), so if you are interested in cycling please get in touch and come and join us on the racing tracks!



LCpl Royals ascending a steep climb at the front of the pack

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj E Swift

SSM WO2 (SSM) G Davies

Exercise BATTLEAXE CHALLENGE 4-8 APR 16 - by LCpl Duffy



Sig Lowndes on the ascent

On 4 April 2016 members of 211 Sig Sqn travelled to the Nuffield Centre in Anglesey, North Wales to take part in an AT package comprising of hill walking, mountain biking and rock climbing.

After a short 2 hour journey we arrived at our destination. Upon arrival we realised the accommodation and facilities were of a high standard, excusing the bar, which was unfortunately undergoing a renovation when we were there. After a quick look around we had a brief where we all found out what we would be doing for the week. After this brief the climbers went to the indoor wall to practice some basic skills, whereas the hill walkers and mountain bikers had the rest of the day off.

On the second day the AT package started in earnest as everyone would be going out, the mountain bikers were to do what proved to be a very challenging route as practically all participants, including the instructors, fell off at some stage during the day! The hill walkers went out to climb Snowdon and the rock climbing course went out onto a rock face for the first time. This included both **Cpl Kerrigan** and **Sig Lowndes** forgetting that although rock climbing shoes are great on rock they are useless on wet grass, resulting in both of them falling in sheep droppings.

After a hearty breakfast the third day began, the mountain bikers and hill walking groups stayed the same but changed routes. The mountain bikers in particular were looking for somewhere less challenging! Unfortunately the weather was typically Welsh so we were greeted with rain throughout the day. WO2 (FofS) Daley decided to take the rock climbers to Holyhead to try to dodge the worst of it so we could climb outdoors rather than going indoors. Luckily there were clear skies in Holyhead and we managed to do both climbing and abseiling before finishing the day in Betws-Y-Coed with a brew.

Day 4 included our first injury of the week as **Cpl Rose** had a fall on the Mountain biking and had a tiny, miniscule cut on his leg that he insisted needed hospital treatment. As the hill walking and mountain biking groups had swapped over they

did the same routes again, including going up Snowdon and doing a green route for the Mountain bikers. The rock climbing course was finished on the indoor walls where we had a go at lead climbing and using the auto-belay devices. Luckily the weather was bad again so we were happy to be indoors and were very concerned about our colleagues... while in the café enjoying cake.

The last day was a shorter day as we had the journey back to camp to take into account, with this in mind the rock climbers went to an easier climb and practiced placing gear in the crag to use on an outdoor lead climb. After this was finished we made our way back to camp.

All in all the AT package was successful with all participants enjoying and learning something from the week. The climbers in particular all passed their Foundation level Single Pitch climbing course and are looking forward to gaining their Single pitch leading qualification, including **Cpl Lafferty**, if he can get over his fear of heights... it was a long week for him!

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj G Middleton SSM WO2 (SSM) J Cordery

Stop Hunger Endurance Competition - by Cpl Grundy



Cpl Grundy running hard with Sgt Cameron taking it easy

On the 26th April 2016 the 1st Sig Regt took part in the Stop Hunger Charity endurance event. The challenge was to man a running and cycling machine for nine hours, the winners would be the team that travelled the furthest total distance.

With the gauntlet thrown teams from 1st, 22nd and 16th Sig Regts along with the Tactical Supply Wing and Sodexo descended upon the JRC eager to compete. A sense of competitiveness and undercurrent of rivalry washed over the area almost immediately and it became clear that every team had a desire to win the event and the associated bragging rights.

The 1st Sig Regt's plan was to submit two teams; they would take one 30 min interval on either the exercise bike or treadmill. Despite short notice and additional commitments the Regt responded to the call to arms with unprecedented zeal and the teams were complete with reserves in minimal time.

As the event progressed throughout the day one thing became very clear, the level of support and motivation delivered by the 1^{St} Sig Regt outshone the competition. Anyone who thought that they could jog or steady cycle for 30mins was sorely mistaken. The aptly named 'Regimental motivation squad' made up from Capt Hosken, SSgt Williams and SSgt (SSI) Allen with his gym staff were on hand throughout the day. The support and encouragement that this squad delivered allowed a large percentage of team members to set new personal bests over a 30 min cycle or run.

As the event drew to a close it became painfully apparent that competition was going to be too close to call. Even Sodexo

were outperforming initial expectations due to the efforts of Sgt Cameron and Cpl Grundy. Once the nine hours were complete it was an anxious wait while the results were counted. With growing tension and what seemed like an age the results were called, 1st Sig Regt had beaten the Tactical Supply Wing by 8km to claim the top spot and the bragging rights as the fittest Regiment in station.

On behalf of the Regt I would like to mention a special note of thanks to the event organiser, Mrs Gabbi Walker, who despite the heavy workload of running the combined mess, still managed to bring together an entire station to raise money for a worthy charity. It was a great day that was enjoyed by all.



2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT YORK



CO Mai J Stillie

RSM WO1 (RSM) J Stephenson

On 18 March 2016 2 Sig Regt dined out and bid farewell to its Commanding Officer, Lt Col Ian Hargreaves. Col Hargreaves leaves on promotion and posting as Assistant Head of Army Information Cyber Security, Army HQ. Under the leadership of Col Hargreaves 2 Sig Regt has enjoyed an immensely busy period of operation deployments, national and international exercises and numerous sporting and AT events. During his tenure, the Regt was the lead for operational support worldwide which, at its peak in 2015, saw over 350 soldiers deployed on 18 operations across 4 continents. These tasks also included support to UK operations and of particular note is the support of local authorities of York after the Christmas and New Year flooding of 2015/16. Col Hargreaves received the customary dine out from the Officers Mess, a 'Burger King' themed farewell from the WO & Sgts Mess and also a personal farewell from the Gurkha community during their Nepalese New Year celebrations. His measured command style, attention to detail and interest in all aspects of his unit will be missed by all at Imphal barracks and we wish him and Helen the very best of luck for the future.



Lt Col Hargreaves during his dine out from the Officers Mess

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj D Whitworth SSM WO₂ (SSM) N McDiarmid

Sp Sqn SHQ has undergone a period change with a number of personalities leaving and arriving. The Sqn bids farewell to Capt Berry who moves on to 16SR as the QM(T), to be replaced by Capt Lawer, Padre Clarke is replaced by Padre Williams, SSgt Jennings deployed to BATUK for six months and Pte Forsdike joins us from 214 Sig Sqn to bolster the Sqn CHRS team. We wish the best of look to those who have left and welcome the new arrivals.

The month of May saw the inaugural awarding of the Sp Sqn OC's Soldier Of Note award. Pte Turner AGC (SPS) was the worthy recipient of the accolade and is congratulated on her efforts since arriving with the Sqn.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj M Jones SSM WO2 (SSM) P Stillie

As the Sqn continues to re-balance to support the Vanguard Light Forces Group, levels of activity remain high; with plenty of lower level CT1 training that has focussed on core trade and military skills. We continue to provide support to BATUS and BATUK and hold a large portion of the Sqn at readiness for a number of UK and overseas taskings. We have achieved a good balance however, with plenty of sporting opportunities and a recent AT trip to Morocco.

As I write, we are currently deploying as a Sqn to support HQ 1(UK) Div on Ex RHINO CHARGE, and are set for a number of CIS exercises later in the year with HQ 11 (Inf) Bde.

We have said goodbye to a number of long serving members of the team. Departing for Northern Ireland on promotion is SSgt (FofS) Shaun Stanham as well as WO2 (FofS) Ian Wardle, who will take his place as Regimental FofS at 30 Sig Regt.

It is also a fond farewell to the 2IC, Capt Dave 'The Pirate' Wallis, off to be Adjt at 3 Sig Regt and to the Sgt Maj, WO2 (SSM) Phil Stillie, who moves to 1 MI Bn. My thanks and appreciation to you all for your efforts and the pivotal parts you played in a successful few years for the Sqn.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Ahsan

SSM WO2 (SSM) Grainger

219 Sig Sqn has had a very busy few months, mostly spent pouring ourselves into and out of various military training areas across the UK to prepare for the task of providing communications support to the European Union Battle Group, or as the Daily Mail would have it, 'The Secret EU Army'. We now enter a period of reconstitution before being at readiness for the second half of 2016 with the hope that deployment to an operational theatre is in our collective fates.

We sadly wish farewell to several key members of the Sqn; Capt David Lenehan who moves on to Kathmandu with his wife after successfully wrestling the job of SO3 G2/3/6 from a worthy adversary, Capt Joshua Ingold who leaves us one step closer to marriage, and finally Lt Paul Walker who continues to espouse the merits of being able to succeed as the proud holder of a Home Economics degree in a Technical Corps. We also wish the very best to the four Sgts who were selected for promotion to SSgt, and will depart for new assignments across the R SIGNALS. At the same time we welcome the addition of the good natured force of nature in the form of Lt Paris Goldsbury who joins us after being able to conquer her fear of maps and following route cards.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Whillis SSM WO2 (SSM) Gopal

246 GSS has enjoyed another busy, exciting couple of months. On operations and exercises we have continued deploying soldiers all over the world; individuals to BATUS, BATUK, BATSUB; Island Troop led by Lt Seaton has successfully taken over their role on BFSAI; Cpl Ramesh has completed his tour on Op NEWCOMBE in Mali; SSgt Sekendra has taken 13 individuals to Poland to support VJTF(L) and we have also deployed various FALCON dets in support of Regimental exercises. At the same time the Ops Officer led a Regimental exped to Dhaulagiri in Nepal and the Sqn successfully organised Race the Sun 2016.

During this period we have also had a considerable turnover of staff within the SHQ. The Sqn Ops Officer, Capt T Aldred, will soon depart for RMAS and has been replaced by Lt M McCabe; the 2IC, Capt Bharat, has moved to 16SR and has been replaced by Capt Vishal; Sqn YofS, SSgt (YofS) N Piff, has moved to another Sqn with 2SR and has been replaced by A/SSgt P Shaw and FofS, SSgt (FofS) Marsh, has departed for 1 NATO Sig Bn has been replaced with SSgt (FofS) Lill who is fresh from his FofS course and keen to impress; The SQMS, SSgt Lalit, has taken up a post at 11RSS upon promotion and has been replaced by SSgt Saindra. The Sqn wishes all individuals the very best for the future and looks forward to working with all the new arrivals.

DELIVERING RACE THE SUN - by Maj P Whillis and WO2 (SSM) Gopal, RTS OIC and 2IC

Planning

Race the Sun is an annual, 15 leg multi-activity race hosted by 2 Sig Regt in York where teams attempt to complete the 212km course across seven disciplines between sunrise and sunset. Planning and organising such an event takes

considerable effort and this article will give a small insight into what goes into realising such an enjoyable date in the calendar.

Planning starts six months out. A Warning Order was sent in late December 2015, followed by a team Admin Instruction in February 2016. In total 30 teams entered by the application deadline a month before the event, with 16 from major units and 14 from minor units. Of these, two subsequently withdrew, leaving 28 teams to compete. 19 of these teams were from Royal Signals units, meaning that a significant proportion of the Corps were present in Imphal Barracks on race day.

At the outset, six major themes were identified on which the success of the race depended: the route, safety, timing, G4 support, the transport plan and funding.

From November 2015, route map reconnaissance was conducted and Leg ICs were identified. Once the desired route had been identified, the Leg ICs surveyed their legs and land clearance requests were sent to local landowners. Route confirmation continued until immediately prior to the event, which was fortunate: it allowed us to delay a planned road closure near Castle Howard until after the race, and also to negotiate with the Forestry Commission to ensure that their erratic predilection for closing gates to prevent the trees escaping was held in check for 24 hours. The route for the 2016 race was altered slightly, as some landowners chose not to allow access to their land, and to enhance safety. In addition, we decided to change the rules and descriptions for some of the legs as in the past they had caused confusion. Notably, competitors were explicitly permitted to complete any cycling leg on any roadworthy bike of their choice, to neutralise the invigorating 'that's not a mountain bike' arguments of previous years.

Safety scrutiny of this year's event was painstaking, with the EASP and risk assessments for each leg being examined by HQ 11 Sig and WM Bde, Force Troops Command (FTC), 4 Inf Bde and Imphal Barracks SHE Co-ord WO2 O'Neill. As a result, the safety arrangements and medical support for the race was far more robust than in previous years. Three medical units, Wet Bulb Globe Thermometers, emergency shelters and medically trained personnel were deployed around the course, and a comprehensive 'actions on lost' procedure was implemented. On race day, this plan succeeded in finding two lost competitors within acceptable timelines. Safety boats and pilots from 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, Water Safety Officers (Sgt Jamie McMoran from 32 Engr Regt and Sgt Murray from 66 Works Group RE), and open water lifeguards from 4 Yorks and the Queen's Own Yeomanry provided the cover we needed for the Risk to Life water legs, for which we are very grateful.

Timing the event was another major theme. As in previous years, leg marshalls carried out manual timing for each segment. This was supplemented by an electronic timing system from an external company, with which some accuracy issues were encountered. As a result, the manual times were generally preferred throughout the event. A key improvement for the next edition of the race will be to improve the robustness of any electronic timing solution.

Administering 610 competitors, around 300 support staff and a profusion of distinguished visitors took no small effort. The superb work of QM (G) Maj John Howell-Walmsley MBE and 246's SQMS SSgt Saindra Chemjong, together with numerous

diligent individuals, ensured that G4 arrangements for the race were outstanding. The immediate build up to the event saw 2 Sig Regt erect a tent city in front of the WOs' and Sergeants' Mess as well as ironing out the final details: banners, arches, PA systems, visual displays, and pot plants temporarily liberated from the surrounding buildings.

The transport plan is fundamental to the event's success, and WO1 Matt Whitfield MBE did a superb job of co-ordinating 18 minibuses, numerous MAN trucks, three medical vehicles, and a herd of panel vans and baggage wagons through the York rush hours. Apart from an unnecessarily exciting juncture when a driver taking a 'short cut' resulted in a bicycle carrier arriving with only seconds to spare before the start of leg 3, this element of the race seemed to run seamlessly, thanks to his and his staff's efforts.

The finances required for Race the Sun are primarily drawn from unit entry fees, but the competition suffers from having no dedicated funding beyond this. Sponsorship was sought for the event and was generously provided by BAe Systems. HQ Royal Signals agreed to underwrite the event (within reason) in case of financial difficulty, but fortunately this contingency was not required. Owing to some hard work by the Gurkha Chefs under **Sgt Bimal**, who were drawn from sub-units across Queen's Gurkha Signals, catering costs were reduced by around £1000 on previous years, with no loss of

As the competition drew closer, we conducted a Rehearsal of Concepts Drill to test the robustness of each of the elements described above. Several weak points were identified and addressed, and clarification issued. We were also treated to an aerial view of the route, helpfully created by Cpl Suman and made available for the competitors to view on the day of the race. A live race rehearsal seven days prior proved each concept, and showed that the route was sufficiently marked to prevent individuals exercising appropriate situational awareness from getting lost.

Race Control was set up in the QM's Dept and we awaited the beginning of the race. As the teams arrived and settled into the accommodation (2 Sig Regt's gym, squash court or Strensall Camp transit rooms) the teams' captains, the drivers, the swimmers and kayakers, DCGS, Commander 11 Sig and WM Bde and the Corps Colonel were briefed on the final form of the event; then it was a green light for the o500 hrs start of leg 1.



Competitors race off at 0500 for the start of Leg 1

Once Maj Jim Stillie, CO 2 Sig Regt, had honked the starter horn, the teams raced off to the river and the frantic kayak up the River Ouse. Those of us in Race Control lacked time to appreciate the event, as we were busy keeping track of the considerable moving parts. The inventive and unorthodox voice procedure practised by the watchkeepers, who did a genuinely fine job of logging developments, provided the principal amusement. Up to four legs were soon in progress simultaneously, due to the divergence in ability between competitors who were spread over around 25 miles of North Yorkshire. This kept the medics, under Maj Anne Gumbley and Sgt Natalie Richardson on their toes, together with SSgt (QMSI) Hayward's gym staff checking the WBGTs. Legs reporting that they were setting up, opening, releasing competitors, receiving competitors and closing down were all tracked over the AIRWAVE net and the MoD's adopted WhatsApp capability. The day progressed without serious incident: a couple of competitors became lost, and there were some minor injuries due to falls on the biking and running legs. Unfortunately some of the electronic timing chips failed but thankfully the Leg ICs had kept manual scores. The middle section of the race, which always seems the slowest part due to the multitude of running legs crammed into a horseshoe around the Hole of Horcum and Dalby Forest, was reached around midday. After a quick dip in Castle Howard lake at 3pm, the final duathlon braved the York rush hour traffic and saw the largest proportion of incidents - this is another part of the race that should be amended in 2017. After the final stretcher race around Imphal Barracks, and prior to the prize giving ceremony, many had time for a curry buffet and a well-deserved drink while listening to the rousingly good REME band.



Competitors ready for the mass-start Half Marathon (Leg 7)

As past competitors, we consider Race the Sun to be one of the highlights of the calendar. Having organised the 2016 race, we look forward to the relatively undemanding pleasure of competing again next year.



Another team finishes the stretcher race to complete the day

Exercise NORTHERN TOUBKAL - by Cpl 'Daz' Lee

Ex NORTHERN TOUBKAL was a High Altitude and Remote trip to Mt Toubkal in Morocco that would also include a trek through the Sahara desert. Our expedition began with us meeting up at Imphal Barracks, York at 1400hrs on 3rd April to be issued loan pool kit, including warm and wet kit, walking poles and emergency survival equipment for the group. This was followed by a mad dash to *Go Outdoors* by several of the party to buy last minute essentials!

We arrived at Marrakech Airport and began filling out the necessary immigration paperwork as we entered the terminal building. As we moved towards the queue for passport control, we were approached by an immigration officer who asked us if we were British Army. After confirming we were an awkward wait followed before a separate passport control booth was opened for us, allowing us to avoid the large queue. This was to be our first taste of the Moroccan hospitality which was to continue. Once through passport control, we collected our bags and began the 15 minute transfer to the *Hotel Semiramis* which was our base for the night. We were given a short brief by **Jamal** - our tour guide for the expedition - on a change of itinerary due to snow, weather conditions to expect and Moroccan culture. We were then given free time to explore Marrakech.

We woke at 0715hrs on Tuesday 5th we departed the hotel at o830hrs for a two hour transfer to our start point where we met up with the mules and their guides who were to carry our kit and look after us for the next eight days. We also met the Moroccan Army and Gendarmerie who were to escort us for the duration of our expedition. We set off on a flat walk which was followed by a short steep climb which left everyone struggling for breath due to the altitude. We stopped for lunch at the top of the hill which was a picnic of fish and cheese sandwiches. We then walked 650m downhill to finish off our 6.5 mile trek. We arrived at what was advertised as a camp site but was in reality a 20 metre squared patch of grass with a traditional French 'hole in the floor' toilet and a hose pipe for a shower. A communal tent was set up which would be where we would eat our meals for the remainder of the expedition. We were given a short brief on the weather, followed by our evening meal. Sig 'Moroccan Kev' Wright had earlier requested to try bulls' testicles so these were duly brought out and sampled by the majority of the party.



Sig 'Moroccan Kev' Wright cheerful to be back in his home country

The next day began with an early wake up at 0530hrs due to the noise of a nearby village which was a great start to the 10 mile journey and possibly the hardest day's walking as we had to endure several steep assents. We had a photo with the Moroccan military and our guides then started our walk from our camp just outside the small town of Imlill to the base camp at the bottom of Mt Toubkal. The locals were all hospitable and more than welcoming as we walked through each village and as we made our descent through one of the villages our guide pointed out the first of many 'shortcuts' we would be taking over the next few days. By short cut he meant steep incline over rough terrain. As the day went on, you could tell that we were gaining height as there was more and more snow at the edges of the paths. The total climb throughout the day was 1100 metres. As the night drew in, it got colder and colder which was not fun for the jungle boys (LCpl Nabin and Pte Hardie), who both brought jungle sleeping bags on the trip to save space in their grip bags.

Thursday 7th saw us depart the camp at o8oohrs, our destination being the Nelter refuge which was at the base of Mt Toubkal - the main effort for the Exped. We climbed 1000 metres over 10km which took a total of 3 hours and 40 minutes. Once we arrived we pitched the tents and were given lessons on kit packing and conservation, part of the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification some of us were receiving.

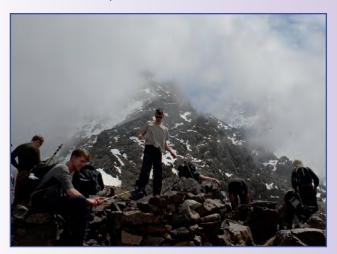


The entire team and our Moroccan hosts on the Summit of Mount Toubkal

The next day was the big one - Mt Toubkal - 4167 metres above sea level and the highest peak in North Africa. It was a 1000 metre climb over 2.5km from our start point. We had been fully briefed on the signs and symptoms of altitude sickness the previous evening and over the duration of the climb most people struggled with the altitude at some point. Two of the morale raising moments were LCpl Danny 'chub chaff' Coulman falling, sliding and wiping out Sig 'brillo pad' Deegan. This was followed by one of the Moroccan Army trying to help Capt Ingold down the mountain which left him squealing 'get off me get off me' to the amusement of the group. Thankfully all of the group made it to the summit without experiencing any serious issues with the altitude which resulted in some great photos and a well-deserved rest. The way down was probably the highlight with several of the group running, falling and sliding on their bums in the snowy areas on the mountain. This was much to the dismay of Lt 'I only need one set of socks' Ciborowski and his apprentice Sig 'Sergio Sam' Bennet, while Capt 'Dangerous Dave' Wallis was flying down the mountain on his bum. The evening was once

again spent in front of the warm fire, attempting to dry our wet clothes and charging our phones after a warm shower.

Saturday the 9th saw us begin our descent from the Nelter refuge, the temperature slowly increasing the further we walked, resulting in Sig 'Sergio Sam' Bennett turning into what resembled a lobster. Upon leaving the refuge we acquired a new member of the Exped, a four legged, one eyed dog who decided to leave her four puppies behind and follow us on the remainder of the mountain phase due to Cpl 'grandma Kate' Holden repeatedly feeding her. Near the end of our descent, we passed several hugely impressive waterfalls - which would later double up as our shower as we found another campsite without a shower.



The team having a quick break before heading down to the waterfalls

The following day was a well deserved rest day where we continued our lessons and then we begin our descent from our camp at Abiz Tamsoult into the valley and crossing a small stream. We had a late lunch which was arguably the largest of the week - but unbeknown to us the Moroccan Army and Gendarmerie had prepared a surprise meal for us which was roughly an hour after we had eaten!

The final day of the mountain phase was now upon us. Our sadness at the expedition finishing soon turned to dread when we realised we were to ascend for the full day. It was one of the hottest days to date and as we climbed up a mountain road to a place called Agadir - a word which had been used all week as a name for anything from jam to a mule - and we rested for lunch. Once finished, we were given an extra 40 minutes to rest, so the tops came off and we lay in the sun to catch a tan and rest our eyes. After our siesta we carried on, on what was a very steep and tiring climb until we reached our end point.

We then had a transition day from mountain phase to the desert phase. This should have been an uneventful 10 hour journey into the Sahara desert but turned out to be the craziest convoy any of us had ever seen thanks to some haphazard Moroccan driving.

Our first day in the desert saw us donning our newly purchased Moroccan outfits and headscarves. We set off and fortunately the heat was nowhere near as bad as expected. We stopped for lunch - which was an extended three and a half hour break to avoid the heat - then lay down in the shade where we could find it. This resulted in Capt 'Dangerous Dave' Wallis slumped against a tree, in his issued No. 2 dress



Even Camels smile for the camera!

shirt, like a downed WW2 pilot. After lunch, we had a one hour walk to our camp for the evening. This area resembled our expectation of the desert much more than the grassy, stony terrain we had experienced in the morning.



Our desert campsite

Friday the 15th was to be the final day walking in the desert before our return to civilisation and the R&R phase. We began walking at 0730hrs to beat the intense heat of mid afternoon. It was to prove a relatively easy day as we reached our end point by 1130hrs before the heat kicked in. We enjoyed lunch and then concluding the Summer Mountain Foundation with the written test. The highlight of the day was getting a short ride in the desert on the camels. This left us relieved that we never had to endure full days on the backs on them as they were not as comfortable as we expected and didn't smell particularly good either.

Saturday 16th began with a five hour transfer to begin our 48 hour R&R phase of the expedition back in Marrakech. Overall it proved to be a very challenging and rewarding expedition, climbing Mount Toubkal and nine members of the group achieving the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification. Thanks must go to Capt Wallis and Lt 'I'll prove you can wear socks for five days' Ciborowski for organising the Expedition, Trek and Tour for looking after us and the Moroccan Army and Gendarmerie for their hospitality.

Exercise LION SUN - by Lt Ciborowski

January 2016 saw 2 Sig Regt begin the calendar year in style by deploying to Cyprus to conduct a comprehensive package of LFTT, dry training and AT on Ex LIONSUN 1/16 and proved to be a welcome change of scenery from the flood ridden streets of York to the warm, sun-drenched coast of Cyprus. 120 personnel deployed and the ex began with theoretical and practical lessons ranging from BCDT to fire team, section and platoon level tactics. Split down into 3 platoons, the exercising troops were put through their paces during the initial training phase. Once basic skills and drills were brought back up to scratch and various MATTs were conducted, the troops were ready to execute an excellent LFTT package in the Dhekalia training area.

Receiving 'battlefield promotions', Cpls - Sgts Danny Briscoe, 'Bish' Bishoprick and Gopal Rai were employed as the Platoon Sergeants, instantly setting in to their role and overcoming the G4 battle. Advancing from the basic individual, pairs and fire team attacks, the phase was concluded with a whopping section attack complete with 2 x GPMG SF overhead fire, all in front of the visiting CO, RSM and Padre. The lads progressed excellently and despite the regular opening of the heavens, they soldiered on commendably. Likewise, the section commanders enjoyed their opportunities to test their infantry skills to the max in the rugged terrain and searing heat.



Coy in the field during the visit of CO and RSM 2SR

Returning to Bloodhound Camp, the troops welcomed the excellent opportunity to conduct various AT events such as skiing and diving, paying testament to the fantastic versatility that Cyprus offers as a training location. Once complete, they were made to quickly get their heads back in to the game with a return to training. The blank phase commenced with the welcome introduction of the infantry advisors from the PWRR and LANCS to assist the Signals with their infantry prowess. Progressing from section attacks, the platoons began to act as a whole executing platoon advance to contacts, ambushes and deliberate attacks.



Pl Comds Caldwell, Ciborowski and Myers

Based out of a FOB, the final company attack was launched at dawn, a deliberate attack on an extremely rugged, steep and long hillside underneath a main motorway viaduct. Led by Lt Danny Ciborowski, the company's first move was a 0300 insertion TAB to get into position ready to assault the enemy. Capt Henry Maurel's (French exchange officer) platoon were positioned as a fire support platoon whose orders were to open fire on the enemy at first light at 0658 following the initial mortar bombardment at 0655. On time, Lt Ben Caldwell's platoon began the initial assault with an excellent and aggressive platoon attack on the first 3 enemy positions at a speed that amazed the DS and Infantry Advisors alike. Reaching their limit of exploitation, the company commander launched Lt Anthony Myers's platoon forward to take the fight to the enemy, where some heavy fighting up the horrendous terrain demanded every last effort from his troops. With various casualties being taken, they responded very well to remove the casualties from the battlefield. Encountering heavy resistance further on during the battle, Capt Maurel's platoon was temporarily withdrawn in order to bring in gunfire from the RAF helicopter support.

Once complete, Lt Myers's platoon punched through the enemy lines and pushed them further back to the top of the hill. The company attack concluded with a large company reorg where the helicopter was brought in to remove the casualties ending a 4 hour battle that saw some excellent performances from all levels. The junior ranks did themselves proud and earning praise from the infantry advisors and returned to 2 Sig Regt on a high.



2SR Coy complete at the end of Ex LION SUN

Exercise AQUA KEYS – 2 SIG REGT Water Safety Week - by LCpl Prestage

While 2 Sig Reg is desirably located at Imphal Barracks, York city centre, it is positioned close to the Rivers Ouse and Foss, which over the last 2 years have claimed numerous deaths due to drowning. Among these tragic deaths were Signallers Stephen Fry and Tyler Pearson. To raise awareness of the importance of water safety the Regt's CO, Lt Col Hargreaves gave direction for the unit to undergo a water safety week 9-13 May 16. Included within this educational water safety week were swimming lessons, MATT 3 Basic Life Support training and a Substance Misuse brief which was delivered by Galahad Substance Misuse Solutions Itd. A hard hitting, poignant brief was also delivered by Jackie Roberts and Aaron Dhanda of the Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) who are employed as Community Drowning Prevention Co-ordinators. In this brief Jackie gave an incredibly moving account of the heartache she experienced following the

death of her daughter 20 year old Megan Roberts in January 2015. Megan, who was student studying at York University, sadly drowned in the river Ouse after a night out with friends while under the influence of alcohol.



Soldiers from 2 Sig Regt undergoing an arduous Swim PT session at The Mount School

The water safety week culminated with a remembrance service for Sigs Pearson and Fry who both fell into, then drowned in the Rivers Ouse and Foss following nights out with friends. Sig Fry who was 20 years old had only recently arrived at 2 Sig Regt following his qualification in Blandford as a Communications Systems Operator. Similarly Sig Pearson who was 18 years old drowned in April 2014 following completion of his RSE training at Blandford having been in the unit for just 2 weeks. The aim of the water safety week was to highlight to the soldiers of 2 Sig Regt the dangers of open water swimming especially while under the influence of alcohol in an attempt to ensure the unit does not incur any needless casualties in the future.



Soldiers of 2 Sig Regt parading at Imphal Barracks for a Remembrance service for Sigs Pearson and Fry

2 Signal Regiment support to the RSA Weekend at Eden Camp - by Sgt Rose

On Sunday the 22nd May, members of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn and Sp Sqn deployed from York to Eden Camp (just outside York) with a Falcon and OLRT detachment. Our mission was to display the current CIS systems to the Royal Signals Association members attending the veterans weekend and highlight how technology has changed in the 21st Century. Numerous branches of the RSA all met at Eden Camp with veterans from past campaigns such as Borneo, Malaya and Aden while others had served during the height of the Cold War and Northern Ireland. The day was also supported by 50 Sig Sqn, part of 32 Sig Regt, which is the reserve unit affiliated

to 2 Sig Regt. This was a great example of all elements of the Corps family, the 3 R's (Regular/Reserve/Retired), all working and supporting each other at a public event. Eden Camp was still open to the public for the day and those visiting were treated to the added bonus of seeing all elements of the Royal Signals.



2 SR Falcon and OLRT equipment on display

The Falcon detachment on display was manned by Cpl Arjun Gurung, LCpl Basanta Rai and LCpl Ramlal Gurung and this attracted many people eager to talk to serving Gurkhas. Those who had served alongside members of the QGS recalled days in Hong Kong and Brunei, while others from the Ptarmigan (and previous eras) were keen to see inside the detachment and compare how they remembered their own detachments years before. LCpl Barnett and LCpl Scurr showcased the OLRT (Operational Liaison Recce Team) detachment comprising the latest Wi-Fi Bgan, Bowman FFR and man-pack radios. Those veterans remembering the days of Larkspur and even Clansman were amazed and impressed by how much smaller and lighter the current equipment is and also its capabilities and deployability compared to the systems of the past. Veterans had nostalgic memories of Morse code, BATCO and R4 copper wire and were disappointed that they had now been replaced by the modern systems.

The conclusion of the day's events was a parade for all the veterans. This consisted of 14 standards from branches of the RSA, 54 marching members and the Corps band with a crowd of around 320 spectators. Sgt Rose had the honour of marching the veterans on and off the parade with the Corps Colonel taking the salute. The standard of the veterans drill was exceptional, with barely a foot out of step and all heads held high with unquestionable pride. Once the parade concluded the bar was open with everybody able to enjoy some refreshments in the glorious sun, while remembering stories and colleagues from their many experiences during their time in the Corps.

This event was only in its second year but has already shown signs of growing popularity and numbers attending. It was a fantastic opportunity for the current serving members to speak to the veterans and learn more about the RSA. I would encourage everybody within the Corps to join the RSA and give as much support as they can to it in the future. There are many events planned by the RSA throughout the year open to both serving and retired members. Next year's event at Eden Camp is already being planned with a possible date of 21st May 2017.

EUBG CERTEX – by Sig Daley

219 Sig Sqn recently deployed on the EUBG CERTEX, tasked with the role of building and maintaining a Bde HQ in support of the EUBG. Falcon Troop took charge of the FHQ, led by their newly arrived OC 2Lt 'Baby Boss' Goldsbury, and the Sqn OC Maj Ahsan. Throughout the exercise we worked with other nations' armies, such as the Irish Defence Force and members of the Lithuanian, Swedish, Latvian and Finnish Armed Forces. This was particularly taxing for the Complex Cpl, Cpl 'Jock' Reid who often struggles with the basics of the English language, let alone speaking to those from outside his native country. To our surprise it seemed that those from other nations actually understood him better than most in his own Sqn, and he proved to be one of the main points of contact to liaise with the different nationalities.



YofS 'Mr Grumpy' Smith getting to grips with Installation Technician work

The ex took place across much of Salisbury Plain, however, since the scenario was set in the fictitious country of Eiba, travel across the training area took much longer than expected in order to simulate a real deployment. For those in the Main party (myself included), travel was by 'ferry' (a car park in Barton Stacey). Those in the Recce party travelled by air, spending only one night at Netheravon airfield before they moved onto the capital of Eiba, Eiba City (Copehill Down). These travel arrangements went smoothly... apart from the initial departure, when a misunderstanding of which camp exit the packets were leaving from, led to Packet 1 taking a much more scenic route than originally planned. The Packet Commander, 2Lt 'Baby Boss' Goldsbury, however has assured us that this was intentional and they were simply avoiding setting any patterns and that any further questioning of her route selection would result in extra map reading sessions.



Remedial map reading lessons with 2lt 'Baby Boss' Goldsbury

After our long journey 'across the sea' we arrived in Eiba City and proceeded to FOB WEST, where the EUBG FHQ had already been established. It was quickly noted that the build of the HQ by the small Recce party had left them looking more zombie than human and LCpl Caulton and LCpl Boyle exceedingly bitter that they had missed out on the relaxing ferry ride over. Keen to help, we continued to set up the NER under the vigilant eyes of FofS(IS) Froggett to ensure no one touched or upset his baby (Housekeeper). From here we were able to monitor OPCIS and assist the 4 Bde staff officers.

Once the NER was fully up and running smoothly I ensured that it remained so, such ensuring faults were being chased up, as well as the lovely privilege of sanger duty. These were divided up between the Techs, Mechs and ED's, whilst the heartbeat of the Corps, the Operators, stagged on the radio nets to ensure the FHQ staff officers maintained real time situational awareness. Part of my job throughout the exercise was also shadowing the Day Shift Engineer. This had me fixing and diagnosing faults that occurred within the FHQ, of which there were many. Reasons for this were varied, but when the VUDT terminals began blowing up YofS 'Mr **Grumpy' Smith** adopted an even grumpier expression than the standard one all Yeoman's are issued with! I therefore had a number of Incident Report forms to fill out for the broken terminals and HDD's, all of which had the crypto accountant cursing almost continuously.

The final part of the ex was to efficiently tear down the HQ without causing any damage to our equipment. This was successful, although it almost went horribly wrong thanks to a lightning storm which had the operators frantically scrambling to bring the masts down as quickly as possible. Of course, the only way to decide who had the unenviable task of touching the mast was a game of rock/paper/rank, and inevitably it was up to **Sig Donovan** and **Sig Ford** to take up the task, with the promise from **Cpl Reid** that he would fill in part of their Class 1 books. (They are still waiting for this.)



Cpl Reid making sure that 'Satellite Comms' are working before deploying to Eiba City, aka Copehill Down Village

All in all the EUBG CERTEX was an enjoyable exercise for my first one at 2 Sig Regt. It gave me an opportunity to experience life on exercise with the Royal Signals, as well as an insight into how we work in the field. It also allowed me to see how we operate in the Sqn as a whole, bringing together the different trade groups into one machine in order to build a HQ. Overall this was a great experience, especially getting to work with members of other European Nations' Armies, and personally I believe stands the Sqn in good stead for any future EUBG operations that may be called.

Nepalese New Year 2073 and farewell to CO 2SR

- by LCpl Rajeev Thapa

"On the road to success, the rule is always to look ahead. May you reach your destination and may your journey be wonderful. 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year 2073. Hope this New Year brings new beginnings, fresh starts, reaffirmations of love and promises for a brighter future."

On Saturday og April 16, 246 GSS families celebrated "Nepalese New Year 2073" at Imphal Barracks, York. This function was organised under the coordination of Sgt Mehar Singh Gaha. The main aim of this function was to bring all the 246 GSS personnel and their families together to celebrate Nepalese New Year 2073 as well as to bid farewell to Commanding Officer, 2 Sig Regt, Lt Col Hargreaves and his family. In Nepali calendar history, year 2072 is marked as a bad year due to the devastating earthquake and fuel blockade of the country. 246 GSS families came together to say goodbye to 2072 and welcome New Year 2073 hoping this new year can heal the pains and bring joy and happiness to all people.

The venue was set up outside the Sqn Mandir (Temple) and was well decorated, tents, sound system and bouncy castle and although the main event was meant to start from 1300 hrs on Saturday, the team led by LCpl Om (Food IC) started to prepare the BBQ from 0900 hrs. In the afternoon, at about 1250 hrs, everyone with their families started to arrive at the venue with honourable guests and family arriving at 1330 hrs. Delicious tipan tapan kicked off straight away, with chilled beer enjoying by all regardless of the cold weather. "Happy New Year" was on the air as everyone was busy greeting each other. As the day progressed, entertainment IC LCpl Naresh organised a spoon race for the children, then bingo and a raffle draw respectively. The most interesting programme of this function was "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" hosted by LCpl Naresh with the CO Saheb taking a hot seat. The game was definitely enjoyed by CO Saheb and equally by all spectators as he was punished with funny caricatures for wrong answers, one of which was 'what time does the back gate to camp close' and alarmingly he got this one wrong!!. However, at the end he managed to win £1 million worth of Khukuri Rum. The function was then entertained with live

music by Yorkeli band. After that OC 246 GSS, Maj Paul Whillis congratulated the newly promoties and farewell to outgoing personnel, which included an emotional speech to SSgt YofS Piff who is moving, on promotion, to another Sqn within 2SR. Then it was time to say farewell to CO 2 Sig Regt from the 246 GSS family. In the past two and half years of his stay in the Regt, CO Saheb has always been supportive to the Gurkha community when in need. He was then presented with colourful garlands and a momento on behalf of all ranks from the Sqn. Then CO Saheb gave a final farewell speech thanking all the Gurkha community, the amount of support he has received from the Gurkhas over last two and half years. The farewell speech was followed by delicious food.



CO 2SR along with OC, 2IC and SSM 246 GSS and their Wives

The function was definitely enjoyed by all and was a great success. Everyone had played their parts to make this function so successful. It was a display of hard work, dedication and team-work. May the year ahead bring you good luck, success and lots of love. Happy New Year 2073.

"Jai 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron"



Outgoing CO of 2SR, Lt Col Hargreaves, delivering a farewell speech to 246 GSS



3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION SIGNAL REGIMENT BULFORD



CO Lt Col A J Smith
RSM WO1 K Mills

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj J Watt SSM WO1 S Welton

Exercise Normandy 72 - by SSgt Donna Stephen

On the 1st of June 2016 elements of 3 (UK) Div and Sig Regt deployed to France to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of the D Day landings. We set off from a rainy wet Bulford hoping that when we got to France we would be arriving on Tuesday morning to a week of sunshine for the parades, but instead what we mostly got was more rain.

For the first few days, we spent our time as a group orientating ourselves round the various locations in Caen that had significant relevance to the two veterans who had joined us to commemorate the Normandy Landings. We visited Pegasus Bridge, Sword and Gold beach, witnessed some of the war first hand in the 360 cinema and walked up and down the rows of graves in the cemetery where the fallen British soldiers were laid to rest. An emotional and enlightening few days, to say the least. During these few days we also took the time to talk to the 2 veterans who were with us and they would tell us the stories of what they remembered from the war. **Ted** (93) and **Trader** (97) landed on Sword Beach on June 6th 1944 as members of 3 (UK) Div and Sig Regt.



Trader and Ted

The next couple of days were filled with parades and to our delight some sunshine to make the days a little brighter.

On the 5th June we took part in the first of our parades for the week, where soldiers from the Regt placed roses on stones in commemoration. It was after this parade that we were humbled to be able to witness **Ted** and **Trader** become the proud recipients of the Legion d'honneur (Legion of Honour) the highest French Order and which is the equivalent to a British Knighthood. These two men are remarkable and received their medals with honour and grace.



Memorial at 3 Div Cemetery

On the 6th June on the first parade of the day we were again privileged, this time, to bear witness to one of the soldiers from our own Regt, **WO2 Rob Plews**, be awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) from the GOC. Later that evening the Regt took part in the longest parade of the week which saw us begin with a few words from the padre and the laying of the wreaths at Sword Beach, to then march flawlessly up the mile and a half hill to the cemetery where there was a few more words from the padre and the local children then singing our national anthem and their own before they placed flowers on the gravestones of the fallen soldiers.

The final parade took place on the morning of the 7th June where the Soldiers from 3DSR once again donned their Number 2 Dress and represented themselves and the Regt in a very professional manner, singing the National Anthem as loud and as proud as they could.

This brought us to the end of an emotional and educational week as we learned of the first hand events that took place on those fateful few days from the heroes who had taken part in the Normandy Landings 72 years ago.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj R Moody SSM WO2 G Moffat

Exercise KIWI PLATO - by 2Lt James 'Reserved' Raynor

3 Div had played a crucial role in the Peninsula wars of the early 19th century, when the armies of Napoleonic France and the British Army of **Arthur Wellesley** (Later Duke of Wellington) did battle across Portugal and Spain. As such, after months of planning by **Maj Moody**, **Lt Buttery** and **Sgt Dixon**, 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt manned the white fleet at 0200hrs. Bleary eyed with Game of Thrones loaded on phones the group departed for Lisbon, Portugal.

In the weeks leading up to the ex deployment the group had enjoyed visits to the Rifles Museum to learn more about the conditions, tactics and politics of the day. They were also treated by the Surrey Branch of the Muzzleloaders Association of Great Britain, to a day on the ranges firing



Lt Shrubbs animates the Duke of Wellingtons plan with an unconventional 'Brecon Chop'

weapons which would have been used in the Peninsula wars and even at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. 2Lt Raynor was awarded first place and currently claims he's the best musket shot in the Corps.

After settling in at the hotel and enjoying the evening entertainment of Lisbon the team led by Toby 'Turbo' Tour guide began the battlefield study in earnest on Tuesday. We began with the battle of Vimero, where **Gen Sir Arthur** Wellesley displayed the principles of Defence which made him so famed at the time.

From there we went to Rolica where we were treated to a 38 degree centigrade walk up

a hill – unfortunately **Turbo** had selected the wrong hill and we were then privy to an example of tour guiding from 500m as we looked across a valley, to the hill we should have been on, at the tomb of Colonel Lake. The Battle at Rolicia was the first major land deployment where the British Army had involved itself directly in the affairs of Europe for decades. No longer were we to be a de-facto naval force alone.

On Wednesday the group were in Porto and were joined by the CO, Lt Col AJ Smith. The CO had only just come from Normandy commemorating the D-Day landing where 3rd Div had also played a vital role. In Porto the British crossed the River Douro and routed the French – a spectacular example of an obstacle crossing by Wellesley and also an example of the offensive nature which the British learnt to adopt throughout the war. We had lunch in Graham's port house and began to more fully appreciate why the British had placed such an emphasis on Porto and their major produce.

Later in the day the group visited Bussaco in Northern Portugal and learned a great deal about Delaying Actions through the study of the area and the battle that commenced there. This action afforded Wellesley the time he needed to properly fortify Lisbon and ultimately win the war. On Thursday we visited Badajoz and Albuera in Spain. In the

whole of the British Army's past the siege of Badajoz goes down as one of the darkest. Following a bloody battle the British commenced 3 days of chaos as the spoils of war were taken. Over 4000 Spanish civilians died at the hands of the British, as they raped, drank and murdered their way through the city. It was a sobering lesson in the essential nature of local support, and more generally why we have the values and standards of today. After a short service to commemorate the dead from across the war, we enjoyed an evening on a veranda looking over Elvas as the sun set. The evening was enlivened by some inventive Gin and Tonics – 'who knew chilli went so well in a G and T?' - (actually I'm still not so sure it does).

On Friday we visited the defensive ramparts of Torres Vedras - an impregnable wall which Wellesley created to defend Lisbon and launch his attack on France. Overall the study was a great success. It was a pleasure having Lt Osment from our sister regt, 71St (City of London) Y Sig Regt along. His involvement in discussions was immensely valuable, he settled into the group very well and his Portuguese was (barring some conversations with waiters) an asset. Overall the trip was not only interesting historically but informed our view of the armed forces today: our doctrine, our concept of operations and what our future might look like. I would recommend it to anyone and will hopefully be able to attend more such events later on in my career.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj V Maddison SSM **WO₂ M Turner**

Exercise GRIFFIN STRIKE - by Lt Hodder As a result of the Lancaster House treaties of 2010 and the



Concentration face

subsequent creation of the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF), 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt has, in recent years, been involved in a number of large-scale, high-profile ex's including JOINT WARRIOR, ROCHEMBEAU, GRIFFIN RISE and FRENCH RHINO all in preparation for the CJEF final validation of concept (FVoC) on ex GRIFFIN STRIKE. The CJEF is an early entry, British and French led force created to provide an alternative, Europeanbased response to any type of crisis in a coherent and co-ordinated manner. It is able to carry out both defensive and offensive operations across all terrains, in the air and at sea. It can conduct nonenduring, complex intervention operations and face multiple threats, at high intensity and at short notice. The CJEF therefore has a requirement for the British and French armies to train, operate and



The obligatory group shot near Albuera

fight together either as a bilateral force or alongside other allies.

As the 3rd (UK) Div currently leads on the Land Command Component (LCC) of the CJEF, which consists of various elements including 4 British Bdes and the French 7 Bde blindée, it inevitably falls to 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt to support them, alongside 27th Regt RLC, 4th Med Regt and 4th Bn REME. So, after literally years of preparation and planning 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt, in the form of 206 Sig Sqn, deployed to RAF St. Mawgan, just outside Newquay in Cornwall on 29th February 2016 in order to commence the build of the CJEF LCC Main HQ. Concurrently, the Air Command Component (ACC) was being established at RAF Leeming and was to be supported by RAF Typhoons and Chinooks, alongside some French Dassault Rafales and some Army Air Corps Attack Helicopters (21 aircraft in total). In addition, the Maritime Command Component (MCC) was established aboard the Royal Navy's Flagship HMS Ocean and involved no less than 5 British and 5 French ships including the French amphibious assault ship Dixmude. The communications picture being planned and managed throughout by the Joint Forces Communications and Information Systems (JFCIS) team under the command of the 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt's Ops Offr.

The LCC Main HQ was declared at fully operational capability in time to receive the British and French staff on 12th April 16 when the execute phase of the ex began. During the month long build and establishment of the HQ, 206 Sig Sqn were accompanied on RAF St. Mawgan by 202 Sig Sqn, who established the BNFG (101 Log Bde HQ), 16th (Air Assault) Bde HQ's and Sig Sqn (216) and 22nd Sig Regt who provided EXCON and various LOCONs. Meanwhile, on SPTA 12th Armd Inf Bde HQ was established and supported by 1 Bn YORKS, 2 RGR and 3 PARA with 228 Sig Sqn providing HF reach back and proving OPCIS at Armd Bde level for the first time. Achieving the complete interoperability of communications within the LCC Main HQ was, as explained, a CJEF and therefore a JFCIS FVoC and was a drawn out and by no means straightforward process. Essentially, 206 Sig Sqn were able to establish a multi domain, cross-system, tri-service and bi-national interoperability picture for the exercising staff created with the use of TacNIP (on trial from General Dynamics) and MIP which allowed the establishment of the British/French gateway at the OPCIS level (as proven on exercise FRENCH RHINO) and TNG for the TACCIS/OPCIS gateway.



Brecon chop, anyone else spotting a trend?

With a plethora of VTCs, relatively stable communications, some tears, some more tears and occasionally some laughter the execute phase eventually came to a highly anticipated end after about ten days (but not before an impressive beach assault on Pendine Sands by 3 CDO Bde). The staff swiftly departed, the communications were dropped and the LCC Main HQ was packed away with 206 Sig Sqn returning to camp on 29th April 2016, some two months after initial deployment. The concepts proved and validated on the exercise are too long to list but have offered an impressive insight into the CJEF capability and were achieved primarily as a result of the outstanding work ethic, commitment and ingenuity of the soldiers of 3rd (UK) Div Sig Regt. A job well done!

Exercise GRIFFIN STRIKE AT Package - by Sig Davis

After Ex GRIFFIN STIKE where 206 Sig Sqn deployed for eight weeks to Newquay, it was now time for the sqn to enjoy the adventure training packages that Newquay had to offer and not just the airfield at RAF St Mawgan.

We departed from sunny Bulford on a Sunday for five days to Newquay. Arriving in St Mawgan apart from getting ourselves ready for the first days activity we found we had time to partake in the local delicacies.

The first activity was hill walking, with **Sgt Bruin** taking the lead. We walked along the coastline taking in the views of the beaches. On this activity where everyone has a moan and groan about it, but it's generally a social walk and was nice for the weather also, if you socialise that is.



Capt Roberts shows everyone the ropes

The next day was rock climbing, with Capt Roberts taking the lead as the instructor, making sure Sig Anderson could get through it. We went to Roche Rock, which looked small at first and I thought it wouldn't be that bad to climb, but when you're at the top it was high. We had good weather until it started to rain then we were slipping everywhere with those tiny shoes that destroy your feet, worse than wearing high heels. Activity three was coasteering, with a civilian company down at the seaside. This was the coldest day and the sea was not too pleasant. It was fun going off the

cliffs but jumping into the water being freezing cold with your toes and hands, and having a pleasure moment urinating in your wetsuit. Then getting out and freezing to death because its windy, then again the bar was good after coasteering.

Activity four was mountain biking, with **Cpl Evans** having to lead us into the wilderness and insure our safety with the brief at the start showing how to break and stop. Here is the one where you find the weak and prey on them, just so you can sit behind, I mean far behind and watch them fall and

have a little giggle. Jokes aside it was a nice eight mile hike up and down hills, the down hills were great didnt think Newquay would have a good place for mountain biking.

To conclude the adventure training was great and 206 Sig Sqn lads got a lot out of it, which was doubted at the start because of the sqn being there eight weeks prior to the AT, and in the end it was a laugh. The day activities were great and the town and nightlife was good.

RA 300 BUILD - by LCpl Innes

The 26 May 2016 marked the Royal Artillery's 300th anniversary, and as part of the celebrations, Cambrai Tp was tasked to build the Current Operations cell from the Divisional Headquarters to show Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The build started a week prior to the celebrations to ensure everything was in order for the Queen's visit, and began with a shaky journey across Salisbury Plain, with the J-Tent 'secure' on the back of a flatbed. On arrival the setup was a guick task, due to the looming possibility of working on a Friday afternoon.

We returned on the Monday to add the final pieces of equipment, and the first rounds of inspections began, and would continue for the next 3 days! Much to Lt Hodder's dismay ranks from Cols to the Master of Artillery and several other 2 star Generals all came to inspect on the run up to the royal visit.



The HRH drive by

On the day of the parade a few members of the Tp were selected to man the cell in order to make it look like a live operation was underway, and the rest of the Tp were free to watch the Royal Artillery's parade. This was followed by a look around some of the other stalls and equipment laid out for the visit, but unfortunately not the bar.

After Her Majesty had left the area, we were free to remove what was inside of the tent, to ease the next day's tear down. Thankfully the following day went without too many issues, and we were left to move everything back to camp just as 'securely' as the way down.

All in all the week went without a hitch and gave some members of the troop a chance to see the Queen, and show off one part of the Headquarters we build for the Division.

228 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj R Limbrey SSM WO₂ S Riste

OpCIS Under Armour - by Sgt Smith

Operational Communication information Systems (OpCIS) is a new Concept to 228 Sig Sqn. Here, in our Sqn, we are more familiar with the Term TacCIS. However we were asked to find a solution to enable the staff officers to use OpCIS in our Armoured Advanced HQ. This is something that hasn't truly been done before. This is the story of OpCIS under Armour

The Regt Op's team had come up with a plan to enable the GOC 3 Div and his team to use OpCIS in our HQ via a method called long lining. This essentially means replacing a fibre cable with a satellite terminal. Sounds easy right? Well through some careful planning the Regt thought it was possible.



Ensuring compliance with drivers hours, not bored of OpCIS...... honest

I was told to collect various items from other Sqn's and departments and by getting Airbus to deliver a suit of satellites we were able to assemble at RAF St Mawgan, where the majority of the Regt was based so that we could PACEx the equipment. Two Satellites were chosen, one being the GATR and the other XeBRA. The former, a dish wouldn't look out of place in a 70's Sci-Fi movie and the later a small and very portable dish, predominately used for engineering purposes.

Once PACEx'd, under the instructions of the CO, I wrapped it all in Bubble Wrap and headed for Salisbury Plain Training Area and deployed the Concept of having Magpie terminals on the desks within the Armoured HQ.

With moments to spare the system leapt into life and delivery as planned. We proved that the concept works and we are now moving forward to find a permanent solution to the concept. More to follow in the coming months.

Exercise ARMOURED CRAWL - by Cpl Middlecoate

During Alpha Troops CT1 training, 228 Sig Sqn deployed in conjunction with members of 3rd (UK) Div on a 2-day exercise designated Ex ARMOURED CRAWL. The aim of the ex was to introduce the divisional staff to the rigours of working with armoured vehicles platforms.



Sig Ward on top of things as usual

The ex started with the completion of their armour crew competency course that was valiantly led by Cpl James Brant and Cpl Nathan Shone, which introduced the divisional staff to the armoured platform. The course entailed the key safety aspects of working on armoured platforms and how to conduct themselves whist moving in and around the vehicles. Upon completion of the course, they were shipped out to 'Bulldog Field' on TCVs where they were introduced to the Armoured Forward Headquarters and Crew led by Cpl Oliver Clerk (Stand-in G6 Cpl). The divisional staff firstly observed a slow time build and tear down of a four Bulldog headquarters. It was at this point they had to don their body armour and endure a brief trip in the back of the vehicles to experience the joys of being a passenger. The divisional staff then assisted in a rapid build of the four vehicle headquarters in order for them to conduct a planning cycle and a key requirements considerations meeting. All participating members then tore down the headquarters.



Ready to go!

Ex ARMOURED CRAWL was a brilliant opportunity to allow the divisional staff to interact with the Signallers operating the detachments enabling key relationships to form.



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

Exercise STORM FORCE 16 - by LCpl Brown

Over April - May 16 elements of 223 Sig Sqn and 237 Sig Sqn along with partners across government deployed on Ex STORM FORCE (SF16). SF16 is a 5 eyes community (UK, USA, Canada, Australia & New Zealand) strategic level exercise run in the USA to develop the passage of information on an international scale. This year SF16 was run out of Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho in the north mid-west of America.

At first glance, SF16 didn't look like the most appealing of exercises, but that was not the case. It became apparent very quickly that at the strategic level, our American counterparts do not do half measures. So with hotels booked, and \$70 per day for food, we jumped the pond to not so boring Idaho.

Before we knew any better we would tell various people where we were heading and they cringed for us, clearly they had never sampled the delights of the State capital, Boise,

which was conveniently located about 30 minutes from our hotel.

We were pleasantly surprised, firstly by the weather regularly hitting the 27 degrees mark, making for some stunning squaddie tans. We were then surprised further, where in the UK it's a security risk to be MOD personnel, it's a big benefit in the USA. As you can imagine, Idaho is not a tourist hotspot so our 'exotic' accents gathered quite a lot of attention. It became a regular occurrence that after explaining we were in the military, London is not close to everywhere and Europe is not a country, the local populous would buy the drinks... who were we to say no – Hearts and Minds!

As I alluded to earlier, the Americans firmly put the phrase "go big or go home" into practice. This was proved ever evident when VIP day came. Naturally, it would be out of the question to ask Staff Officers to sit in excessively luxurious 4X4s for 45 minutes to get to the training area where SF16 was centred. Instead 2 Blackhawk helicopters were drafted in to shuttle the VIPs to and from the area, only to be eclipsed by fly-bys from low flying F-15 fighters and A-10 Warthogs.

Ex STORM FORCE 16 was a long and tiring ex, but there were also a lot of perks to this job. Firstly the ex was very successful, but also, our hard work was balanced by the time we had to ourselves and to experience Idaho.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Watson
SSM WO2 (SSM) O'Reilly

Exercise WESENDORF SHADOW - by Cpl Purdie and LCpl Pritchard

On Sunday 6th March, 226 Sig Sqn deployed to Sennybridge in order to conduct Ex WESENDORF SHADOW. The Sunday started like every other when 226 deploys; get everyone up really early to meet at 0630 for a 'Scale A' breakfast before departing at 1030 hrs. Once in Sennybridge, the ex ran just as it did last year combining classroom based fundamental electronic warfare lessons with basic BCCS lessons on the ex area. As we moved into the second week and into the field stage of the ex there were plenty of mistakes made which can best be described by **Cpl Purdie** through the medium of poetry:

So now we turn to OPFOR's tales, They are many and they are fine, Seen from our outside point of view, And told in the style of rhyme.

In general things went smoothly, So exercise troops take pride. But there were a couple of clangers, And in you we will confide.

T-SPRING began to raise its head, The EDs were called to recover, When **Frankland** got her TCV stuck, And **Beck** followed up with another!



TCVs stuck in the mud

Then just outside their razor wired fort In the name of force protection, They decided to set a sheep on fire With a trip wire, as deception!

This preceded the "notional buzz saw" For **Bartlett's** notional chopper, And an ammo resup for 500 rounds ball Which is live, not blank. And a lot of.

Then came the night of fiery hell, When SENTA went aflame, And marks the last time para illume, And **Lodowski** will meet again.

It starts with T-SPRING getting bumped OPFOR were making brass,

We launched off our shmulis, From our baseline on the grass.

"Go go degrees," the instructions read, But during the shmuli salvo, **Ski** took aim at woodblock 6, And burned down DZ BRAVO!



DZ Bravo slightly warmer than usual!

The drop zone was awash with flame, A grid square had been scorched, OPFOR, EXCON and fire brigade, Stopped the lot from being torched!

This story has been told before, Of many a different soldier, If the blokes find out you've left your kit, To ransom they'll behold you,

Up steps **Kerrigan**, at the start of ex, The troops were his this fine night, But he left his daysack in the car, And held within – his night sight.

"He ****** what?" the Yeoman shouts, "That kit is serialised," Up steps **Mckenna**, leave it to me, With evil in his eyes.

Let's be fair, once he knew

Kerrigan did report it.

"I do believe my daysacks left,
Can you ask the blokes to sort it?"

"What daysack? Oh THIS daysack" **Mckenna** cried, "The OpsO knows, you're for it! He wants a formal demand for all the kit you've left, or forfeit."

The demand was sent by radio, "My daysack, have it sent me." But he didn't demand the items within, **Kerrigan** received it empty!

"I need my bloody warmers back, And my tams, I just can't hack it" "I don't know what you mean, said **Mckenna**, Whilst wearing said North Face jacket!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Fogarty
SSM WO2 (SSM) Peake

Regimental Cricket - by Capt Miller

This year, Brawdy cricket club has reformed and is now regularly playing cricket for the first time in many years. With a number of Int Corps and Royal Signals players away on exercise, a bunch of enthusiastic amateurs travelled to Hereford to play against a Pilgrims side on 19th May, as part of the Army Major units' competition. We batted first with Lt Punter (237 Sqn) and 2Lt Smith (245 Sqn) opening the batting. They hung around for a while but failed to score significant runs. Capt Miller (237 Sqn) came in and steadied the ship with a knock of 82 before finally being given out LBW. LCpl Pickard (245 Sqn) and Cpl Richards (Sp Sqn) added a few runs before we finally ended up on 105 all out.

The bowling attack fared better with some great bowling from **Cpl Richards** who was desperately unlucky to not get a wicket. **Capt Miller** managed to break the opening partnership as their number two batsman lofted one to midoff. Needless to say, with few runs on the board our total was reached in relative ease, but the day out was thoroughly enjoyed by all and was a great opportunity for those who had not played for years (or at all) to get back into the game.

On Monday 23rd May we again played a T20 friendly against Llanrhian, a local team near St Davids. This was a lot closer as again we batted first. Some good batting from LCpl Illingworth (22) and Capt Miller (88) led us nicely to a total of 137 off the 20 overs. LCpls Illingworth and Harrison (237 Sqn), along with Maj Francis (OC 223 Sqn) bowled well, limiting the opposition and taking a few wickets. Capt Miller swapped out from keeper and bowled towards the end, but Llanrhian got to their target of 138 with 3 balls to spare.

Finally, on 6th June the Regt played the first Officers v Seniors game in a very long time. On what was a remarkably hot and sunny day, without a breath of wind (Summer was on a Monday in Brawdy this year) the Officers lost the toss and were put into bat. Lt Col Stoter (CO 14SREW) opened the batting and fended off the first couple of overs, the first one bowled by WO1 (RSM) Robinson with a bowling style vaguely reminiscent of a young John Embury. The best of the batting came from Maj Burdge (2IC 14SREW) and Maj Fogarty (OC

237Sqn) who really scored the lion's share of the runs for the Officers' side. Capt Miller's luck ran out as he was beautifully caught first ball by WO2 (SSM) Wellstead (223 Sqn). The officers ended up on 95 off their allotted overs and the senior's response started slow but steady. Lt Col Stoter and Capt Smith (245 Sqn) bowled very well, limiting the number of runs scored in the first few overs and made early inroads into the Seniors' batting order. SSgt (YofS(EW)) Lancaster and Sgt Loveridge (Sp Sqn) played well and started chasing down the Officers' total, ably assisted by SSgt Margrie (Sp Sqn) and SSgt (YofS) Forde (245 Sqn). Capt Miller, Maj Fogarty and Capt McGraw (223 Sqn) started to take wickets further down the order and Capt Morris (QM(T)) was subbed on to add to the pressure on the batsmen, bowing some menacingly quick balls.

The end was spectacular. With 12 to win off the last over, the ball was thrown to the CO again to finish off the game. Bowling very well, the Seniors required 4 off the last ball to draw level, a 6 to win it. The CO ran in... WO2 (SSM) Wellstead danced down the wicket... leant back to give it the kitchen sink... and lobbed it straight back to the CO for a caught and bowled (an SJAR moment if ever I saw one). That was it, game over with the Officers winning narrowly. Another great day out was had by all as we invited the Seniors into the Officers' Mess for a BBQ and beers afterwards.



The CO presenting Maj Hill (US Army) with the winners' cup

A special mention must go to **Capt Norris** (Sp Sqn) who has really got the cricket club off the ground again.

The victorious Officers' Mess Cricket Team

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Hodges SSM WO2 (SSM) Craven

Exercise DRAGONS WARRIOR - by LCpl Tom Webster

On a glorious Sunday morning in April the troops of 245 Sig Sqn reported to the armoury. With the transport cunningly booked for the early afternoon, improvised training, in the shape of a grenade weapon handling test, quickly became the order of the day. Grenade shaped rocks in hand, 245 demonstrated their best **Freddy Flintoff** impersonations in the general direction of a stick placed 15m away. The accuracy of the results,

embarrassing at best, were masked by safe rock handling practices all around. By the end of the day we arrived at farm 6 in sunny Sennybridge and set about settling in. The next morning we zeroed and commenced the ACMT. LCpl Rob Cross excelled, quickly becoming tangled in his sling before even cocking his weapon. Cue much weeping on his part and hilarity on everyone else's. Cpl Sean Bonner, taking pity, untangled him and the SSM kindly let him reshoot. After this illustrious beginning things progressed a little more smoothly, firers moving through various positions and working from individual to pairs and fire team manoeuvre. Due to the 72hr rule, and the fact that you can never throw enough rocks, more rocks were thrown (despite actual grenades having been thrown only 24 hours previous). Night and defensive shoots provided an opportunity for competition, Lt Tabor choked, and the whole thing culminated in a sensor attack where everything came together. Bags of smoke, right flanking, lob the grenade. Easy! LCpl Cross even got to grips with a sling!

Exercise MOUFLON FIX - by LCpls Rob Cross and LCpl John Wardley

Early on a Monday morning 245 Sig Sqn rolled out of camp to deploy on Ex MOUFLON FIX. Convoy drills were rigidly adopted as Cpl 'Frenchy' Hurley would not exceed 30mph on the M4 for the fear of losing someone! Eventually, much later than expected, the Sqn arrived at Caerwent Training Area and began the set up of a new piece of EW equipment. On the second day of the ex the Sqn was joined by **LCpl** Everett and LCpl 'Robbie' Williams who'd only arrived from phase 2 training at Blandford just 24 hours previous. Luckily, WO2 (SSM) Craven had a couple of spare sleeping bags for them so they would not miss out on the experience. That night their help was much required as Cpl 'Frenchy' Hurley's detachment was required to do a night move which took a record time of 4 hours to move 500m. After 2 days of limited success we received a mini training package from Sgt 'Newts' Newton which got us back on track. Collection became a lot more effective and our new equipment started to demonstrate its superiority to its predecessor. Before long, sensors were intercepting and locating target emitters, before passing them to our French linguists when required, who finally earned their language pay. In all Ex MOUFLON FIX was deemed a great success, giving us a brilliant opportunity to test and practise our new kit outside of the comfortable classroom environment.

Exercise DRAGON'S KNOWLEDGE - by 2Lt Rob Smith

On Tuesday 10th May 2016, seventeen intrepid 14 Sig Regt (Electronic Warfare) Officers deployed on Ex DRAGON'S KNOWLEDGE in the vicinity of central London. Starting at 0800, the team successfully managed to reaffirm Captain Dan Brent's competency in using public transport as they gathered at MOD Main Building, where a fantastic Cyber brief was delivered by Captain Tim Holmes-Mitra. Just like the rest of his audience, I was captivated. This is a topic that few claim to understand, with far less still having even a basic understanding, despite its vital importance to the Army; so it is a real privilege for those at 14 Sig Regt (Electronic Warfare) to work so closely with Captain Holmes-Mitra.

Following on from the discussions upstairs, the group was led down to the bowels of Main Building and into the beautifully restored wine cellar commissioned by Henry VIII in the 16th Century. This cellar is one of the few remaining parts of Whitehall Palace, once the largest palace in Europe one that

had been razed several times over the centuries, making the cellar's survival to this day quite remarkable and a fascinating point of interest for visitors to the Ministry of Defence.



Henry VIII's wine cellar

In the afternoon, we prepared for the Annual Corps Dinner Night at the Savoy Hotel. This was a joyous and poignant event, that allowed the brightest and the best of the Corps to reflect, look forward and catch up with old friends and comrades.



The Officers of 14 Sig Regt (EW)

The final morning of Ex DRAGON'S KNOWLEDGE included a trip to Lambeth and the Imperial War Museum. Following Capt Brent's confirmatory travel via public transport (including a river crossing), the party discovered the story of the First World War through the lives of those who experienced it first hand, either on the Home Front or elsewhere, traced the story of Nazi persecution and genocide of Europe's Jews from 1933 to 1945, and explored the undercover world of espionage, covert operations and the work of Britain's Special Forces.

14 Sig Regt (Electronic Warfare) enjoyed a thoroughly worthwhile visit to the capital and can look forward to future such exercises; building upon the success of this year's event we can be sure it can only be better in twelve months' time.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj Wilford

SSM WO2 (SSM) O'Connor

Exercise DRAGONS CASSINO - by Lt Stevens

The ex began Monday morning at Heathrow airport, many, many hours too early for our flight as to ensure that we definitely couldn't possibly miss our plane. Once through security, we all met up at the local Wetherspoons for a very hearty breakfast, and were conveniently situated 20 yards from the correct gate, enabling us to take full advantage of the flowing Wetherspoons hospitality, it was all going well....

Our flight was called and we began to board, all except Capt Dan Brent who decided that at that moment he needed to visit the nearest ablutions as he preferred the cold hard touch of porcelain to that of his plane seat. Subsequently Capt Dan 'I ain't getting on no plane' Brent sadly missed his flight and headed back to Brawdy whilst the rest of us landed in Rome before travelling to our hotel. That evening we were treated to a 3 course meal before receiving our first of many briefs which finished around 2200, at which point most of us went to sleep as we were in for some long days.

The next morning we had to be on the coach before 0730hrs or we'd be "left behind" according to **Capt Mark McMullan** and we spent the day travelling from one battle site to the next, hearing about the thousands of allied soldiers who lost

their lives at each battle, all because of one man's arrogance and ineptitude.

The next day **Capt Mark McMullan** was true to his code of "He who falls behind, stays behind" and at 0730hrs the coach pulled off, leaving 2 members behind to make their own way to our location by taxi at their own expence.

This day was spent "appreciating" all the heights surrounding Monte Cassino and consisted of marching up and down the hills in 30+°C for 12 miles listening to lots of briefs in the Italian sun. Unfortunately, **Lt Nathan Stevens** did this with only 300ml of water whilst wearing a pair of childrens board shorts and carrying a Tescos cheap plastic carrier bag with his lunch in. We also visited the Monte Cassino monastery on our hike and finished at the Polish War memorial, commemorating the huge sacrifice made by the Polish during the war for Rome.

Our final day was spent following the Allies' race to Rome after a successful breach of the German defence, led by the British where the Americans had failed for 3 months, as they rushed to secure the capital. We stopped at a British and Commonwealth War memorial where **RSM Scott Robinson** held a service of respect for all those who gave their lives.

After a short time we once again were on the road and made our way back to Rome to fly back home, returning to Brawdy, exchanging sunburn for windburn once more, and of course, reuniting with Capt Dan Brent and dropping off Lt Nathan Stevens at the medical centre for treatment.



16th SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO Lt Col Stuart Whittley RSM WO1 (RSM) Ian Wells

Exercise CRUSADER STORM 16 2/3 Mar 16 - by WO2 (SSM) Tom Earl



The day was 2nd Mar 16, the time 0730 hrs and **WO1** (**RSM**) Ian **Wells** was bestowed the near impossible task of educating his fellow RD Warrant Officers. After the obligatory predeparture brief at the back of RHQ the Regiments' elite boarded the transport, inbound for Plymouth; the first "port of call" being the Naval Base Heritage Centre. The team arrived some 4 hours after departing Stafford due to some very dubious left and right driving from **WO2** (**RQMS**) "Murphy" Tiplady; a route that might have been completed within half the time if not for the erratic sawing of the steering wheel.

After a well awaited "warm wet" the tour commenced, starting at the figure head collection; this was clearly an amusing start to the tour for all of the attendees... well except one! For those without any naval education these are huge figures of heads that would be mounted on or fixed to the deck of the ships, giving them identity. Moving swiftly on we were ushered into the Age of Sail room where we were introduced to a life size layout of some of the living quarters and elements of the ships ranging from the balls in the brass monkey to the poop deck. The tour progressed into the main building of the Heritage Centre where we were introduced to the Battle of Jutland. The battle is now celebrating its 100th anniversary and there were some fantastic centre pieces and displays to help celebrate it; mainly the scale models of HMS Warspite, HMS Lion and HMS Royal Oak. All of these were built at Devonport and took part at Jutland.

Next on the agenda was a visit aboard HMS BULWARK whilst it was still aside preparing to once again provide support to the Royal Marines; both on exercise and during operations. HMS BULWARK is the second ship of the Royal Navy's Albionclass assault ships and also one of the UK's two newest amphibious transport docks. The tour commenced within the heart of the ship with an introduction to the amphibious transport dock; designed to put Royal Marines ashore by air and sea. HMS BULWARK supports a permanently embarked Royal Marines landing craft unit, 4 Assault Squadron, Royal Marines; utilising the rear of the ship which opens and floods a compartment, allowing the boats inside to be launched.

A trip to the bridge was in order where the 64 metre flight deck was visible, which is able to take two Sea King HC4 or Merlin medium lift helicopters and store a third. Whilst on board we quickly picked up some of the local lingo such as "The Galley", "Being Aside" and "Heads" (no not you again WO2 (SSM) Steve Pearce).

With the tour over and the mandatory photo taken it was eventually time to get back to the mess, shower and change ready for a bite to eat and a few beers. Not wanting to let his team down and to ensure that his boys didn't spend their money frivolously, the RSM had arranged a cheap lock in for us; no not the pub kind, the van locked in a compound type ensuring that the deadline for sampling the local nightlife was not achieved. This it seems was just as well because the party animal that is WO2 Andy Hill exploded once he was released in to town. Like a coiled spring he demolished his meal to try and be the first on the karaoke; where to be fair he sounded pretty good. His talent didn't stop there as he almost won musical chairs in a suspect nightclub with a compere that could have been Danny La Rue, and had a rather unnerving dance off with a fellow naval man; needless to say it was an amusing night.

Day 2 arrived and all were up bright eyed and bushy tailed ready for the education to recommence, for today we were to visit the Citadel on the Plymouth coastline; specifically, Smeatons Tower and the Plymouth Hoe Memorial, where it literally was cold enough to "freeze the brass balls off of a monkey".

Smeaton's Tower is the third and most notable Eddystone Lighthouse. It marked a major step forward in lighthouse design. In use from 1759 to 1877, it was largely dismantled and rebuilt in its current location, where it now stands as a memorial to its designer, John Smeaton.

After World War I, the Royal Navy wanted to find a way to commemorate sailors who had died at sea and had no known grave. An Admiralty committee recommended building memorials at the three main naval ports in Great Britain -Plymouth, Chatham, and Portsmouth. The memorials at all three sites were designed by Sir Robert Lorimer with sculpture by Henry Poole; the Plymouth Hoe Memorial was established.

So the education was complete and the journey back to Stafford had started, it was immediately noticeable that the journey was going slightly smoother and quicker; was it a tail wind? I think not, I think it was mainly due to the wind inside the cab and the sense of urgency to get out of the minibus.

Exercise GRIFFIN STRIKE - by LCpl Andrew, Rangoon Troop

Ex Griffin Strike was a CT3 exercise that took place on Sennybridge Camp, Wales and on Salisbury Plain, in order to validate the lead Airborne Battalion and Royal Marine Commandos for this year's training cycle.

Under the command of 3 UK Div and subsequently 12 AI Bde, Rangoon Tp, 207 Sig Sqn and elements from 255 Sig Sqn deployed with Bowman, Housekeeper and Falcon Assets to set up a HICON to support the exercise.

This then enabled interoperability between the exercising Parachute Regt and the French military forces. The Scenario had split the country in two. As a result, NATO deployed a multinational force to great effect.

16 SR RAAT Task - by LCpl Ball

16 SR were tasked to provide RAAT support to XI West Midlands Brigade Cadet team for their 2 one week Cadet Leadership Course in Nescliff Camp, near Oswestry in Shropshire over Easter. We departed MOD Stafford on the evening of Friday 25 Mar.

On the first full day on 26 Mar, the cadets began to arrive and in the afternoon Sig Fook, LCpl Freeman and Sig Brew took them through three lessons, consisting of VP, CWS (night vision) and PRR. That night the England football team were playing and we finished the day by watching the game.

On Sunday the two platoons were split down into sections and had to complete 10 command tasks throughout the day. Safe to say for Nescliff the weather was terrible for standing outside all day. We had to help to run the 10 stands with the cadet training team. Some examples of the tasks were gun runs, march and shoot on the DCCT and window escape. These tasks were to assess the leadership qualities of the young cadets. LCpl Welch made the mistake of telling the cadets to start slapping each other with mud on their hands.

The next day the cadets were revised on different exercise scenarios and skills such as TIBUA (training in built up areas) on which they were instructed on how to breach a building with grenades with assistance from LCpl Ball and LCpl Rohman as Demo Troops. VCP was also taught by LCpl 'Raoul Roman' Freeman and LCpl Towersey-Veal playing enemy. There was also **Sig Neish** assisting on the teaching of Valon.

Day four was exercise day. The cadets went through various stands throughout the day which consisted of Section in defence and attack, VCP and TIBUA with paintballs and at the end of the day we safely and diligently 'disposed' of the remaining paintballs. That night we attacked the harbour location playing as enemy, Sig Brew won the Most Dramatic Death Award.

Thursday was the day of the Platoon attack, we all had a role to play for this last part of the exercise week, there were 6 enemy positions to attack over a stretch of around 1-2 miles. Sig Brew and Cfn Gordon were LMG gunners for the 2 Platoons. Plenty of smoke and rounds were used that day, which also meant a lot of brass picking. That night we had a well-deserved drink and headed into town for a student night.

Junior Commanders's Leadership Development Course - by LCpl Gale, 255 Sig Sqn

During a 6-month deployment of the Falkland Islands, personnel from 16th Sig Regt, along with members of ISS section, which is made up of people from all three services, were given the chance to develop their skills on a Junior Commanders Leadership Development Course. This course provided a promising opportunity to learn, revise and strengthen traits that should be held by any Junior Commander, but also skills that would be prominent throughout their career.

On the first day of the course, we were waiting in the conference room and it was already apparent that a few of the course members were already quite nervous. Only 36 hours prior we were all given separate subjects to create a five-minute presentation and to lead a discussion group on. This was the only insight we had into what the course would entail at this point. Course leaders Lt Robins and WO2

McLaren entered the conference room and were quick to drop us all in at the deep end. We were paired off and given an appreciation, assuming the role of Capt Black, dropped in a hostile environment with Guerrilla fighters, a dense jungle, river rapids and disease ridden swamps. Our goal, to get a snake bite victim and his team from one end of this unforgiving terrain to a distant hospital. We were given one hour to shift though a mountain of information, pick out the relevant information and present our plan. Already we had displayed the quick thinking and information management skills that are fundamental to being a good junior commander, and it wasn't even lunch time yet.

We swiftly moved onto the next task; discussion groups. This is where we're to control the flow of the discussion on our given subjects and dish out relevant facts to support or dispute people's arguments. From immigration in Britain to women on the front line, these were all clearly meant to split our opinions. This task had tested our command and control over a group of our peers.

Next was the section of the course that most people seemed the most unnerved about, the presentations. For a large number of the course this was to be the first time they would give a presentation to a group of people. We entered the conference room filled with officers and SNCOs, one by one we each delivered our 5 minute presentations, receiving feedback afterwards on our presenting styles and content. This was just a taste of what tasks will be asked of us regularly as we advance in rank, and not only aids us in our military careers but will help us in civilian life also. Day one had now came to a close and we were briefed about what to expect the next day.

Day two, we waited to start our lessons on 6 section battle drills and fire & manoeuvre. For the Army personnel this was more of a refresher, but for the members of the RAF and Navy this offered more of an insight on what the Army is all about. **Sgt Black** led the training and we each ran through scenarios where we were to take an enemy position. In the afternoon we were given a treat. An opportunity to put what we had learnt in the morning into practice on the paintball field. I was delegated Section Commander and was briefed to lead my section across the field, taking out any enemy positions as we went. I am happy to say we took over two positions with the only casualty being an RAF lad taking a paintball to the grid. Overall I think the whole course can say that this was the highlight but can see all the things we had learnt come into play.

207 (JERBOA) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Caveen
SSM WO2 (SSM) Pearce

Exercise JERBOA COMMUNICATOR 1 - by LCpl Thapa

On 18th April 2016, after a hard and very productive week of SQN PACEX and a well-deserved weekend's rest, 207



(JERBOA) Sig Sqn were ready to move to NESSCLIFF to deploy on Ex JC1 for two weeks. The aim of the ex was to deliver a large number of training objectives as set out in the Squadron Training Directive. It was focused on building basic skills required to deploy detachments into the field.

The ex consisted of 5 days of training serials such as Duties of Sentry and Radio Sentry, EC in the field, Map Marking lesson, Voice Procedures (VP), Troop Commander's Deployment Orders, Crypto lesson, Admin in the field and much more to further enhance individual skills.

Second week was followed by deployment of the detachments under field condition in order to test individual detachment's role and build skills while out in the field. After being deployed, it was obvious that every detachment was fighting for comms and individual skills learnt during the first week were exhibited. After the detachments were fully set up, shift rotation began full swing. It will be fair to say especially during night shifts on a chilly Nesscliff Training Area, we felt like the brothers of the Night's Watch, building wall of Kero heater fending off possible White Walkers (Sheep).

Main effort whilst out on the field was to establish Voice comms using HF and VHF means between detachments across the Sqn which was successfully achieved. Detachment crew also had plenty of experience on recceing the location for set up and also the tear down to comply with Notice to Move timings.

The ex was an excellent learning experience particularly for some of us who were on the first Communication exercise. New ways of working and the challenge, alongside troop bonding and cohesion surely benefited 207 (JERBOA) Sig Sqn.

After the ex, a thorough turnaround followed by Troop Commander's and Squadron OC's inspection we were ready for SQN PACEX the subsequent week to deploy on JERBOA COMMUNICATOR 2.



21st SIGNAL REGIMENT **COLERNE**

204 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Major S Gray

SSM WO2 (SSM) K Stowell

Exercise SCORPION PLATO - A potential supervisor's perspective - by Cpl Dowd, Alamein Tp

I was invited to part take in a potential supervisors' development exercise with 220 Sqn where we were to visit Berlin on a battlefield tour. We had a day of learning about the history of Germany and its involvement within World War 2. It was a very in depth day going into a lot of detail and debate, engaging personnel to start thinking about how to overcome different battle situations and what was done well. We also learnt about the politics that was going on in Germany leading up to the war, to try and engage us in thinking about how people can be influenced easily. It was a very good insight on how to 'think outside the box' as we applied different ideas and theories. Whilst being deployed out in Berlin, after seeing the historically rich city that is Berlin, we would have a presentation in the evening as well as the following morning on subjects that we had covered the day prior. This was to get us used to researching and demonstrating our ability to stand and deliver in front of a crowd – one of many important traits of a potential supervisor.

My subject was how SIGINT was used during the World War and the difference with modern SIGINT. This was quite a new subject to myself, but it was a very good subject to read into whilst enjoying some of the local beers of course. The battlefield tour was a very relaxed environment, where we were entrusted to be professional without the bonds of having a 'dry' trip. This played out perfectly as it gave us a perfect opportunity to speak on an 'away from work' approach with officers and SNCOs to get a very good insight on what is expected of a supervisor as well as their own personal experience within a supervisory role. Attending the battlefield tour for potential supervisors has done nothing but bolster my need to pursue my career within the supervisory role and it has shown me that not only that we all have the potential to 'think outside the box' but also how easily we can apply ourselves with nothing but an opportunity to do so.

Exercise MESSINA TROOP DEVELOPMENT (Ex MTD) - by LCpl Owen, Messina Tp

On Monday the 18th of April Messina Troop began a Troop Development week at 21 Sig Regt. The ex was broken down into two phases. The first part conducted at 21 Sig Regt and the second half staying at Sennybridge Camp in the Brecon Beacons. Monday was mostly filled with lessons by Cpl Pacey and Cpl Britton. The previous Friday we had pulled presentation topics out of a hat so we only had until Tuesday the 19th to get them up to scratch. On Tuesday morning we began the first half of the day with an essay writing task from which we had four topics to choose from, the one that I chose was 'Is torture ever acceptable?' and then kicked off our presentations at 1400hrs. All the presentations that Messina Troop did were good but the one I enjoyed most was 'How to make a paper aeroplane' by Sig Gibson.



Bio Spill

Wednesday morning we all met up at the revetments training area to start the command tasks that Cpl Pacey and Cpl Britton had arranged. The Troop was split into three teams of four to compete among each other. The first task was "Chasm Crossing" where you get from point A to B without any one or any item touching the ground.



Chasm Crossing

The second was "Bio Spill" where you had to make your way through an obstacle course with your section only being able to stand on two wooden planks and the third was "Blind Direction" where the team leader directed his blindfolded team through an obstacle course. After completing these three command tasks we met down at the parade square for the final command task which was "Blind Drive", this was by far the best command task but a lot more difficult than it seems. We then made our way down to Sennybridge Camp

where we went to the local pub for a troop quiz.

Thursday was the start of a day navigation exercise; we were split into two teams with each team having a different route to walk.

Each team was dropped off at a different side of Pen y Fan in the Brecon Beacons. The route that my team was assigned was led by Cpl Pacey and took



Selfie on the Pfan

about 5 hours. **Cpl 'Moaner' Jepson** did not find the navigation exercise easy. We all met up at the car park at the bottom of Pen y Fan and headed back to Sennybridge camp to go out for a Troop meal at Nando's. On Friday morning we all headed back to camp and had all enjoyed our development week.

215 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj JW Hooker SSM WO2 (SSM) J Davis

Since the last round of notes, 215 Sig Sqn has been able to finally focus on its own training with a quiet period (generally) for both 1 Armd Inf Bde HQ and 21 Sig Regt. This has been particularly useful, with armoured commanders getting the chance to practice GPMG firing on the ranges and some low level skills training in the form of Ex CYGNUS MERCURY 1 to both maintain and enhance the soldiers' communications skills. Looking ahead, the Sqn is set to ramp back up with a trip to Texas (sadly working) for some with a concurrent trip to Salisbury Plain Training Area for others (who drew the short straw there?).

Exercise CYGNUS MERCURY 1 (Collective Training)

On Monday 25 April, 215 Sig Sqn deployed to Imber Firs Barn on Salisbury Plain Training Area (where else?). Once we arrived on location, both Bengal and Sabre troops set up their forward HQs, FFRs and Bulldogs in and around a series of ISO containers. Caspian troop established an SHQ close by, doing their best to make a building with no windows or insulation as homely as possible. With plenty of kerosene heaters and improvisation with ponchos, **Sgt '60 Minute Makeover' Johnson** did his best to make conditions bearable despite the deceptively cold and windy Salisbury Plain climate!

The troops quickly established comms and got into routine. While one shift occupied the headquarters and manned the net for 12 hours, the other got their heads down in the DRASh tents that had been set up to escape the gopping weather. Bengal and Sabre troops began putting their out dets to the test, moving them from location to location across the plain. Sig 'Diesel Dumper' Eastwood's Bulldog was delayed setting off due to a slight fuel leak which had resulted in 160 L of diesel collecting in the engine compartment. Before it could be moved, the vehicle's hull had to be drained without contaminating or drowning the local wildlife – ever a challenge!



Armour deployed in the field

The CT1 ex was an excellent opportunity to brush up on basic comms knowledge, prevent skill fade, prove that we can deploy our fleet without major dramas, and improve our operational effectiveness before we deploy on any major Brigade exercises in the near future. However, the finest spectacle of the ex was witnessing first hand a full armoured battlegroup fight through our position on their own ex on the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings. **Cpl 'Forward Repair Team?' Vella** was particularly surprised when the armoured lads mistook her for their enemy.



Armour moving locations

All serials had been completed by Thursday morning but under the instruction of the Ops Officer Capt 'Sidetrack' Mitchell we stayed another day for some troop training, as the training area had been booked for the entire week. This included some good old fashioned cross country driver training. Sgt 'Driving Instructor' Scourfield was keen to re-establish her off-roading credentials, having hopelessly bogged in a land rover earlier in the week.

All in all the CT1 ex was a great success, and a good opportunity for the Sqn to train together ahead of a busy summer.

Bulldog Commanders' Course - by 2Lt T Davis-Merry

Three weeks into our posting at 215 Sig Sqn, it was time for **2Lt Heuston** and I to embark on our Bulldog AFV Commanders' Course. With our oversized coveralls and goggles at the ready, we were well-prepared for our first two weeks of armour training. **LCpl Jenkinson** proved to be a superb Driver Maintenance Instructor (DMI) and our thanks go to our course driver **Sig Docherty**.

The first week of the course was held at Azimghur Barracks, the home of 21St Sig Regt, and focused on ensuring that we had a sound understanding of the mechanics of the vehicle and how to conduct the necessary maintenance. These lessons covered all the key systems of the vehicle, from cooling and drivetrain to fuel systems and electrical components. This provided us a great opportunity to get the tools and grease gun out and try our hands at some basic armoured-vehicle maintenance. A crucial part of the course, this gave us a much better understanding of the considerable maintenance burden the Bulldogs place on our troops and how we could best manage it.

For the second phase of the course we were based in the 228 Sig Sqn garages in Bulford. This week saw us head on to Salisbury Plain Training Area to conduct the off-road phase of the course. Here we saw first-hand the reliability issues that these vehicles face. On the morning of day one of the driving phase we made it ten metres out of the hangar before the

engine spluttered and stopped. A quick inspection pointed to the fuel lift pump as the source of the problem. The rest of the day was then spent with the tools out and on the phone to our friends at the LAD. Whilst this might have been frustrating, it was all a valuable learning experience. Twentyfour hours later our Bulldog was back on the road and so we cracked on with the rest of the course.

Our first challenge was to manoeuvre the Bulldog around a series of cones as if we were moving the vehicle into and out of a hangar, all fairly straightforward and so a good place to start. We then progressed on to commanding the vehicle over a range of terrain types from trenches and steep tracks to wading through water obstacles. This gave us all a real insight into just how manoeuvrable the vehicle can be and how they handle in the off-road environment.



The tightest of manoeuvring areas!

The next challenge tested our ability to judge the width of the vehicle as we manoeuvred 16 tonnes of steel down a narrow track which twisted and turned through a dense woodblock. This is relatively straightforward the first time around, when both the driver and commander can look out of their respective cupolas, but becomes quite a challenge when the hatches are battened down. The second time through the obstacle was somewhat more testing as visibility from the small windows in the commander's cupola is very limited. This is where a sound spatial awareness and a good sense of how the vehicle would respond to the smallest of driver inputs became invaluable. Thankfully, all of us on the course passed this assessment without so much as a paint scratch.



Ramp practice

We all thoroughly enjoyed the course and learnt a surprising amount in just two short weeks. We both look forward to putting our new skills into practice on exercise and we are most grateful to **LCpl Jenkinson** for his excellent instruction.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Plested

SSM WO₂ (SSM) Dinsdale

Exercise SCORPION PLATO 2016 - Battlefield Study to Berlin - by Lt Adam Homer

After an early start on a Sunday morning 29 May 16, 220 Sig Sqn started our journey from Colerne Station to Heathrow airport where we caught our outbound flight to Berlin. After checking into our hotel we all had some time to settle in, find out about the local area of the city in which we were staying and head out for dinner. The battlefield study would begin the next day.

So after completing a bit of sightseeing, the following morning we met up with our tour guide Michael, a former soldier of the Grenadier Guards having served in the British Army in the late 1990s. Michael was a hit from the start, instantly making a positive impression on the group and with his no-nonsense approach and good humour, coupled with a great deal of historical and local knowledge; we knew it was going to be a good week. The first day we learnt a great deal about the build-up WWII and how the Nazis took control of Germany in the 1930s, as well as some of the amazing architecture that was in place for the remembrance of those who lost their lives in the battle of Berlin and in the Holocaust. The last place we visited this day was the sight of Adolf Hitler's bunker site where he committed suicide in 1945, and signalled the beginning of the end of WWII in Europe.

On the second day, we headed South and followed the route into the centre of Berlin, following the advance of the 8th Guards Army of the Soviet Red Army moving Northwest to force the surrender of the Germans. We discussed tactics at the platoon and company level, the sacrifice of both the attackers and the defenders, and learnt about the desperation of both sides to defeat the other. The third day would see us travelling out of the city to Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. A place where political prisoners, PoWs and Jewish people were worked to death before and during WWII. This allowed us a chance to reflect on the morality of conflict and the issue of why we abide by the rule of law, and fight for those that cannot fight for themselves.



Troops looking at the scale of Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp on a map board

On the Fourth day, we would see all the major sites of Berlin to do with the Cold War, and the occupation of both West and East Berlin. The Berlin Wall, Checkpoint Charlie and the Stasi Museum to name but a few. This day was linked to the very real idea of a second Cold War emerging against Russia following aggression in Ukraine, and President Putin's attitude towards the West.



Checkpoint Charlie manned today by re-enactors and history enthusiasts

Given the amount we had learnt in the short time, the most powerfully emotive place that we had visited was Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, located 35 km north of Berlin. A place that had a sombre atmosphere, and a heartfelt connection to all those who that were sacrificed in WWII. The overall experience was well received from the group and Berlin and its history is something that all people should experience.

Exercise SCORPION AT - by Sig Alex Simkiss

We departed 18 Apr 16 an early Monday morning in two minibuses. On arrival we had briefs and had some time to get things ready for the adventure ahead. The sqn was divided into two groups. One group went hill walking which was led by **Cpl Laxman Rai** and group two went mountain biking, which was led by **LCpl Morgan**.

The hill walking group went on a Tor circuit which included the highest point, High Willhays Tor and other Tors which included Yes Tor, Dinger Tor and Steeperton Tor. The views were both amazing and breathtaking. After the first checkpoint, we all took it in turns navigating from point to point. Some of us decided on track routes where others just went rogue, and the "brave" went the direct route. We covered all sorts of terrain through marshy patches, up vertical hills, through thick grass and streams. Throughout the trek we had **Sgt Si Tragner** giving everyone points about navigating and received the nickname "trekking with Trags".



One of the better weather moments

Throughout the day we covered a total distance of almost eight miles (the short route) around Dartmoor. At every point we would stop for a quick water break and pit stop and also had lunch atop of Yes Tor. After successfully completing a day's exciting and tiring walk, we all headed to the Cpls' Club in Oakhampton Camp and took part in a quiz organised by Cpl Fricker where we split down into teams of five. The seniors team ended up winning the quiz consisting of the Sqn OC, SSM, SSgt Nick Beckett, Sgt Reece Marsden and Sgt Si Tragner, thus demonstrating their high IQ levels. Or they clearly cheated.

On the second day we headed out on the mountain bikes which was led by LCpl "Ghost Rider" Morgan. Firstly we had a walk through, talk through of the bikes and then a little go around the car park to get comfortable. On first impressions Sig "Mini Barrett" Green looked like he required stabilizers. We soon set off on the area and sure enough the first thing was uphill. Most part of the tracks were very rocky and had raised curbs which made it quite difficult going downhill. Especially Mr Harvey, he went down a rocky hill slamming on his brakes. The bike went one way and Mr Harvey the other, he bailed hard with no risk to injury apart from his ego.

We executed some excellent river crossings with the bikes, where you used the bike as a sort of support while you balanced on the rocks trying to successfully cross. Around about the half-way point we got three punctures within twenty minutes due to the harsh Dartmoor rocks. For the final bit of the day we were at the highest point where the tracks met metalled roads which took us all the way down to Oakhampton Camp. Due to us being on the roads we easily picked up a lot of speed, and for me that was the best thrill of the day. Once we got back to the car park we checked over all the bikes and reported anything that had broken and then put them all away.

The CO's Final Day - by Capt Dave Baxter

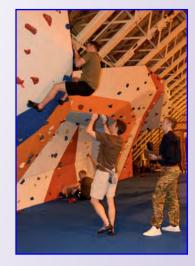
On the 15 Apr 16, Lt Col (now Col) Adam Corkery completed his last day in unit as the CO of 21St Sig Regt. Having served 2 years and 8 months as the CO, including commanding the Regiment on Op HERRICK 19. It was therefore fitting that he be given an exciting send off on his last day.

In the week preceding his last day, Lt Col Corkery was kept busy. In addition to the usual activities conducted before leaving a unit, his last week in work saw him attending a leaving function with his Majors, the RSM and the SSA, followed by a formal dine out later in the week in the Officers' Mess. The menu for the dine out was excellent, and huge credit should go to the kitchen in producing an excellent five course meal that was unanimously agreed upon as one of the best meals served in the mess.

On Fri 15 Apr 16, the CO spent his morning clearing out his office. CO's PT was replaced with the final round of activities for the CO's cup; a year-long inter-squadron sports and fitness competition. On this day, the activities were bouldering on the new bouldering wall, 5-a-side football and basketball. Each sqn fielded teams for all activities and competed in the final activity in an effort win the CO's cup, refereed and managed by the PTIs.

The CO kept himself out of a Sp Sqn team, and instead spent his time instructing those attempting to climb on the bouldering wall. The successful installation of the bouldering wall was a focus of the CO's and very much in line with his directive of enriching the soldier's lives. As a keen climber himself, he was well suited to providing advice and assisting the mix of abilities struggling to gain points for their sqn team. Needless to say, his long limbs and climbing experience made each route look easy when he demonstrated moves.

After the results of the CO's Cup were announced by the SSI, the RSM took command of all the Regt and with the assistance of his



The CO spotting a new climber

SSMs, lined the Regt up along a route from the gymnasium to the Bristol University Air Squadron (BUAS) office. A working (!) Bulldog from 215 Sig Sqn was parked outside the main entrance of the gymnasium and the CO was driven along the route. Unfortunately, the original plan of flying the CO from Colerne to Netheravon was cancelled due to bad weather.



The CO's final departure of Colerne Camp

Overall, the CO enjoyed the whole day. He actively jumps at every chance to pass on his climbing knowledge in an effort to hopefully inspire others to take up climbing. He also began his career as an Armoured Troop Commander and so was pleased to end his time at Regtl Duty with a drive in an armoured vehicle. I am sure I speak for the entire Regt when I say thank you for everything he has done for the Regt and that we all wish him the very best of luck in his next job.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj McGrail SSM WO2 (SSM) Dolan

Sp Sqn continues to work hard supporting the field sqns during our high-readiness year, in amongst the normal ECI, RSIT and LSI prep activities running in the background, and the ongoing CT1 and 2 training exercises. The sqn is looking forward to a two week AT package in June which is being run by SSgt 'Mof' Moffatt and promises to being a fun-packed time for those lucky enough to enjoy the great outdoors of Weymouth. Maj Olly McGrail prepares to handover command

to Maj Karl Overton (who is currently employed as the QM(G) in a building not more than twenty paces away from Sp Sqn HQ). Maj Olly McGrail moves on to be the OpsO at 11 Sig Regt. The Sqn 2IC – Capt Fred Fensom has handed over to Capt Dougie Icke (formally the QM(T) – again a 'stones throw' from Sp Sqn HQ) and has also taken up post in Blandford. We welcome Capt Liam Tosh as the new QM(T) but say goodbye to WO2 (RQMS) John McMahon who moves up to York to take up post as the RSM. He is replaced by WO2 (RQMS) Al Jordan who having just finished his RQMS course is ready to engage in the G4 battle. Lastly, Sp Sqn SHQ welcomes Sgt Lee Pell who on arrival from 30 Commando IX GPRM in Plymouth now assumes the Ops Sgt role; he has certainly hit the ground running and is doing a great job already.

Exercise SUPPORTING ENDEAVOUR 2 - by Sgt Lee Pell

During the period of 3-13 May 16, Sp Sqn conducted Ex SUPPORTING ENDEAVOUR 2. This was a Collective Training Level 2 activity, with a primary aim of deploying to MoD Stafford Training Area in order to sustain 220 Sig Sqn during their deployment on Ex SCORPION MERCURY 2. This would confirm that the Echelon Group, held at readiness, had met the specified Collective Training Objectives prior to commencement of CT level 3 Training.

The Ex began with a week of preparation, where the Sqn conducted all of the necessary administration prior to deployment, as well as the Regimental Training Wing providing lessons covering the Combat Estimate and Orders Process. This set us up nicely for the issuing of Exercise Orders, prior to the vehicle line-up at the end of the week. The Sgn then had a well-deserved weekend off prior to Deployment phase on Monday 9 May 16.

Sp Sqn lined up at, what was now known as, MOB Colerne early Monday morning in preparation for the short drive to MoD Stafford. The Deployment had its usual share of issues, including the CS Engineer's FRT rover breaking down. Luckily, however, their packet also had members of the LAD who graciously came to rescue. They carried out text book fault diagnosis by spitting on the engine, in order to listen for the 'sizzle', and finally came to the conclusion that the engine had overheated. The only thing that could be done now was to give the standard "Sorry mate, there's nothing I can do" answer, before jumping in their rover and returning to the convoy.

At this time, the second packet was safe and sound at Strensham Services, due to an unplanned stop directed by the Capt (QMT) Liam Tosh, much to the dismay of SSgt 'Rats' Rattenbury, the acting MTO and A1 Ech Commander.

All three packets arrived at Site 2 of MoD Stafford in good time and went straight into setting up the Echelon Group. Within three hours the infrastructure was in and the work routine had started. Throughout the week, all departments worked well to fill the time with 'in house' training, on top of their routine tasks supporting 220 Sig Sqn. Special thanks goes out to Sgt 'Sid' Mulholland from the RAF's Tactical Supply Wing, who gave up his time to come across and deliver a lesson on the setup of an Emergency Helicopter Landing Site and Sgt 'Elf' Watson who provided a lesson on how to manage a Medical scene.

The true, unsung heroes of the week were the Chefs, Cpl Hyatt and LCpl Davies. They provided a fantastic feast for every meal and not only was the food exceptional, but they also brought a hidden talent out of **Cpl 'Asa' Connon**, in his ability to serve food at the hot-plate whilst maintaining an overly happy and cheerful manner. That will no doubt set him up for bright future at McDonalds, should he ever decide to switch career paths.

The key element of Ex SUPPORTING ENDEAVOUR 2 was to provide a rolling replen to 220 Sig Sqn. This was achieved to great effect by **SSgt 'Rats' Rattenbury** and his team, once 220 Sig Sqn had decided when and where they wanted the replen to take place. The serial was executed with minimal difficulty and proved to be an invaluable way of practicing one of their key tasks, whilst blowing away some cobwebs.

During the ex we were visited by OC and 2IC of Sp Sqn Maj Olly McGrail and Capt Dougie Icke (after they had 'taken one for the team' by attending the Officers' Corps dinner night at the Savoy in London whilst we were 'roughing it' on exercise), who confirmed along with 21 Sig Regt Ops Team and the A2 ECH Comd which CT2 training objectives had been achieved.

The final stage of the ex was the recovery and 'deplen', which was conducted back in Colerne. Within 24 hours, Sp Sqn was turned around and ready to deploy once again. This allowed us to take another well-earned weekend off, and look forward to our next phase of Collective Training – an Urban Operations Battle Camp... Where the fun really begins.

Exercise BEAUFIGHTER CASSINO - by Capt Dougie Icke

This year's Regtl Battlefield Study for 21 Sig Regt was an ambitious deployment to Monte Cassino for thirty officers and SNCOs and organised by Capt Dougie Icke. We were joined by four members of 39 Sig Regt (our paired RESERVE unit) - Lt Col Nick Bruce, Maj Penny Mell, WO1 Chris Klass and WO1 Mick Durrant from the initial briefing day and it were a great opportunity to participate in the whole battlefield study experience together. The early start from Colerne to LHR was arguably an hour 'too' early, but anybody who has been 'caught out' by M4 repairs and detours during silent hours will understand the BS Organisers management of risk and contingency planning. As the group arrived to an unmanned 'check-in' desk the CO - Lt Col Adam Corkery was heard to remark to the BS Organiser 'So Dougie, how do you think it's going so far?'. Luckily, everything was to go swimmingly thereafter and soon enough everybody was seated on the plane ready for the journey to Rome. I mention this knowing that my good friend Capt Mark McMullan who organised a similar BS with 14 (EW) Sig Regt a couple of months later managed to lose a group member at the gate prior to boarding the plane resulting in one less of the group flying to Rome (I hope to see this in his Wire entry).

The next four days were spent exploring the area of Monte Cassino with each day dedicated to one of the four battles to capture Monte Cassino from the determined German defence. Our tour guide – Frank de Planta took us to various stands that allowed the ground to be studied in detail which were aided by a comprehensive study pack. Conversation, questions and debate were the order of the day with all group members encouraged to engage with the appreciations and studies in a relaxed environment that encouraged learning at all levels.

Day one saw the group move around the area of Cevaro and the Rapido river crossing sites before finally checking into our hotel – the *Hotel Rocca* which we were delighted to find had a swimming pool, gym and bar for our free time – but not to

get in the way of the nightly 'Fun Quiz' where Capt Dougie Icke and Frank de Planta ensured that we 'racked our brains' in order to answer some tough questions. Maj Olly McGrail was particularly strong in this contest, as was WO2 (RQMS) John McMahon, as they were both keen to show some of the young DE officers that their hours of watching the History Channel and pre-course reading had not been wasted. Dinner on the first night saw most of the group make the mistake of thinking that the 'starter' was the main course only to find themselves facing another plate full of 'carbs' to negotiate prior to dessert. The inclusion of sufficient amounts of Italian wine at dinner was another 'tick-in-the-box' which ensured everybody retired to their rooms suitably refreshed after a long day of travel and Monte Cassino fresh air.



Capt Dougie Icke explains 'in detail' the G4 Plan to WO2 (RQMS)

John McMahon with the Liri Valley and Monte Cassino

Monastery in the background

Day two started with a visit to the German Cemetery, prior to moving around Monastery Hill to gain an in-depth orientation to the ground and an explanation of why this position dominated the battlefield. This day was focused on the second battle for Cassino and included analysis of the attack on the Railway Station by 5 NZ Inf Bde, a visit to the Polish Cemetery and stands at Castle Hill and Snakeshead Ridge where we discussed the terrain and actions fought by 2 NZ Div, 4 Ind Div, 34 US Inf Div and 78 BR Inf Div. Possibly the highlight of the day (certainly for Padre Tom) was the visit to Monte Cassino Monastery which had been impressively re-built following its destruction by allied bombing prior to its capture. The impressive architecture, and art once you entered inside, was sublime, as were the views out onto the Liri valley. The views brought home much of the ground appreciation, and it was clear to see why the Monastery and the very important Vital Ground of Point 593 were so critical to success of the operation. The visit to the Monastery was also the chance to purchase an additional 'fridge magnet' for those under instructions from those left behind to not come back empty-handed.

Day three saw the group initially move to Caira. The morning spent walking 'up' the Cavendish Road was welcomed by all as a chance to stretch the legs whilst learning about the various challenges of moving logistics and subsequently tanks up a small track made by engineer assets prior to the failed attack at Point 593. Point 593 was then studied in detail as it was the focus of 34 US Inf Div's attempt to capture this key terrain during the first battle, 4 Ind Div in the second battle and II (PO) Corps in the fourth battle. The group then moved to Cassino CWGC Cemetery where an act of remembrance was delivered by **Padre Tom Hiney** and a period of time was spent by all walking and reflecting amongst the graves of the

many allied officers and soldiers who were laid to rest in Cassino – the numerous capbadges included R SIGNALS and it was fitting that each group member was given a small poppy cross to lay at a gravestone of their choice. Whilst it would have been nice to lay one at every gravestone, it was still felt to be a nice gesture which represented a small token of our gratitude to the many brave soldiers that fell. The last stand of the day was Amazon Bridge where 4 BR Inf Div had struggled to establish a crossing of the Rapido on 12-13 May 44 but eventually succeeded later during the fourth battle.



A brief lull in battle to capture the required group photo

Day four was a summary of the fourth successful battle, including the North Irish Horse attack in support of 1 Cdn Inf

Div's assault on the Hitler Line on 23 May 44, prior to studying the options for the breakout from Anzio at Cori, the decision to adopt Op BUFFALO and the initial success of the US breakout towards Valmontone on 23-25 May 44. The last stand, prior to making our last leg of the journey to Rome Fiumicino airport, was in the area of the Velletri Gap where we studied 36 US Inf Div's plan to slip between the inter-Corps boundary for LXXVI Pz Corps and 1 Para Corps and break the Fourteenth Army's defence on 30 May 44. Under the expert guidance of Frank de Planta, we summarized the battles of Monte Cassino, with particular focus on the principles of attack and defence. Whilst Frank de Plata would admit to being slightly biased – we analysed some of the decisions made by the US General Mark Clark, and summarised that some of the decisions he made, in hindsight, were not viewed by many military historians as particularly great.

All in all, the battlefield study was a great success and the feedback from all attendees was positive. Special mention goes to Lt Alistair Green, who for reasons known only to himself decided to chase and poke a 'rat' whilst walking back to the hotel from Cassino town during an evening out only to find the 'rat' had teeth and was inclined to bite his finger and remain attached until it could be prized off! A trip to the medical centre at Rome Fiumicino airport, once he finally admitted to his 'man v rat' challenge ensured he was not about to go down with a rat-infested disease but he did take up their offer of some 'free' antibiotics.

Anybody wishing to organise a battlefield study to Monte Cassino is welcome to contact Capt Dougie Icke for copies of the Agreement in Principle/Detail and other supporting documents. Frank de Planta comes very highly recommended as a tour guide and can be contacted at the following email address: f.deplanta@btinternet.com.



22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT **STAFFORD**



CO Lt Col A Fawcett RSM WO1 (RSM) D Seymour

Regiment CO's Cup Athletic Sports Day - by LCpl Adams

This event was held at Rowley park sports stadium on 5th May 2016. It was a welcome escape from the hangars and offices in the Regt to another joyous outdoor activity. Even better, it was a bright sunny day with a lot of motivated athletes willing to get to the finish line first.

The event encouraged athletes from all standards within the Regt to compete and win points for their sqns to add to the annual CO's cup competition. Four sqns participated altogether in Field and Track events; 222 Sqn, 248 Gurkha Sqn 252 Sqn and Support Sqn. Last year's winners 217 Sqn, didn't take part due to exercise commitments.

The event started at 10am organised by the PTIs. It began with a sport for strong, healthy men and women -shot put and discus throwing. It was quite interesting watching their methods, as most contestants had never done it before but their techniques got better as it went on. Sp Sqn had the better of everyone, as LCpl Turner's throwing strength on the day was second to none, except maybe 'The hulk'.

Then came the high jump which didn't last very long due to the amount of competitors, but Sig Grand came out on top putting 222 Sqn in a good position. This was followed by triple jump and long jump which were very tight in the scorings.

The track events were next on the list - 5000m, 1500m, 800m, 400m and 200m races, 110m hurdles, 100m sprint, 4x100m and 4 x400m relays. The 5000m event kicked off with **LCpl Dan** 'the Grey' Grey of 222 Sqn showing off his fast pace and by the end of the last lap, lapping most runners. The 1500m, 800m and 400m were very competitive with most of the runners keeping to the same pace until the last lap, when some good runners started picking up the quick pace. The 110m hurdle was enjoyable and funny, with different runners with different techniques trying to get over the hurdles. Everybody cheered, supporting their sqns. The 200m and 100m were very much looked forward to. Sig Jammeh of 222 Sqn won both of these two races at a very comfortable pace and even having to slow down on the last 30 metres. Then came the long awaited last event, the relays. I took part in the 4x400 metres for 222 Sqn. These events scored the maximum points. It was nervy as other sqns have done well on other events as well and the scores were very close before the relays. Due to 222 Sqn having the fastest athlete on the track for 100m and 200m (Sig Jammeh). 222 Sqn won both the

4x100m and 4x400m, conquering all the points and giving them the overall lead.

The games lasted for about four hours and then it was time for prize distribution. 222 Sqn were announced the winners on parade and **Sig Jammeh** who was deemed the best athlete, marched out and collected the award presented by the CO. This was an ultimate moment of pleasure for the sqn, amidst the loud clapping and shouting of cheers.



Exercise LONDON BEACON LEARN - by Lt Franklin

The annual Corps dinner night is a much anticipated occasion that allows Officers to socialise, celebrate and catch up with friends. It is also an opportunity to take part in educational experiences that are of benefit to an Officers career and enhance their general knowledge in areas such as politics; all of which were achieved to a high standard on Ex LONDON BEACON LEARN.

The first stop on 22 Sig Regt's educational tour began at PJHQ based in Northwood, it provided a detailed insight into the work, roles and potential career paths that a posting a PJHQ can provide. The briefs were informative and highlighted the complex organisational structure of PJHQ but were kept at a level that even the lowliest Subaltern could understand.

With enhanced insight into potential future careers we travelled to London, arriving with just enough time to don the penguin suits and moving to a local drinking establishment for a few refreshing beverages and the beginning of the annual catch up. Dinner at the *Savoy* was a truly fantastic experience and the food was first rate, with a fantastic atmosphere and great company it genuinely was a memorable occasion. With dinner concluded the majority of Officers headed off into the night for further fun and frivolity in keeping with the spirit of the Corps.

The education sandwich concluded with a tour of Parliament with MP Andrew Griffiths and then Prime Ministers Question Time. The tour itself was an eye opening experience, enhanced by the knowledge of Mr Griffith; it was evident that we would not have had such an insightful tour without his enthusiasm and familiarity with the building. PMQ's was a rare chance to see the parliamentary process in person and was the highlight of the visit.

The Officers of 22 Sig Regt would like to thank **Andrew Griffiths** (MP) and the Officers of PJHQ for their time and the experience that they provided; it was both informative and enjoyable.



22 Sig Regt Officers visiting Parliament



CO 22 Sig Regt giving MP Andrew Griffiths a thank you gift from the Regt

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj S Macpherson SSM WO2 (SSM) J Roberts

222 Sqn Battle Camp - by Sig Jammeh

222 Signal Sqn deployed to Leek training area on the 18th of April 2016. We deployed in the early hours on Monday, had all our kit issued and then went to low level tactics and training, just to refresh our basic skills and drills. Day 1 was a refresher on our basic soldiering skills; we had lessons on the six section battle drills, Fire control orders and also lessons of patrols. Later on in the day we were broken down into 2 sections. The day ended with a night navigation, which we went on in teams of two. We were given six different check points to find within the allocated time, it turns out a lot of us needed work on our navigation skills especially LCpl Sophie Duffy and LCpl Ben Handyside who manage to get lost and required a search party to get them back to the harbour area.

Tuesday started with more lessons and as the day progressed, more practice after every lesson. The main highlight of that Tuesday was when the DS decided to demonstrate their infantry skills by conducting a full section attack in front of everyone. The weather was brilliant, warm and dry, all the junior ranks were asked to sit back and watch a perfect demonstration on how to conduct a section attack. **SSgt Frost** was the section Commander, his 2IC was **Sgt Ball**, and with the junior ranks was **SSgt Kirkby (YoS)** acting as a commentator because every action the DS were doing during the attack he was telling us to watch and learn from them.

The attack was going really well until just before the regroup was called, the grenadier in delta fire team **Cpl Kent-Smith** had taken the retaining clip off his smoke grenade too soon whilst laying there with delta waiting for regroup, the next thing we saw was a thick smoke in the air where delta was and everyone in the section getting choked by their grenadier.

Throughout the week we conducted endless patrols and section attacks whilst changing section 2IC's, allowing each member to be tested on their command appointment. In the end the two sections merged to form up one section for our final attack. We set off from our harbour at 1130hrs and patrolled to the FUP as one section where we had a soak period and met with the DS, had a few inspirational speeches and war music played to get everyone pumped up. We then formed up in our patrol formation to conduct the attacks, after 2 attacks the section regrouped, and everyone got their breath back somehow, LCpl Knill-Jones started screaming over the PRR giving target indication and fire control orders for no reason, but luckily no one reacted to his orders because nothing was happening or seen. At that moment everyone was expecting end-ex would be called or so we thought but the DS had one last surprise for us, a casevac. The DS started screaming at us MAN DOWN we then got a poncho to get the casualty out of there as quickly as possible, once the casualty was in a safe area end-ex was called. After a long week of patrols and section attacks Sig Clark was awarded a deserved prizes of top field soldier.

222 Sqn LFTT - by Sig Jammeh

Just two days after our Sqn battle camp with 222, we again deployed to MOD Lydd for live firing. This time not just 222 Sgn but with SP Sgn and 252 Sgn. We left MOD Stafford around about 1400 hours on Sunday and drove to Lydd, arrived there at 1830. On arrival at Lydd camp all our weapons got handed into the armoury and straight to scoff house for the evening meal. From there we got shown our accommodation, the morale was high this time round compared to the battle camp week, because there were no night stags and more importantly, warm food instead of rations. On that Sunday evening we had briefings on what was going to happen throughout the week, after the briefing everyone had to have a weapon handling test on pistols, as most of us never touch let alone fire a pistol. It took a while for most us to find our way round the pistol but in the end everyone got the hang of it and passed the weapon handling test.

The Monday morning was an early start. We left the camp for the ranges, it was only a half hour drive from Lydd Camp. We were broken down into details for grouping and zeroing. Whilst detail 1 were doing the grouping and zeroing detail 2 were having an introduction on the GPMG weapon system and a weapon handling test too, again this is another weapon which a lot us haven't fired before. Once the grouping and zeroing was completed we went straight to the ACMT shoot. Obviously at every ACMT range there are always some snipers but also very terrible shooters as well. Sig Jammeh happened to be the worst shot of the week because I can safely say I was actually the only one who didn't pass the ACMT, which clearly indicates I won't be a threat to the top shooters for the prize at end of the week.

Throughout the week more live firing was conducted, and for some of the lads there that week was the first time they had experienced such ranges, after a week of battle camp firing blank rounds and the following week firing live rounds, doing section attacks and pair fire manoeuvre, GPMG shoots and pistol ranges. The DS made sure that everyone's weapon handling skills were at a top standard. We also did night shoots and for most lads the moving target range was the best and most enjoyable one of all, because that one simulates a real life scenario. The last range of week was a weighted 15kg run of 1.5 miles and then straight onto shooting down as many targets as possible from 200m within the allocated time given. The day ended with the prize giving for the best soldier who was **Sig Ezard** for his skills and drills during week and the other prize to **Sig Clark** for being the sniper that he is, with the highest score overall in the various shoots that was conducted throughout the week.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj B Price SSM WO2 (SSM) L Rana

Tihar - by LCpl Sanam

Tihar is one of the major festivals celebrated for five days in Nepal. It is also known as Diwali or Bhai tika. It is the festival of lights where Laxmi, the goddess of wealth is worshipped along with crow, dog, cow and finally brothers. During these five days, people go from one house to other playing Deusi and Bhailo. They sing special Deusi songs and they get money or home made treats in return. The other part of this festival is gambling. Gambling is only allowed during this festival so many people take the opportunity to indulge. Most of the games are card based, along with dice and tripasa.

Whilst spending two months in Lithuania on Ex ARRCADE FUSION 15, 248 GSS got the opportunity to mark the day of Tihar, after returning from the Baltics we had the opportunity to celebrate both the festival and our return with our families.

On the 12 Dec 15, all of the Stafford based Gurkha community gathered for a Tihar celebration. CO Saheb kicked off the event with the first roll of the Tripasa. There were several games being played, including tripasa, dice and card games. There were delicious Nepalese foods prepared by Gurkha ladies. Later all the ladies played Bhailo and collected some funds. The gambling went on until 2200 hours which was the cut off time. Everyone enjoyed the night (although some enjoyed it more than others!). It was a quality night especially after coming from a long overseas exercise. Everyone got time to gather around and have some relaxation. Special thanks goes to **SSgt Damber** for organising such a memorable event.

252 (HONG KONG) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj C Raynor SSM WO2 (SSM) B McLean

A race to remember - by Cpl Sam Clowes

It all Started with a long drive to Queen Elizabeth Barracks late on Wednesday evening to meet up with the rest of 22 Sig Regt team already accommodated. Before we could meet the team we had to go to Imphal Barracks for a couple of jobs. Firstly **Cpl 'Alex' Hopkins** was required to receive his water safety brief ready for the kayak in the morning, with the main points being don't drink the water and stay in the boat. Our second task was to locate the kayak and ensure it was suitable. After a couple of late night issues which were quickly rectified, the 3 of us were good to go to Strensall.

On arrival we received a detailed team brief ensuring each team member was happy with their event and any admin details that may be needed. Finally, close to midnight, all kit was sorted and ready to go for a 0400hrs wake up call for myself and Alex Hopkins in order to silently get ready and make way for Imphal Barracks for the first two legs of Race the Sun. Whereas LCpl 'Gav' Roberts had 16 hours in bed before he even had to think about getting ready for the stretcher race. In the car to York we both had a quick snack for breakfast and for entertainment we watched groups of people staggering home after kick out time from the clubs around the city. However it soon sunk in what was soon to be coming for the both of us.

All personnel in the river run were shortly herded on to transport and taken for a small drive to the start location. Once a detailed race brief was received, all that was to do was to stand around and wait in the light rain for your team to get out of the water, along with being amused by kayakers struggling to drag a water filled boat out of the water and up a river bank before tagging their team partner. This was usually followed by runner sprinting off like Mo Farrah on the last lap of the 5000m, although very short lived and probably not even reaching the distance of the final lap before easing off to a more realistic pace. The route itself bought many obstacles along the way with a few gardens to cross, the odd gate to get through or over, long grass with the odd nettle poking out and the biggest obstacle happily stood in the middle of a path was a cow to run around. All these obstacles along with pre run rain throughout the night helped to make the run that little bit more arduous.

After completing the river run I finally got a chance to get warm and dry and once back to Strensall I could catch up with some much needed sleep in preparation of taking part on event 15 with **Gav Roberts** and 4 others on the stretcher. After starting the stretcher run in a strong position, thanks to a good lap of the field by our runner **LCpl Lafferty**, we set off for the laps around camp. We were looking strong as a team and only were passed by one other, however not without a fight, particularly from **Sgt Lord**. With a strong effort all around on the stretcher, we finished 5th in a strong field.

It was a very long day and physically demanding but could finally be enjoyed by all, with an impressive spread of Nepalese cuisine and a cheeky beer or two. Upon heading back to camp, we were squashed up on a minibus for 3 hours cramping up and feeling worse than we did after we just completed our events.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj N Pollitt

SSM WO2 (SSM) McGeever

Exercise SUSTAIN DRAGON - by LCpl Coward & Sig Litchfield

8th - 13th May 16

A small group from Sp Sqn deployed on Adventurous Training at Castlemartin Training Centre in Pembrokeshire, which consisted of canoeing, mountain biking, rock climbing and hill walking. The week was based on soldiers going beyond their comfort zone and improve their AT skills.

During the canoeing day LCpl Cory 'Angry Jock' Parks and Cpl Dan Goode spent most of the day in the water rather than in their boats, trying to capsize each other to the amusement of the rest of the group. With LCpl 'Angry Jock' Parks ending up

looking a beached whale by the end of the day everyone seemed to enjoy the day.

The day on the mountain bikes seemed to be the most enjoyable and most favourable activity by the group and it seemed to fetch everyone out of their comfort zones. Cfn James 'JC' Caldwell thought he was the fastest bloke on two wheels during the day and then LCpl Dan 'Kamikaze' Coward thinking he didn't need to listen to the instructor on a section that has the most crashes on it, nearly crashing his bike on that exact section.

The weather made a turn for the worst forcing the group to go indoors for the rock climbing. With most of the lads trying to better each other by seeing who could get to the top the quickest and other lads just trying to overcome fears of heights by mastering the climbing wall.

The last day saw the group partake in a bit of hill walking through the welsh countryside and seeing some of the delightful views Wales had to offer. This capped off a good week with a good bunch of lads.

15th - 20th May 16

Upon arrival close to the start of summer, **Sgt King** organised some Sqn Adventurous Training. This took place at ATC Castlemartin. On first looks after the 4 hour dreaded long journey from Stafford all of the lads looked a bit disheartened as there was no service or 3G, so it meant they had to socialise with each other!

We arrived quite early so that left us to go into Pembroke and have a look around. Upon some further research **LCpl Karim** had found that there was a beach right around the corner from camp to which we made full use of several times whilst being there!

Monday morning arrived, so we got all of the arrivals and safety briefs over and done with! The first activity of the week was trekking! This included a long walk across the coast with some brilliant views and beautiful buildings. The trek was several miles long so it gave us time to chat with some of the locals and look at some of the old military history of Pembrokeshire.

Day 2 arrived and some of the lads were feeling a bit rough (some more than others), for us now it was Kayaking to which the weather was dull but morale was still very high! This gave us the opportunity to test out some of our kayaking skills and see who was the best. A few people fell into the water to such excitement of others. I personally did not favour this but I tried my best.

On the Wednesday it was Rock Climbing but the rocks were unsafe so instead, we went into a local town about 45 minutes away from Castlemartin. This housed a 50ft high climbing wall which would even challenge some of the best and most confident climbers! **Sig Ayush** and **Sig Kuldip** favoured this as they were timing themselves on who could climb up the wall the fastest! It turns out they did both the same time.

Mountain Biking had arrived to which I had enjoyed as it was adrenaline packed! **Sig Holland** had fallen off his bike and injured himself but he still got back up with a smile! We were cycling through the forest and the weather took a turn for the worst with it raining hard whilst everyone was trying to bike up a very steep hill, (this was challenging). But we all pulled

through it! We eventually got to the top of the hill and at the bottom was "The Wall of Death", it was a high side of a rock and only the most confident and most fearless of bikers attempted it. But luckily for us LCpl Black braved up and showed us how it was all done! (even the instructor was impressed). As soon as we had all finished and we were all muddy it was now time for the long 2 hour journey back to camp. 10 minutes in and everyone was asleep!

Friday morning arrived (Home time!!!) everyone was so excited. But before we went down to the local town of Tenby and trekked along the beach which was a few miles long! By this time everyone was feeling tired and we now had to drive back to Stafford. It was a good enjoyable week!



32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT **GLASGOW**



CO Lt Col J R Knight MBE RSM WO1 (RSM) J Blowes

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj L Bertram SSM WO2 (SSM) G Cowan

Exercise MERCURY RISING 1 - 7 - 15 May 2016

The first of our deployments for 2016 of the Low Frequency Fall Back (LFFB) system saw some valuable training being carried out by Sqn personnel on the ex. We set to work, building the site on the Saturday. With the site fully built and the system ready to move into the inflation stage by Sunday morning, the weather was not in our favour, unusually clear blue skies but along with this came some fierce and cold winds from the north-west. This unfortunately meant that we could not inflate the aerostat and, therefore, could not fully achieve our mission. Despite this, we did manage vital training and maintenance on the aerostat, transmitter and other elements of the system. It was also an opportunity for all of us to get our training records updated. By the end of the deployment we had a new Flight Control Officer (FCO). Sgt Charlie Sylvester was presented his 'red hat' by our OC Maj Bertram – congratulations Charlie!

We were, as always, well supported on the deployment by a Reacher detachment from 21 Sig Regt. Thanks once again to the guys for their valuable knowledge and professionalism.

A field kitchen was set up by Sgt Sheila Chalmers and Pte Billy Mitchell near EXCON providing the troops on site with three meals a day, another vital cog in the wheel. Alongside the LFFB, we also conducted some Bowman training. This was headed by SSgt Ian Devonport and allowed many of us to re-familiarise ourselves with the kit, a gentle reminder before the Brigade comms ex in June. CST training was also carried out, headed by **Sgt Cat Duncan**. The remote DII laptops were deployed at the site CP and provided EXCON with access to DII in order co-ordinate the ex. We had various visits during our deployment including; Brigade Commander 11 Signal and West Midlands (Brig Anderton-Brown), 2 Signal Group Commander (Col Cooper) and Assistant Commander Force Troops Command (Brig Harvey). They were all treated to a full brief by each by the module ICs of all the component parts of the system and how it all comes together.

While visiting, **Brig Anderton-Brown** presented a number of us with our VRSM clasps; Maj L Bertram, SSgt Malcolm

Forbes, Sgt Lesley Bayne, Cpl Barry Gayton, Cpl Martin Krawczyk, Cpl Scott MacDonald and LCpl Stuart Howard. Congratulations to all and look forward to many years to come.

Some officer cadets from Glasgow, Tayforth and Aberdeen UOTC joined us for a day with the aim of giving them an insight into what the Sqn do and to hopefully enticing some of them to join the Regt. They spent their time training alongside sqn members for the day, they gave us positive feedback and we hope to see them back soon.

40 (NORTH IRISH HORSE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj G Stevenson SSM WO2 (SSM) L Gamble

MATTs Weekend 15 - 17 Apr 16

40 (NIH) Sig Sqn held their first MATTs weekend of the current training year at Magilligan Training Camp over the weekend 15 - 17 Apr 16. The weekend began with Values & Standards on the Friday evening with the Padre, Maj lan Gamble. Entertaining as ever, the Padre ensured everyone was morally correct. After a good night's sleep it was back to the classroom on Saturday morning for LOAC with Capt Dave Buckingham, all together less entertaining.

The Sqn was then broken down into four syndicates to cover four practical MATTs and they set off to their respective locations on a round robin scenario.

The first stand was Map Reading instructed by SSgt (SPSI) lan Robson, which included both theory revision and a practical



Cpl Mortimer Finding His Way

exercise. The Second stand was CIED instructed by Cpl **Dutch Holland.** This lesson consisted of a vehicle search to try and find a hidden VBIED. This was well received due to the high threat in Northern Ireland from this form of attack. The third stand was CBRN instructed by SSgt Ricky Lindsay. It was time to get the CS pellets out and expose the troops to CS within the respirator testing facility, most survived without inhaling the gas.

Finally the BCDT lesson instructor **Cpl Mal Colhoun** set up a few battlefield scenarios within a house to assess how the troops dealt with multiple casualties in different rooms.

After a few refreshments and a lot of stories from the day it was up early Sunday morning for the Security MATT/WIP by WO2 (SSM) Les Gamble, followed by the SHEF WIP by SSgt (SQMS) Dave Thomas. It was then time to quickly grab kit and get ready for the AFT. After a gruelling



Guess Who?

AFT, it was the end of another successful and enjoyable (for most) MATTs weekend.

Somme Heritage Centre and Brownlow House visits 30 Apr 16 - by LCpl Robert Browne

On Saturday 30 April 2016 members of 40 (NIH) Sig Sqn went to the Somme Heritage Centre and Brownlow House in preparation for Ex SOMME FINN. At the Somme Heritage Centre we were met by **Mrs Carol Walker** who is the Director of the Museum. **Mrs Walker** is heavily involved with the preparation for the 100th Anniversary of the Somme. Her parents actually live in the Ulster Tower, Theipval. After a quick introduction of the museum and an insight of the 100th anniversary from **Carol**, we presented her with a bouquet of flowers, and then she handed us over to our tour guide. The guide was very good and very knowledgeable and explained everything in great depth. He explained how the Army was formed in Northern Ireland and how they ended up fighting for the British Army.

We learnt that the 36th (Ulster) Division was formed in September 1914, into **Kitchener's** 'New Army'. The Division was made up from units of the Ulster Volunteer Force, which had been formed in 1913. It was commanded initially by **Maj Gen C H Powell C.B.**, but **Maj Gen Oliver Nugent C.B.D.S.O.** took over in September 1915 as the Division embarked for France. After training in Ireland, the Division moved to Seaford and Aldershot, deploying to France in September 1915. Over the winter of 1915/16, brigades were attached to line divisions in the Somme area. By mid-March 1916, the Division was in the Front Line, astride the River Ancre, between Beaumont Hamel and Thiepval.

After the tour of The Somme Heritage Centre we then went to Brownlow House in Lurgan, on arrival we had a light lunch then we were given a presentation by **Mr Richard Edgar**, a local author and historian. At the outbreak of the First World War, Brownlow House was the headquarters of the 16th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles and the 10th Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers, while in the Second World War various contingents of British and American troops were stationed in Lurgan at Brownlow House. **General Dwight D. Eisenhower**, the Supreme Allied Commander, is said to have stayed at Brownlow House with his men and the room he stayed in has since been re-named the Eisenhower room. All in all it was an insightful day and enjoyed by all.



The Clearing Station

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj N Coatsworth MBE SSM WO2 (SSM) D Ross

Exercise TEES MATT 1 - 1 to 3 April 16

Over the weekend of 1-3 April, 50 Sig Sqn deployed to Wathgill Training Camp in order to conduct the first MATTs weekend of the new training year. As is customary 'up north', the weather was changeable, as we experienced all four seasons in a single day. The training began with an AFT, the first mile of which was in four inches of snow; miles three to four were dealt with during a blizzard and mile five in torrential rain. It wasn't until we hit the killer climb past Bardon Edge that the sun finally made an appearance – so most were praying for the blizzard to reappear by the time we the finish line was in sight.

Next on the agenda was Bellerby Ranges, where one or two individuals chose to interpret the Marksmanship Principles in a manner hitherto unseen, though a little friendly guidance and persuasion from the coaching staff soon had everyone back on track and a good percentage pass rate achieved.

CBRN under **Cpl 'give us a course' Liddle** was unusually popular for once. This had little to do with the quality of instruction I suspect, and more to do with the extra layer of protection the suits and respirators offered against the chilling wind and hailstones.



Cpl (Paul) Liddle looks for a high five during CBRN training but draws a blank

LCpl Poole demonstrated excellent adaptability and improvisation by overcoming the weather issue and holding his First Aid lesson in the back of a Pantec – and the rancid smell he somehow managed to produce in there added real value. Map Reading rounded off a great day nicely and left everyone with sufficient time to enjoy a well-earned meal and drink. Back in Darlington there was still time to complete a couple of presentations and a PFA; the latter wasn't popular amongst those who had also completed the AFT!

Farewell to 37 Signal Regiment - 24 May 16

Following the re-subordination of 50 Sig Sqn from 37 to 32 Sig Regt on 1 April, the Commanding Officer of the former, Lt Col T Downes, visited Darlington ARC on the 24 May to bid us farewell and thank the Sqn for their efforts while under her command. Following her kind words, she went on to present the Sqn with a Winged Lion statuette and the OC, Maj N R Coatsworth MBE reciprocated by presenting her a Silver (in colour at least) Unicorn. We would like to take this opportunity to formally thank all members of 37 Sig Regt for their support during our time with them and wish them all the luck in the future – unless they are competing against 32 Sig Regt obviously.



CO 37 Sig Regt presenting OC 50 Sig Sqn with a Winged Lion statuette

The Unicorn Cup

The second round of the 50 Sig Sqn 'Unicorn Cup' was recently held within Darlington ARC and witnessed members participating in a number of physical challenges, including a 'Superstars Gym Test', 'Archery', a 'Mountain Bike Time Trial' and a 'Land Rover pull'. All activities were hotly contested with Archery being a particular favourite, as budding Robin



Sig (Marsha) Meade is first to volunteer for shooting the Apple off the Sgt Maj's head

Hoods and William Tells within each section fought for the honour of Top Shot. The truth however was somewhat different and an old cliché containing the words; 'Cow's' and 'Banjo' was rolled out more than once. Notwithstanding this, 875 Sig Tp emerged victorious and the OC, Captain 'I don't like to gloat' Hunter wasted no time at all in publishing the results via text, FaceBook, Defence Connect, Twitter and even tried to grab some column space in The Daily Telegraph, or so I'm told..... Round three next!

51 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj H Lawrie SSM WO2 (SSM) D Mackenzie

April saw 51 Sig Sqn attending a MATTs weekend held on Otterburn training area. Arriving late on the Friday evening, it was a quick brief and straight to bed as an early start on the Saturday saw the Sqn attempting their AFT. Well done to LCpl Stu Kimsey for ensuring that the majority passed. Sgt **'Love-God' Leslie** was RCO for the day and ensured everyone managed to get through their shoot. Cpl Gerry Nichols gave excellent instruction on MATT 3 to ensure a maximum pass on Basic Life Support (BLS) was achieved for the Sqn, while SSgt Craig Douglas made sure no one would get lost by passing on his navigation skills. April also saw the farewell of Cpl Graham Miller (GT) after 36 years of service to the Army Reserve.

Exercise NORTHERN GUARDIAN I

May saw the Sqn dusting off their BFAs and going into the field to brush up on their BCCS on Ex NORTHERN GUARDIAN I. Thanks to Sgt Gary McRobbie for planning this Ex. A special mention to our resident 60 year old chef LCpl Rodger (Dodger) for assisting as Enemy and showing everyone how not to put a basha up. The training went well with Sgt McRobbie concentrating on the six section battle drills, **Cpl Grant Campbell** instructing on battle casevac drills and Sgt Rob Lowe making sure everyone sweated on the CBRN phase. The confirmatory Ex was fun to say the least as the temperatures rose in the baking sun and WO2 Ian Conlan playing enemy, initiating contact from distance!



51 Sqn ready for action (or a nap)!

Edinburgh Gun Salute and Exercise NORTHERN HORSESHOE **BUZZARD**

As we ventured into June the OC, Maj Heather Lawrie, and Sig (Scotty) Tait from the Sqn, along with the CO and other officers from the Regiment attended the 21 Gun salute at



Maj Lawrie, Maj McCartney and Maj Dods at Edinburgh Castle

Edinburgh castle to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday. This month also saw Ex NORTHERN **HORSESHOE BUZZARD** which gave the Sqn an opportunity to show the Bde our excellent Bowman HF skills, by communicating throughout UK using different configurations of Antennae. Another good attendance by the Sqn and, once the cobwebs had been dusted off, the skills came to the fore. Well according to Sig Lee Watts!

We would also like to mention our two soldiers deployed on Op TOSCA in Cyprus for six months, **LCpl Marc Carr** and **LCpl David Huey**. All the best guys and we look forward to your return later in the year.

52 (LOWLAND) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj R McCartney SSM WO2 (SSM) D Reid

MATTs Weekend 22-24 Apr 16 - by LCpl Ross Keddie

The main effort of this weekend was to have as many members of 32 Sig Regt MATT qualified at the beginning of the training year, creating space for engaging training to be put on throughout the rest of the year. As part of the advance party, it was our job to have Otterburn Camp set up before the influx of the Main Body.



52 Sp Sqn on MATTs Weekend

Upon arrival, after a quick scoff in the cookhouse, we took over the accommodation and then went down to the armoury to store the weapons. Afterwards, the classrooms for MATT 5 Navigation and the outdoor area for MATT 9 Counter Explosive Ordnance (CEO) were set up for the following days training. A good attendance from the main body saw troops from 52 Sp (Glasgow) Sqn, 51 (Edinburgh) Sig Sqn, 50 (Darlington) Sig Sqn, 2 (Dundee/Aberdeen) Sig Sqn, Kohima Tp (York) as well as members of RHQ (Glasgow) all come together to be put through their paces. Although some members of 52 Sp Sqn had difficulties reading the route card that was provided and decided to take the 'scenic' route to Otterburn.

An early start to the day saw everyone being split into two groups after breakfast. Group One would take part in the round-robin of MATT stands which took place inside Otterburn Camp. (As it is lambing season for the farmers, there was no training allowed to take place outside the camp perimeter on the Otterburn Training Area). The stands included MATT 1 Personal Weapon Training, MATT 3 Battlefield Casualty Drills and MATT 9 CEO.

Group Two were moved to Albemarle Barracks (where a certain WO2 (SSM) 'Dave' Reid completed his basic training as a young lad many, many years ago) to take part in MATT 2 AFT. After being fuelled with the fantastic packed meals at lunchtime the two groups swapped over. Group Two's AFT began ok, but with a wrong turn by the front markers many huffs and puffs were heard as we had to turn back on ourselves. However, to be completely fair though, you could argue it was prep for MATT 5 – Navigation.

During dinner the secret got out that it was LCpl 'Bleu' Grice's birthday. She received a specially made cake and had 'Happy Birthday' sang to her by the entire cookhouse (hit a beamer). With a hard day's work over, it was time for everyone to gather in the bar for a few well earned, sociable drinks.



Staff Ballentyne teaching CBRN

Another early start on Sunday saw us having breakfast and finishing off the block jobs in anticipation for the accommodation to be handed over. The last of the weekend's training had us in the respirator testing facility, being tested on our MATT 4 CBRN drills. Once this was complete it was time for a 52 Sp Sqn team photo then onto the transport back to Glasgow. Usual close down procedures took place once back at location then home for everyone to enjoy what was left of their Sundays. We covered a lot over a very busy weekend, but are looking forward to the next weekend away which will be BCCS training.

Comms/Mod 5 Training Weekend 9-10 Apr 16 - by Sig Cameron (248)

This comms weekend was a fantastic chance to get plenty of revision and practice on Bowman radios and detachments. We spent time in the classroom reviewing subjects such as voice procedure and radio net protocol. We were then left to manage a small voice procedure exercise, where we set up a number of radio dets and practiced a number of different voice comms scenarios. Mistakes

were made but this was a time to prepare, as we want to get it right in the field

This was a really good experience as it brought together operators with different levels of understanding, allowing us to assist and encourage each other. This helped build confidence as individuals, as well as a team on the net. For me, this was a really good opportunity to get more of my Class



Members of 52 Sp Sqn

Three Workbook completed as well as extra hands-on practice, which will only benefit me going forward in my Royal Signals career.

Comms/Mod 5 Training Weekend 9-10 Apr 16 - by Sig Cameron (307)

Having yet to complete my trade course, I definitely feel more confident and prepared thanks to the voice procedure I learnt over the Mod 5 training weekend. Most people learned something new and everyone from brand new

signallers to the more experienced members of the Unit got something positive from it. I'm looking forward to more comms weekends in the future in order to further improve my personal communication skills and be part of a Sqn that is constantly getting better and stronger. Although I have not attended my trade course yet, this was a great insight to gain experience and skills which will no doubt help me pass my Class Three Course.



37th SIGNAL REGIMENT REDDITCH



CO Lt Col T J Downes RSM WO1 (RSM) Morrison

A busy start to the new training year that has seen the Regt involved with ExHorse Shoe Buzzard, a CT2 National Resilience exercise directed by 2 Sig Group, conduct BOWMAN and CST competencies on Ex Global Canter 1 and partake in various physical activities including Race The Sun, Nijmegen qualifying event and Ex Winged Lion cycle training (raising funds for the RSBF-visit https://www.justgiving. com/37th-Signal-Regiment-Army-Reserve).

Recruiting has been maintained with another surge period supported by 16 Sig Regt RST; that included numerous Military Activity Days in the FE/HE environment, Ex Virgin Media2, support to 11 Sig Bde Ex Reserve Challenge and running the Army Stand at the **Royal Three Counties** Show. The show was visited by HRH the Princess Royal who met members of the Regt and other cap badges during her brief stop at the Army Stand.

Congratulations to **SSgt** Collister (33 Sig Sqn) and LCpl Brown (Sp Sqn) who were awarded GOC FTC commendations on the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Farewell to the outgoing Adjt Capt Si Pierson – thanks for your commitment to the Regt during your tour and best of luck for the future; a warm welcome to Capt Dave Pooley as the new Adjt.

Exercise Virgin Media 2, 7-10 June 2016 - by WO2 Reynolds

This week saw 37th Sig Regt take part in Ex Virgin Media 2. Employees from Virgin Media were hosted by the Regt on Swynnerton training area, where they were split into four teams of 6. Day one saw them conduct a round robin of

stands that included, weapon familiarisation, battlefield communications, command tasks and field craft. They then took part in a navigation exercise where they had to visit various locations on Swynnerton training area; collecting kit on their way that would enable them to spend a night in the field (water, 24h rations, sleeping system and basha kit). Later that evening they conducted a Close Target Recce (CTR) of an enemy location, before returning to the harbour area for some well-earned sleep.



HRH the Princess Royal meeting the ROSO (Capt Andy Barnard)



Virgin Media₂ Navigation Exercise

The next day, they had a go on the DCCT, tackled the obstacle course and fired the SA80 on the 25m range, before receiving a Regt brief on the Army Reserve. Out of the 24 employees that attend the event, 12 completed contact coupons stating an interest in joining the Army Reserve; 4 live near our Sqn locations and the remainder will be handed off to other Reserve Sig Regts up and down the country. Thanks to all the staff that attended and made it a successful event; further enhancing our strategic partnering with Virgin Media and building on our already strong relationship.



Virgin Media2 Basha Site "A night in the field"

54 (QOWWY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj D Dewfall SSM SSgt P Hall

54 (QOWWY) Sp Sqn have been kept busy recently with exercises, recruiting events and a variety of sporting endeavours, as well as the Sqn Sgt Maj gearing up for Armed Forces Day on Saturday 25thJune 2016; that will be followed by a reception, hosted by the Redditch Mayor Councillor Joe Baker.

SSgt Kent will be leaving us shortly and is congratulated on completing his full 22 years in the Royal Corps of Signals; but he will not be missed for long, as he has already agreed to come back as full time reservist, so he can transition into civilian life slowly – good luck! We would also like to welcome his replacement into the Regt, SSgt Moxon, who will be joining us from 30 Sig Regt in August 16.

The main exercise for us in this period was Ex Horse Shoe Buzzard, a CT2 National Resilience Combat Net Radio (CNR) exercise directed by 2 Sig Group and planned by 71 Sig Regt. From 37 Sig Regt we deployed several detachments around

our AO from all our Sqns. Regt Ops and 54 Sp Sqn (QOWWY) also provided an ISOC and an HF detachment to provide comms down to 71 Sig Regt location. In support from Redditch, we had the Regimental Foreman, Cpl Nex, LCpl Hathaway and Sig Vaughan. The Situation for the ex was that Hurricane FRANK had brought widespread flooding and destruction throughout the UK and a major incident had been called; as the ex progressed, the level of death and destruction increased. With plane crashes and major loss of life, thankfully it was all just an exercise. It was a successful ex, testing our HF skills and knowledge to the full, but critically it proved that we were able to maintain communications to 71 Sig Regt throughout, as well to our own detachments over the midlands and North of England, and wider to our sister regiments of 32 and 39 Sig Regt as



Sig Vaughan taking disaster in his stride and still having time for tea

Exercise LANARKSHIRE RIDER - Mountain Biking - by SSgt Smith

Ex Lanarkshire Rider saw members of the Regular and Reserve Royal Signals units taking part in a training and development week in Scotland; taking in various bike trails, graded from blue to the more challenging black routes. Following on from a successful Ex Lanarkshire Rider, several members of the Regt have since taken part in this year's Inter Unit MTB XC races.

The first of the races took place in April at Hadleigh Park, previously used by the Olympic XC mountain bikers in 2012. We did 3 laps of a fast, and at times, technical course, with all 4 seasons from sun to snow. Capt Lucy Sewell (48 Sqn) was victorious as 1st in the female category, with **SSgt Cat Smith** (Sp Sqn) coming in 3rd place. Round 2's race was held at Blandford, and despite the copious amounts of mud and rain, we had some good results. In the female category Maj Sandy Hennis (RHQ) was 1St, Capt Sewell 3rd and SSgt Smith 4th; while Sig Nick Marshall (Sp Sqn) achieved an outstanding position of 20th overall out of a field of 180 riders.

Round 3 was at Colchester, and with a slightly shorter course than usual, riders were required to complete 4 laps rather than 3. On a hot and humid day, with a lot of single track, overtaking was barely possible. That said, we had a good ride and still got some reasonable results, with Capt Sewell 2nd in the female category and **SSgt Smith** 4th on this occasion. With another 2 rounds to go, 37 Sig Regt are in a good position in the Race Series, but always on the lookout for enthusiastic individuals to join the team.

33 (LANCASHIRE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj A Bowdler SSM WO2 (SSM) Jolliffe

RACE THE SUN 16 - by SSgt Coley

The Race the Sun WngO came out in Jan and as nominated team Captain I felt like Nick Fury trying to assemble my world saving Avengers team. I began looking for my Captain America, Ironman and Hulk to participate in the gruelling 15 leg Relay Race around York and surrounding area, however, it soon hit home that I wasn't in fact assembling the avengers, but a team of highly motivated individuals who wanted to compete against other likeminded athletes (or those who just wanted a day out the office). After much chopping and changing, the elite 37th Sig Regt arrived at York ready to participate in the Minor Units competition.

Leg 1 Run and Kayak: SSgt Timothy Abbott, dressed like he had lost a bet, was ready and waiting for the short run to his beloved Kayak, before the 6 km paddle up the River Ouse. He arrived with a big smile on his face before handing over to Capt Hennis. He obviously loved it so much he decided to paddle back and not get in the transport.



SSgt Timothy Abbott showing the way to the start

Leg 2 Cross Country River Run: Having been handed the proverbial baton, Capt Sandy Hennis embarked on her 11km run along the banks of the River Ouse. A dark and drizzly day didn't hamper her efforts and Capt Hennis arrived, a little wet and muddy, but happy to be getting into a warm van as WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks set off on his bike.

Leg 3 Cycle: WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks kitted out in his 37 Sig Regt lycra, set off in a blur of bike and rider for his 34km ride, as myself and SSgt Ryan Evans left to go and meet him at the start of leg 4. Leg 4 Hill Run: With WO2 (FofS) Ishwor Gurung pacing around in the car park waiting to begin his eagerly anticipated 5km hill run, WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks arrived speeding to the admin area. GPS bands and good luck exchanged, WO2 (FofS) Ishwor Gurung set off as fast as his little legs could carry him.



WO2 (FofS) Ishwor Gurung looking fresh before his Hill run

Leg 5 Loaded March: A tired looking WO2 (FofS) Ishwor Gurung arrived at the top of what he described as the 'savage hill'. WO2 (SSM) Suresh Gurung and Cpl Christine McMullen began the 12.5km tab, with the SSM soon reeling in a few competitors in front of him. Leg 6 Moor Run: SSgt Dave Williams looked confused, as he pondered that the dark wet forest area didn't resemble a badminton court, he waited for the loaded march guys to arrive. Despite not having his trusty badminton racket, he set off on his 10km moor run. Leg 7 Half Marathon: Cpl Brendan Dunker had for some reason volunteered for the Half Marathon and set off as part of the mass start along the Yorkshire countryside. Leg 8 Cross Country Cycle: Cpl Brendan Dunker arrived after a gruelling 21km and set Capt Sandy Hennis on her way again, having recovered from her earlier run, she stepped in to cover as someone had dropped out. We left Cpl Brendan Dunker chomping his way through a bag of Haribos, as we raced to the start of leg 9 to meet Capt Sandy Hennis and drop WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks off ready for his second event.

Leg 9 Fell Run: Capt Sandy Hennis arrived after a pretty horrendous leg, a touch of cramp and some "savage hills", WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks embarked on his 13km run across Levisham Moor (rather him than me as I was pretty tired from driving). Leg 10 Orienteering: We were a bit concerned that Capt Dave Pooley (ex 264) may struggle with the 7km course, but he seemed ok as he came running in and handed over to SSgt Gareth Myers for the forest run. Leg 11 Forest run: Eager to get going as he was getting cold, SSgt Gareth Myers disappeared into the woods on his 13km adventure. Leg 12 Cycle Orienteering: WO2 (MTWO) Steve Brooks was left all alone on the car park as he waited for the start of his Cycle orienteering leg to start on the arrival of SSgt Gareth Myers. SSgt Ryan Evans, Capt Sandy Hennis and myself, then sped off to catch the start of the open water swim Leg 13. Our very own triathlete ninja Capt Graham 'Scouse' Markham was already oiled up and raring to go, as we arrived just in time to see the mass start of competitors enter the rather chilly water. After swimming around the buoy the competitors made their way back to shore. Capt Graham 'Scouse' Markham already undressing as he got out the water ready to transition and complete the next leg of his triathlon. Leg 14 Duathlon: A wet and no doubt little chilly Capt Graham 'Scouse' Markham jumped on his bike and sped off on his 24km cycle and 6km run; eagerly followed by SSgt John Norton, his very own designated support staff!



Capt Graham 'Scouse' Markham finding time to do the Hokey Cokey

Leg 15 Stretcher Race: With all competitors now safely back on camp it was time for the finale. A 3km stretcher race around camp carrying a 40kg load. A great effort from all of the 37 Sig Regt team, saw them overtake a few other teams along the way, before crossing the line, exhausted, sweaty and relieved it was all over. Unfortunately we didn't place this year in the minor unit competition, but a great effort from all those who participated - there's always next year!!



37 Sig Regt Race The Sun Team 2016

48 (CITY OF BIRMINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj S Cherry
SSM WO2 (SSM) Fowler

The Nijmegen Marches: Chapter one "The Cosford Trials" - by LCpl Ben "Dunks" Dunker

On 3rd April 1908 some lunatics got together and thought of an event to walk 150km in 4 days... clearly a 4 am in the morning "lets hurry up and end this meeting" decision. So on the 15 Feb 2016 **WO2 (RQMS) Robertson** (now turned 50) made another 4 am decision of... "Let's do it"

So soldiers from across 37 came together for the qualifying event held at RAF Cosford, where they spared... NO EXPENSE (literally no expense spent) on our lovely refrigerated tentage and wet grass to bed down ready for our 5am start. The flags were flown, the boots were laced, and the sugar was primed. We were off; 13 members handpicked by himself to undergo this marathon (x2). Alongside us was **Cpl 'Ed Harris' Hewitt**, a veteran of Nijmegen marches having completed it multiple times and also supported it from behind the curtains also, reiterating his top tips and his insights as to what to expect.



Nijmegen Marches qualifying eve

The starting line-up: The RQ, 2IC Sgt 'Savage' Cavanagh-Wilkinson, Cpl Priest, Cpl Hewitt, LCpls Brooks, Earwaker,

Harrison and myself and finally Sigs Gough, Mander, Ogutu and 37s newest addition fresh out of bravo Sig "H" Teasdale. Day 1 claimed its first victim at the 6 mile point in another team, an ambulance arrived and pronounced the Cadet should jack at the scene. The end of day one, 25 miles marched, definitely showed the team their soft spots or rather their hot spots. Knowing that the 2nd day of another 25 miles would take its toll, our strategy was themed on the hare and the tortoise, no stops just go steady. That was the plan, but the constant droll of cadets singing and chanting, very quickly spurred us on to the finish and a celebratory collapse at the end. Meatloaf sang "2 out of 3 ain't bad", ours was 11 out of 13... but still... not bad going... "It's just a walk" 37th Sig Regt are going to Holland.

"Run when you can, walk if you have to, crawl if you must; just never give up" - Dean Karnazes

48 SIGNAL SQUADRON Recruiting Team - by Sgt Shaw (RSUSO)

It has been a very busy few weeks for the Sqn recruiting team, starting with Ex Reserve Challenge at Nesscliffe Training Area, where a number of civilians from different walks of life were put through a number of military stands focusing on teamwork and leadership, as well as getting to 'basha-up' for the evening. Teams consisted of employees from Birmingham NHS Trust, Bureau Veritas, Caterpillar, Marston's AeroSpace, IDE Systems, the Royal Bank of Scotland, students from Birmingham University and Burton College, as well as a number of job seekers from Wolverhampton Job Centre Plus. Sig Nzbandora acted as one of the hosts whilst Sig Smith, LCpl Dcaccia and Sgt Shaw hosted a communications stand, consisting of a blindfolded relay race through an obstacle course; with the competitors being guided by a colleague using a radio system. This turned out to be rather amusing to watch, as the different shapes being made with candidates trying to step over obstacles, as well as the confusion between left and right! A particular highlight was the civilians making their military mentor leopard crawl for at least an extra 10 metREs more than required! As a result of Ex Reserve Challenge, 42 Expressions of Interest in joining the Army Reserve were completed for the 11 Sig & WM Bde region.

The Recruiting Team were then involved in Ex Virgin Media 2 at Swynnerton Training Area; helping to run a command and control communications exercise for Military Prep College students and employees from Virgin Media, alongside colleagues from Sp Sqn. After Ex Virgin Media, it was back to training potential recruits at the Regimental Recruit Workshop held at RHQ, Redditch. 48 Sqn sent 4 potential recruits to the workshop on this occasion (including 1 ResPO), to help them prepare for their assessment, with training focusing on the topics they will be assessed on at the assessment centre as well as giving them the opportunity to go on the .22 indoor range. All in all a very enjoyable and beneficial weekend for both potential recruits and instructors.

Exercise MERCURY SNOWRIDER 2016 - by Sig Marshall

Ex MERCURY SNOWRIDER took place 28th Fe to the 12tthMarch 2016, Rauris Austria. For us it started on the 27th, where we met other members of 37 Sig Regt at 48 Sqn in Birmingham. A late night turned into an early morning drive to Gatwick, where an almost empty Monarch flight took us on to Salzburg. A pleasant airport transfer later and we had arrived, in the small alpine town of Rauris. For a couple of

The 2016 Morrison Cup was held in Blandford Camp over the 22 - 23 June and it represented an opportunity for athletes of all levels to meet and measure themselves against the rest of the Royal Corps of Signals. The prizes up for grabs were: Major Units Winners, Minor Units Winners and Female Team Winners. In addition to this, the Corps Tug of War (ToW) event was to be held on the 23 June and this all combined to present a chance for officers and soldiers to come together in Blandford to celebrate some top notch sportsmen, past, present and future, that are part of the Royal Signals family. Units from across the breadth of the nation were represented in the event, with several Reserve units featuring in both the Athletics and the ToW.

Competitive Edge

With OC 3 Sqn overseeing her final Morrison Cup in her dual role as Event IC and OIC Athletics for 11 Sig Regt, the pressure was on Team Captain Cpl Aaron Downey to deliver a Major Unit victory. The 'home' team came into this event following a strong showing at the Army Athletics Championships a few weeks before. One Team Captain for one unit was under clear orders: win it or don't come back! This team will remain nameless for now. Units like 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt always bring a strong team down and most units had their individual targets to try and gain as many points as possible. Individually, there were some athletes looking to improve times from the previous years, and as usual, there were some 'new kids on the block' aspiring to topple the established athletes.



Nick Bateson Outstanding Athlete Plate Winner - LCpl Elkington



Female Winners - 30 Sig Regt, Sgt Briggs

Individual Achievements

Following on from a sterling Morrison Cup debut in the colours of 11 Sig Regt last year, LCpl Mica Taylor, now of 30 Sig Regt, showed what a top athlete she has become with another fine performance this year. Last year's top individual athlete, Sgt Ronnie De Bique of 10 Sig Regt showed his speed once more in the relay events. This year's star man, however, was LCpl Sean Elkington from 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, who impressed the officials whenever he took to the track and

won the coveted 'Bateson Trophy' for the most outstanding athlete of the competition. It was LCpl Curwoord of 30 Sig Regt that seemed to invite most comments as she set off in the 800m heats, with many in the stands of the opinion; "she'll not keep that up for two laps". She duly did, and followed it up the next day with a win in both the 800m and 1500m.

Tug of War

As is traditional for the Morrison Cup, whilst the officials were totting up the Athletics points, the Tug of War competition came to the fore. The grandstand was treated to four quality finals, covering a range of weights and incorporating male, female and mixed teams. Unsurprisingly, with WO2 (FofS) Craig Petch at the helm, 15 Sig Regt (IS) carried the day and their ToW juggernaut rolls on, complete with another set of trophies.

Looking Forward

Whilst there were some changes to the social aspects of how the event was run Brigadier Anderton-Brown, the new president of Corps Sports, in his closing remarks summed up Morrison Cup 2016 as being a celebration of athletes and true sporting spirit and achievement. This will continue to remain at the heart of this key Corps competition and for a future look forward, Morrison Cup 2017 will be held earlier in the calendar year, over the period 3-4 May 2017.



Team Results

Category	Unit
Major Unit Winner	11 (RSS) Sig Regt
Major Unit Runner-Up	1 Sig Regt
Minor Unit Winner	15 Sig Regt (IS)
Minor Unit Runner-Up	39 Sig Regt (V)
Female Team Winner	30 Sig Regt
Female Team Runner-Up	3 (UK) Divisional Sig Regt





Sig West of 3 (UK) Div S into the sho



Sig Sween of 14 Sig



Minor Units and ToW Win



by SSgt SR McCreadie

CUP 2016

eam limbering up



g Regt putting it an Impetition



Regt on the discus





Selected Individual Results

Event	Winner	Unit	Result *	
Major Units				
100m	Sig Wilkinson	11 (RSS) Sig Regt	11.31	
400m Hurdles	Cpl Lodowski	14 Sig Regt (EW)	55.19	
Javelin	LCpl Onderi	16 Sig Regt	47.74m	
4 x 100m	Cpl McKenzie, Sig Wilkinson, LCpl Leighton, Sig Scribbins	11 (RSS) Sig Regt	45.53	
3000m Steeplechase	Cpl Parr	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt	10.53.45	
Discus	Sig Haywood	22 Sig Regt	25.61m	
Minor Units				
100m	Sig Henry	BGSU	11.94	
110m Hurdles	SSgt Williams	39 Sig Regt (V)	22.34	
800m	Capt Tee	15 Sig Regt (IS)	2.29.53	
Female Teams				
100m	LCpl Taylor	30 Sig Regt	13.50	
400m	Cpl Burton	1 Sig Regt	1.04.23	
1500m	LCpl Curwood	30 Sig Regt	5.29.00	

^{(*} Timings are given as either min.sec.msec or sec.msec. Distances are in metres.)

Sig Scribbins, Ph 2 Soldier, 11 Sig Regt, and 4x 400m Winner:

"Before the Morrison Cup event I was interviewed on BFBS radio about the event and my previous athletics experience. Despite the short notice before going live, it was a good chance to speak about the build-up to the Cup. The team were definitely feeling very confident going into the event, so it was a great feeling winning it. For us, the athletics season is near enough over now as we have no more competitions on the horizon but there will still be training across the summer to improve for next year. This was my first season in the Athletics team and it was great to meet new people from the Regiment. It was also nice to speak to people from other units during the Morrison Cup; asking questions about their life at unit, sports and what to expect when I get there."

Cpl Aaron Downey, 11 Sig Regt Team Captain and Major Unit Champions:

"I was given the role of 11 Sig Regt Athletics coach by OIC Athletics, Major Jacques-Grey. As well as training and entering the teams in events throughout the season, I was responsible for developing 11 Sig Regt's Morrison Cup 2016 male and female team. Participation in athletics events during the build-up to Morrison Cup allowed for a solid core of athletes to be developed, and it also gave many of the athletes the opportunity to bond and get to know each other better. Training a few weeks prior to the Morrison Cup 2016 became increasingly difficult due to rehearsals for the Princess Royal Day amongst other things, so preparation was not ideal but given the pool of athletes we had to select from, and taking into account the individuals already confirmed for the team, I had a good deal of confidence going forward. During the competition it was clear to see the amount of talent that we had on offer. Everything was down to the athletes wanting to win for each other and making my job so much easier. The only thing I had to worry about was whether an athlete turned up to their event on time! As the competition came to a close there was a sense among our team that we had done enough to secure either second or first. We were delighted to see that we had done enough, as a team, to collect 1st place for the males and a respectable 4th for the females. It is hugely pleasing to know that 11 Sig Regt not only continues to develop soldiers in trade, but also have willing soldiers that want to develop as athletes and increase competition throughout the Corps."

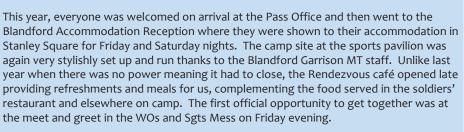
Sgt Ryan Gosling, 15 Sig Regt Team Captain and Minor Unit Champions:

"The Morrison Cup was a really enjoyable experience for me, running the team and also competing in events that I haven't done before. I was made IC Athletics after joining the unit in January 2016. It was not easy to get a team together for the Morrison Cup, due to 15 Sig Regt being so disjointed and currently going through a busy period. However after selecting a team from RHQ, Sp Sqn, 259 Sqn and 233 Sqn, and conducting only minimal training, we were slightly surprised to secure first position in the Minor Unit competition. The Team is now looking forward to next year's event to compete and hold our title as Morrison Cup Minor Unit champions."

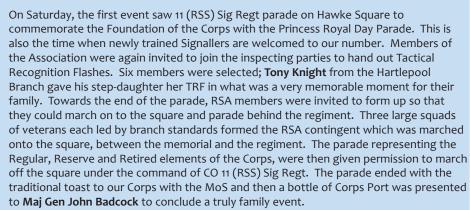




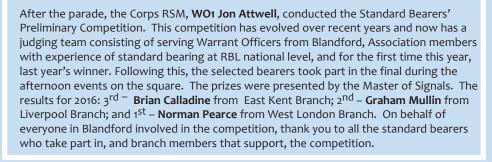
































end 18/19 June 2016









While the Blandford Lunch took place in the Officers' Mess, the grassed arena outside the mess contained representatives who brought displays from current units by bringing examples of current equipment, unit scrapbooks (I particularly enjoyed 16 Signal Regiment's!) and other information for us to see. As in previous years, our thanks go to everyone who travelled with these displays and patiently answered our questions. During the day you could also visit the DCCT Small Arms Trainer, the Corps Museum and shop, with motorcycles and vintage cars outside.

Blandford Camp managed to avoid the rain except for a slight dampening around lunchtime. This was insufficient to disrupt the afternoon programme and we heard from the bands of the Royal Corps of Signals and the Corps Pipes and Drums both individually and massed; the Standard Bearers' competition final and prize giving; the Gurkha Kukri Dance and the White Helmets. The afternoon concluded with the Sunset Retreat Ceremony.

During the evening, the 11 (RSS) Sig Regt WOs' and Sgts' Mess (courtesy of the Presiding Member **WO1** (**RSM**) **Richie Savage**) was open for a social evening including curry supper. The Corps band provided a quintet which played a selection of music during the evening and I am again grateful to the RSM, mess manager and staff for their help and support.

For the first time this year the Party-in-the-Park was held on the Reunion Saturday evening. The arena near the Officers' Mess was transformed during the afternoon with the addition of stage, lighting and speakers setting the scene for later in the evening. The event was a great success and added an extra dimension to the weekend.

On Sunday morning a religious service was held at the Corps Chapel. It was conducted by the Blandford Garrison Padre, **Capt Kevin White. Col (Retd) Terry Canham** turned the page of the Memorial Book and the collection during the service raised £179.33 for the RSBF. Following the service, the Chairman RSA, **Brigadier David Hargreaves** presented the Derby branch and the Edinburgh branch standard bearers with the branch 50th anniversary pennants to be flown with their standards. He then received a cheque to the RSBF in the sum of £280.17 from **Keith Bates** who represented the organizing committee of the Eden Camp Parade. Refreshments, which included a wonderful selection of cake, were served in the Glass House.

The official photographs from the event can be viewed and downloaded from the link on the RSA website, and are free! Next year I hope you will be able to join us and the date for your diary is 17/18 June.

by Caroline Addison
Photo's by Adam Forty

















weeks a year this tranquil place hosts one of the best snowboarding competitions I have seen. This year (my first) over 150 of the Corps finest, attended to compete in Slopestyle, Grand Slalom and Boarder cross. The locals received us with open arms and you could tell they were indeed prepared for our arrival, even 150 squaddies worth!

The ex began with teams splitting up into multiple groups of ability, beginner, intermediate and advanced. Then the hippies came. A minibus with **Bob Marley** blaring out, several unkempt but definitely cooler than me individuals get out, please welcome Ripstar! These Dutch instructors took their groups to the slopes and very quickly empowered them with their knowledge, confidence and skill. Even after day one we were all pushing ourselves, this is what we signed up for! Our instructors coached us on all three disciplines, whilst still saving some time for the odd powder day! This late on in the season we were really lucky to have such fantastic conditions. With week one focused on training, competing was saved for week two.

Race week!

Grand Slalom seeding was next on the agenda, with all 5 team riders competing - Myself and LCpl Callum McCormick (54 Sqn), Team Captain LCpl Stewart Bailey (48 Sqn), Cpl Ant Stewart (33 Sqn) and Sig Phil Golden (50 Sqn). Seeding was an experience and I really enjoyed, it gave me a taste of the competitiveness to come. Seeding positions awarded our team points, so it was all go right from the start! As a team, even with mixed ability, we all pushed as hard as we could, some even too far. More on that later!



Slalom Event

Grand Slalom gave us some great results, LCpl Bailey pulling out all the stops for a top 3 finish. Myself, having won my first two races, felt unstoppable... enter a core team rider who hadn't seeded. Dreams shattered, well only until next year when I come back stronger. At this level all team points count, so we were already banking some across the board.

With the weather closing in, Slopestyle was delayed, allowing the piste pixies time to build build! Boarder cross next on the horizon gave us once again an opportunity to seed. This time you are head to head with three other riders; anyone who has been on a snowboard before will understand, close proximity riding is nigh on impossible. It definitely was a spectator sport!

With seeding out the way and bib numbers issued, racing was set to commence for the team. LCpl McCormick happened to be up first, in the first race of the day, rider ready... three.. two.. one.. and he's out of the gate. Ten seconds later he's

cartwheeled and is flat on his face. The crowd were incredibly supportive, however once we all realised he wasn't going anywhere and the helievac was required, we all felt it necessary to document the action. A temporary pause of camera phones later and the game was back on. LCpl McCormick had broken his collar bone, however was in good spirits. High on pain killers he was even shouting "Get to the Chopper" on his way to the LZ!

Once again as a team we performed well, with the points flooding in, we all felt positive for a good team result. Our other novice Cpl Stewart digging out blind, even having been on a board less than a week. Maximum effort! During the exercise we offered to entertain and feed the Corps Colonel. As a team we all chipped in and made an effort, and felt he appreciated our opinions on Reserve life, as well as some good natured banter (or was just very polite!). The last competition was Slopestyle, which presented a challenge mostly due to the conditions, but the packed powder and poor visibility didn't put us off. Intermediates and advanced once again giving it their best shot in the park to round off the points for the week.

Being a small team in comparison to some, we were unsure of our successes, and kept on pushing throughout the exercise to try and secure a victory however small. By the time the awards ceremony started, we couldn't help but feel slightly anxious. However our efforts paid off!



37 Sig Regt – Reserve Unit Champions

Best Reserve Unit - 37 Signal Regiment Third Place Male - LCpl Bailey Best Reservist - LCpl Bailey Core Team Place 2016/17 - LCpl Bailey Best Accident - LCpl McCormick

For those of you looking to snowboard for the first time, get involved! For those of you who already board, get involved! Ex MSR was one of the best two weeks I've ever had. You meet some great people and learn so much. For us as a Regt, we achieved great things in defending our best reserve unit title. We'll be back in 2017 to defend again, see you there!

64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj McHenery SSM WO2(SSM) Howes

Parish notes - by WO2 (SSM) P Howes

Once again I have had the pleasure of attending a CMS (RES) Phase 1(B) Consolidated Pass Off Parade. This time at ATR Grantham and for the turn of Pte Christopher Walker RLC.

He's to be the sqn's new chef and so he's got an equally tough course ahead of him still; it will ensure he can growl "one sausage each" in a suitable tone of authority!

Congratulations, good luck and welcome to the sqn.

The month of May also allowed us to formally say goodbye to two ex-members of the sqn and celebrate the achievements of those of us who remain. Dave Marrison and Mick Wasden both received gifts from the sqn for their efforts and were dined out in style at the SABRE Dinner. The SABRE (Sixtyfour Annual Best in class Recognition Event) Dinner has a number of categories that include Best New Soldier, Best Tradesman and Champion Troop. However, the most eagerly anticipated but equally least wanted is the MATH Award – Most Amusing Technical Hitch- it covers a multitude of sins and is open to all ranks worryingly for the OC and myself. This years "lucky" winner is LCpl Nick Coke for his determined efforts in bogging-in a different FFR Det each time he got near Beckingham Training Area in the last year!



LCpl Nick Coke receives his MATH Award from OC 64 Sqn

The SABRE dinner was excellently prepared by the Master Chef WO2 Paul Holland and his team, LCpl Immi Imran and LCpl Kaz Kazam, brought in especially for the occasion. Alas, a last minute withdrawal meant there was a spare Beef Wellington on our table... as they were the size of a gorilla's fist it was decided we should share it amongst us. There was no way any of us could polish of a second one solo! The first Tuesday night in June saw SHQ and 864 Troops host

4 visiting Officer Cadets from Sheffield UOTC accompanied by Capt Andy Wyatt, late of this parish but with a different rank and regt back then. After a briefing on the role of the sqn provided by Capt Samantha Blackshaw, due to the OC being away on a "vital" battlefield study in Crete for the week (lucky for some), they were treated to a swift curry dinner prepared by Sgt Karran Dilly RLC. Bellies full, it was off for a tour of a CST Det followed by a BOWMAN FFR to round things off. Hopefully this will be the start of a good relationship where we can foster the interest of some young officer candidates and maybe pick up a few soldiers as they leave university and perhaps settle in the area.

Exercise GLOBAL CANTER 1 20-22 May 2016 - by LCpl Michelle Woods

Ex Global Canter 1 started with a list of numerous tasks from WO2 Kev Tharby in preparation for the weekend's fun and games. I was responsible for the destruction of a small rainforest whilst I photocopied a plethora of CEI's, booklets, handouts and précis. The remainder of the sqn prepared the BOWMAN and CST assets for a Saturday morning start.

An early breakfast was demolished by all, setting us up for the day. Thanks to the chefs for that. After splitting into two syndicates we trained on the BOWMAN fits; all applications Voice, HF, VHF data etc. During this, our personal training records where updated where possible as well as the Det folders. After lunch, training focused on the CST Dets with Cpl Vince Fountain, learning how to employ the VTC, laptops, scanners etc. Although real estate is limited at the ARC we established Comms from each CST and practised using all means of communication. The training proved to be extremely beneficial, as a lot of the Sqn had only concentrated on either BOWMAN or CST previously in the recent past.

The sun made an appearance the next day, so Sunday was a day of wisdom exchange, with **WO2 Kev Tharby!** A thorough brief on how to complete UMI's and where each piece of kit could be found was beneficial to all in attendance. Despite the limited numbers who turned out, the weekend proved to be extremely useful.



39th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRISTOL



CO Lt Col N C Bruce
RSM WO1 (RSM) S Tomblin

43 (WESSEX AND CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj R Nixon A/SSM SSgt I Stott

Exercise ARIES TOR 16 - by Capt Martin Crilly

Exercise ARIES TOR is the Annual 1 Arty and SW Bde national UK contingency operation held at Okehampton Camp during the first weekend in May. It sees hundreds of military personnel from Reserve and Regular units in the South West take over the camp and prepare for the influx of the thousands of teenagers that descend on the area for the Ten



Don't panic! You're only running the ground to air desk between the Command Centre and 3 Navy Merlins

Tors Challenge, the largest youth challenge in the UK. This year the challenge took place over Ten Tors on Dartmoor during the weekend 7-8 May. It saw 2,400 teenagers walk routes of 35, 45 and 55 miles, and 400 less able young people challenged themselves to complete shorter routes on the Saturday in the Jubilee Challenge (JC).

Each year members of 43 Sig Sqn assist 1 Arty & SW Bde by providing ICS support to the largest youth challenge in the UK. This year many of our regular SPSIs from the Sqn and Regt also attended during the preceding week to set up the communications and IT infrastructure for the event.

Other Sqn personnel worked over the weekend as RadOps in the Fall Out CP, logging details from the 10 Tors and fall-out centres across the Moor. Commenting on the support delivered by everyone, Dept Commander 1 Arty Bde, Col Toby Bridge said 'What a great weekend, thank you very much to everyone who helped make it happen!'

Exercise WESSEX TROT 2 - by Capt Martin Crilly

Ex WESSEX TROT 2 was a sqn HF Comms exat the home of 21 Sig Regt at Colerne on the weekend 13-15 May 16. After prepping the vehicles at Bath ARC on the Friday evening, sqn personnel deployed to Colerne early on Saturday morning. With clear skies, a full suite of HF antennae was deployed and comms were quickly established with the other sqns located in Wales and Maindy Barracks. Not satisfied with operating and training on one HF Frequency (that would be 'too easy') Regt Yeoman of Signals WO2 (YofS) Falinski insisted on more frequency changes. Operating the network at dusk and dawn presented some of the new members of the sqn with some interesting challenges but SPSI (Tech) SSgt Williams was on hand to explain the idiosyncrasies of HF propagation. After some additional skills training on the Sunday morning, the sqn returned to Bath and Bristol ARC early on Sunday afternoon with just enough time to spare for some equipment care on the vehicles and equipment. All in all it was an excellent skills training weekend with excellent basic HF skills learned and practiced by the whole sqn.

53 (WALES AND WESTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj G Smith
SSM WO2 (SSM) Knock

Exercise RIGID RESOLVE - by SSgt Cooke

Two Reserves from 53 Sig Sqn (Sig Gayther and Sig Chadwick) and two Reserves from 94 Sig Sqn (Cpl Bastiman-Davies and Sig Setelo) deployed from Cardiff ARC on 15 May 16 to SPTA as well as one member of permanent staff. This was an exthat 6 Rifles were conducting and required external assistance. We deployed with 1 FFR in order to bolster the Rifles' communications assets. A total of 239 soldiers were on this exercise, broken down as follows: 191 Reserves, 40 Regulars, 6 Army Cadet Force, and 2 FTRS.

Once we had arrived at West Down Camp we were directed to West Down Plantation where the exercise was being run. We were told by a LCpl in the Rifles, "Park up, it's only 450m down the road, you can't miss it". After walking for 15 minutes in the pitch black we came across a small wooded area with a few lights and some movement; this was EXCON which was slightly further than 450m, more like over a mile! We had to book in at the booking-in cell and then our signallers were straight into it and onto the shift roster. Due to the Rifles' numbers and expertise in EXCON our personnel were paired up each with a young inexperienced Rifleman. EXCON was made up of 1 FFR with 4 9x9 and 2 12x12 tents all meshed together

The main comms for the ex were VHF secure, with Airwave as a backup. During the ex a lot of traffic came across the net, more than what our signallers would usually experience on a

sqn level deployment, so they were slightly out of their depth at first but once they had been on the net for a short amount of time it became second nature and the comms were flowing.

Saturday evening was when the attacks took place and all you could hear was the mortar base line overpowering the small arms fire. Whilst these attacks were on, traffic on the net was constant and became very hard to monitor and take down in the radio log, but with a bit of determination the guys managed well.

Once all four companies had completed all of their Training Objectives, a short TAB back to EXCON's location was all they thought they were required to do. Not in this case! The ACF had set up enemy locations and engaged each company as they went by. This came as a shock to many of the Rifleman as they must have thought the ex was over. This goes to show that it really is not over until you are sat on the bus driving home. Once 'endex' was called it was all hands to the pumps to tear down EXCON and pack it all away before finishing with a closing brief from the CO of 6 Rifles. All in all, this was a highly productive ex for our sqn personnel: not only did they get the chance to support fellow Reservists whilst also practicing their trade, they also were able to showcase how adaptable us signallers are!

Exercise LYNX TROT 2 - by SSgt Cooke

We knew we were in for a good exwhen the sun was shining bright in the sky. We made our way to Caerwent Training Area on the Friday night and set up a Bowman det to establish HF comms with the other sqns in Colerne and Windsor as soon as we could. This first night was a real insight and in some sense a trial by fire, as some of us who are not yet fully trained had never set up or used the equipment out in the field before, especially in the dark.

The rest of the ex was more of an eye opener, especially as in the daylight we could now see what we were doing and therefore make more sense of it! We quickly drove to another part of the training area to set up a second Bowman det to establish HF comms with all the other detachments and VHF comms between the two detachments in Caerwent. After a morning in one location we packed the detachment away and moved to another site to do it all again; this is where we would set up for the night and start our shift rota. After doing a bit of camouflage and concealment on the detachment we started to delve deeper into using the radio systems. We were given a task to keep radio traffic up during our shifts, a simple yet effective way to learn and enhance our VP. Coming away from the ex, many of us have now got a much deeper knowledge of the equipment we use and how we use it. We all learnt new tips and techniques from each other and also from Sgt Morris and SSgt Simpson who have not long come from the Regulars to join us. Again thanks goes to our two SPSI's SSgt Cooke and SSgt Hayes and everyone who put the work in to make this ex happen.

Exercise TIME WARRIOR - by Sig Harding

Waking up to fields filled with wandering knights, Second World War soldiers and Napoleonic officers was a first for me. There was something exciting about seeing a 13th century archer mingling with a Victorian rat-catcher, or a group of Vietnam troopers playing catch with a pair of Redcoats.

Where else would that happen?

The bank holiday weekend saw Fortress Wales, an annual re-enactment and living history event, return to Caldicot Castle. Among the hordes of different groups spanning from medieval times right up to the Falklands, were 53 Sig Sqn, a modern Army Reserve unit from 39 Sig Regt. Our attendance at the weekend was organised by our very own WO2 'Paddy' Keogh and our main purpose was to recruit, setting up a stall complete with an imitation SA80 and Glock, as well as a Land Rover based detachment and plenty of magazines, leaflets and posters, all manned by our own eager Reservists – Sgt Prosser, Signalers Harding, O'Callaghan, Tyrrell, Boase, Taylor, Garvie and Chadwick, as well as two medics – Privates Jabbar and Lloyd-Matejicek. One of our own troop commanders, WO2 'Paddy'Keogh, was also present – in full medieval rig!



Come join us!

As the public went about checking out the historic camps and watching battle re-enactments, they were also able to learn about the modern army, our role as a Reserve Signals unit and how we operate today. Those of us who were not on duty, however, were free to rotate through the various eras, receiving talks from each group as they displayed the uniforms, weapons, tactics and lifestyles of the period they were depicting. With many, and in particular with those of the twentieth century, it was easy to see how the modern British

Army has adapted over time: how the equipment previously used so naturally led to the kit that we use today. Even the sayings in common parlance today, the origin of which few people know, like 'flash in the pan' (relating to the flash produced by the firing mechanism of the musket), or the self-explanatory 'chink in one's armour.' Even the way we drive on the left here in the UK originates from the practice of passing medieval warriors - one would pass on the left, the opposing side to when jousting, as a gesture that they would not run their adversary through with a lance as



I wonder where 53 Sig Sqn are based?

they did so. Interest in the 53 Sig Sqn stand was varied from the young to the old, including many ex-signallers, and we were even invited to come and recruit at another venue in the future.

It was enlightening for the historical reenactors and us Reservists alike to learn from one another, and for the general public to be able to learn from both. The old and the new, combined and complementary, and a fantastic weekend enjoyed by all.

Cultural Visit - by LCpl Mulreid

Members of 53 Sig Sqn recently attended a cultural visit to the rural town of Monmouth to examine the grounds of the battle of Monmouth. This battle took place on 25 November 1233 between Richard Marshal of the barons opposed to the growth of King Henry's powers, and Baldwin the 3rd who had been entrusted with defending the town of Monmouth by the King. By studying the ground and historical events that took place on that battle site, members of 53 Sig Sqn were taught how to conduct their own quick combat estimates and put them into effect.



So who's going to do the 510?

Soldiers of 53 Sig Sqn were later treated to a demonstration in the art of medieval warfare and were taught how some warfare tactics are the same now as back then. To finish off the evening, the Sqn members then took part in various command tasks to assess and test their leadership capabilities followed by a presentation given by **Sgt Prosser** on the different types of individual leadership styles for both use in the military and the civilian work place. On Sunday morning, Sqn members finished the weekend ex by taking part in an orienteering ex around the beautiful Forest of Dean.

93 (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj A Morris SSM WO2 (SSM) Vise

Exercise LYNX EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT - by Capt Topps

Eighteen members of 39 Sig Regt visited St Mary's CE School in Bridport, Dorset on Friday 11 March. This community engagement event was arranged by WO1 (SVWO) Richie Ayling and the Padre Rev Pete Stone. The reason for participating in this CE was to demonstrate the British Army's professionalism and to inspire the children who would not normally be given the exposure of the activities. Several of the school pupils face very challenging situations in their young lives and it was hoped that the children's confidence could be increased and that they would be able to have a fun learning opportunity which was different to a normal school day and which they would remember for a long time.

All four sqns of 39 Sig Regt were represented and RV'd at St Mary's School much to the excitement of several children. However, so that the children could concentrate on maths and english rather than us as we set up the stands which the children would later visit, all the blinds across the school were shut which inadvertently added to their excitement!

The four areas set up were: a mini assault course utilising the school's play equipment; a cam net and tables on the school field to show weapons systems and the equipment the Army uses; a basha in the school's wooded area set up with a fire pit and medic station; and finally a Bowman Det and MANN Truck to demonstrate what we as a Regt do.

Sooner than we realised, lunch time was upon us and a crowd of very excited children were unleashed on 39 Sig Regt Team. Friends were made, autographs signed and questions asked all before the official start. The lunch time supervision staff asked if we could come every lunch as they had never had such a quiet break time!

Six classes of 4-11 years olds 'paraded' on the playground where they were welcomed by Padre Stone, who is one of the Governors of the school as well as being their local vicar. Padre Stone then handed them over to WO1 (SVWO) Richie Ayling whose name by now had been changed by the children to "Mr Alien". After a quick brief on the activities, WO1 (SVWO) Richie Ayling told them that to be a soldier you need four things: discipline (especially listening quietly); team work; encouragement; and a sense of humour. This is what we all wanted to see that afternoon, and we did.

All of the age ranges were engaged and took part in most, if not all of the activities which included: learning the phonetic alphabet and spelling words over the radio systems to their friends; getting to sit in the driving seat of the MANN truck and being very excited by sitting in an office chair in the TCOPO. For some reason, the 4 and 5 year olds especially enjoyed being measured against the height of the MANN truck tyres! Everyone also enjoyed trying to lift WO1 (RSM) Scott Tomblin's body armour and looking through the sights of his weapon system.

All the children asked many questions including about cooking and toilets in the woods and many enjoyed wrapping an emergency bandage on their friends and applying cam cream so that they could hide from their teachers. It should be noted that the teachers did not get away scot free and several also had cam cream applied. There were a few worried faces when, after asking how to get it off, the teachers were told, "You don't!"

The children loved the assault course so much so that the staff are wondering about how they could purchase some cam nets to make the playground equipment more appealing. Even the less able and less confident pupils were encouraged to complete the course and hearing the cheers of encouragement from the children as well as seeing members of the Regt running alongside those pupils, encouraged the staff no end. When they were not all on the assault course "Mr Alien" was putting them through some drill, which they performed very well. After two hours of activities a "Regimental photo" was arranged where the whole school, the staff, and the members of the Regt had their photo taken by WO2 (RAWO) Baylis, whose face clearly showed that herding cats would have been an easier option! After school, parents were shown around the stands by the children and after a final brief the day was over. Several parents thanked members of the Regt for coming to the school and giving the children a very different and rewarding experience.

The children at St Mary's had a wonderful day. There were lots of smiles and high fives and it is certainly a day that the children will remember. For some of the children with difficulties they experienced an activity which engaged and

engrossed them; notably, one teacher remarked that on no occasion was anyone called out for bad behaviour, a sure sign that they enjoyed themselves. The staff were full of praise for the way the Regt engaged the children and really helped the children come out of themselves. As for the exhausted members of the Regt, they left with a job well done, a community engaged and the knowledge that they had made a difference. How much of a difference? Just one of the many stories that were fed back to us was of one five year old, whose only exposure to soldiers was from 18-rated video games; he was convinced that we were there to shoot him but after being introduced to Sig Lloyd they became friends. Sig Lloyd showed him the weapon systems we use and why we sometimes have to use it and then she was able to tell him about how we go to help people, how the Regt was deployed in the floods to help and make a difference to people. It certainly made a difference to this little boy's view of the British Army.

Regimental MTB Race Team - by WO2 Stockwell

The Regtl mountain bike cross country team has been in action during the first two rounds of the Army race series. The first round took place at Hadleigh Park home of the 2012 Olympic mountain bike race and the team was up against a strong field of 200 riders. The course featured lots of climbing and technical sections and really tested the team's fitness. First home was WO2 Andy Dawson followed by WO2 Chris Stockwell in the veterans. In the senior class Sig Griffey represented the team in his first race of the year.



The driest part of the course

Round two took place at Blandford and the weather decided to get rather wet to say the least. A constant downpour turned the course into a mud bath. However the team did really well battling against the conditions. Capt Alex Cave was entering his first senior race of the year and came in at 30th out of 170+riders. In the veterans WO2 Andy Dawson came in at 21St and **WO2 Chris Stockwell** 50th. The results have now pushed us into 6th position in the minor unit standings out of 19 teams; a great start to the season so far!

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj Paul Ukpai SSM WO2 (SSM) Anderson

Maj Paul Ukpai has certainly made his mark since taking command of the sqn in October 2015, with a strong focus on recruiting and retention. Attendance has improved, and recruiting pipeline has really started to pick up and is the strongest it has been for 2 years! Recognition needs to go to WO2 Chapman and his team of recruiters; SSgt Welsh, Cpl Brownlees and Sig Smith for their hard work and perseverance. Under the direction of the OC, the team have been relentlessly recruiting to capture the next generation of Berkshire Yeomen with particular focus on establishing a new troop at the Camberley Army Reserve Centre on the London Road. New 'Recruiting Now' signs are being fitted and the team are regularly seen running events in and around the local areas. Watch this space!

SSgt Welsh retired from the Regular Army just over a year ago after 24 years, completing his final posting as a Warrant Officer with London University Officer Training Corps. After twelve months away from the green machine, **SSgt Welsh** joined the Sqn earlier this year and there has been no stopping him – a driving force behind the recruiting and taking the lead on Recruit Training.

The sqn also welcomes a new PSAO, **Capt Pete Dale** who joins us after a successful career in the Coldstream Guards. We very much look forward to the wealth of experience **Capt Dale** brings.

Exercise LYNX TROT 2 - by Capt Saunders

These last few months have been yet another busy period for the sqn, kicking off with **Ex LYNX TROT 2**. The sqn paraded at Windsor, picked up rations, maps, fuel cards, packed the vehicles, completed final checks and then deployed onto a dank Minley Training Area – thank you to the SSM for ordering the weather! Dets were initialised and HF comms established.

WO2 (FofS(v)) Eastwood-Bell ran the ops room and, following some A&P and HF lessons, gave a set of orders to the Det Comds to deploy the Sqn assets across the Minley and Aldershot training area. Despite a few equipment challenges and SSgt Sterry's unplanned 'wrestle with the trees', comms were established and the OC was delighted to have a fully informed net. And so the ex began, with ex traffic flowing, detachment moves and personal RIPs throughout the weekend. It was a busy but ultimately successful ex with all objectives achieved. The ex was overseen by the PSI's, SSgt Torode and SSgt Simpson, who helped to blow the HF cobwebs away, demonstrating the correct polarisation and erection of HF antennas.



Sig Riglar looking on, picking up tips for his trade course in August

SSgt Simpson was recently posted to the sqn as the SPSI and for him this was his first ex with the sqn and the Reserves. When asked, he commented that he was particularly impressed with the keenness of the troops and their willingness to learn!

The following weekend was Regimental MATTs at Rollestone Camp, the only place on earth where four seasons can be experienced in one day, every day! Kicking off with a PFA, which nearly turned into an AFT distance, the day could only get better. Cunningly, OC 93 Sig Sqn had noticed the extended length of the PFA route and whizzed to the first of the runners to alert the instructor. Later that day the instructor did make his apologies and told us all that there was no extra cost for the extended phys! After a hearty breakfast, 2IC 93 Sig Sqn entertained us all with his jokes as we headed by coach down to the ranges. Once at the ranges, Sgt Grace and SSgt Sterry were detailed to run the ranges, whilst the rest of us completed the BCDT package.



LCpl Hazelgrove helping 94 Sig Sqn to be the most consistent on the ranges

Back on the coach for more bad jokes, this time from **Capt Martin Crilly,** 2IC 43 Sp Sqn, we returned to Rollestone Camp for CBRN – a particular favourite MATT of **Capt Saunders. Cpl Mays** also seemed to enjoy donning and doffing the new GSR with an impressive pose for the camera. After a long day going through MATTs testing, it was time for admin and then one or two refreshments in the bar.



Can you spot Cpl Mays?

Sunday morning, bright and early we were up and ready for the AFT – what better way to start the day! With everybody lined up and ready to go, **Capt Saunders** donned a fluorescent jacket and we were off. With the AFT completed; we were back into the classroom for MATTs 6, 7 and 8. With a slightly different approach to MATT 6, we were broken into groups to think about and give examples of allocated Values and Standards. Thanks to the imagination of **SSgt Welsh**, we were able to create some imaginative examples of integrity, which had the rest of the Regt in tears of laughter!

Exercise RIGID RESOLVE - by Cpl Bastiman-Davies

Sig Sotelo-Reyes and myself both jumped at the chance to join the Rifles on their ex to provide Bowman support for their live fire exercise. Arriving after dark on Friday evening we were shown to a small patch of shrubbery and given the timings for our radio stag. Rather than a building, room or 9x9 tentage, our accommodation this ex was a basher and a tree. Wow – this was a bit different to the usual signals 'accommodation' we had become used to! From the depths of my memory, and bergen, I found what was needed to erect

a hasty basher and we settled down for the night. Getting up well before dawn, the first radio stag was uneventful, and the warmth of the CP was welcome compared to the frost on the ground outside.

On Saturday the well-orchestrated ex got underway, and our signals work routine started in earnest. In daylight we were able to erect a considerably better basher for our rest periods, whilst on stag we were extremely busy with real traffic, filling over half an operator's log in the 24hr ex period. Towards midnight we were treated to the sound of mortar and machine-gun fire. It was really satisfying to have the chance to do my Radio Operator role with a real purpose. It was inspiring and rewarding to get out on the ground in a completely different setting to a typical signals ex, and I would recommend that any operator who is given this opportunity take it up when offered, as it is a fantastic chance to see our kit being used for real.



71st (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH



CO Lt Col HJ Scott MBE
RSM WO1 (RSM) P Robertson

Warrant Officer's & Sergeant's Mess Study Day

- by WO1(RSM) Robertson

On 9 Apr 16 the WOs and SNCOs gathered at the Regtl Mess for a study day. The day was designed to enhance personal development as well as further educate members on Regtl business. WO1 (SVWO) Keeble was the first speaker, who briefed the mess on HRR (High Readiness Reserves), a key aspect of the Regt. Following this, the CO presented his vision, goals and clear direction for the Regt, whilst welcoming views on how to achieve this. External guest presenters included Kate Goodchild from the Armed Forces Pension Society (AFPS), author and speaker James Kerr who spoke on leadership and his time spent with the All Blacks rugby team. Brig Robertson, a previous CO of the Regt, also gave his thoughts on the future of the Army Reserve.

The mess also said farewell to one of our famously outspoken but larger than life characters **Sgt Morris** who is sadly moving onto 39th Sig Regt. We wish him all the very best in the future.

Exercise PHOENIX WARRIOR 13-15 MAY 16 - by Capt Roy Cooper

Having completed the Regular Commissioning course approximately 6 years previously, and thought little of Advances to Contact and Recce Patrols since, **Capt Roy Cooper** volunteered to be the Platoon Commander on the annual Regitl Battle Camp, PHOENIX WARRIOR.

Supporting Capt Cooper were Lt Roberts as his Radio Operator (except when he went AWOL from the Platoon HQ for 6 hours to patrol with the troops!) and Capt Khushru Cooper as his redoubtable Battle Captain. Sgt Crumpton-Taylor was the ever-reliable (and long-suffering) Platoon Sgt and was integral in coordinating section activity, as one would expect, following his Top Soldier award from the previous year's camp. His only failure was in attempting to get his

headstrong Platoon Commander to get some much needed sleep!

A healthy-sized and balanced platoon with three 8-10 man sections and a Platoon HQ of near-equivalent size looked ideal for a great ex! 31 and 36 Sig Sqns each fielded their own section, with 68 Sig Sqn and 265 Sp Sqn forming a composite section. With all of the supporting elements there were over 50 people committing to a non-assured weekend, simply out of a love of soldiering, which was very gratifying. Cpl Pinington's prior experience with 216 Sig Sqn meant that he stood out as 1 Section Commander, however, no less determination was exhibited by his peers Cpl Porter and Cpl Wright over the weekend, who did well to lead inexperienced and fatigued soldiers in unfamiliar circumstances.

The ex Main Events List consisted of a FOB defence and atmospherics patrolling phase, leading into a day of battle lessons delivered by the Permanent Staff Instructors. These were well planned and delivered and included Battlefield Casualty Drills, range card production and the duties of a sentry, Fire Control Orders and contact drills, the principles of patrolling and section attacks. As soon as these were completed a patrolling phase was planned that would culminate with a Platoon level advance to contact on the final morning.

The majority of exercising troops would get by on only a handful of hours sleep before trudging back into work on Monday. Despite this, the whiff of cordite and the opportunity to ghost through deserted woodblocks meant that there was a real buzz over the duration of the ex and when ENDEX was called a palpable sense of achievement. From (in some cases) not knowing what a "Re-org" was, the Platoon managed to conduct highly successful standing, recce and fighting patrols and the final advance to contact dropped the time from contact to re-org from a laboured 20, down to 6 punchy minutes. Indeed, the motivation of the soldiers over the duration of the ex was notable and the development in skill over its course was as unmistakable. Over the ex the Directing Staff and Platoon hierarchy fed into the Regtl Sgt Maj which soldiers most caught the eye. Despite a number of

terrific performances from others **Sig Asamoah** was awarded the Battle Camp Top Soldier award for his determination, field-craft and team-work.



Sgt Asamoah receiving Battle Camp Top Soldier Award

the firing point, followed by running down the range, all while trying to remember how many rounds at each target, ouch! The build-up training was over three weekends; the first weekend was the DCCT at Windsor Barracks and taught everyone how to prepare the point of aim, pressure and trigger squeeze. The marksmanship principles were covered and individual strengths and weaknesses were identified before firing live rounds on the range without wasting them!

The second weekend was down at Hythe ranges; nice beach, nice weather ... wrong! Running down the range on shingles (safety **ON** of course), at different distances, adopting different positions to fire from. It was hard and wore energy down quickly, but at least was good preparation for the competition. Thankfully everyone all completed the ACMT without too much difficulty in order they could compete in the competition. The third weekend included more advanced range shoots and practices of the competition shoots, it was all starting to feel much more real.

It was then time to put everything into practice, no pressure at all! The regt was the only Reserve team to attend and were

> up against all of the regular infantry/guards regts in London, most of whom were made up of sniper trained and recce platoon people, gulp!

At one point the team were coming 4th out of 10 teams in the pistol shoots, **Sgt Jules** came 4th place overall in the Pistol competition. Overall, the unit came a respectable 7th out of 10 teams, with **Capt Roberts** being awarded runner-up shot in the overall rifle competition. Not bad for Army Reservists...

For three weekends training, the Regt did extremely well and this can

only hold well for the future. Well done to all.



Ex Phoenix Warrior, FOB endex

The London District Operational Shooting Competition - by Sig Evans

This year the regt managed to get a shooting team together; some experienced from **SSgt Heath** and **SSgt Allen** and some less experienced individuals from the Reserves. The GOC London District Competition is an annual competition usually run at the end of April; this year 6 Reservists and 2 Regulars from 71 Y Sig Regt took part.

Much thanks must go to **SSgt Ben Heath** and **SSgt Jim Allen**, as without them prepping and sorting out the admin side of things the team would not have been able to compete at all. Paticular thanks go to them for giving up their own time to teach the less experienced how to shoot the more advanced shoots and multiple firing positions.

The competition was run by the Coldstream guards so the first thought was it was going to be hard being signallers who don't do much Infantry training. One of the competition shoots involved a 2 mile approach march carrying 35lbs, including CBA, to be completed in 22mins. Then straight onto

31 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY AND PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Orr
SSM WO2 (SSM) May
SPSI SSgt Smiejkowski
SPSI (Tech) SSgt Heath

Officer Commanding Update - by Maj Alex Orr

The sqn has had a busy few months sorting out dets and relocating them to Kingston and Coulsdon, recruiting for our budding Troop location in Kingston and preparing for the ever present ECI.

We have waved goodbye to **Sig McKenna** who is moving back to Manchester, and have congratulated **Sig Matos-Santos** on the good news that he is going to be a father for the second time! Congratulations must also go to **Cpl Langley** who was the runner up at the recent Draper's Hall award ceremony.

Exercise COCKNEY SLIDE - by Capt Tim Roberts

Ex COCKNEY SLIDE was the regtl Winter AT expedition to the Grand Massiff ski region in France. There had been a widespread shortage of snow in weeks leading up to it but it was practically a whiteout on the way through France when **Sgt Osho** took the wheel and struggled to see the road ahead. For the rest it was reassuring as it looked like there would be good snow when they arrived.

On the first day's skiing, everyone ventured out to test their ski legs and warm up for what for all would be a test of endurance. Capt Alleyne's pole planting lesson was certainly memorable for its stabbing and punching technique; phrases went on through the week including repetitions of knee / bum / knee, stroke the dog, skiing in a tunnel and many more. Sgt Abbott's group ran into a black run that had only been pisted half way down, but a quick lesson on traversing a slope beyond people's abilities saved the day.

It was when the regt's group was to go touring that the real skiing started! With excitement and anticipation everyone skied to pastures new and set about applying skins to the skis. Stripping down to minimal clothing they started the ascent. The joy of the scenery soon gave way to the physical effort of the climb. As everyone ascended, the helpful banter from those using the chair lifts over the top only increased everyone's determination to get to the top.

The group suffered numerous stumbles as they got to grips with the technique, but having finished the ascent there was the much anticipated descent. However first there was a drop into a gully, which no one completed without a tumble. Removing the skins the group raced back across country. No one had realised quite how exhausted their legs were. Only on the last chairlift of the day did it become apparent the distance that had been traversed. Although not a lot in a straight line, the height and actual distance was considerable. This gave everyone a real sense of achievement and reenforced the objectives of the day.

The next day's challenges started with building snow holes, conducting slab tests and avalanche search skills. Volunteers to get up on the snow slab to see if it would slip were in short supply until **SSgt Marsh** stepped forward. Reassuringly it took quite an effort to dislodge the slab which didn't move significantly.

The next challenge was skiing off piste through the woods, for which the first rule was to ski around the trees! Regardless **Sgt Nielsen** and **WO2 Tear** went bouncing off wrapping themselves around numerous trees, with **Capt Alleyne** giving his hearty chuckle at each crunch! Off piste in a gully without trees was also challenging as there were some tree stumps buried under the snow just for added surprise!

The last day of skiing was a free ski, where groups were smaller. **Sig Ewen**, clearly aspired to go from zero to hero when she mistakenly left her group to join the advanced skiers. Between touring, skiing uphill, and skiing downhill, through trees everyone all developed their skiing abilities and came home far more confident skiers. In some cases skills were developed through the application of sheer terror but overall it was worth it and definitely recommend.

36 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Rowson SSM WO2(SSM) Elliot

Monchy Le Preux Inaugural Memorial Ceremony 21 May 2016 - by Capt Monk

Very early Saturday morning on 21 May 16 saw the deployment of **Capt Monk, LCpl Honychurch** and **Sig Gibbs** to Folkestone and then Calais, followed by the move inland to a little village near Arras that saw some of the bloodiest battles during the First World War. Whoever had control of this vital ground had the opportunity to look across the desolate battlefields of the Somme.

As the members of 36 Sig Sqn arrived in Monchy Le Preux, they approached the venue up a small hill to find a few locals putting the final touches for the ceremony. Tricolores and Union Flags fluttered in the breeze and members of the town band were fine tuning their instruments. It was difficult to look at the village as it is now and imagine the devastation and destruction that was prevalent at the time. The monument itself is located in a small square in front of the town church, (which, apart from a small section of the front entrance archway, was levelled flat during the many bombardments the town received). The square has a memorial to the fallen French from both wars as well as a statue of a Caribou in memory of Canadian soldiers who lost their lives during the same fighting.

As the ceremony started and the dignitaries arrived, LCpl Honychurch and Sig Gibbs took up their positions with Lances and Guidons to either side of the memorial as Guard of Honour. Commemorative addresses were given by the Mayor of Monchy, the Prefete du Pass de Calais and Dr Ted Bailey, Grandson of RSM Frank Bailey DCM of the 1st Battalion Essex Regiment. Wreaths were then laid including one by Col Stephen Foakes, TD, DL (Hon Col 71 Y Sig Regt and Assistant Chairman Essex Yeomanry Association.)



Dignitaries at Memorial

After the ceremony the three individuals were invited to join the dignitaries and many locals at a champagne reception in the village hall, where a few more speeches and presentations took place. After the obligatory quick trip to *Citi-Europe* to stock up on cheeses and other local specialities everyone made their way back to the UK after an enjoyable, if somewhat long day.

68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Major Trevelion
SSM WO2 (SSM) Cullumbine

'A Day out at the FA Cup Final' - by LCpl Graham and LCpl Johnstone

In May members of the regt were given the opportunity to help with the opening ceremony to the FA Cup Final being played at Wembley Stadium against Crystal Palace FC and Man United FC. This meant giving up some spare time on the Wednesday prior to the competitions to practice the flag folding on a very large scale, yet this was worth it to watch the match for free after!

For the rehearsal on the Wednesday everyone met up at Wembley Park, which included over 100 individuals from all three services. Walking down the side of the pitch everyone had to be very careful not to "step on the pitch!", and then it became clear the size of the task; a giant canvas/polyester snake stretching the full length of the pitch. Before the big day, everyone at the practice had to get the canvas into position and zip it all together. However, this could only be done by walking on the pitch! Then it was time for a quick run through with everyone being given specific tasks ready for the big day.

Saturday arrived and everyone from the regt attending met again for a McDonalds breakfast, followed by making their way once again to Wembley. While sat in the briefing room they were told to get into the aforementioned teams ready to do some last minute practising, but quickly found things had changed! Swiftly tasked with another more important task; to carry out and unveil the smaller team badges. A task they successfully completed without any practice! Instead of being able to join the rest of the service personnel after and receive the applause and stand proud as the national anthem was played, they were to stay in situ in the kneeling position until the national anthem started, when they were to stand to attention.

This would have been easy if not for the rambunctious Crystal Palace fans generating so much noise it drowned out the

band, and so as the National Anthem started to play poor Karen Harding missed her cue to start singing. All was not lost and the anthem went without a further hitch. After the National Anthem it was game time, and Man United fans were delighted when they won. A great day had by all that attended and great opportunity.

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY (SHARPSHOOTERS)) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj Baker TD
SSM SSgt Haskell
SPSI SSgt Donaldson MBE

Officer Commanding Update

- by Maj Paul Baker TD

The sqn has been busy transitioning to the new assured training events, attendance at which is now a requirement to be certified efficient and so earn the annual bounty. In March the sqn deployed to Pippingford Park on Ex PHOENIX

FROLIC where the JNCOs were tested to the full in the absence of the Sqn Chain of Command, who were enjoying a simulated fireside chat in the lecture theatre at Donnington with **Maj Gen John Crackett**, as part of Ex HORSESHOE KNOWLEDGE.

Ex PHOENIX WARRIOR in May, the RSM's annual military training event, was as demanding as ever; the troops all looked the part and put in maximum effort so as to benefit fully from the excellent training package on offer. Our congratulations go to **SSgt (SQMS) Thwaite** on winning the Draper's Company Medal for excellent endeavour to the sqn and to the regt, and to **Cpl Crane** and his wife, **Nichola**, on the birth of their baby daughter.

The sqn has been subjected to an intense EC update and preparation programme which paid off as the sqn did very well on the recent EC inspection. Special thanks go to **Sgt Fraser**, **SSgt Thwaite** and **SSgt Lane** on their tireless work on getting us through, well done.

We are looking forward to our Veterans' Day which is being held in the Army Reserve Centre on Saturday 23rd July 2016. All of our regtl and local service associations are warmly invited for what we hope will be an informative and enjoyable event.

DRAPER'S COMPANY MEDAL - by SSgt (SQMS) Paul Thwaite

In the unique and astonishing building of the Worshipful Company of Drapers, SSgt Thwaite was presented the Draper's Company Medal by the Master Draper, Mr John William Giffard, CBE, QPM, DL for his dedicated service to the Army Reserve. The Commanding Officer, Lt Col HJ Scott MBE, was asked to read out his citation to the Master and a panel of wardens who unanimously agreed that he was worthy of this distinguished recognition. SSgt Thwaite was one of four medal recipients from the Navy, Army and RAF units which are affiliated to the Worshipful Company of Drapers. The Drapers laid on an excellent lunch and tour for all medal recipients and their guests. Cpl Langley, who was also nominated, was awarded a certificate as the runner up. Sincere congratulations to SSgt Thwaite and Cpl Langley, both thoroughly deserved.



SSgt Thwaite, the CO and Cpl Langley in the Draper's Hall

NEWS FROM SQUADRONS



16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216) COLCHESTER



 Ω **RSM**

Maj AR Nicklin MBE WO1 (RSM) NG Marshall

Introduction from the Brigade RSM

The last period has seen the sqn focus on increasing our operational effectiveness and the efficiency of our core output. This has included both air and trade skills whilst still supporting the Army's high readiness Brigade on multiple exercises across the globe. We have also assisted in running the Brigade All Arms Pre Parachute Selection course, which was highly successful with 14 personnel passing from throughout the Corps. This feed is essential as these soldiers will help shape the future of our Sqn and wider Corps.







The Squadron - built on an unparalleled heritage

Three countries, two Joint Forcible Entries, with the entire sgn on an operational footing. The largest airborne exercise since the Cold War has strategic relevance for the future of expeditionary high readiness operations. Parachuting US, French, Polish, and UK, with complementary air assault operations in abundance, the soldiers of this Sqn have delivered against a demanding operational imperative. To quote the CJTF Commander, Maj Gen Clarke, comms and C2 sit as the main effort for this large scale multi-national power projection and tactical manoeuvre.



So what? With limited resource due to A2020 reductions, 216 (Parachute) Sig Sqn remains independent for a reason – it sits as the Corps' and Army specialist in air manoeuvre C2. It proves its worth on a daily basis, with output exponential to its size. This is testament to the exceptional soldiers that are privileged to lead this sqn for a brief time in its distinguished 75 year legacy. Airborne 16 celebrates 75 years since the formation of Airborne Forces in 1941 and we, as a Brigade, remain a force to be reckoned with.

Buzzwords are in abundance across the conventional Army moving to the future: expeditionary approaches to comms, distributed C2, interoperability – this is normal daily business for this Sqn. It pushes every capability to the limit, challenging existing approaches and rapidly redefining the normal baseline. We are at the forefront of change in the conventional force. No one man is indispensable and camaraderie and a warfighting focus define everything we do - we are agile in mindset and flexible in execution to create a future that embraces change.

It won't surprise anyone to learn that we believe ourselves to be the best communicators, soldiers, and leaders the Corps has to offer, with the generation coming through the best we have ever seen. Holding ourselves to the highest standards creates a competitiveness to succeed and deliver in the most challenging environments. We cannot do it on our own and there is no part of the Corps that doesn't support our

endeavours and we could not do it without them – 244 Sig Sqn, 15 Sig Regt, ISS – to name a few. We abide by the Pegasus ethos and are airborne in mindset whether parachute trained or not.

As British Airborne soldiers we place the mission, our comrades, before ourselves. Our bravery is founded upon determination, endurance, and selflessness. We are supremely disciplined and that discipline is primarily self-imposed. We take pride in being part of an elite, and understand our responsibility to strive for the highest standards of achievement, turnout, and attitude. We wear Pegasus with humility, recognising our obligation never to demean or diminish the value of others. We are a compassionate friend, but a ferocious enemy. In battle, in barracks, and at home we always do the right thing.

The Pegasus Ethos

Exercise SWIFT RESPONSE Pre-Deployment and Ph 1

- by SSgt Ronnie 'the Lover Man' Corbett

Ex SWIFT RESPONSE 16 was the first major outing for the newly formed Comd Tac Group that would involve not only a historic Para insertion but also a chance to work with the Commander actually delivering effect on a coalition Joint Task Force scale ex. The pre-deployment training involved seven members of 216, including the RSM, moving to Fort Bragg NC, to conduct familiariation training with the T11 (US parachute) we were also to provide support to members of the HQ during the build-up planning phase. After arriving early evening on the 24th May we quickly realised that the scale of the jump we would take part in was on a scale that amazed us all. We were to take part in the display jump on Sicily DZ for the 82nd Airborne annual All American week, the finale of the celebration consisted of the jump followed by demonstrations including live firing of artillery pieces. Once we had conducted our conversion training we were informed that there would be upwards of 1600 men and women from the 82nd AB from seventeen C17s. For all of us it was the first descent from these airframes and it was topped off by being Sig Fletcher and Sig Wilkinson's second jump ever after completing their BPC in the UK. On the morning of the jump we fitted up and headed out of our hangar and were greeted by the awesome sight of 1600 paratroopers heading to their respective planes. As we hit our P-hour and left the plane it was a jaw dropping experience seeing over 200 men dropped in waves of two C17s at a time, a sight that was truly a once in a lifetime spectacle. To add to a great day and bearing in mind we saw someone land on top of a Humvee no-one was injured on the entire jump.

As the build-up to what would be the largest combined parachute insertion since Market Garden continued everyone was itching to get on with the job. Phase 1 of Ex SWIFT RESPONSE, involved an 82nd AB Division led, consisting of elements of the Polish 6 AAB Bde, the US 1BCT and of course a 3 PARA led battlegroup. The scenario saw a combined joint entry via parachute onto the Torun training area in Poland, force elements would be mounting from Ramstein in Germany, Krakow in Poland and most importantly Fort Bragg NC. The ex bore other large similarities to Operation Market Garden as the final objective for the Polish Brigade was a major civilian road bridge leading in to the southern fringes on the city of Torun. As I attended the final brief at the 82nd AB Div HQ, the Commanding General summed it up in American style with his closing statement, "this time it won't be a

Bridge too far". If this wasn't enough to add extra Kudos to the entire endeavour the insertion of Comd Tac and the troops from the 82nd AB from Fort Bragg would be the longest Parachute insertion in the history of airborne forces. From the outset, the mounting in Fort Bragg did not go exactly to plan, the first plane we were loaded onto broke, which resulted in a mad dash to another C17, upon successfully boarding this plane a downtrodden PJI informed us that they may not even have enough parachutes for all the Pax on board, so as the wheels left the tarmac we were not even sure if all of us would be able to jump at the other end. Luckily while in the air the PJI managed to find a secret stash of chutes in the planes stores, the jump was back on. After about 9 hours into our 12 hour flight the, PJIs got us up and strapped into our jump equipment. And finally we were fast approaching the DZ, and being shuffled out of the plane to start our descent onto Kijewo DZ. The jump fortunately went without incident, other than the JTAC having to pull his reserve chute, it was time to crack on to the mission and why we were there.

Our first port of call as with all jumps was to make our way to the RV point and from there to establish Comms to bring the Bde Comd and the Battle Capt back into the tactical picture. After we had done this we moved to co-locate with the Forward HQ that had also jumped to provide the ability for the Bde to control and synchronise efforts with our coalition partners. As the battle advanced and 3 PARA moved onto objective Thatcher, H-hour was met, and with remarkable speed, an American observer remarked "You boys had a tough fight", the Opfor did not yield unto their final rounds had been spent. Upon the successful capture of the Obj the decision was made to move 8km forward to provide a step up+ link Function for Forward HQ with the 2nd Cavalry Regt (a US Striker Regt). This move was fairly gruelling as the heat on the day had really started to pick up and tracks across the area were mainly sand which really sponged up ones energy. After the successful link up and forward passage of lines with 2CR and End Ex fast approaching, things took a slightly manic sequence of events as we hoped to get exfilled to GTA, Germany. We were again plagued with airframe issues, we were due to be collected from the area via Heli but this plan did not come to fruition, this left us in the rather to close for comfort vicinity of the fast approaching fire mission being called in by our colleagues from 7RHA. We managed to liaise with the Polish and secure a lift off the area where we conducted a quick one place change and got bundled into white fleet to race us to Bydgoszcz Airport. We missed our intended UK C130 flight but with some Stirling work from Capt Stu 'the King of Poland' Boyle, and some heavy gesticulating from the OC we got ourselves on a flight back to GTA curtesy of our American allies.

So with all said and done, and with only Phase 1 of the ex complete, we had already moved through 4 countries and carved ourselves into Airborne history, although short this had already been one of the best exercises of my career.



OTHER UNITS



UK MOD SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM



Mandatory Training With A Difference - by Maj Robin Foster

When we were told that it would be necessary for the members of SANGCOM to complete a Fire Awareness Course as part of our mandatory training, we naturally assumed it would involve a boring thirty minute course on the Defence Learning Portal. Fortunately things are never as simple as that in Saudi Arabia and fortunately for the team in SANGCOM, fire training in this instance, meant an hour in the yard playing with fire extinguishers and naked flames.

On the 4 April 2016 a team from the Saudi Arabian National Guard Fire Department were kind enough to take us through our paces. The morning started with a presentation from Sgt Mohammad Abdullah Al Nawfal reminding us about the dangers and pitfalls of being complacent with fire safety. Of course there were the usual warnings not to use fire extinguishers as doorstops and ensuring everyone knew where their nearest fire escape was.

With the formal presentation out of the way, it was time for the practical training. This turned out to be the highlight of the working day. No less than 12 fire extinguishers were lined up for members of the team to practise on. The practical started with a demonstration from the firefighters showing us the correct method of putting out a fire with an extinguisher. This involved a large metal bin filled with a significant amount of propellant being casually set alight. The ensuing fire bomb was impressive and left nobody in any doubt that this was to be taken seriously. It took less than thirty seconds for the expert to step forward, grab a fire extinguisher, prepare it for use and snuff out the flames. Slick, impressive, professional. Still in awe, we were asked to step forward, don firefighting PPE and repeat the procedure. In pairs, team members took turns pitting their wits against the reignited fire. Although there were some false starts, most of us managed to kill the flames, albeit with far less aplomb.

The training session ended with a debrief and summary of the day's events. What most were anticipating as a boring session, mandatory fire training turned out to be fun, entertaining and above all, memorable. Proof, if ever any was needed, that hands on training beats the virtual environment every time.



Fire extinguishers at the ready



Karen Raynor gets to grips with the fire

SANGOM Team Brunch - by Nick Bradshaw

As I cross the compound, it's hot and dusty. The shirt isn't quite stuck to me yet but it isn't far off. I approach a door and my face is blasted with water, fed into the blades of a hurricane fan. It's a welcome relief. I enter the majalis into the air conditioned room. There are tables laid out with fine china, water glasses and more cutlery than anyone could ever use. For the 80 Royal Signals and civil service personnel of the SANGCOM project team this is an oasis of relaxation from the controlled lifestyle that operates outside the compound walls. The lounge of a villa has been transformed by the Marriott Hotel with a brunch of food stations hosting a breakfast selection, roast beef, burgers, salads, Danish pastries and a wide selection of desserts. The kitchen is occupied with chefs preparing omelettes and waffles to order with a selection of fillings and toppings. There is no rush to try it all though, we have four hours of this yet.

Back inside the majalis the kids are in a corner playing games and colouring pictures. DJ Dave has challenged himself: name any tune and he will find and play it before the end of the event... he is soon swamped and a little corner of Riyadh fills with classics from the seventies to the noughties with the odd guilty pleasure thrown in. At just the right moment frozen flannels are brought out. Everyone cools and calms (except on one table where there is a stand-off as a water fight threatens to get out of control).



DJ Dave entertaining the team at brunch

As the brunch ends the music continues... the microphone comes out and an impromptu karaoke session breaks out. Eventually families start to leave with tired kids and as the tables get cleared away only one question looms... what's for dinner?



The ladies enjoying the brunch

Humbled By Ultramarathon Distance - by Maj Robin Foster

Alan Paton wrote in his masterwork, Cry The Beloved Country, "There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it." On the 29th of May 2016, as I struggled up one of these "lovely" hills during the Comrades Ultramarathon I thought how right he was.

The Comrades, as it is known to locals, is an ultramarathon of 89 kilometres which is run annually in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa between the cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg. It is the world's largest and oldest ultramarathon race and I had spent the past six months training for it. This involved countless early mornings, endless training miles, mountains of sweaty clothes, constant hunger and a huge dose of patience from family and friends.

These thoughts formed a distant memory as I stood on the start line at 05:30 with 23,000 eager runners nervously waiting for the starter's gun. To compliment my physical training, I had mentally prepared by studying the famous "big five" hills of the race: Polly Shortts, Inchanga, Botha's Hill Field's Hill and Cowies Hill. Despite their plebeian sounding names, these hills are all torturous climbs both in length and altitude. The longest, Field's Hill, is a slightly silly, spirit crushing 3.2 km long hill with a total ascent of 1152 feet and a maximum elevation of 2,206 feet. I'd done my homework and now it was time to run. The clock struck 05:30 which prompted the explosion of the starter's gun and we started moving. I use the word 'moving' in its broadest sense. For the first minute or so it was really more like a pack of cards being reshuffled than a massive crowd surging forward. Then gradually I felt a little more freedom to move. I stopped sliding my soles over the tarmac, tangling my feet in the discarded water bottles, and actually got some lift off the ground.

A race this long demands a plan and mine was simple; run when you can, walk when you must but keep moving forward. Having run cautiously through the cool, dark streets of Pietermaritzburg I encountered my first significant hill, Polly Shortts. A cheeky little hill that forced me to reduce my pace and shorten my stride but this early in the race, I was still feeling strong and it didn't matter as much. The real test came when I encountered the first killer hill. At around the 40 km mark the long, steep, grinding hill known as Inchanga

tilted beneath my feet and I was forced to walk. This gave me a chance to catch my breath, chat to my fellow runners and appreciate the Valley of a Thousand Hills. Yes, the **Alan Paton** scenery was spectacular, but an ultramarathon crushes your appreciation for aesthetics and my thoughts quickly turned inward, where a nagging voice kept saying "put your head down, focus, get through this mile...then the next one."

After the halfway mark, things became bit of a blur and I suddenly found myself climbing up Botha's hill which followed soon after Inchanga. According to the race organisers, these are two different hills which implies a respite between them. This is a total fiction. When I consulted my course map I noted one undulating grade rising 1,000 feet in 10 km. I find nothing restful about this. Two miles past Botha's hill I really started feeling it which was not a good sign. But then a surprise encounter with my family on the side of the road lifted my spirits and gave me the strength to tackle the remaining hills. The final few km of the race were helped by the dense crowds lining the streets of Durban and the finish stadium.

After collecting my tiny bronze medal at the finish line, I was forced to admit that it hurt like hell. I lost four toenails somewhere along the 89 km route. But despite the pain I felt during the race, it was an incredible experience and one that will stay with me for a long time to come. I'm so grateful I was able to finish and to be a part of it. Grateful that my body allowed me to push through when all I wanted to do was quit.



Family support during 89km race

It's been two weeks since the race and I haven't run since. Will I run other Comrades? Probably not as there are other events calling my name, but this one will live with me forever and has a significant place in my heart. The slogan of Comrades Marathon is a Zulu word; "Izokuthoba" meaning "It will humble you". It certainly did.



The last mile

Football Match - SANGCOM vs Saudi National Guard Signal School - by WO2 (FofS (IS)) Retd Dave Skingley

What better way to promote understanding and cement relationships than a friendly game of football? Early March in UK would normally mean a cold, wet and windy match but not so in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The team assembled in the late afternoon with the temperature at around 35 degrees and a mix of Military and Civil Servants with an average age of over 40, what could possibly go wrong?! The team lined up looking, as one observer put it "More like a rugby team than a football team." Clearly with a nod to the SANGCOM Programme Director, Brig Pete Drew and our resident rugby internationals Adam 'The Beast' Taylor and Francis 'Psycho' Chandler, we prepared to take on the young, fit and fleet footed team from the National Guard Signal School. After an inspirational team talk by our manager Paul 'Pops Guardiola' Esseen, we were ready, if not particularly able, to play.

The game started at a frantic pace which clearly suited our hosts and it was evident we were going to be in for a tough match. The quick AstroTurf pitch obviously suited the younger, fitter team and it wasn't long before the Guard took a deserved lead. We managed to hold them off thanks to some inspirational defending from a plucky back four and some good saves by Pete 'The Cat' West. Incredibly, against the run of play we equalized. A free-kick deep in our own half from Rich 'Warren' Shea was met by Dave 'Apples' Appleyard who finished with aplomb. Our euphoria was short lived however as the Guard retook the lead just before half-time. A couple of substitutes were added in the second half in the form of Maj Neil 'Chubbs' Taylor, which didn't do a great deal for the average age of the team and Capt Dan 'Babyface' **Thompson**, one of the newer members of the team. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm didn't match their shooting ability! The Guard's superior prowess and fitness finally took its toll on creaking knees and joints and they finally ran away with the game and a 4-2 win. The game was called to a halt slightly early due to a lack of light and the fact that no one knew where the switch was for the floodlights.

The game was played in good spirits and enjoyed by both sides. Though I suspect the recovery period of our players was significantly longer than our opponents. Special thanks go to **Brig Al Twuaijiri** for sanctioning the game and indeed for playing which ensured we had two Brigadiers on one pitch. Gracious in defeat, Brig Drew presented the trophy to his counterpart and we look forward to getting an opportunity to play again once the temperatures dip below the level of an active volcano.



The Team - Military and Civil Servants



The spoils go to the winners



BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT KENYA



Welcome to BATUK - by LCpl Buchanan

After my good 'friend' LCpl Steven 'wins big' Wagstaff told me how good BATUK was I decided to put myself forward and deployed to Kenya on the 31st of April.

After a long flight which consisted of being continuously hit by the trolley and having LBdr Nathan 'Chicken'Birch-Rogerson snoring the whole way we finally arrived in Nairobi.

On the first day we were given the usual induction package and then sent on our way to Nanyuki show ground (NSG).

Our first week in work, myself and the rest of the new arrivals were quickly thrown in the deep end with a board of officers' inspection. This board of officers' inspection consisted of doing a BES check on all 84 Bowman platforms held by BATUK. After the BOO BES check followed a BES confirmation check by BATUK CIS and then after that was completed, a follow up BES check, this cycle of BES checking seems to be

continuous as items appear to move from one platform to another or back onto the stores shelf all by themselves.



Bowman Backache

The next few weeks after that have been spent prepping for the upcoming 1 Grenadier Guards battle group deployment on Ex Askari Storm. When they arrived we spent a week handing over 58 vehicles to the battle group that are now out on the ground for the next 6 weeks.

At the minute we are getting the remaining vehicles up to RSIT standard which starts at the end of the month. This will again be a lot of hard work but I'm sure with the hours we are putting in that we will have a successful year.

We are currently looking forward to going on a safari over the next few weekends. There's also an upcoming troop BBQ which is being organised by Cpl Rob 'l'm too scared to insert a nickname' Scoular and LCpl 'Recluse' Duncan.

Overall it has been an incredibly busy month, but I can truly say, along with the rest of BATUK CIS dept that we have learnt loads since being here. This will definitely set us all in good stead for the rest of our careers.



Looking at it won't fix it



1ST NATO SIGNAL BATTALION



CO Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU Army)
RSM CWO Steve Base (CAN Army)

Exercise Wesel Wives - by LCpl Paul Thompson

On the 21st of April a contingent of military wives from 1st NATO Sig Bn Wesel, deployed to Sennelager ranges for a taster session of basic military skills.

Glorious sunshine greeted us early at the accommodation for the two and a half hour drive. After a brief stop for coffee we arrived at the ranges where the day's activities were to be held. The package consisted of camouflage and concealment, basic marksmanship principles, weapon safety and eating & administration in the field. Things were kept jovial and light hearted throughout the day, **SSgt Dave Tuck** set the tone; the ladies were told to turn around and identify **SSgt Martin Catt** who was 100m away then run to him and back as a body of (wo)men.



The ladies set off to SSgt Catt's location



The ladies return in fits of giggles

Giggles, panting and some choice language later, the ladies were ready for the day ahead. Demonstrations in the correct levels of camouflage were given with Cpl Navin 'Nav' Gurung, LCpl Paul 'Tommo' Thompson and Sgt Greg Smith demonstrating too much, too little and just right respectively. This was combined with a how things are seen lesson featuring Nav deftly concealing himself in some nearby trees.



Cpl Gurung demonstrates too much camouflage



LCpl Thompson demonstrates too little camouflage



Sgt Smith demonstrates correct camouflage

Lessons moved on to weapons and safety training with **SSgt Tuck** leading the way demonstrating stripping and assembling of the A2 and how it works followed by weapon handling and safety. A live fire demonstration was deftly delivered by **Sgt Mark 'Gibbo' Gibson**, balloons were pinned to the white patches of the target as a more visual way of showing the target being hit. From 50m, **Gibbo** missed them all.



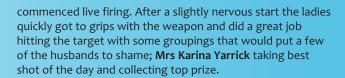
SSgt Tuck explaims the A2 rifle to the wives



The wives listening to SSgt Tuck's rifle lesson

Then it was on to the big moment of the day as the wives, champing at the bit, had their opportunity to get their hands on the LA5A2 and be taken through dry drills and building up positions under the auspicious guidance of the safety team: Cpl Andy Southwood, Gibbo, Nav, Sgt Natasha Robertson, Sgt Gary Smythson and SSgt Catt.

When everyone was happy 25 metre targets (adorned once again with balloons) were set, safety staff loaded the weapons and in groups of three the wives



After the fun of live weapons firing attention turned to the process of administration in the field. A tongue in cheek demonstration of how an officer would be served his lunch in the field kicked things off, with Tommo displaying his waiting on skills to 'Field Marshall' Greg Smith. Nav then showed how and what the normal everyday soldier would eat and how to prepare a 24hr ration pack. Extra boxes of these culinary delights were handed out to the wives so they could get hands on cooking and tasting a variety of meals and snacks. Luckily provisions had already been collected with fresh cheese & ham sandwiches and a spot of wine made available so they didn't have to brave the biscuit browns.

All in all it turned out to be a very productive and fun day with a chance for all the wives to get a small insight into how a soldier would live day to day on operations and exercise and to grow their own camaraderie with each other.

A Bridge Not Too Far - by Sgt Mike Brightwell

April saw the coming of the 1st NATO Sig Bn SNCO/WO/Officer cultural visit to Arnhem. To get everyone in the right frame of mind before the trip and to recap on a bit of history, a screening of A Bridge Too Far was held the weekend prior to departure, along with a BBQ and a few light refreshments.



The day's attendees outside the Airborne museum



The training team

The day started with a visit to the Airborne Museum in Oosterbeek; situated in what was the Hartenstein Hotel, which was established as the 1st Airborne Divisional HQ during the initial landings. The day continued with a visit to the Arnhem Oosterbeek war cemetery where we paid our respects to the fallen; after a recital of the poem "To the men of Arnhem, we thank them all" by **SSgt Dave Tuck**, cold beers were liberated from the clutches of the cooler and everyone was free to toast and pay their respects in their own way.



Everyone gathered to lay wreaths, the poem recital and to toast the fallen





Visitor's book

Plaque

Then it was on to Arnhem Bridge, where **Col Frost** and his brave men of the 2nd Parachute Bn held the north side of the bridge from the advancing 9th SS Panzer Division for over four days. It was here we once again raised our glasses (vodka martinis this time) and toasted to the achievement of what a few men could do in the face of overwhelming odds.



Arnhem Bridge

It was then time to enjoy the glorious sunshine and amenities that Arnhem centre has to offer as we went spent the rest of the afternoon being wined and dined. A great many thanks to everyone who was involved in making this a very successful day out.

Coy Cohesion Day - by Sgt Gary Westmoreland

A Maintenance & Support Company cohesion day was organised by OR-7 **Chris Stelten** (DEU A) involving a trip to Zolverein mine museum near Essen and followed up with a tour of Schalke FC's Veltins Stadium.

We jumped onto the coach and headed south, the meteorological optimists evidenced by their shorts and sunglasses; the hazy start soon gave way to clear blue skies which quickly had the mercury heading north, much to the discomfort of those who had opted to wear jeans.

Soon enough the now disused mine towers announced our destination and an earlier than expected arrival allowed for some basking in the sun while we waited for those who had free-wheeled to show up. When all were present we headed into the museum and the tour commenced. In ignorance we rode the escalator up to the reception, blissfully unaware that, as we would soon be informed, we were in fact travelling upon Escalator of the Year 2014! Heavens to Murgatroid.

The tour was incredibly informative not only about the mining industry in Germany but the region surrounding Essen. We retired to the museum restaurant for lunch and then reconvened at what was by this point, a sweat box of a coach for the journey to the Veltins Stadium.

Home of Schalke FC, the stadium dominates the skyline. A few of our German compatriots were big Schalke fans and so received constant taunting questions from the Brits, enquiring why Schalke weren't as good as Dortmund. The last home game of the season had been played the previous week so the stadium was in the process of being used as a concert venue for the summer which meant that the pitch had been moved outside to receive natural daylight but also that several portions of it were out of bounds. Nevertheless, our tour guide met us at the trophy room and off we went. It wasn't the most in-depth of tours due to the concert conversions, the highlight being the beer room where 85,000 litres of the amber stuff is piped from during max capacity events.

1st NATO Signal Battalion - by Capt Wall

As the Army finished its re-basing programme there are fewer and fewer postings left in Germany. Within the next couple of years 1st NATO Signal Battalion (1NSB) HQ will be one of very few formed units left. The unit comprises of 10 NATO countries who contribute manpower to the HQ and the 6 Deployable CIS Modules (DCMs). There are 32 British soldiers and officers in the Bn HQ who live and work in Wesel, about an hour North of Dusseldorf and close to the Dutch border. The location is excellent with the only real draw back being a long trip to school for parents with children of that age.

1 NSB is one of three units which 'belong' to NATO and support exercises, deployments and operations all over the world. At the time of writing 1 NSB has troops in Turkey, Afghanistan and in several Eastern European countries on exercises and deployments. Working in the NATO environment is very enjoyable and challenging; a must for anyone who wants to broaden their horizons!

For those that would like to work in NATO but don't fancy Germany there is DCM D, the British manned sub unit of 1 NSB, based in Blandford. Kept busy with deployments to Afghanistan and Turkey as well as numerous overseas exercises it is a great opportunity to learn new, specialised equipment and work with a whole host of other nations.

Corps Colonel's visit to 628 Signal Troop 22 - 23 Apr 16 - by SSgt McKechnie

As many members of the Corps were preparing for Easter leave 628 Signal Troop were putting the final pieces in place for a visit from Col Hutchinson MBE ADC, Corps Colonel R Signals on 22-23 Apr 16. The Troop lines became a hive of activity on Sun 20 Apr as members of Maintenance and Support (M&S) Company from 1St NATO Signal Battalion (1 NSB) arrived with communication vehicles and recovery vehicles in preparation to display life in Germany to the Corps Colonel. With final preparations in full swing Capt Tee took the opportunity to rehearse his unit brief on unsuspecting visiting Sandhurst cadets; before letting them loose to meet actual soldiers, who used this as an opportunity to practice their presentations before the Commanding Officer's walkthrough.

The Corps Colonel arrived with a full entourage and was greeted by Capt Tee before being introduced to Lt Col Kubitz (DEU Army) Commanding Officer 1NSB. Col Hutchinson was invited to open the Francisca room. Maj Lyons gave a brief update on Bn issues before handing over to Capt Tee to provide the unit brief. Once guest books were signed and coffee drunk it was time for the Corps Colonel to meet the troops.

Col Hutchinson was briefed on the history of the unit, including photos of himself as a young Officer Commanding of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn in the late 90's, bringing back some fond memories. This was followed by Sgt Morris briefing on the NATO Readiness Forces (NRF) commitments 628 Signal Troop are allocated over the next 18 months. LCpl Roberts briefed on the training burden and exotic locations soldiers train on the NATO CIS equipment. Col Hutchinson saw some of the communications equipment we hold before seeing how life differs for the G4 chain within NATO, before receiving updates on the 2 operational deployments 628 Sig Tp had recently returned from. WO2 (CSM) Crossley introduced members from M&S Coy who briefed on life in Germany.



Once all the briefs were completed Col Hutchinson presented Capt Tee with the NATO CIS Group unit award, which Capt Tee went to great lengths to point out that this was a unit award and not his individual award! The Corps Col addressed the troops before being presented a 1 NSB plaque by the Commanding Officer.



With the visit concluded it was off to the Warrant Officer's and Sergeant's mess to present Long Service & Good Conduct Medals to members of the Troop who were fortunate enough to evade being caught for 15 years. It was interesting to listen to each of the citations which demonstrated the diverse careers the 4 soldiers had had, especially as Cpl Marshall's sounded like a lonely hearts advert.

Once the photographer finally appeared and captured the occasion it was time for lunch and to celebrate in the bar.



628 Signal Troop Dinner Night - by Sgt Wilkes

As the unit is spread across four countries, (Germany, UK, Croatia and Denmark) it is rare that we get an opportunity to come together in a formal setting. Therefore when 1 NSB HQ and M&S Coy came to Blandford as part of the Corps Colonel's visit it seemed like the ideal opportunity to remedy this. I was overwhelmed to receive the good news that I, Sgt Wilkes, would be Mr Vice for the evening, with Col **Hutchinson MBE ADC** the guest of honour; himself a former Officer Commanding of 280 (UK) Signal Squadron, our predecessor.

The evening started with a minutes silence to remember the tragic events as a result of the terrorist attacks in Belgium that week. Once I was invited to I managed to nervously say grace without any hiccups - phew.

Although my place card managed to go walkabout, the pranking was kept to a reasonable amount; although it would appear the mess staff forget to lay a place setting so as Mr

Vice had to make do with a cardboard plate and plastic cutlery! Thanks also go to **Sgt Gaylard** who took time out of a busy week to organise and set up the night. As Mr Vice I was expecting a certain amount of fun and games, the first part of the night's events were livened up by the PMC **SSgt McKechnie,** who had his gavel "borrowed" in pretty short order, although **Sgt Moran's** bladder couldn't last much longer and it soon returned in time for a much needed comfort break.

The evening provided a befitting occasion for the Corps Col to present Royal Warrants to WO2 (CSM) Crossley and WO2 (YofS) Donaghy and a GOC's commendation to SSgt Chapman AGC (SPS) for her outstanding work whilst serving with the QDG. WO1 (FofS) Fraser, presiding over his first dinner night found some interesting historical facts to include in his speech and ensured that there would be ample port for the next dinner night before inviting the guest of honour to speak.

Once the top table adjourned to the bar I regaled the remaining diners with a short quiz and was assisted by **Sgt Wynter** whose bladder couldn't last much longer so answered every question in quick time. Unfortunately, the M&S Coy contingent were booked on the morning ferry and had to leave just after midnight, although **Sgt Ebot**, who books the travel managed to ensure that his flight was at a more sociable time and therefore managed to enjoy the evenings festivities.

Returning Pieces to the Corps Museum - by Capt Rich Wall

The 1st NATO Sig Bn has existed in several different forms and several different places over the years starting in Maastricht before being moved to Wesel, Germany. Somewhere over that time the Corps museum 'lent' the two field telephones and a signalling lamp. Although I'm sure it wasn't deliberate they were never returned and have moved around with the Bn for quite a few years surviving various tidying up and throwing out sessions. Earlier this year they were identified as being from the Corps museum by Maj Jim Lyons, who was part of the original trials team for the lamp, and it was decided they were to be given back. After an absence of many years they were returned to their rightful home in the museum with the help of the CO 1 NSB Lt Col Andreas Kubitz, WO1 (RSM) Steven Base, LCpl Mitchell and LCpl Hurlock.





NATO JWC (JOINT WARFARE CENTRE)





L-R Sgt Nabakeke (Army), SSgt Moore (Army), Sgt Wright (Royal Air Force), CPO Betts (Royal Navy), CPO Thistlewaite (Royal Navy)

A team of 5 Service Personnel are raising money for three charities (BLESMA, GOSH, ACTIONDUCHENNE) at NATO Joint Warfare Centre, Stavanger, Norway. CPO's Paul Thistlewaite and Gary Betts are joined by SSgt Dave Moore and Sgt Emosi Nabakeke from The Royal Corps of Signals and RAF Sgt Gemma Wright. The challenge in which they are embarking on is completing 24 Service fitness tests in 24 hours each. Sgt Wright who has organized this event says "Being in a Multi-National environment provides a rare opportunity for different Nations to experience the GBR Military standards for fitness testing. Being in Norway provides a unique setting to get different nations together to complete a fitness test and provide a friendly element of competition. The event is far more than this though, we want to encourage spouses, family and children to attend and give our fitness test a go, we are creating a families day around our event to pull the whole community together. We are hoping the Norwegian weather is kind (especially through the early hours). 24 fitness tests may be painful for the 5 of us running but in doing so we are raising money for our truly deserving charities; it will all be worth it."

To see more details on the event or to make a donation to the charities please see more information at: virginmoneygiving.com/24hrChallenge

ORIENTEERING

Jan Kjellstrom (JK) Orienteering Event 2016

This year the Royal Signals sent 20 team members to Yorkshire to hone their skills in the UK's biggest orienteering event.

Day 1 - by Sig Humbahadur Gurung

The Jan Kjellstrom International Festival of Orienteering otherwise known as JK first started in 1967 and is the biggest orienteering festival in the UK. It is held over Easter weekend each year and attracts around 4000 orienteers both from the UK and abroad. The event consists of a sprint race (Friday), middle or long distance (Saturday), long (Sunday) and relays (Monday).

This year the JK took place in Yorkshire and as always the Royal Signals Orienteers based in different locations travelled up to Ripon, North Yorkshire on Thursday where the team were staying for the course of the event. The team members consisted of both experienced and new members who were excited to tie their laces for this big event.

The sun was out and it was warm on Day 1 which was sprint orienteering held at Leeds University, West Yorkshire on good Friday 25 Mar 16. Both male and female Orienteers were on the open class with different start timings. As we approached through the main entrance of the University, we found ourselves competing alongside some very famous names in the Orienteering world. This was thrilling for everyone but especially for the young Orienteers like me who got a flavour of the skill level that one can aspire to. It was exciting and learning phase on urban course for the new members, who sometimes were lost at few checkpoints. The winning timings on Day 1 for Men open was 17:59 and for Women open was 15:04.

Day 2 - by LCpl Sanjaya Gurung

After the urban, it was time for orienteering in the woods. The event was conducted in Wass Forest in North Yorkshire. It was a rough open land with steep valleys and slopes with plenty of rocks and contour details alongside scattered trees. However, some of the areas were swampy and boggy whereas some had dense vegetation. After finishing the course, it could be easily seen in everybody's face that the terrain had been challenging. New orienteers struggled a little bit in their long course in terms of taking correct bearing, attack point and judging the distance between the control points which were discussed later in our daily evening group discussion. It was fruitful for me, being a new orienteer to have advice from the experienced senior as part of our discussions in the evening. I am sure that other orienteers also had a great opportunity to enhance and uplift their orienteering skills in such a huge international event.



Day 3 - by LCpl Vivake Gurung

Day 3 of the competition was the most challenging route which was held in Kilnsey, Yorkshire dale. The day started with a lot of energy and enthusiasm. The team had an early breakfast and then travelled to the event area. The area itself was mostly open land with very less distinctive features on the map which made it very difficult to identify our own location. Moreover, the steep slopes and partly rocky terrain slowed down the speed of the orienteers. However, I set off from the start position with a strong confidence built up during the first and second day. The surrounding was quite energetic as people from different age groups and skills were in the area with a sense of competition amongst themselves. As soon as I started, I orientated myself with the map and took a magnetic bearing to the first control point. The course was quite challenging which made me fully dependent on the bearing I took. However, the surroundings full of enthusiastic participants made me keep going. During the competition, the weather was also against us. It started raining minutes after the event started which made it even more challenging. Nevertheless, we were able to complete the course successfully in a decent time. The most unforgettable moment during the day was when I got completely disoriented in search of the control. I was quite a few metres away looking for one of the controls, it was because of the poor judgment of the distance. Luckily, the skills I learnt in these past few days helped orientate myself back to the previous control.

Overall, it was a good experience taking part in such a big event for the first time. I got the opportunity to further develop my orienteering skills.

DAY 4 - by LCpl Raja Subba Limbu

The final event for JK Trophy was Team Relay. We had four teams, of which two teams were competing for JK Trophy and the rest two teams run for Men's Short Relay competition.

The course was a blend of urban and forest area. Compared to the previous events, it was a bit easier to encourage fast and exciting running. All the experiences that we gained from previous events helped us hugely on the day. We managed to complete the final event with good times. Everyone had made some significant progress in comparison to day 1. It was a huge success for all orienteers to get a good experience. Moreover, it was a well spent Easter.

Without any doubt, the event gave us ample opportunity to test orienteering skills over difficult terrain as well as physical stamina and mental agility. A huge congratulations to **Maj Calland, SSgt Jagat** and **SSgt Riches** for winning the Splint Female, Splint Male and Surprise Leg competions. Also, a huge thanks goes to **Capt Rose** for organising this invaluable training for us. We look forward to attending this event in the future to sharpen our orienteering skills.

ENGLAND BOXING ELITE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2016

76 men and 39 women (which included 10 Service Boxers) competed in the England Boxing Elite National Championships 2016 Finals (this included Quarter Finals, Semi-finals and the Finals) at the Echo Arena Liverpool, over three days of competition (29 April – 1 May 2016). It is the biggest ever field for the National Finals and it is only the second time in the events 128 year history that the men and women's finals have been held as part of the same tournament. The competition featured six reigning champions and seven members of GB Boxing's elite Podium squad. There, one of the men in the middle of the action, was International (AIBA) Boxing Referee/Judge Capt Kirkham-Brown R SIGNALS, RCMO of 204 Field Hospital, BASED IN Northern Ireland.

Capt Kirkham-Brown has been involved in boxing for over forty years and has been fortunate to have been involved in many major international tournaments. National championships are always keenly contested and over this weekend Capt Kirkham-Brown refereed and judged in the region of 50 contests between the best boxers in England. It's always a privilege to share the ring with elite athletes and I consider it an honour to be selected to officiate at what is one of the best tournaments on the world stage. Next on the agenda is the Army Inter Unit Team Final between 2 Para and 1 RRF in Aldershot on 17 May, followed by the Army Individuals Championships in June, also at Combat Sports Centre in Aldershot, where once again I expect to see a strong R SIGNALS contingent participating. In addition to officiating, Capt Kirkham-Brown is also the Chairman for UK Sp Comd (Nth) Boxing and a member of the Army Boxing Executive committee.



Captain KB in action during the semi-final clash at 64kg; Dalton Smith (Steel City) seeded #1, lost to Danny Wright (Centurians) on points

ROYAL SIGNALS RUGBY LEAGUE

PRE-SEASON TRAINING CAMP IN AGEN, FRANCE

The Corps Rugby League team deployed to Agen, France at the beginning of April to conduct a pre-season training camp to prepare for this year's Lawson Cup competition. The Lawson Cup is the inter Army competition where all Corps compete against each other in an attempt to be crowned Army champions. The team was hosted throughout by 48^{eme} Regiment de Transmissions, one of the five French Signals Regiments. Our hosts' hospitality was second to none, providing a variety of support ranging from accommodation and feeding through to training equipment.

During the camp, thirty players and staff completed a variety of training serials from physical and skills training sessions to team building exercises including laser quest. The camp was concluded with a tough fixture against a regional select XIII from Villeneuve sur Lot. The fixture provided the ideal opportunity for Corps players to test themselves against semi-professional opposition, two of whom had international honours. The fixture took place in the Villeneuve sur Lot Stadium and drew a sizeable local crowd. Without exception the Corps players performance was impressive, the dedication and unrelenting determination throughout the match was noted by our hosts with the player of the match being awarded to **Cpl Balekinasiga** (11 Sig Regt). The final score was 54-14 to our hosts.

The Corps' first Lawson Cup fixture will take place on Wednesday 27 April against the REME at RAF Lyneham. The remainder of the fixtures are shown below. The semi final and final draws are made later in the season.

Round	Date	Opposition	Location
1	27 Apr 16	REME	RAF Lyneham
2	8 Jun 16	RLC	South Cerney
3	15 Jun 16	AMS/RAPTC	Aldershot
4	6 Jul 16	RAC	Blandford

The Corps Rugby League 9's competition will be held in Blandford on Tuesday 21 June. Further details will be released to units in May. If you have any questions or enquiries please establish comms with **Capt Tom Howley**

(FdArmy-Trg-MTMCI-Adjt@mod.uk) who is the Corps Rugby League point of contact.

Team building at the largest laser quest in Europe – ideal CLM prep for some and more tiring then most first m weather training – you can tell we are from the UK from the pale skin! Game day – players and staff before the warm up. Thank you to the ABF for the warm up t-shirt: On parade with the French Regiment, where the Regt 2IC officially welcomed us to France Farewell function from 48^{eme} Regiment de Transmissions who were excellent hosts

by Cpl Horne

RMY ENDURANCE MOTORCYCLE RACE TI

With the Royal Corps of Signals steeped in motorcycle heritage, **Cpl Cooper** is taking it to the next level representing the Corps and the Army as a member of The Army Endurance Motorcycle Race Team.

The Team consists of 15 riders broken down into 5 separate teams; all members of the team are either serving members of the British Army or Veterans. The team races in the All Novice/Rookie championship all the way up through to Clubman class and National within the No Limits Racing Series.

2016 saw the creation of Army Team 5, the all new rookie team consisting of our very own Cpl Cooper (11SR), LCpl Richardson (Duke of Lancs) and Mr George (RLC Veteran).

Cpl Cooper tells us that "as the team name suggests we compete in endurance races, which means we race the clock. The races last anywhere between 3 - 8 hours and all start with a classic Le Mans style grid. This means the bike is held by a team mate on one side of the grid while the first rider lines up opposite his bike. When the National Flag is dropped the race starts and the rider runs across the track, jumps on the bike, starts it up and off we go racing. The team with the most laps completed when the clock counts down to zero, wins".

The race season is well and truly underway. With Cpl Cooper and Army Team 5 holding on to second place in the All Novice Championship (mix of 600 & 1000cc machines) trailing a 1000cc team in first place by a single point after an enormous effort by all at the 6hr race at Donington Park in May.

"After a beautiful day testing at Donington Park and putting in some great times, we were surprised to find we were running 4 to 5 seconds slower in qualifying. However, we put it all behind us and looked forward to the race." Cpl Cooper was to take the first stint. "Having qualified 46th on the grid out of 50 teams, I knew I had to make a good start." Cpl Cooper managed to jump 14 places making it to 32nd place by the first corner. As the race continued and Army Team 5 made their changes the lap times began to tumble and started to run quicker than in testing. With **LCpl Richardson** (Duke of Lancs) putting in the fastest lap time of Team 5 in the final stint of the race managing to overtake the other 600cc Team (Team 4) on the final lap, securing 3rd in class for Team 5 and again finishing higher than more experienced members of the Army Endurance Motorcycle Race Team.

The Army Endurance Motorcycle Race Team are now looking forward to the rest of the season with a 5hr race at the coastal circuit of Anglesey in June followed by the mammoth 8hr race at the fast flowing Snetterton in Norfolk a couple of weeks later in July.

Find out more about the teams progress and how the season is unfolding and show your support, by reading The Army Endurance Motorcycle Race Team's blog at https://teamarmyeracing.wordpress.com

Follow the team on Facebook - ARMY Endurance Motorcycle Race Team Watch the highlights on the team YouTube Channel - Army Endurance Motorcycle Race Team











Cpl Cooper dropping into Craner Curve

EXERCISE NORTHERN DHAULAGIRI KEYS



by Capt T Aldred

On 21 Apr 16, 12 intrepid members of 2 Sig Regt set off from sunny York to the Dhaulagiri region of Nepal to conduct a trek in this remote region of the country. The trek took 3 weeks and was done in conjunction with a major, tri-service medical research expedition into the effects of Altitude sickness and throughout our time in Nepal we would take part in the research.

Upon arrival into Kathmandu we were met by the rep from the trekking company we utilised, Himalayan Experience, and also **Cpl 'General' Pawan** who had gone ahead of the main party to visit relatives in Nepal. We received a brief at the hotel and, after some food and an admin period, set off to explore the 'Rock

and Roll' haven of the Thamel area of Kathmandu under the supervision of Thamel experts **Sgt Mehar** and **Sgt 'Jabul' Prakash**. The next day was a full admin day that allowed sightseeing, a quick visit to the British Embassy and the opportunity to buy some outdoor clothing. The day after we set off on a long and emotional vehicle move to Beni, the start of the actual trek. With several of the members of the team suffering from the effects of a few days in Thamel (**Sig 'Tourist Attraction' Marchington** take a bow) a 10 hour bus journey, complete with traffic jams and enormous potholes, was not enjoyed at all. However we all made it and after a night's sleep in Beni and another transfer to Darbang we actually began the trek in glorious sunshine where we immediately were able to appreciate the views afforded to us in Nepal; the countryside is simply stunning. We followed a riverside pass along the bottom of a valley to our first campsite. Upon arrival we were able to use the nearby stream and also had our first medical evacuation after one of the team slipped and cut his foot open on a rock – not the best start to the exped!! Thankfully 2SR MO, **Maj Gumbley**, was available to treat the casualty and with the help of the trekking company we could evacuate him the next day. He would meet us in Pokhara, fully recovered, at the end of the trip.

The new, 11 strong team continued the next day. The remarkable porters, provided through the trekking company, carried our main bags, cooked our food and also set up and collapsed the campsites throughout the trek and also provided a messing tent for us all to eat in. We set off at a steady pace and walked uphill for most of the day, following the winding river. The scenery remained brilliant and **Capt Vishal** kept us all entertained by introducing the non-Gurkha members to the local flora and fauna; what plants can be eaten, what is best for pain or insect bite relief or what adds the most flavour to food. The sun was out all day and after lunch we wound our way to the next campsite where, in the evening, we were treated to a cultural dance by the local villagers before escaping to our tents to avoid the enormous mosquitos that were intent on having us for dinner. The next day was much the same and it was only the next day that the vegetation changed. We were now above the main vegetation and the tracks became steeper and thinner as we ascended the valley. The guides took us slightly off route to visit a nearby hot spring which was a welcome relief. We camped again that night and all noticed the drop in temperature once the sun had gone down. Our route the day after was shorter but very steep as we followed the switchback paths up the mountain side and also appreciated the huge scars on the side of the mountain, even across our path, from recent landslides. Our food that night was also a treat for **Sig 'Robbo' Roberts** who was getting a little tired of Gurkha curry every night so the chefs managed to knock up a traditional Cornish pasty.



The next day we had reached such a height that there were no more trees or vegetation; the ground was all just loose shale rock. We reached Italian Base Camp, the first medical research location, by midday and we all noticed how hard the days walking had

been because of the altitude we were now at. We visited the research team, made arrangements for our measurements (Blood Oxygen levels and Heart rate) to be taken and began to relax in location as the next day was a planned rest day although **Sgt Mehar** took some of the team for some lessons so they could achieve the Summer Mountain Foundation qualification. For the next few days we would be trekking across a glacier, so an early start was necessary to get the majority of the walking out of the way before the ice heats up and becomes slippery. Our camp that night was at Japanese Base Camp and on landscape that closely resembled the moon and our night's sleep was punctuated with avalanches falling off the nearby peaks. After a disturbed night's sleep we set off to reach the Dhaulagiri Base Camp and were lucky to be set up there before a storm came in, reducing our visibility to almost nil. We managed to have

another rest day there and also completed the next round of medical tests on us and also, unfortunately, have to evacuate another member of the team because of Altitude Sickness. Thankfully he could walk off the mountain and recovered quickly, meeting us in Pokhara later. The Base Camp was quite austere and with a near-constant storm we did not always get views of the nearby Dhaulagiri Mountain, but when the cloud lifted we were treated to some spectacular views.

The final phase of the trekking element of the expedition was upon us. Early morning we set off from Base Camp to trek to Hidden Valley which would see us climb over a 5300m pass to sleep at 5100m; our highest sleep of the trip. The route today



was a steep incline and then a long, steady uphill slope to the top of the pass. The pace was very slow and everyone felt the strain, but the scenery was incredible as the clouds lifted and the weather was actually very pleasant as we crossed over the pass and descended down to our next campsite. We visited our final research tent at Hidden Valley and had decided not to have the rest day at this location as we were all feeling strong and also did not want to spend another night out in the storm, which had come in again with vengeance. The next day, our last day of full trekking, was quite an epic few hours. We set off well but soon the mountain path we were taking began to contour the mountain sides and in the face of a severe storm we crept along, moving slowly. The visibility was poor and the path unsteady, but we kept going and most importantly kept each other going. Eventually we reached 'Windy Hill' which lived up to its nickname as we descended quickly, soon dropping below the snow line for the first time in a week, and appreciated the stunning views of the Marpha-Jomson valley which was bright in the afternoon sun. An overnight camp then saw us descend further, to Marpha itself, where a guesthouse awaited us with such luxuries as running water, Wi-Fi and a cold drink. Some members of the team decided to relax at the house while other members took the opportunity to visit the Muktinath temple (about 3 hours away) and then we all came together for a final meal and an opportunity to thank the Porters, Guides and cooks who had sustained us throughout the trip.

We slowly began working our way back to Kathmandu but first we had 2 nights in Pokhara. Some of the GURTAM members took the opportunity to visit family and friends whilst the rest of the team explored Pokhara; sailing on the beautiful lake, visiting the Bahari temple in the centre of the lake and also to see the Barracks in Pokhara and take a guided tour of the nearby Gurkha Museum which was very interesting. Finally we arrived back in Kathmandu and after handing back all of our research equipment we savoured our final days in 'Rock and Roll' enclave before returning to the UK.

Overall the expedition accomplished all of its aims and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The incredible variety of landscapes and experiences we had in Nepal only served to highlight the importance of Adventurous Training like this and benefully increase at the part of the property of th



EXERCISE TIGER FROSTED KHUKURI

by Sgt Akash Sunuwar

Exercise FROSTED KHUKURI 2016 which took place over 12 – 25 Feb 2016 was a level 3 Adventure Training (AT) Alpine Skiing ex to Hakuba ski area in the Nagano prefecture of Japan. 22 serving members deployed on the exercise from 9 different cap badges stationed in British Forces Brunei (BFB) Garrison, the exercise was organised and led by **Sgt Jay Lyon** of 7 Flt Army Air Corps.



The aims of the exercise were as follows:

- a. To conduct Distributed Training (DT) to bring all participants up to SF 1 or SF 2 level and identify individuals with potential for future development to become instructors.
- b. To promote team cohesion across all departments throughout the BFB.
- c. To develop character, courage and leadership by pushing the individuals out of their comfort zones in an unfamiliar environment.
- d. To introduce the demanding sport of Alpine Skiing to the junior soldiers and nurture a desire to pursue/organise further ski exercises.

On 12 February we took a flight to Kuala-Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), and stayed in a hotel overnight. Next morning we had late breakfast and made our way to the KLIA to catch our flight to Japan. Our flight took off around mid afternoon and landed at Haneda International Airport (Tokyo) around midnight. We were well received at the airport by the transfer company rep and ushered to our awaiting coach. At about o6oohrs the following morning we arrived at *Snowbeds* B&B. On arrival we were given a short welcome and orientation brief by hotel staff and were ushered to our rooms. After a brief rest we awoke around 1100 hrs in the morning. After lunch **Jay** gave us an initial brief about the itinerary for the next 8 days and then we headed to *Spicy Rentals*, a local ski kit hire shop in Happo Town centre, for fitting and collection.

Hakuba is situated in the stunning Nagano region of Japan which is renowned as one of Japan's top winter resort areas. The Nagano Winter Olympics were held here in 1998 which raised its profile even more to the skiers and snowboarders across the world as an excellent winter sports venue. There are 9 resorts, 146 lifts and over 200 different trails with exceptionally pristine powder and some of the longest vertical skiing in Japan. It provides a range of hotels, restaurants, bars, shops and Onsen hot springs with a free shuttle bus to connect them all. Happo Town and Echoland are the recommended areas to stay for ski and night life. This is a short 15 minutes walk from Hakuba station. There is also the opportunity to night ski if that takes your fancy.

We stayed in *Snowbeds* Bed and Breakfast in Echoland which although budget was adequate for the ex. It had 2-8 men rooms and a good kitchen and dining facilities. It had a communal lounge with a TV and fireplace for relaxation that was to share with other guests. **Mitch**, an Australian, is the owner of the hotel and **Sinead** 'the house keeper' were both very helpful and friendly.





15 February 2016 (Day 1), Time: 0700 hrs, cool and cloudy day. We all travelled together to Imori where we were split into two groups of beginners and intermediate level. **Dave** was the allotted instructor for the beginners. **SSgt Stuart Henderson (Stu)** was the allotted instructor for the intermediate group. **Dave** is a very senior ski instructor on loan to the ex from Training Team Brunei. It was our pleasure to have such an experienced instructor like him. The lesson began with a quick introduction of ski gear and techniques. With his amazing instruction technique, most of us picked up the basics very quickly and we were practising the gliding, turning and breaking techniques all afternoon. However, it was not easy as it looked. We had lots of bumps and falls but everyone had fun.

16 February (Day 2); began with warm up, revision, recap and practice session; Dave took us through some new methods of ski walking, gliding, turning and "ploughing" (a term used for a method of breaking technique in ski). It was fantastic to see most of us could glide, take a nice turn and "plough". However, I did not find it particularly easy to pick up straight away. We were then starting to attack the gentle slopes by the afternoon. Flight Sgt Kelly McVitty (who already was a snow boarder), Cpl Saugat Gurung and LCpl Pranesh Hembya were strongest in the beginners group. Dave taught us some different techniques as and when the terrain allowed it. He focused more on the weaker skiers than the stronger ones for them to improve and come in line with others. SSgt Neil Jones was a beginner skier but also a fighter who would never be afraid of getting lost in the trails but liked to learn his own way.

Day 3, the instructors were swapped over so that both groups got the opportunity to learn from different instructors. We were with **Stu** and intermediate group were with **Dave**. We set off for upper Goryu and Hakuba 47. Most of us could ski on gentle slopes and knew how to stop when needed which was a good achievement. We did some green trails and had lunch at the Restaurant Alps 360. Then we started skiing in some easy red trails. However, I was still finding my confidence in the group. It wasn't until late that day I overcame my fear and realised it was the only thing holding me back. As soon as I started attacking the slopes without fear and let the ski go smoothly all went well and I started to make much better improvements. The key to learning to ski faster was to let go of your fear. After a long day skiing all of us were pretty much exhausted but looking forward to the social evening that the hotel had arranged. **Sinead** was very good at making refreshments and ensured we were all entertained. In the meantime **Jay** displayed his impressive close up card tricks. It was a fun night but there was serious skiing the next day so we retired early to rest.

Day 4, both groups set off for Iwatake resort; We took the gondola to the top and after a quick warm up we skied downhill nice and smooth via a green route. It was quite a bad day of our ski tour, **LCpl Milankumar Sunuwar**, from intermediate group seriously injured himself skiing downhill. He was evacuated off the mountain via a skidoo which is provided free with the lift pass, he was then taken to hospital where they scanned his knee; it was suspected that his ligament in the knee joint was torn. For the rest of the ex he was on crutches and pain killers. Despite being given the option of an early flight back and after consulting medical advice he chose to stay and continue with the Exercise until the end. **LCpl Bachan Gurung** who was in intermediate group, received a minor injury and took a complete rest. Apart from those 2 incidents everyone had a joyful ski in their groups. By this time all novices were starting to become intermediates.

Day 5, We were taken to Hakuba Happo and the instructors decided to mix the groups in order to build confidence for the beginners. The instructors liked to choose one of the students to lead the trail with the rest having to follow one after another. Everyone enjoyed the duck run in a nice looking snake trail. This went until lunch time and we were then given a free run; however we had to be in groups of 2-3 at least for safety reasons. Again everyone enjoyed doing their own choice of trails. The lower part of Goryu and Limori resorts cater well for beginners with wide open runs and a good consistent slope.



The weather was in our favour. We got opportunities to experience in cloudy, snowy and even sunny weather. Cloudy days were the most suitable for skiing because the temperature would stay cooler which kept the ski trails perfect. The difficult part was to ski under heavy snow because of the additional snow on trails which would just slow us down too quickly. However, this would contradict when it was sunny. The icy and slippery condition would help us ski faster but control and breaking would be more difficult, especially for novice skiers.

Day 6 was a rest day, so 6 of us decided to do a tour of Nagano city. We took coach at o8oohrs from Hakuba Happo bus station to Nagano. It took us an hour and half to get to the station at the city centre. We witnessed the Japanese Cultural Show at the station for a while and managed to get the chance to wear Samurai costume. Then we made our way to the Zenko-ji Temple through the city centre enjoying the atmosphere of the Japanese modern and ancient building, art and culture. The Zenko-Ji was a Buddhist temple, built in 7th century but Nagano city was established in 1897, originally a town built around the temple. The temple was named after "Yoshimitsu Honda" who rescued the main image of Amida Buddha from the place it was dumped caused by the dispute of two clans. "Zenku-ji" is the Chinese transliteration of "Yoshimitsu Honda". The main image of Buddha is a hibutsu (secret Buddha), a statue of Buddha which was secretly hidden from from the public. It is believed that "hibutsu" was the first Buddha statue brought in to Japan. The other interesting part of this temple was that it was built using only wood. Afterwards we went to a Japanese restaurant for lunch and relaxation. We returned to Hakuba in the evening. It was an amazing experience and a fruitful educational day.

7th Day, 0700hrs, similar routine as Day 5, got to the shuttle bus to Hakuba 47 resort.

Day 8, sadly the final day of ski; the plan was to get onto the gondola and get to the top for a group photograph but the skiing began straight away. We met up at the top for lunch and a group photograph. For the final run we skied off the mountain together in 1 large group. We then handed the hired ski gears back on our way back to the hotel. In the evening we all got together for our last dinner in a German restaurant in Hakuba town centre. The evening started with a thanks giving speech by the Ex Leader, Sgt Lyon. We enjoyed a range of delicious continental food and drinks. We also had a professional card magician to entertain us and it was good to see competition between Sgt Lyon and this Australian magician. The night was then wrapped up with some surprise presentations which were the icing on the cake.

Early morning on 22nd February 2016 we loaded our baggage in to the coach and headed back to Tokyo. After around 6 hours journey of negotiating numerous tunnels, hills, rivers and cities of Japan, finally we arrived at the Shinjuku Kuyakusho-mae Capsule Hotel which was situated at the heart of Shinjuku City. For most of us it was our first new experience but it is common in Japan. The guests had to take off their shoes at the entrance and lock them into the provided locker. Check-in was at the counter where you get the capsule (room) number and a locker to keep personal kit and valuables. Common bathrooms, toilets and amenities were provided in level 3; whereas the rooms were in level 4, 5, 6 and 7, however level 7 was the ladies accommodation. All kind of necessary washing and shaving kit, tooth brush, toothpaste, soap, hand lotion, shampoo, comb, hair dryer were provided. There were some interesting and funny experiences which I would like to share; toilets were designed in such way that one didn't have to use toilet paper to clean but all you needed was to press a button where you would be cleaned with water spray and dried too. To brush your teeth one didn't have to apply toothpaste but just use the special brush, where the funny thing was you could not see the toothpaste from the outside at all.

We arrived at the capsule hotel around late afternoon and checked in quickly. Then we decided to explore some of the key attractions in the Tokyo city. So we headed to the Shinjuku Station. Then we gathered some information and city map from the information centre. We got on the next tube to famous Shibuya Scramble crossing. It was one of the world's largest scramble crossing situated outside the "Hachiko" exit of Shibuya Station. It is referred to as a "scramble crossing" as the traffic was stopped in all directions, thus allowing pedestrians to walk in all directions through the intersection. It was an amazing experience to be there physically and witnessing the action happening in front of your eyes. It was just like in the movies. We then walked across; people were taking videos of themselves, kissing, and cheering. We also took some pictures of ourselves in the crossing and with the statue of "Hachiko". Then we took our turn towards the Tokyo Tower. What an amazing experience to be at the top of the tower and enjoy the spectacular 360 night view of Tokyo city that extended to the horizon.

The night was still young, but we headed back to our nest (capsule), leaving the rest for the following day. Since our flight was not until late the next evening, we continued our tour of Tokyo. We managed to explore many landmarks and attractions in and around the capital within a short period of time, such as the Imperial Palace, Tokyo Dome, Shinjuku City, Tokyo Metro (subway, nearly 3 times bigger than London Underground), and various shopping malls on our way. Then we rushed back to the hotel to collect our baggage and headed for Haneda International Airport to catch the flight back to Brunei.

What a fantastic opportunity it was to get trained and feel the adventure of the Japanese Alps, exploring and experiencing the Japanese culture and tradition as well as modern development and technology. Despite being one of the busiest cities in the world Tokyo was surprisingly very clean, well organised and a vibrant city. Without doubt the Japanese are well ahead of time and the most developed country in the east because they are well disciplined, humble and hardworking people. This was what I experienced in our visit to this beautiful country.

In conclusion, it was a very successful ex. It surely had been a fantastic experience for all of us to enjoy the skiing in such top class resorts and gain an experience of Japanese culture. At the end of the ex we could tell that we have built a fantastic working relationship amongst ourselves. All the members of both beginners and intermediate groups have achieved the standard of SF1 or SF2 accordingly. Thus, every individual played their part to achieve the aims of ex as mentioned at the beginning. It involves a huge amount of work, planning and preparation even before the actual AT could get approval from Joint Service Adventure Training Form Alfa (JSATFA). Getting financial support from ranges of organisations is another painstaking process. Then not to mention all the administrative work from beginning to the end of exercise. Therefore, all participants are hugely indebted to Sgt Jay Lyon and all the sponsors for giving us this fantastic opportunity.

EXERGISE TIGER ANNAPURNA KHUKURI

by Cpl Nishan Gurung

Ex Tiger Annapurna Khukuri, a level 3 High Altitude Adventure Training (AT) Expedition (Exped) to Annapurna Base Camp (ABC) in Nepal, was conducted over the period 10 – 25 Mar. The aims of the exercise were to conduct a high altitude and physically arduous trek in a remote terrain of Nepal, in order to develop physical courage, enhance teamwork and leadership whilst placing individuals outside of their comfort zones, and exposing individuals to new culture and places, and to inspire the junior soldiers to gain AT qualifications.

This Exped was actually planned for the year 2015 but the devastating earthquake that struck Nepal a year ago and unofficial blockade by its neighbour to the south, resulted in the ex being put on hold for another year. All the mandatory pre Exped administrations, briefings and medicals were carried out well in advance of the expedition. Out of a total fourteen members of the Exped, twelve were from the British Forces Brunei (BFB) while two SML instructors were trawled from the UK due to the scarcity of the qualified ones in BFB. The following personnel were deployed on the Exped:

S/No	Rank	Name	Cap Badge	Remarks
1	Capt	Nimbahadur Pun	QG SIGNALS	Exped Leader, MLT
2	Sgt	Akash Sunuwar	R SIGNALS	Exped 2IC, Team Medic
3	Cpl	Durga Pun	QG SIGNALS	Admin NCO, MLT
4	Cpl	Amar Gurung	QOGLR	MLT, BCD
5	Cpl	Basanta Jirel	RAMC	CMT
6	Cpl	Nishan Gurung	QG SIGNALS	MLT
7	Cpl	Bhim Parangden	QGE	
8	Cpl	Mimlal Thapa	GSPS	
9	LCpl	Bijay Gurung	QG SIGNALS	
10	LCpl	Shanteshwor Pun	QG SIGNALS	Photographer
11	LCpl	Roshan Tamang	GSPS	
12	Pte	Saugat Gurung	QOGLR	
13	Sgt	Debendra Gurung	QG SIGNALS	Lead SML
14	LCpl	Basanta Rai	QG SIGNALS	SML, Team Medic



Welcomed by Ama Toli of Chommrong Village

Gurkha Adventures Trekking Company, well reputed within the Brigade fraternity and run by an ex QGE wala with the experience of more than ten years in the field was chosen for the provision of trekking guides, porters, transport, lodging and food for the whole duration of the trek.

On the first day in Kathmandu, the Exped leader and 2IC had a mandatory security brief by SO Admin, Defence Attaché in British Embassy, Kathmandu. A brief by the Trekking Company in the afternoon about the 'dos' and 'donts' in the higher altitudes, left us with a bit of time for last minute shopping in Thamel. **LCpl Shantey** ended up spending the most on a shopping spree.

On 12th Mar, we set off early to Pokhara to beat the infamous 'Kalanki ko Jam' but the effort turned out to be in vain as we could not avoid it and unsurprisingly took an hour to hit the highway, which is normal for the commuters in Nepal. After six hours of driving without any delays or obstruction in the route, we reached the tourist haven Pokhara, a stark contrast to crowded Kathmandu, a city full of pollution and vehicular madness.

The following morning, after two hours of driving, we reached our disembarkation point, Nayapool – a town in the border of Kaski and Parbat districts. After a few safety and route briefs by the lead guide, we hoisted our day packs onto our backs and set off



Cpl Durga with his ever present sticks, flanked by Cpls Deven and Basanta

through a mixture of flat, open fields and dirt tracks to Tikhedhungaa – which would be our first destination of the trek. Soon after we passed a small village of Birethanti, forty five minutes walk from Nayapool, it was now a highway of porters – carrying super-human loads on their backs – and trekkers from all over the world. Peaceful serenity and solitude soon replaced the mad bustle of Nayapool.

The first catastrophe of the Exped struck in the form of fever to our Lead SML, **Sgt Debendra Gurung**. The mercury hit 39 degree centigrade and the trekking came to a complete halt! Few had already lost their hope of making it to the top. It was a wise decision by Exped Leader to rent a room in a nearby lodge to let him have a rest for few hours. **Cpl Basanta Jirel**, a qualified medic from The Medic Corps, was on hand to assist with the medications. When he was feeling better, we started the long slog up to Tikhedhungaa (1500 metres above sea level). The lodge we were staying at was relatively cosy and was crowded with fervent hikers from Tokyo to Texas.

Any first timer encountering the uphill of Ulleri will certainly feel unpromising. The route itself was so steep that it was almost perpendicular. We trudged up stone steps of Ulleri the following morning, crammed into such a short distance, passing through the fleet of mules carrying daily supplies to the hotels in more higher and remote places. The incline made our leg muscles burn and our



At the top of Poonhill with Annapurna range at the background

lungs heave, while the painfully elusive summit seemed to remain like a distant apparition. At the top of Ghorepani (2750 metres), a fierce chill enveloped us as the temperatures were beginning to fall as a result of altitude gain. The fireplace – fuelled by gas – kept the lounge and dining areas luxuriously warm.

With the intention of not missing the view of glorious sunrise from Poon Hill (3210 metres), a beautiful view point named after a Poon family and an hour uphill walk from Ghorepani, we started early the following morning before dawn. After witnessing the first rays of sunrise over those extraordinary mountain peaks, we took a moment to bask in the view of the majestic Himalayas. For an hour, we simply stayed at the peak of Poon Hill sipping hot tea from the one and only shop at a whopping cost of Rs 200 per glass and silently drinking in the glorious scenery. The view more than compensated for the cold.

We headed east towards Chommrong traversing through Rhododendron forests along the ridge line and passing through

some perilous re-entrants, where fog interrupted clear skies and turned visibility to mere metres. By afternoon, the skies had cleared and we gazed at the imposing summits to the north while walking. Thankfully we arrived in Chommrong (2170 metres), the colourful mountain village located on the lap of Annapurna, after covering the longest distance on a day of the Exped. To my surprise, this village had everything from an Italian restaurant to makeshift departmental stores for last minute supplies and one can even load up on pastries from a German Bakery! Fortunately hiking in Annapurna region is very convenient. The abundance of tea houses means you won't need to carry a tent, or much food.

It's fair to say that Chommrong was the last bastion of civilisation before exploring the vast and untamed region of Annapurna. It's still not clear to me why they don't sell meat products after this point, a massive blow to the morale of the whole team! Our next stop was Deurali (3230 metres), a tiny hamlet made up of just three hotels. Forget meat, the hot lemon was a soothing balm after another hard and long day trek.

We started our final day of ascent towards ABC at a snails pace, drenched in rain and passing through some avalanche prone areas and reached Macchapuchhre Base Camp (3700 metres) in two hours. When we reached ABC (4130 metres) around noon, the clouds were already creeping up and we had no view at all. At 4130 metres, it was the highest point in the circuit. Reaching ABC provided a weird mix of emotions; immense relief at finally arriving as well as excitement at being so high. The following morning, we were rewarded with a stunning view of Annapurna and her neighbours. The Himalaya's had had a fresh dumping of snow for peaks to replenish their white cloaks. When we finally started our downhill push from ABC towards civilisation, Mt Annapurna seemed to follow, teasing us with her beautiful form.

As we continued to descend, we stopped for a night in Bamboo and stayed in Jhinudanda the following day. A visit to the hot springs, a half an hour walk from Jhinudanda, was a perfect remedy for tight muscles and lasted for two hours. The next slumber place was



Oxygen demonstration by Prakash (Guide) after crossing 3500 metres in Deurali

Pothana, where a function was organised in the evening in honour of our porters, whose support were unparalleled throughout. **Sgt Akash's** - with three albums under his belt - soothing guitar beat, **LCpl Bijay's dohori** with Tin pane (Nepali wine) and a warm fire place was a fitting blend.



The expedition team posing at Annapurna
Base Camp

The 9 days and 8 nights trekking phase was concluded with a short but strenuous walk down steep and apparently never ending steps to Phedi, passing through outskirts of, recently booming with tourists, village of Dhampus. While in Pokhara, a guided visit to various places of interests was organised by **LCpls Bijay** and **Shantey.** The visit coincided with the Holi festival and when **Cpls Durga** and **Bhim** turned up unrecognisable; their faces swathed with colours, it was a surprise to nobody.

En route back to Kathmandu, two reps of the Rafting Company were awaiting us in Trisuli River at Charaudi. It was the first time for many of us and those treacherous rapids added some exhilaration to the escapade, with **Cpl Amar** losing his grip and plunging into the chilled water of Trisuli. The last day in Kathmandu was spent with a visit to various Historical places in and around the valley, culminating with a final

dinner in one of the traditional Newari eatery. This is where we bade adieu to our two very humble and mild-mannered guides.

As I reclined down that night in the hotel room, I couldn't help closing my eyes and remembering the glorious summit of Annapurna, with the sunrise brushing the peaks of Holy Machapuchre and her neighbours; the alluring, cloud ravaged ridgeline of Annapurna I, III and IV; and the simple pleasures of eating dal bhat with mates and warm locals among the most majestic of mountain tops.

Finally, as a note of sincere thanks to all CofC of various units and depts for their valuable support, advice, guidance and much appreciated financial support. With all this and scrupulously planned AT package by the Exped Leader, the Ex TIGER AK16 concluded remarkably.

Some experiences are pretty hard to beat!



Visit to historical Naraynhiti Palace during Recuperation phase

EXERCISE COCKNEY SLIDE

by WO2 (SUKO) Adam Tear

L x COCKNEY SLIDE was the 71 Yeomanry Signal Regiment's Winter Adventurous Training Exped to the Grand Massiff ski Region in France which took place in the first week of March. The Regt already had a busy Winter season sending teams to compete at both the Corps Alpine Ski Championships and the Corps Snowboarding Championships.

After these sporting events, this was the Unit's opportunity to deliver Ski foundation 1 and 2 AT qualifications. The group assembled at the Coulsdon Army Reserve Centre late on Friday the 4th March to be issued their kit and as a launch point for the long drive into Europe. A widespread shortage of snow in the preceding weeks had led to concerns over whether conditions would be good enough this late in the season and in the early part of the move there was nothing to suggest that would change. That was until it was **Sgt Funmi Osho's** turn to take the wheel where the bus had to slow to a crawl in practically a whiteout. Strangely enough it cleared right up to sunshine and blue skies as soon as she handed over the driving. While she was far from happy, it was reassuring as it looked like there would be good snow when they got there. The only other excitement of the journey out was a confusing diversion around the French side of Geneva airport trying to locate **Capt Khush Cooper**. The French side had more in common with a car rental car park than the foyer to an international airport and apparently was even harder to negotiate from the inside.

The Exped would be based out of Samoens on the edge of the Grand Massiff ski Region which is centred on Flaine. The village was quieter than Flaine and had access to the same skiing areas but from a picturesque traditional village instead of the concrete tower blocks. There was only a small amount of snow in the valley so **Sig Alice Ewen** would be able to get out for her evening runs. As this was her first time skiing those words would come back to haunt her as the full days of skiing took their toll.



Flt Lt Stephen Ford and the SF1 group



Capt Khush Cooper traversing



Capt Khush Cooper and SSgt Tim Abbott traversing

On their first day skiing, everyone ventured out to test their ski legs, and warm up for what for all would be a test of endurance. The groups were split into two for SF2 under Capt Dave Alleyne and SSgt Tim Abbott who'd joined the exped from 37 Sig Regt and the novices going for SF1 under Flt Lt Steve Ford. The different approaches became apparent early on with SSgt Abbotts's emphasis on mileage and Flt Lt Ford's gentle support and encouragement. Capt Dave Alleyne's pole planting lesson was certainly memorable for its stabbing and punching technique although I won't repeat it here. His phrases carried on through the week including repetitions of knee / bum / knee, sitting on a milk stool, stroke the dog, skiing in a tunnel and many more.

Later, Instructor **SSgt Tim Abbott** with **WO2 Adam Tear** and **Sgt Dave Nielsen** were nearly thrown from a chair lift when the conveyor belt pushed them to an abrupt drop off before the chair arrived. Rapid back stepping was required to escape the potential embarrassment.

Sunday evening was the first of the three lecture nights, covering topics such as avalanche awareness, emergency shelters and mountain weather. For these three nights the lessons were preceded by "Come Dine With Me" style evenings hosted in turn by each of the chalets. The third night's meal supplied by the instructor chalet was widely acknowledged (by them at least) as the clear winner notwithstanding the counter claim that they'd gone way over budget.

Back to the skiing and training continued on the third day with **Sgt Abbott's** group ending up on a run that had only been pisted, half way down. A quick lesson on traversing a slope beyond their abilities was required save the day but certainly stretched people's comfort zones.

It was when the SF2 groups joined up to go touring that the real skiing started! With excitement and anticipation they skied to pastures new and set about applying skins to the skis. Stripping down to minimal clothing (within reason) they started the ascent. The joy of the scenery soon gave way to the physical effort of the climb. As they ascended, the helpful banter from those using the chair lifts over the top only increased everyone's determination to get to the top. The group suffered numerous stumbles as they got to grips with the technique and as the sun heated the face of the climb, the slopes started to become more fragile. **Sig Andy Carrigan** who had moved up from the SF1's for the day to join the tour had a small slip out of the tracks that had been cut but then struggled to retrieve his ski in the depth of snow.

Having finished the ascent they then had the much anticipated descent. However first there was a drop into a gully, which no one completed without a tumble. Removing the skins they then raced back across country for the exercise group pictures to be taken with the SF1s. However no one had realised quite how exhausted their legs were. **Cpl Rosie Ewbank**, who'd previously complained that the ragging she'd been promised had failed to materialise, was strangely silent. **Sig Carrigan** re-joined the



WO2 Adam Tear, Sig Andy Carrigan and Cpl Ewbank working their way up

SF1s for their leisurely descent on the Cascades run, a 14 Km blue run into the neighbouring town of Sixt and the SF2's continued to work on their off-piste skiing. Only on the last chairlift of the day did they fully appreciate the distance they had traversed. Although not a lot in a straight line, the height and actual distance traversed was considerable. This gave the guys a real sense of achievement and reenforced the objectives of the day.

The day was the first really good one for visibility so the SF2s made

the most of it to the extent that the ski patrol ended up kicking them off the slopes and having to ski down into the adjoining town of Morillon to catch the bus linking the valley villages together. On reaching Samoens, the local buses had stopped but the local school bus dropped them close to home for a brief walk back.

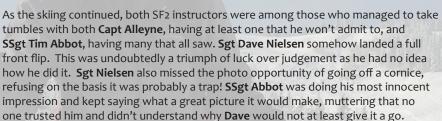


Sgt Dave Nielsen & Cpl Rosie Ewbank checking the snow pack

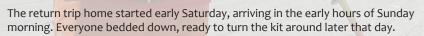
As the SF2 group returned home, they got the call that the SF1 group had actually spent even longer on the hills, and needed a mini bus to collect them from Sixt. **WO2 Simon May's** first night ski was not planned and he came off less than impressed after encountering a piste basher on a narrow track.

The next day's challenges started with building snow holes, conducting slab tests and avalanche search skills. Volunteers to get up on the snow slab to see if it would slip were in short supply until **SSgt Richie Marsh** stepped forward. Reassuringly it took quite an effort to dislodge the slab although there was still a little disappointment in the crowd as the expected collapse (with him included) wasn't as spectacular as they'd hoped.

The group broke into pairs for the avalanche transceiver searches. One of them would head off and bury their transceiver in a daysack for their team mate to find. A key point here (which in fairness had been stressed by the instructors) is to make sure it's turned on before you bury it! Finding a transceiver that isn't transmitting is taking the drill to a whole different level.



The last day of skiing was a free ski, where everyone split up into smaller groups. Sig Alice Ewen, clearly aspired to go from zero to hero when she mistakenly left her group to join the advanced skiers. On catching them only to be told that her SF1 group had gone a different way her response of "shut up", "you're lying" and level of disbelief was priceless.



The exercise was a success, it delivered the training objectives and each person sought to push themselves further and develop themselves. There was a wide range of ranks from the old and bold through to newly trained, who were mixed through the ski abilities. As a Reserve Unit spread around London, the ex further had the added benefit of joining together troops from the different sqns. Between touring up hill, and skiing downhill, everyone developed their skiing abilities and came home far more confident skiers. In some cases skills were developed through the application of sheer terror! All of this was done during physical exercise starting at first lift in the morning and in some cases finishing well after last lift in the evening, pushing each person in their ski fitness, physical fitness and mental fitness.

A challenging exercise but overall it was worth it, rewarding and highly recommended.



SSgt Richie Marsh testing the snow pack



Sgt Nielsen working his way through the trees



WO2 Simon May to the rescue when your keys are with the other group!

EXERCISE KANCHENJUNGA DRAGON II, THE SHINING PATH by Sig Price

On 7 April 14 members of 30th Sig Reg were deployed on Ex Kanchenjunga Dragon II. The previous expedition was postponed by almost a year, due to the tragic earthquake that struck Nepal in April 2015.

We arrived at Hotel Manang in Kathmandu on 7 April, in the early afternoon. After checking in and sorting out our rooms, we all went downstairs into the lobby. We were told that we had free time to sort out any admin, roam around the local area and acclimatise. Afterwards, we all met up in the hotel restaurant in the evening for a meal and to talk about the next couple of days before we left for the trek.

The next day after breakfast, we all gathered in a room next to the lobby for a brief from **Capt Hebindra Pun**, OIC Exped and Adventure Zambuling, our trekking company. Shortly after, we were instructed to get all the tents together and put them all in one bag for the porters to carry on the trek. At 1000hrs, we all met back up in the same room to hand in the tents. **SSgt Kingshott** had laid out all his kit that he would be taking on the trek. He then explained what things he was taking and the reasons why he was taking them. This was helpful because it showed people exactly what they needed, not to pack too much kit and it also gave people time to go out and buy anything they might have needed that they hadn't previously thought of. The rest of the day was then spent exploring the local area and preparing kit for the trek.

On the morning of 9 April, we departed from the hotel. The minibus took us from our hotel to the airport to catch our domestic flight, where we would get on a coach to another hotel. Once the plane had landed, it was a 200m walk to the "Chelsea Bus" which we would be on for the rest of the day. The journey was very bumpy and not exactly comfortable, but eventually we stopped for lunch in a small restaurant/café next to a large tea plantation.

The food that was served was "Dal Bhat". This is a very popular dish in Nepal and India and consists of steamed rice, lentils, vegetables, chutney and is sometimes served with some sort of meat. After everyone had finished their food, some people decided to explore the tea plantation and take some photos before we got back on the coach. We climbed onto the coach for the second half of the journey and eventually arrived in the small town of llam where our hotel was.

The next day was the final part of the bus journey to Taplejung where the trek would start. The majority of the day was spent travelling besides our long lunch stop. The place that we stopped for lunch (Phidim) was home to a Gurkha welfare centre that we were to visit on our way to Taplejung. At the welfare centre, we were shown a PowerPoint presentation and given a short tour of the centre itself by an Ex-QGSIGNALS WO2, now the Assistant Area Welfare Officer. Here we learned about what the people do and what their mission there is. We then had lunch and got back on the coach for the last part of the journey.

It was now even hotter than before, and the breeze coming in the windows on the coach seemed to do nothing but drag in the dust from the road. After what felt like a pretty long day, we finally arrived in Taplejung. We had our evening meal and then everyone went off to sort out their kit for the start of the trek the following day. A small group of the exped then enjoyed some 'tongba' an eastern Nepal speciality drink!

The trek start point was in Taplejung and the finish point of the trek was in a place not far from Taplejung called Suketa. The trek was almost a loop on the map but we were finishing a few miles short of where we started. We were to be trekking for 16 days with one rest day for altitude acclimatisation.

Some of the Expedition members posing for a photo in Kanyam Tea plantation on the way to llam

Some of the Expedition members posing for a photo in Kanyam Tea plantation on the way to

WO2 (YofS) Dudley demonstrates how to hand-wash clothes before enjoying a glacial ice-cold shower



Usually in the evenings, there was a lot of spare time. On a lunch stop on one of the days, SSgt Kingshott showed us how to balance a rock on top of another. Rock balancing takes a lot of patience and when successful gives you a strange sense of achievement. This killed a lot of time in the evenings when reading a book started getting boring.

The route we took to Kanchenjunga Base Camp was gradual in height. No one on the expedition started to feel the effects of AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness) until around 4000m. At this point some people were suffering mostly with headaches, loss of appetite, fatigue and dizziness. At the final stop before base camp day, we were staying in a stunning place called Lonak. The altitude at Lonak was 4700m and people were suffering once again from AMS. Due to this, 3 people on the expedition didn't make it to base camp and stayed in Lonak whilst the rest of the exped team went to the base camp. Day 9 was base camp day and it was a 20km trip from Lonak to base camp and back. On arrival to Lonak, we were served lunch and then had to trek 15km back to the previous place we had stayed.

On the way to Kanchenjunga base camp, there were many landslides. When crossing, the instructors made us take extra care, spacing was also put in place so that if there was another landslide, not everybody would be taken out by it. It was important that all messages from the front were passed to the rear and vice versa, to ensure everyone's safety. The instructors were very good at stopping to explain why the precautions we took were being taken. Many people including myself on this expedition were looking to gain their SMF qualification at the end of the trek. We were taught a lot by the instructors on the expedition which would help us in future AT qualifications that we might want to achieve.

The route back to Suketa (The finish point) was a lot of uphill and downhill. We didn't drop below 2000M for the remainder of the trek, but now no one was suffering at all from AMS as we had all acclimatised. On day 12 of the trek, we had woken up in the morning to find it had snowed overnight. On this day, we were to go over 3 passes and there was snow everywhere. We had been given micro spikes prior to the trek, however the actual track wasn't too bad so there was no need to wear them. On some parts when there was snow, the instructors gave points on how to manoeuvre in the snow safely. The pace had obviously slowed down considerably due to the conditions, even with the snow we still arrived out our finish point for the day at 1500hrs.

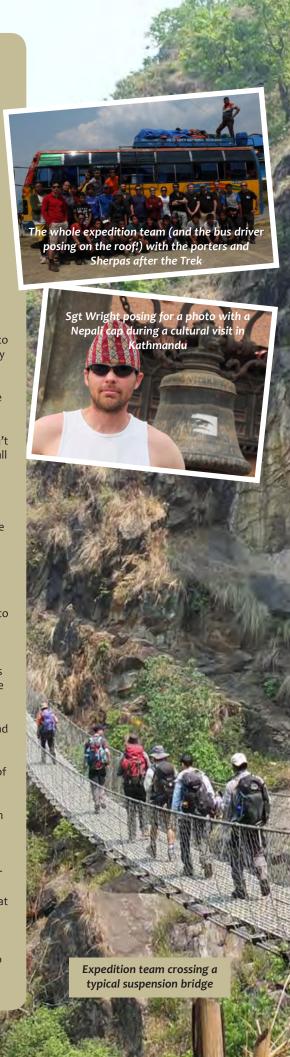
The last day of the trek, the track was probably the flattest part since the start. We finished in Suketa where the transport was waiting for us. We were not flying back to Kathmandu; instead we had to get on a coach for 5 hours to a hotel and stay the night there.

We were in a place called Dharan. Here, was the main place in Nepal that the kukri is made. These were a lot cheaper to buy than in Kathmandu, due to them being made in Dharan. We had a look round various kukri shops and some people purchased kukris for display items in their homes. The following day we had to endure a gruelling 17 hours back on the coach. We arrived at the hotel in Kathmandu at around o100hrs and went straight to bed.

The next day after breakfast we visited 3 temples in and around Kathmandu. Most of which were damaged by the earthquakes from the year before. On the trek, it was the year anniversary of the earthquake and we stopped at one point for a minute's silence. Some buildings around the temples were completely destroyed due to them being built in the 16th century. We had a guide with us who told us about all the temples and the history of Nepal.

We got back to the hotel after our tour and were told that we were all going out for a pre-paid meal that evening. During our meal, traditional Nepalese dancing took place and some people even got the opportunity to get up and dance on the stage at the end of the night.

The expedition was very successful and saw eleven members of 30th Sig Reg reach Kanchenjunga base camp. We had covered over 250km in 17 days and there were no injuries for the full duration. The experience was amazing but I don't think many of the British members of the expedition will be eating dal bhat any time soon.





n 7 Feb 16, whilst the world was deep in slumber, eight members of 299 Sig Sqn (SC) and eight members of the wider corps assembled. The lucky 16 set off and deployed to Turin, Italy. The expedition was set up to provide the opportunity to learn the necessary skills to qualify for Ski Foundation Level One (SF1), as well as a much needed bonding session for the Squadron. The departure at Heathrow went without a hitch, and saw the team flying high over the clouds in the early hours of the day. On arrival, visibility was limited with a thick fog that looked like it wasn't going away anytime soon. After a long wait to collect bags, we were on our way to the lovely resort known as Sauze d'Oulx.

The first port of call was to collect the equipment. Some of the party ventured into town to get acquainted with the new surroundings. After a social get together we headed back to the hotel for the evening meal where we discussed the week's events.

The group was divided into two teams based on experience and ability. Team one would house the beginners. It took willpower, determination and all the patience in the world for the Sqn AT instructor not to abandon ship. Team two consisted of members who had some experience or who had already conducted SF1. The expedition was for those in team two to expand on their previous experiences and to conduct SF1 in a more satisfying manner. The two instructors aim for the expedition was for all members to achieve SF1. For this the members would have to competently and confidently parallel ski on red runs, which to team one sounded concerning. Team one started on a green slope to learn the fundamentals of skiing. This consisted of learning how to move and how to stop, without letting the skis run away. Skiing proved difficult at first, and saw a few falls. Team two kicked off with a quick remind and revise of some basic principles and then headed off to get acquainted with the snow. It was at this point that some dark horses on skis emerged and their previous modesty had been ousted.



Team 2 enjoying the scenery



Receiving awards at the quiz night

The results were astonishing. The confidence and skill for team one had increased 10 fold; this was demonstrated multiple times on the red runs much to the instructors delight. All members demonstrated the necessary skills to qualify for SF1, and showed the level of instruction was unequalled. Team two harnessed their previous experiences and showed a high level of consistency. The week didn't go without any battle wounds though, with an (un)lucky member of the expedition leaving with one arm shorter than the other. Overall the week was long and at times perilous, however, all students that conducted SF1 had passed.

In conclusion the deployment was a massive success. All the aims and objectives set out at the beginning of the week were met. The departure was a sorry sight for all. The weather was beautiful, and the level of instruction was impeccable. None of the week would have been possible without the instructors' aptitude and patience. This has proved to be another successful venture for the 299 Sig Sqn (SC), and will surely, not be the last.

eek One 27 Feb - 05 Mar 16

Soldiers from 2 Sig Regt departed Imphal Barracks in York to participate in an Alpine Ski ex designed to qualify soldiers in both Ski Foundation (SF) 1 and 2. The journey was by coach to Leeds Bradford Airport and flight to Chambery in France. Once arrived there was a smooth transfer onto another coach to Les Arcs Ski Resort which was a further 2 and half hours by road.

On arrival to the Les Arcs Ski Resort in France everyone was divided into three groups, SF1 led by Instructor Capt 'Chris' Sykes-Poppham of the Royal Marines, this group was for those who had little or no experience, SF2 led by Chief Instructor, Maj John Howell-Walmsley MBE for those who were already at SF1 level and ready to advance and the final group SF2+ led by Sgt Dean Houghton, for those who needed the further continuation training towards advancement onto SF3. This was a group of elite rogue ski veterans intent on ripping up the slopes in search of off-piste powder, getting big air between stopping at cafes and of course.. 'in the voice of Jeremy Clarkson' "break the land speed record!"

Of course you can't ski without ski equipment and UCPA provided this also, which was incredibly convenient for two of our female skiers **Cpl Holly Beazley** and **Sig Daniella Stewart** who proved that women truly can multitask when they performed the famous Uri Geller spoon bending trick using their ski poles while exiting a chair lift. When asking to exchange their poles (that were now bent in half) the ski hire staff remarked that in 25 years he had never seen poles bent in such a way.

The ski conditions were looking good with lots of snow falling and forecast to fall over the coming days, there was some poor visibility due to low lying clouds and fog at times. However, each morning everybody received a full weather brief and the instructors selected where to get the best possible conditions to ski, so this was not an issue for us.

Week One (SF2)

Everyone was looking forward to the weeks skiing with different levels of excitement. You had the SF1 group who didn't really know what to expect, the continuation (expert) group who were no doubt looking to push themselves out of their comfort zone and then there was the third group who were there to gain their SF2 qualification, unsure of what the chief instructor had in store for them.

The first two days were spent getting used to being back on skis and focusing on technique hitting mainly blue slopes and the second day introducing more reds. Everyone was coping quite well by the end of the second day; we had finished up getting used to skiing and still had no major disasters or falls just yet! However Maj Paul Whillis was still looking a bit stiff to put it politely. As the week went on there became a bit of a competition between Capt Sunil 'The Probe' Kandola, Lt Dan 'Cib' Ciborowski and Cpl Wayne Lawton, the competition seeing who could get the fastest run that week. Straight away we discovered Lt Dan 'Cib' Ciborowski couldn't keep with the pace so we left him to carry on learning how to ski first! By the end of the week Capt Sunil 'The Probe' Kandola recorded the best run. On the evening a few of the guys went down into the resort for a 'few beers' to reflect on a hard days skiing, little did they know what was in store for them.

The third day was the day everyone had been winding us up about as it was the introduction to ski touring and at some point would involve going uphill on our new touring ski's we had picked up the evening before. The day started with the chief instructor talking a little about ski touring and how we used the new equipment we had been given, then off we went. We got the uphill part out of the way early on. The QM mustn't have had his porridge this morning he didn't push us as much as we expected. Ski touring done we spent the rest of that day off piste on our 'big skis'. Towards the end of the day everyone a little tired, however still trying to be better than one another and with morale still high we were sent one by one down quite a challenging off piste slope. This turned out to be a disaster for all especially Capt Sunnil 'The Probe' Kandola who ended up face first beneath a tree minus a ski and a pole which we eventually found!

The fourth day started where we left off the previous day. We spent the day practising more on our technique, hitting a few steeper slopes. After lunch, which all week consisted of cheese and ham baguettes sitting under a tree on the mountain, **Lt Dan 'Cib' Ciborowski** decided to ask the instructor if we could try a harder slope to which he sarcastically replied 'yes, once you've learned to ski', to the whole groups amusement and he got a bit of stick for the rest of the week.

For the final days skiing, the groups were mixed and we were allowed a less structured day on the slopes. Everyone was feeling a little exhausted by this time and a lot of the group took it easy, trying out the snow park and, dare I say most of the cafes down in the resort, namely the SF2 group who hadn't had a decent lunch all week and had forgotten what a coffee looked like!

Notable skiers identified early on included **Sig 'Wildy' Wylde** who didn't exactly live up to his name taking an hour to reach the bottom of a blue slope! Also you may remember an article from last year about **Lt 'Arrow' Lee Kuizinas** who, this year earned the nickname **Lt Lee 'Bambi' Kuizinas.** This was down to his mostly successful but terrifying to watch 180 spin in which he would let the tip of his left ski dig in until his whole ski and leg was raised in the air behind him then edge around on his other ski slowly until he was facing rearward looking slightly disorientated but very pleased with himself. Unfortunately it looked as though it was also this











technique he would use when navigating off-piste through dense woodland, where he would eventually join the rest of the group looking very well camouflaged in snow and pine needles, but not so pleased with himself. Special mention must go to **Capt Andy Morris**, who went one better and managed to straddle a tree whilst burying himself completely in snow.

No ski trip is ever complete without venturing out for a little refreshment. A small recce 'party' was put together and led by none other than **Capt Sunnil 'The Probe' Kandola.** This nickname he earned due to the fact he would never set foot on the slopes without his daysack, probe and of course his shovel. His brightly coloured helmet and top of the range clothing and equipment made him look a true professional, but all the more stupid when he fell over and over again.

The recce 'party' set off for a downhill walk on treacherous snow covered track, men and women crying out loud as they crashed down, their pride and self-respect momentarily stripped away but these hardened soldiers pressed on! Eventually the group made it to the Bar and its open, its warm and there is music! Everyone has almost put the awful journey and the bitter cold into the back of their minds. They begin to settle, feel the warmth and relax for the evening when **Sig Dave 'Penberthy' Roberts** picks up the microphone with his thick Cornish accent and we see the song up on the screen, 'YMCA,' he almost brought the house down with his performance, by causing an avalanche!

And so the first week drew to a close and it was time for the group to depart back to the UK and for the next group to arrive for another week of action on the slopes.

So week two brings new ski conditions and a new group of soldiers eager to improve and learn new skills. The group was again split down into three, this time with an advanced continuation (expert) group, a SF1 continuation group and a SF2 group. The SF1 continuation group were keen to get started, none more so than **LCpl 'Chez' Harrison**, a self-proclaimed experienced skier. It soon became pretty clear he was no better at skiing, than a fish is at rock climbing! He very quickly developed his very own technique in order to stop, usually involving obstacles, his favourite being fences. Luckily for him he never reached any real speed in the plough! The weather during the second week brought clear skies and sunshine, visibility was excellent and so the scenery was incredible. The down turn of this was UV which was extremely high and so for some there were a few red faces and white goggle marks at the end of the day! As the week went on the ski conditions remained good however the surface did became slightly harder and less forgiving.

On the first day of the Ski Foundation 2 Course Ski God, **Maj 'John' Howell-Walmsley MBE** took his group of 7 students out on the slopes to get their ski legs back with some of the group not skiing for a few years, 23 miles later and a few tumbles here and there especially **Sig Deegan** who was like bambi on ice at first, people were starting to find their ski legs. After completing day one a few members of the group were starting to feel the pain and suddenly remembering how hard and tiring skiing can actually be.

On the second day there was no rest and the group went back onto the ski resort to complete another 15 miles but with a few coffee breaks here and there.

Day 3 and there were a few people within the group especially **Sig 'l've already done SF2' Keating** who were hoping on a much easier time on the slopes, thankfully the chief instructor taught the group how to tell the difference between the layers of snow. They then moved onto building a snow shelter and this is where **Sgt 'Titch' Taylor** was in his element. Digging in and encouraging the guys to get this done with his usual enthusiasm and encouragement. Two and half hours of hard graft later the shelter was built; now it was time to have lunch and no better place to have it than in the snow shelter. Once the group finished their lunch it was time to collapse the shelter and then learn how to find a missing person in an avalanche using their transceivers and probes.

Day 4 arrived and the group knew this was the day they were applying their skins and skiing up hill, this was the day **Cpl Bishoprick** and **Sig Keating** were not looking forward to as they knew it was going to be a hard slog to the top of the mountain. After a few hours of hard ascent they reached the top and were relieved when the chief instructor said they were skiing back down.



On day 5 the group knew there was a bit more hill climbing to do, followed by some off piste skiing which the whole group enjoyed as it was challenging and also tested their skiing ability. After completing day 5 the group were told who had passed and who didn't, thankfully everyone passed and they were told what work on points they needed to do before moving onto SF3.

Another notable skier was WO2 (SSM) 'Nige' McDairmid with his French style of skiing technique coupled with an Elvis Presley hip action.

In summary the ex was a total success with a total of 13 students achieving SF2 under the instruction of Maj Howell-Walmsley MBE and 10 students achieving SF1 under the instruction of both Sgt Dean Houghton and Capt Chris Sykes-Popham.

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EXERCISE TIGER SCIENTIST

by Maj David Caley

What is Dstl and who are the Military Advisers?

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) provides science and technology support to the Joint forces and wider Defence. This includes capability investigations and development work to support projects as wide and diverse as the development of boots through to armoured vehicles whilst in neighbouring buildings work is ongoing to enable operations in germ filled and/or cyber contested environments.

The Military support to Dstl is provided by Military Advisers (MAs) from all three services. The majority of Army MAs are Major or Lt Colonel rank, with a Colonel as Senior Military Advisor (Army) (SMA(A)). There is also a single WO1 post, although present aspirations are to see the number of WO1 posts increase allowing narrower but more specialized advice to the Dstl scientists. The MAs are from every area of the Army and are tasked with ensuring that the capability that Defence requires is met by the work which Dstl provides. This means that whilst you are usually working within your own area of knowledge and expertise there are often occasions where you are working outside of your subject area; in my 18 months at Dstl I have advised and worked on the development of Land EW SigInt, offensive and defensive cyber capabilities, but also become familiar with the tactics and doctrine behind airborne assault operations and armoured battle group manoeuvre, amongst many other non-Royal Signals tasks.

Exercise TIGER SCIENTIST

The aim of Exercise TIGER SCIENTIST was to develop the ski ability (alpine and touring) of Dstl MAs to achieve accreditation of SF1 and SF2 qualifications. A small number of MAs already held SF2 and deployed with the aim of undertaking continuation training to prepare towards SF3. From the Royal Signals **Maj David Galey** and **Maj Nelson Reynolds** attended the Ex, **Maj Galey** was a veteran of last year's exped and already had SF1, whereas **Maj Reynolds** did not have any skiing qualifications.

The organiser of the AT was a Royal Artillery SO2, he had the unenviable task of planning and arranging a week of productive AT for 15 members from all three services; the vast majority of whom were the same rank! As might be imagined this meant that almost everyone had an opinion on how things were run and being organised (including the RAF members not only having an opinion but also able to real off 12 examples of when they had been asked to organise something and done it better...). The number of times comments such as 'I would have done it this way' were heard cannot really be imagined unless you have experienced a similar expedition. However, every member of the AT party which deployed did indeed return and it should therefore be considered a success.

The deployment stage of Ex TIGER SCIENTIST was split into a road and air party. The road party set off from Porton Down on the morning of 19 Feb for our 837 mile journey to Neustift, Austria. As the driver of the minibus, **Maj Galey**, spotted within minutes that the vehicle was limited to 56 mph, but it wasn't for another 24hrs that the implications were fully understood. The next day we arrived 4 hrs late to pick up the flight party from Memmingen airport; given that the morning leg from our overnight stop to the

airport was only meant to take 4 hrs in total, this should indicate the road and traffic conditions and the mood of all concerned as we set out as a full group for the first time. This atmosphere was only heightened by the explanation that many in the flight party would apparently 'have done things differently'.

A night exploring the delights of Neustift and a few drinks over dinner helped the party meld. The next day saw a far happier group set out on our first days skiing on the Stubai Glacier. We were quickly split into 3 groups based on ability and experience. The advanced skiers included Maj Galey and those already holding SF2 set about developing their skills and aimed to complete a minimum of a day and half off the ski areas improving our touring. The intermediate group, in which Maj Reynolds was placed, worked to achieving SF1 if not already held, and if time allowed SF2.



Although the snow and conditions were not perfect, it was clearly going to be an excellent week of AT, even when sat on a ski lift in cold, windy and cloudy conditions very few people would prefer to be back in the UK at work.

Confidence and ability was clearly growing throughout the three groups, with the first few days spent on the pistes or very close to them, improving our skills and learning how to ski 'properly'. Due to our steady improvement the instructors clearly decided it was time to refocus on the stated aim of AT; to 'develop individual courage and leadership skills.'

The party returned happily to the UK, without any SF2 qualifications being awarded, but there were several who gained SF1, including Mai Reynolds and the exped certainly met the stated aims of AT. Risk had been faced, and courage in the face of a growing number of incapacitations had been overcome. Plus everyone's skiing improved massively, some team bonding had been achieved and we all got a week away from the office. On the whole an excellent way to spend a working week.

3RD (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION SIGNAL REGIMENT – NORMANDY OFFICERS' MESS SILVER CLEAR OUT

Normandy Officers' Mess are looking to sell a number of legacy silver items at market value in a bid to commission a new piece of silverware.

The vast majority are sporting trophies that have been presented by varying local units over the years, ranging from the '1953 Home Guard Individual Shooting Championship' to the 'Salisbury Plain District Motorcycling Challenge Cup', all of which have not been presented in decades and have been professionally appraised to hold no value over and above the price of market scrap.

Should anyone know of a particular piece they have a sentimental attachment to, or alternatively, would like any further information, please contact Capt John Rose on (94321) 2694 or 3089.

ARMY APPRENTICES NATIONAL MEMORIAL DRUMHEAD SERVICE 2017

Next year's Army Apprentices National Memorial Drumhead Service will take place at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas on Sunday 7 May 2017.

All ex-Army Apprentices, irrespective of where they did their training would be most welcome to attend.

Further details can be obtained by emailing **Maurice Hope** at <u>mohope118@live.co.uk</u>.

RSBF FUNDRAISING CHALLENGE



They did it - will you?

July is the perfect time to see 'family and friends', especially when that involves getting on your bike and fundraising for the RSBF as two regiments who've chosen to support the work of The RSBF can testify.

Taking the Reserve Route

37 Signal Regiment's eight-day, nigh on 400 mile cycling challenge - part of Ex WINGED LION which aims to promote fitness, attract potential recruits and engage with local authorities and employers - sees every Reserve Centre of the Regiment paid a visit by the cyclists, making this RSBF Fundraising Challenge a 'Corps Family' affair.

Virtually There...

Hot on their heels, real pedal power from more than 180 service personnel at 3DSR sees a combined distance of almost 19,000 km covered in just 48 hours. Using 15 Watt Bikes this virtual journey is equivalent to cycling from Picton Barracks in Bulford to 'partner' HQ at Linton Camp, New Zealand – wow!

Whatever the challenge, huge thanks go to all fundraisers, to those working behind the scenes to make these events a success, and to all donors. Your hard work helps make a real difference to the lives of others.

Thinking of Fundraising? Contact Sandra Hutchinson email RSBF@royalsignals.org

For collection buckets, banners and more contact Carly Hume on 01258 482258 e-mail at events@royalsignals.org

Leave a Gift in Your Will

Your legacy can help us safeguard the Royal Signals Community

Every year the RSBF helps hundreds of those who have fallen on hard times. 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 don't distinguish between Regular, Reserve, National Service, ex-ATS or WRAC who served with the Corps, officer or soldier and their dependants. Any case brought to us will be considered with expert support from 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 Association. We will be happy to provide information on how to leave a legacy so that others from the Corps might benefit from your generosity.

Reperolent Fund

Contact_enquiries @royalsignals.org

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION



Col (Retd) Terry Canham Tel: 01258 482081

Maj (Retd) Mark Tivey Tel: 01258 482082



Association Office RHQ Royal Signals Blandford Camp Blandford Forum Dorset DT₁₁ 8RH http://royalsignals.org



RSBF Grant Co-ordinator Tel (mil) (9)4371 2089 Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089 Email: rsbfgrantscoord@royalsignals.org

> Membership Secretary Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090 Tel (civ) 01258 482090 Email: rsa@royalsignals.org



Mrs Linda Sizeland Tel: 01258 482089



Mrs Caroline Addison Tel: 01258 482090

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col (Retd) TW Canham Assistant General Secretary: Maj (Retd) MS Tivey Grant Co-ordinator: Mrs L Sizeland Membership Secretary: Mrs CA Addison

Sadly we all seem to have suffered from some really unseasonal weather over the last few weeks but with wonderful timing, this didn't impact on the Reunion! The report and some photographs from this year's event are printed elsewhere in this issue of the WIRE and I hope that you will enjoy seeing some of the photographs from the weekend. Next year it will be held 16-18 June and I hope you will try and join us. It is a wonderful family event, I know I am biased because I help to organize it, but do come and see for yourself!

At the beginning of June, the annual Founder's Day celebrations took place at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. The In Pensioners looked resplendent in the Figure Court where they formed up for the inspecting officer, The Princess Royal. The photograph shows the In Pensioners awaiting inspection in the Figure Court with members of the Corps Band Fanfare Trumpeters on the roof above them. Twenty members of the Association were fortunate enough to be allocated tickets and I am sure, like me, had a memorable day. For your chance to be there in June 2017, send me an email between February and April - rsa@royalsignals.org

The next event in the calendar is the memorial service at the Corps Memorial, National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas on Tuesday 26 July. Photographs will be included in the next issue of the WIRE; then the Gathering of the Clans in Hordon on Sunday 28 August. Later in the year there will be the Opening of the Field of Remembrance – at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 10 November,



and the Cenotaph Parade – at Whitehall on Sunday 13 November. The latest date for me to have your name and other details so that you can be included in the Cenotaph contingent is 26 August. If I don't have your name by then you will not be able to join us. Later in November Project Noel VII will take place in Liverpool and that will bring us, again to the many events which mark the beginning of the Christmas season.

Behind the scenes, planning has begun to help us to celebrate the centenary of the formation of the Corps in 2020. One of the current projects is the Corps Oral History Project. The Corps Archive is inviting anyone who served in World War Two, Korea, BAOR or other theatres of operations as they would like to record your stories and reminisces to supplement current and future museum displays, preserve these memories and enlighten the younger generations.

To take part, or find out more, call the Museum on 01258 482683.

New Life Members A warm welcome to the following members, enrolled since the last issue of the WIRE;

LCpl Robert Adcock	2002/12	Cpl David Bone	1957/60	LCpl Zulfiquar Chowdhry	1997/08
Sig Trevor Bailey	1990/92	Sig Gary Boyd	2003/13	Cpl Robert Cowlan	1978/90
Sig Adrian Charles Baker	1978/86	Lt Col Ian Bradshaw	1982/16	WO2 Stephen Delaney	1973/02
Cpl Michael Barrett	2003/16	Sig Peter Busby	1968/74	Sig Jason Duplock	1986/96
Sig Hannah Bayley	2006/09	Cpl Nicholas Carter	1973/82	Sig Paul Durose	1980/86

LCpl Ian Gibbins	1971/83	Cpl Gary Mortimer	1985/98	Sig Karl Taylor	1976/81
Cpl Derek Hellmons	1979/84	Cpl Francis Ndegwa	2003/16	Sig Kenneth Thorpe	1951/53
Sig Kirsty Humphrey	1994/99	Cpl Susan Neate	1988/04	LCpl Paul Tyrell	1973/84
LCpl Andrea Lort	1979/86	Cpl Andrew Osborne	1957/59	Cpl Stuart Whalley	1956/65
Sgt Michael Lort	1979/87	Cpl Howard Pugh	1991/01	SSgt Glen Wicks	1979/93
Sig Sean Maidment	1983/89	Cpl Haydn Ralphs	1979/86	Cpl Ann Wicks	1980/85
Sgt Stephen Martin	1971/92	LCpl Sandra Reid	1972/75	Cpl William Wilkie	1963/72
Cpl Christopher McAlindon	1970/83	Sgt Paula Scully	1994/10	Sgt Leslie Williams	1944/47
LCpl Patrick McGovern	1969/76	Cpl Gary Steinmetz	1979/86	LCpl Dennis Woby	1953/55
SSgt Alexander Millar	1967/79	Cpl Paul Stratton	1979/89		
Sig Anthony Morris	1960/62	Sgt Graham Symons	1992/16		

CATTERICK BRANCH

Local hero!

Johnnie Jeffries is a member of the Catterick & District Branch and an ardent campaigner for the preservation of the memory of his colleagues who jumped into Arnhem some 70 odd years ago.

Last summer he went back to Arnhem to lay wreaths and commemorate Operation Market Garden at which he was taken prisoner. He often tells of how he was completely useless as a prisoner as whatever he was put to work doing he mucked it up such as contaminating sugar production by using what he had to hand.



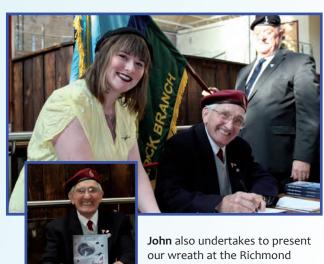
request to the branch to see if we could find an original "Jimmy" so that his maroon beret would be properly represented. The Late Alex Eckford duly obliged and resplendent in his politically correct beret he paraded in Oosterbeck.

Johnnie also undertakes talks to schoolchildren in the Richmond area and tells them about his exploits thus keeping the memory alive. He is so keen to ensure that "we will remember them" he has put his life story down in print which is available from www.baverstockandpasley.co.uk for £12.99 (plus £3 P&P worldwide delivery).

Orphaned at the age of two, **Johnnie** and his four-year-old sister were sent to live in a home run by the Sisters of Charity. His early childhood and formative years were spent under the supervision of the religious order, which saw him overcome adversity in finding lost family and building a life for himself. With the outbreak of WWII, **John** did his part on the home front before being called up to the army in 1941. While serving with the Royal Corps of Signals in Africa he volunteered for parachute training. Following his return to England to prepare for forthcoming operations, **John** eventually had his chance for his first operational parachute drop as part of the ill-fated

Operation Market Garden. Dropping near the Dutch town of Arnhem, **John** was wounded immediately and spent the battle being treated in an aid station before being taken as a prisoner of war.

On Saturday the 9th April 2016 John Jeffries was in attendance at The Station Richmond to undertake a Book Signing of the short story of his life; "A Spirit for Adventure." His son Paul, daughter Lynn, their own family members and the book publisher Mr David Baverstock had taken up position in the concourse just within the Station entrance. As Sylvia and John Harris (our Standard bearer) arrived with the Branch Standard, Johnnie was already busy with some of his first signings and he appeared to have taken to the task like a 'duck to water' and was apparently relishing his new celebrity status, and why not? Upon our arrival, we met with Geoff who was there to organise a side event and he was soon joined by two gentlemen dressed in period dress of WW2 Paratroopers who were there as part of a re-enactment team. Unfortunately, their WW2 Jeep suffered a mechanical failure so they were not able to take John on a celebratory lap around the venue. Johnnie's daughter Lynn and granddaughter Katie work together and Katie has a friend Kirstin who works as the Discipline Clerk for the Parachute Regt, Training Unit in the Garrison. Over a period of 2 hours approx. 30 Paras, in various stages of training all took their turn in meeting Johnnie. Most of them did purchase a book and all seemed in awe of this 94 year old who had actually parachuted into Arnhem when he was the same age as they are now. Their Unit OC, addressed all assembled and spoke highly of Johnnie and his achievements in those dark days of WW2.



our wreath at the Richmond Remembrance parade and represents the branch at various events such as the Eden Camp Parade and Armed forces day flag

raising. We know that as a branch, we are very lucky to have him as a member and long may he continue to fly our flag!

COTSWOLD BRANCH

Chairman & Treasurer Mike Walker Vice-Chair Stuart James Secretary Liz Friend

Michelle Welch-Fuller Social

Wire Notes **Mark Paveley**

The Best Fish and Chips in the UK

Right on our doorstep, so could not be ignored, is the UK's Number 1 Fish and Chips Takeaway according to the National Fish and Chips Awards 2016.

A Fish & Chip Lunch at Simpson's on Friday 13th May 2016 was attended by 13 members plus "Teddy wearing his Corps Tie" - to avoid 13 members at the table on Friday 13th. Everybody agreed it was a very good and enjoyable get together.

Next Up Italia

All Branch members and their guests are invited to enjoy the delights of "La Roccola Italia" in Stonehouse on 24th June 2016.

SALISBURY BRANCH

Salisbury RSA Award

The April 2016 meeting of the RSA Salisbury Branch saw the surprise presentation of Honour Membership of the RSA to Major (Retired) Dick Offord MBE. This well-deserved presentation was due recognition of his outstanding service to the Branch and the Association over a period of 50 years. It took considerable skull duggery and devious manoeuvring by Branch Chairman Lt Col (Ret'd) Nigel Cullen and Dick's wife Marilyn to maintain OPSEC and marshal the membership under our President, Col(Ret'd) Phil Whitemore, to 'bounce' **Dick** at Salisbury Hockey Club. They must have been effective as Dick was literally lost for words which, for all those who know him, is no mean achievement.



Col Phil Whitemore(L) presents a speechless Dick Offord(R) with his award

An opportunity for **Dick** to show off his nice, shiny new badge arose a few weeks later at the Salisbury Branch RSA Spring Lunch at the Grasmere Hotel on Sunday 15th May. Slickly organised by Branch Treasurer Ray Patrickson and his wife Connie, a good number turned out to enjoy some rare Spring sunshine and to raise £60 for the Star and Garter Homes.



Dick Offord (and badge) at the Salisbury RSA Spring Lunch

SCARBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman

Michael Stanger

At our May meeting of the Scarborough Branch of the Royal Signals Association it was the pleasant duty of the Scarborough Deputy Mayor Mr John Richie, to present the 50 year badge to Mr Keith Parsons who is a dedicated member of the Branch.



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Mr Bernard Barks - by Vee Moore

In February I was contacted by Mrs Anne MacKinnon Divisional Secretary of SSAFA in Burton on Trent, Staffordshire regarding one of her clients a Mr Bernard Barks who is a 99 year old ex-signaller now residing in a nursing home. As **Bernard** is very poorly **Anne** thought it would be nice for him to have some contact with his Corps. Bernard had served in

the Royal Signals between 1934 and 1946 reaching the rank of WO11. After his discharge he served as a reservist until 1958. During emails between **Anne** and myself it became apparent that **Bernard** had not applied for his Veterans badge. I advised **Anne** to contact the Veterans Agency who very kindly fast-tracked one for him. It was our intention to present the Veterans badge to him as a surprise on our visit.



Consequently, on Wednesday 23 March, Anne MacKinnon SSAFA, our Branch Chairman Sam Ellicott, Branch Standard Bearer Derek Moore and myself attended Bernard's care home together with SSgt Mark Vinten and SSgt Bill Reddy from 1 Sig Regt. Bernard's two daughters and other family members also attended on the day.

Bernard, who turned out to be very bright for his age, showed us lots of memorabilia he had collected over the years including a framed photograph of himself on a horse taken in the days when cables were laid by signallers on horseback (see photograph below).



He had many photograph albums to show us and he was able to recall details and relate to us a story about each photograph, where it was taken and which unit he was with at the time. At this stage I should say that his favourite picture, one of **Katherine Jenkins** who had once honoured him with a kiss (!) took pride of place at the front of one of his albums.

Besides his photograph collections **Bernard** is also a keen artist and showed us many of his lovely paintings and drawings. He still gets great pleasure from painting and has lost none of his enthusiasm for his art. **Bernard**, being a really sweet man, is a firm favourite with the nurses and he likes nothing better than sitting in a comfy chair with one of them holding his hand.

Soon it was time for us to leave as **Bernard** was getting tired but we made arrangements to visit on his 100th birthday in July this year. We had a lovely time and look forward to our next visit.

ADDENDUM

We were extremely sorry to hear that **Bernard** died on Sunday 8th May. His funeral was held on Monday 23 May, 3pm at Oakamoor Memorial Free Church, Staffordshire. At the request of the family our branch standard bearer **Derek Moore**, the Royal British Legion standard bearer **Sam Ellicott** and myself were in attendance.

SWINDON BRANCH

At the recent AGM of the Swindon Branch we welcomed **Mrs Caroline Addison**, RSA Admin Officer & Membership Secretary to the meeting.

Her visit was twofold, to make herself known to the group and to present our Hon President. Lt Col [Ret'd] David Gent with a Glass crystal 3D Jimmy on a wooden base as he was standing down as the branch President. A post he has held since they were formed 20 years ago. We then had a group photograph and enjoyed an informal talk with Caroline during a buffet, with one or two drinks to wash it down.







LAST POST

Cpl B Angell	1952/62	21-Jun-16	Sig
Maj MD Bailes	1965/02	25-Apr-16	Lt (
Cpl RH Bailey	1942/46	u/k	Cap
WO ₂ B Barks	1934/58	08-May-16	WC
WO ₂ DW Bell	1967/82	u/k	Sgt
LCpl J Blampey	1951/53	25-Feb-16	Lt I
WO ₂ S Campbell	1970/95	23-May-16	Sgt
Sig BA Colderick	1947/49	26-May-16	WC
Cpl M G Dwyer	1970/77	20-May-16	SSg
Sig K Foster	1968/78	29-Apr-16	Cpl
Maj PA Fredericks	1972/06	20-May-16	Sgt
Capt HW Galloway	1937/63	13-Jun-16	Sgt
Capt A N G Gent	1943/70	27-Feb-16	LCp
Maj K Hadfield	1947/91	24-May-16	WC
Cpl W Hunter	1965/77	30-May-16	Sig
LCpl GP Jones	1989/00	07-Jun-16	Sig
Sig AJ Lalande	1976/??	30-Apr-16	

Sig K L Lloyd	1954/57	10-Jun-16
Lt Col FC Lockwood OBE	1947/84	27-May-16
Capt W T Matthews	1951/75	07-Jun-16
WO ₂ J H Morteshed	1942/47	02-Jun-16
Sgt J Murphy	1962/84	09-May-16
Lt RA Needs	1944/47	25-Apr-16
Sgt B Norris	1952/57	20-May-16
WO ₂ C Peach	1962/87	10-Apr-16
SSgt A Rae	1949/83	22-Apr-16
Cpl TW Rampton	1970/78	17-May-16
Sgt R Randall	1960/84	10-May-16
Sgt FR Sidey	1947/72	25-Jun-16
LCpl I R Smith	1985/97	03-Jan-16
WO1 ACT Tasker	1952/76	20-May-16
Sig KC Tolmia	1957/60	25-May-16
Sig MR White	1996/98	22-May-16

JERUSALEM

- by Ex Sgt Derek Fisher, Palestine Command Signals Regt

While serving in Jerusalem 1946 was quite an eventful year. My Captain - Capt Alexander Mackintosh was shot and killed by the Irgun terrorists in the King David Hotel incident and I was in the hotel when it blew up killing 92 people including 22 service personnel, women and children and 48 injured; Just one of the many incidents.

I recently went to Spilsby in Lincolnshire and had a run down the runway in this Lancaster, courtesy of my granddaughter who paid for it as a premature birthday gift. Bought back many memories. In January 1947 after having a month's leave I went back to Jerusalem to find my 8 month old daughter was in hospital seriously ill so they flew me back home from Cairo in a Lancaster. What a journey. I had never flown before and the noise was horrendous and Jan '47 was the worst weather ever so it took 10 days to get home as there were no airfields in the UK to land. I had another month at home and then 3 days after she came out of hospital I was on my way back to Jerusalem. She is now 70 years old bless her!



Corps Colonel Royal Signals visit to Gurkha Company – 25 May 16 - by Cpl Givendra Rai (Sig IC)

On Wednesday, 25th May 2016, the Corps Colonel Royal Signals, Col Simon Hutchinson MBE ADC made his first official visit to Gurkha Cov Catterick (GCC). All the GCC training staffs, led by OC Gurkha Coy, Capt Autar and Capt Ashok, welcomed the Corps Col who was accompanied by the Corps Adjt and Comd Sgt Maj. The traditional welcome with a khada was followed by a Blue Cloth lunch in SP bar under the supervision of Sgt Rabin Gurung. The Corps Col had the opportunity to meet as many soldiers and officers as possible of GCC, particularly the QG SIGNALS personnel, to talk about teaching, coaching and mentoring of the Gurkha recruits. During the lunch, the Corps Col was provided with an overview of GCC organisation and its role within ITC and the Brigade of Gurkhas.



The Corps Colonel and Comd SM with QG SIGNALS Permanent Staff

After the lunch, the Corps Col went to Bn HQ for an office call with CO 2ITB, Lt Col Ramsay OBE, whilst the Corps Adjt and Comd Sgt Maj visited 1 (Sabraon) Platoon area with 1 (Sabraon) Pl Sgt, Sgt Rabin Gurung. Afterwards, they were driven to Laidlaw Building, Vimy Barracks to observe the LMG Lesson being delivered by Cpl Shankar Gurung. The Corps Col was very impressed with the enthusiasm demonstrated by the trainees and the lesson delivery by the Section Commander, **Cpl Shankar**. After the conclusion of the lesson, the Corps Col had a conversation with the section commander/ recruits discussing about the training and the life in UK.



Cpl Shankar Gurung delivering LMG Lesson to the Gurkha

Upon returning to GCC, Helles Bks, **Capt Autar** presented a Gurkha Coy plaque to the Corps Col on behalf of the all ranks QG SIGNALS serving in ITC. During his thank you speech, the



The Corps Colonel signing the Gurkha Coy Catterick visitor's book

Corps Col commended the effort of QG SIGNALS personnel in ITC Catterick. For QG SIGNALS personnel, it was a privilege to welcome the Corps Col in ITC and look forward to hosting him in the future again. After signing the visitor's book, the Corps Col departed for 2 Sig Regt York.

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON REUNION 2016

President Mr Sam Sahota

Chairman Mr Steve Freeman - Pannett

Secretary Mrs Beryl Scott

Well folks this is our 20th Anniversary year as an affiliated Association. 260 Signal Squadron began life attached to 36 Heavy Air Defence Regiment R.A. in 1968 and supported 36 HAD until 1977 when both units were disbanded.

One Saturday night in 1995 in the Sgt's Mess at Blandford (on the reunion weekend) when a group of ex members met up and decided to see if we could start our own Association, affiliated to the Corps Association under the 260 banner. And so it was in 1996 at a hotel in Loughborough a larger group of people came together and 260 Signal Squadron Association was formed. Reunions have taken place in England, Scotland, Wales, and Dortmund in Germany where units were stationed. The camp, Napier Barracks is now a large golf course.



Since our inaugural meeting numbers have dwindled somewhat and at our last meeting in April at the Old Golf House Hotel near Huddersfield we had 24 members attending. Our guest this year was the Corps Associations Admin Officer, **Caroline Addison** and her husband **Doc**.

The weather was sunny over the weekend, the wind was cold around our Urals but no 'brass monkey's' thank goodness. Most members arrived on the Friday and so the weekend started here, as you do, talking about things done over the past year and beyond if we could remember that far back. Anyway, not being so old and bold these days most members had retired by the witching hour.

Up bright and early for breakfast on the Saturday morning followed by our AGM and then we made plans to visit Huddersfield or Halifax both only 4 miles away in opposite directions. Saturday night we all gathered in the bar, naturally, where we had our group photograph and then sat down to a very nice meal. At the end of the meal **Caroline** gave us a short resume on how the Association was progressing followed by our well supported raffle. All the ceremonies over it was time to retire to the bar to relax and have a few more drinks.

After Sunday morning breakfast it was time for the goodbyes as members departed back to their homes throughout the country and wishing all well for their return next year. Next years reunion is an on going project, but watch this space!

YORK REUNION GROUP

The ROYAL SIGNALS YORK REUNION GROUP, (Y.R.G.) idea was formulated back in June 2012.

Earlier that year, two ex-Signals guys got together for a drink, "dragged up a Sandbag" and "Swung the lamp" about the old days! Next time, there was one more, then a couple more, etc.

It was noted, after attending the Royal Signals annual reunion that year, in Blandford, Dorset, that there was a noticeable minority of veterans from the North of the U.K. and thus it was decided to form a York based group and attract membership through an official FACEBOOK site.



The Y.R.G. became an official FACEBOOK site on 11th August 2012 and the first 'meet' was 14th August 2012 with nine attendees!

By forming the group, the YRG has given Royal Signals veterans, from all over the United Kingdom, but especially from the North of England and Scotland, the chance to meet up once a month! There are many who travel from as far as Wales, Kent and some even make the effort by flying in from EXPAT or remote global locations!

It is a privilege which has been lost to most of our northern veterans, since the 'home' of the Royal Corps of Signals moved from Catterick to Blandford in Dorset.

Although the official RSA branches do an admirable job, and many of our members are also members of those RSA branches; we wanted a NAAFI/JRC style, "All Ranks Club" type of environment, to get together and socialize, just like we did in the old days! The group has been a huge success!

It now boasts a membership of over 450 Royal Signals veterans, and other cap badges who served alongside of us within our Royal Signals units.

Also, thanks to one of our members, the Y.R.G. is now an officially affiliated group of the Royal Signals Association.

Regular 'meets' take place on the second Monday of each month, commencing at 11 a.m. Sharp! (As that's when the Bar opens!)

The New York Club & Institute 26 Blossom Street, York, YO24 1AJ

It progresses through the afternoon. And it has been known at times, for some members to carry on into the evening!

Many personnel arriving by train usually meet up at the exit to York Railway station, from 1015 onwards, and then make their way to the venue as a group, at approximately 105 ohrs.

The only exception to our schedule is the month of November, when the Y.R.G. meet on the 11th of November every year, assembled and formed up by, "getting on parade" well in advance of the 11 a.m. requirement to pay our respects, and lay a wreath in the Memorial Gardens in York, after which we relocate to the normal RV at the New York Club!

CERTA CITO

CONTACT: GRAHAM MARCH graham.march@sky.com PETE LINE pmline@aol.com

FACEBOOK group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/yorkreuniongroup/

Veteran ex-members & current Serving members of the Corps,

Plus any attached cap badges are very welcome!



LOST COMMS - 13 AFS

Can anyone identify any of the characters standing next to the Jeep in the photograph? 13 AFS were part of 84 Group and they were on the road to Berlin. Second from the left is Captain LW Dever (my dad). I'd like to know who the others are! If you have any information please contact me. My details are:

Simon Dever

Email: s.dever@ntlworld.com



GENERATION Y WORKSHOP 9 JUNE 2016

- by Lt Col (Retd) Phil Osment, Director, Royal Signals Institution

On the 9 June 2016 the Royal Signals Institution (RSI) staged the latest in a series of 'think tank' workshops (Project BOYLE) to advise the Corps and the Army on approaches to ensure that the Corps is fit for purpose in the 21st Century. Army 2020 requires further refinement and the RSI is bringing together the views of the Regular, Reserve and Retired members of the Corps Family together with major partners in Industry (the R3I Community) to provide the Corps planners by December 2016 with options for a future Corps: one which will serve the Army and Joint Forces in a world of social media, apps, cloud computing, data analytics as well as our familiar territory of secure networking . This will go forward for consideration by the Corps Council, distilled and refined, finally informing decisions to be taken on the way that the Army and Corps will work.

On 9 June in the magnificent surroundings of the former Army Staff College in Camberley a selected group of Captains and SNCOs from across the Corps gathered to consider earlier work and to set out what they considered to be the key factors that would define the Corps needed for 21st Century Operations. The group also looked at current difficulties in recruiting, retention and at planned changes to trade structures. A key feature of this workshop was the removal of formal distinctions of rank and position, allowing all delegates to have an equal voice be they Sgt or Capt . Attendees were grouped in syndicates to create a good mix of trades, ranks, experience and background. Delegates rose to the challenge, with a powerfully expressed exchange of views and constructive and well-reasoned arguments. The presence of Lt Gen Nick Pope, DCGS and Master of Signals, and Brig Gregory Wilson, Hd Army Cap Comd, demonstrated engagement at the highest level. A record of the workshop findings will be in the next edition of The Journal (Summer 2016). Anyone interested in the future of the Corps should take a look at this record and read the Editorial by the Chairman of the RSI.



The Master of Signals ponders syndicate outputs



One of the Generation Y syndicates debate

THE MILITARY DIVISION OF THE NEW YEAR AND QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LISTS 2016

Our congratulations go to the following R Signals and late R Signals personnel who have been recognised in the above:





As Commanders

Brigadier David Graeme ROBSON

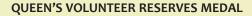
Colonel Malcolm Paul LLEWELLEN OBE

As Members

Captain Graham CAMPBELL Major Graham Jackson CLARKE

Captain Roderick Duncan COWAN

Corporal Robert Ian **HARPER**, Royal Corps of Signals Army Reserve Capt Naveed **MUHAMMAD**, Royal Corps of Signals Army Reserve



Lieutenant Colonel Julian Mark PICTON





Twitter: @rsigsyc Website: www.army.mod.uk/signals/25197.apx Tel: 02392 765668 Email: royalsignalsyachtclub@hotmail.com

Zeitgeist "Spirit of the Times" by Stuart Brown

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The task of sponsoring the BAOR picture commission was accepted in January 2014 by 1ADSR (now 1 Sig Regt) then under the command of Lt Col Jules Hill. The lead was taken by the 2IC, Maj Alan Garrett, with Capt David Malortie as project officer. The task of representing such a long period of service in Germany was a challenge, and the concept adopted was that of representing the changes in equipment and uniform through time to the present day. The eventual painting produced by the selected artist Stuart Brown, is shown above.

The approach chosen was to create a single scene, at first sight looking quite natural, but on closer inspection revealing the chronology and significant landmarks of our presence in BAOR. The former Soviet listening station on the Brocken is shown in rather sinister low cloud, redolent of the all-pervasive Soviet threat of the time. Just visible through the trees is the Bismarckturm, named after the Iron Chancellor who played a key role in the development of modern Germany, with the Schloss at Bisperode, the focus of many exercises, indicated left. Flying above the forest are a pair of RAF Harrier ground attack aircraft, for which Royal Signals provided tactical field communications.

The first element (left) is a Bruin communications vehicle, with soldiers erecting the radio mast, wearing 1950s battle dress. The next element depicts an armoured headquarters with interconnecting penthouse tents. The vehicle on the left is an AFV 439; the figures wear 58 pattern webbing and carry the SLR personal weapon. The third element shows a Bowman Land Rover with operator, the foreground figures wearing CS95, and carrying original pattern SA80 rifles. The final scene reveals a modern day operator on TacSat, wearing Osprey body armour and carrying the SA80 with the new fore grip attachments. A female soldier is included in this group, which is complemented by a MAN truck with communications mast.

The progression of equipment and soldiers demonstrates the evolving role of the Corps, from NATO defence to Out of Area operations, and exemplifies the combination of our Corps ethos with the environment and soul of our hosts across the decades – the Spirit of the Times, or in German, Zeitgeist.

Limited and Open prints of the painting are still available in high resolution. The lithographic prints are available in two sizes with the Limited Edition being the larger of the two; both are printed on 350gsm art board. Limited Edition prints are despatched with a certificate of authenticity, details of remaining Limited edition numbers can be obtained via e-mail, see below.

Further details, including prices, are available at royalsignals.org/zeitgeist or e-mail zeitgeist@royalsignals.org









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3rd (United Kingdom) Division Signal Regiment



