

The Magazine of The Royal Corps of Signals



Corps Formation: 28th June 1920

Corps Motto: Certa Cito

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Front Cover: Sgt Green of 14 Sig Regt on the ascent of Rørnestinden on Exercise DRAGON TROLL.



Back Cover: 71 Sig Regt on Exercise PHOENIX FOCUS.

Note from the Editor

Welcome to this Christmas edition packed full of Unit reports and adventure training.

We are continuing to develop the magazine and are trialling a new page layout for 14 Sig Regt on page 44, the new format is now image led and we hope will be a less onerous chore for unit representatives tasked to collate submissions. Thank you to 14 Sig Regt for all their assistance.

If you are responsible for submitting your unit's notes and are interested in changing your unit's submissions please get in touch with us and we can provide you with further details, let us know what you think of the new layout via e-mail at: wire@royalsignals.org

Thank you for the many and varied contributions that we have received over the past year, we continue to receive many more submissions than we have pages, so if you don't see your article in this issue it should hopefully be in the next issue. You should ensure your notes are not repetitive and do not contain several reports on the same event. Reports must be condensed prior to submission to save space; this means we can include more of your articles.

In the October edition of The Wire we featured an article on page 2 – 'Return to the Falklands – 34 years

later' which stated 'The last serving soldier returns to the Falklands after 34 years.' We have since received information that there are other soldiers still serving, who were involved in the Falklands conflict.

Finally, on behalf of The Wire team and all members of the Headquarters staff we would like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year



t is with deep regret that we must inform you of the passing of Marjorie Riggs in August.

Marjorie was the Assistant Editor of The Wire and The Journal from 1983 until 1995 whilst RHQ was based in London. Marjorie had a long standing association with the

Royal Signals and the military and on retirement became an active volunteer for SSAFA.

Marjorie is survived by her three children, Rosemary, Barbara and David, our thoughts and prayers are with her family at this time.

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Articles:

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

Contribution Deadlines:

15th February for publication in the April edition. 15th April for publication in the June. 15th June for publication in the August. 15th August for publication in the October. 15th October for publication in the December. 10th December for publication in the February.

Subscriptions:

All enquiries regarding subscriptions and changes of address should be made to 01258 482087 or subscriptions@royalsignals.org

Last Post:

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

Contents:

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence. All articles and submissions are published at the discretion of the Editor. This publication may contain official information and should be treated with discretion.

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A Christmas Message from The Corps Colonel Col SG Hutchinson MBE ADC





t has been a demanding, yet extremely rewarding year and so, as we head towards the Christmas period it seems apt to highlight some of those achievements and challenges.

Champions and Honours galore

What is incredibly heartening is the deserved, formal recognition that many of our Soldiers and Officers are now receiving; from Awards in The Queen's Birthday and New Year's Honours lists, through to accelerated promotion, representation on Apprentice of the Year, as Royal Signals Institution (RSI) winners and in regional and national arenas, our soldiers continue to impress. Notably too, Regular, Reserve and Retired Corps' family are rightfully receiving recognition for pushing technical and technological boundaries. We should be rightfully proud of our achievements and as we move towards 2017 this is a theme that I will try and progress.

At work and play

We have soldiers at home and on international deployments globally undertaking impressive, demanding and effective work. The Corps is ideally placed to respond to the technical demands of New Style of IT and data analytics and remains poised to support both the new Information Manoeuvre Command and the perceived challenges from Army 2020 Refine. Significant progress is being made with both recruitment and retention, with predicted improvement in headline manning figures as today's focussed work reaps rewards

tomorrow. But I need to continue to rely on your support and encouragement; we are in this together!

2016 has been a formidable year for Royal Signals sport. The Corps continues to be at the forefront of both Army football and Rugby. Corps Boxing continues to pack more than a punch with male and female national champions. When it comes to shooting, whether clay or operational, The Corps is hard to beat, more than one third of the top firers, and 3 of the top 10 Regts, in the Army are R SIGNALS. The Corps is brimming with success in and on the water too; forty percent of 'Army canoeists' are R SIGNALS and the stellar swimming team were deservedly awarded the esteemed accolade of Corps Sports Team of the year.

Many of you have been involved in helping others too, participating in fund raising challenges in support of charities such as The RSBF as well as pushing boundaries to be a better you. Looking ahead, we wish those embarking on Adventure Training, fundraising challenges and tours in 2017 every success.

Personal recollections

It gives me a sense of enormous pride to see The Corps family unite, whether here in Blandford or elsewhere. This year The Corps weekend was a particular highlight - presenting Tactical Recognition Flashes to new recruits, then watching The Corps, including our revered Veterans march past to the wonderful tenor of The Corps band was genuinely humbling. The day, rounded off with the entertaining "party in the park", under glorious Dorset sunshine, was quite simply, the best. Events such as these only happen because of the graft of so many unsung heroes and I would like to take this opportunity to praise and thank all who go the extra mile for The Corps and for others.

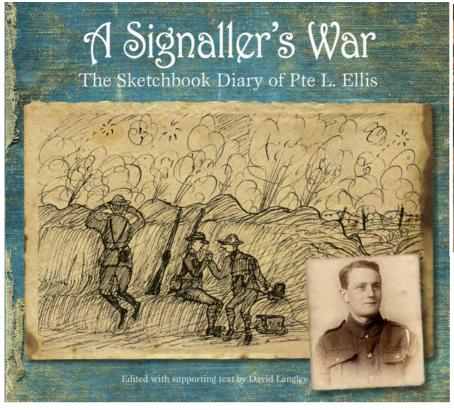
Last words...

As we move towards 2020 and The Corps Centenary, some of you may already have spotted the first of our History of Signalling in 100 objects articles, promoting our formidable history and heritage. Planning is underway for a series of events, ranging from Services of dedication and remembrance, to a Centenary Challenge and grand Corps Dinner - embracing our wish to reflect, engage and celebrate.

With the year almost at an end we can reflect, with a real sense of pride and achievement, on work well done. I am acutely aware that behind every one of us is family, friends and valued members of the public who play their part in supporting us. Their unstinting support makes a significant difference to our success and so I would like to take the opportunity to thank them, as I thank you, for all you do to continue to make The Corps great.

To one and all, I wish you good health and cheer and a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Certa Cito





Three Generations see display of their great grandfather's "exceptional" First World War diaries.

On Saturday 22nd October three generations of the Lawrence family saw the new display of their great grandfather's diaries. The photo shows Dr Doreen Ellis (Lawrence's Daughter), Ms Damaris Carlisle (granddaughter), Mr Aidan Carlisle (grandson) and Torsten Carlisle (great grandson) handing over the diaries to Colonel Andy Percival, Commandant of the Defence School of CIS in Blandford Camp.

These exceptional diaries include two written volumes and three volumes of sketches with over 1680 hand drawn images. They provide one of the most complete and evocative, day-to-day illustrated accounts of life on the Western Front.

Lawrence Ellis "Joined Up" on 31 August 1915, at the age of 16. Having joined the Royal Field Artillery, he was selected for training as a Signaller. His Signals training took him to Aldershot, where on 15 March 1916 he became Signaller 1st Class Ellis and proudly added the "crossed flags" to his tunic sleeve.

The diaries, edited with supporting text by David Langley, have been published in book form under the title "A Signaller's War". The book includes over 280 of the 1680 of Lawrence's evocative sketches which illustrate the humour, hardship and resolve of the typical British soldier. The diaries also provide a rare and unique perspective of the role of the Signaller on the battlefield – striving to provide the "Vital Link".



The diaries were accepted by Colonel Andy Percival on behalf of the museum, from Lawrence's daughter

Dawn. The diaries

will be on display in the Museum's First World War display, until February 2017. The family have generously offered the diaries to the Museum Archive as their final resting place. "A Signallers War" is on sale in the Museum shop:

shop@royalsignalsmuseum.com





Marching Onward! - by LCpl Sarah Frowen

xciting times for The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals as we officially reached 24 members, which is the number required to have full marching band capability! The marching band is the most recognisable face of military music so this is a huge milestone for us to reach in a very short time. Most of you will remember that following FAM2020, it was decided the band would be relocated to RAF Cosford and reformed as a brass band. Military bands have traditionally always been wind bands so this was a huge change for The Corps of Army Music. Forming brass bands meant that we had to recruit instrumentalists that played instruments never before been used in military wind bands such as the Flugel Horn, Tenor Horn and Baritone. When the band reformed in 2014, only ten musicians made the move to RAF Cosford. It was a particularly challenging time for the band as our jobs were extremely limited and mainly involved performing as quintets. Our main targets for the future was to recruit musicians to fill the band. We had to explore an entirely new community of musicians and this wasn't easy! We have spent a lot of time visiting schools, colleges and universities showing young musicians what life is like as professional musicians. As there are only limited vacancies in a brass band this meant that we could be selective with recruitment and we focused on reaching out to music students at music colleges and conservatoires worldwide. No one could predict how successful we would be in such a short amount of time!

Now that the band are able to be tasked fulfilling marching band engagements, this allows **Sgt Martin Roberts** to be able to fulfil his appointment of Drum Major. **Sgt Roberts** joined the band in 2014 as a cornet player following time spent in the Band of the Blues and Royals. He has previously served in Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Kosovo and served on Op Telic, Iraq in 2003. In 2015, **Sgt Roberts** was selected to attend the Drum Majors Course held in Catterick, at the All Arms Drill Wing. The course is only run twice a year and competition to get on the course is fierce! The course is notoriously difficult, combining all aspects of the Army's values and standards, role modelling, team cohesion and presentation. **Sgt Roberts** passed the course with flying colours and upon completion was offered the appointment of "Drum Major". To celebrate

our achievement, the band worked extremely hard to refresh our marching skills. Under the Drum Majors instruction we perfected a marching display and invited **Brig Anderton-Brown** to inspect the band and our display. We were extremely proud of the band and what we achieved. We have

> received high praise following our display and are excited to be performing to such a high standard.

Drum Major Martin Roberts

The band have had a busy and rewarding summer season. We have travelled all over the UK and have been fortunate enough to travel to Cyprus, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. Because of being under strength, we regularly team up with other military bands to complete taskings. In June, twelve members of the band assisted The Band of The Queen's division at the Patron's Lunch 2016. The Mall in St James' Park was transformed for its largest ever street party to celebrate the Queen's

patronage of over 600 charities and organisations on the occasion of her 90th birthday. This iconic event was in recognition of the unrelenting support and service our Monarch has given to the community over her 63 year reign. The Mall was the centrepiece to a truly magnificent spectacle with 10,000 guests. This was a fantastic opportunity for our musicians and they performed extremely well under the pressure! The parade was on radio and television, broadcast all over the world and they definitely showed everyone the high levels of professionalism and musicianship we have amongst our musicians. We have also focused on working with musicians in the surrounding areas. Recently we participated in the Ironbridge Gorge Brass Band Festival for our second year running. We performed on the Saturday

evening in a concert culminating in a joint finale alongside Ifton Colliery Band. We performed again on Sunday, showcasing some of our fantastic soloists within the band to show the local brass band the high levels of musicianship the Corps of Army music holds! We had two 'open days' leading up to the event where local students could visit the band in RAF Cosford. They joined in rehearsals, had a look at the facilities on offer and listened to presentations on what we offer as a career for a professional musician. We had our recruiting stand at the festival where people could ask any questions and have a chat about life in the band. Just from this weekend alone we had several enquiries about joining and we even had one sign up on the spot! These events are fantastic for getting out and showing everyone what we are about.



On stage at the Ironbridge Festival of Brass 2016

From Reserve to Regular - by Musician Jeffrey Bailey

It was in the second year of my service as an Army Reserve Musician with the Band of the Yorkshire Regiment, that I became aware of the Full Time Reserve Service contracts that CAMUS were offering. I had moved down to Huddersfield in 2010 to begin studying music at the University. 2015 saw me in a position to embrace new opportunities as, though I had a stable job and was playing in a number of local bands, the balance between job and musical passion was difficult to uphold. The FTRS contract seemed to offer a solution to my predicament. I had been unsure about joining up and whether life as a regular musician would suit me, the FTRS contract seemed to give the option of experiencing life with a regular band before signing up as a regular on a longer contract.

After discussing options, I was advised to have a two-week trial with a band before finalising my decision. I decided to have my trial with The Band of the Corps of Royal Signals. As one of the three Brass bands in CAMUS, and with one of my close friends having already joined up and become a member of the band, it seemed a natural choice. My two-week trial was a great success. The band were accommodating and very friendly. I finalised my decision and began the process of obtaining my contract, and within 4 months I was heading to the band asa a full time reservist.

I have now been with the band for over 2 months, and can honestly say I have enjoyed every moment. My contract with the band started straight after summer leave, my first engagement being a massed bands marching display at Shrewsbury Flower Show. This set the tempo for an enjoyable busy summer season. Only last week I was performing in a quintet in Northumberland, a band display in Blandford and a massed bands rehearsal at Kneller hall. My ability and confidence as a performer is also going from strength to strength, and two weeks ago I performed my first "Last Post"



Musician Bailey performing his final engagement with the **Band of the Yorkshire Regiment**

ceremony. The next few months are also looking exciting with tours to Germany and Cyprus. I am happy to say that making the decision to apply for an FTRS contact seems be the best decision I have made in my life so far.

Founder's Day 2016

Our Fanfare Team made history in June by being the first fanfare team outside of the state bands to perform at Founder's Day, Royal Chelsea Hospital. The London based state bands were all extremely busy with Trooping of the Colour and Beating Retreat rehearsals, so we were asked to do the job. Our Fanfare Team was made up of twelve players and some had never played a fanfare instrument before so this was a very new experience for them. We spent a lot of time rehearsing and perfecting our performance as we understood the importance of being asked to perform at such a high profile event.

Founder's Day has taken place almost every year since the Royal Hospital was founded in 1681. The day is to celebrate the founding of the Royal Hospital by King Charles II and is one of the highlights of the Royal Hospital Chelsea's calendar. It is attended by over 300 Chelsea pensioners and their families. With an audience of over 3400, our fanfare team lined the roof to play for the arrival of HRH Princess Anne, who was reviewing the Chelsea Pensioners this year. We performed three fanfares during the parade and the sound that resinated around the buildings showed true professionalism and high levels of musicianship. We were honoured to have performed at the event and received praise from all. Our outstanding performance showed everyone what we are capable of and it has been requested that we return to participate in next years event!

Hitting All The Right Notes in Kampala! - by Musician Calum Macdonald

"Life is about flourishing as a human being and not just surviving. And it's proven in so many different ways how music can completely change people's lives." Alison Balsom, Trumpet Virtuoso

The slums of Kampala, in Uganda, are home to some of the most deprived families in the world. Many families share a small hut no bigger than your shed, with some families housing ten people.

From drop pit toilets, to lifetimes without education, some of the children in this area are deprived of childhood experiences. I recently travelled out to the Kampala slums for my third consecutive summer to work with the charity Brass

for Africa. The charity is a music education based non-profit organisation who take these children out of their everyday environments and improve their lives through the medium of music. The charity also brings these children together and creates brass bands for them to play in. The charity works in association with the Mlisada organisation, an orphanage who the charity first worked with when it formed.

During my visit, I was taken for a tour of the Katwe slums, where I was working. I saw children drinking water from dirt filled streams, families sharing tin huts and babies as thin as surely possible. It was heart-breaking. My regular day in Kampala would start with visiting one of the many projects to assist the tutors that Brass for Africa have trained, to help show them how to further the children's playing and how they can also improve their own teaching. I then travelled back to the Brass for Africa offices and offered lessons to any children who were around. I often found that there were children practising in the bandstand on their own, so I would get out an instrument and join in with them and help to guide them in their practice. In the evening I conducted the Brass for Africa brass bands, which are made up of local children from the local houses and the Mlisada orphanage. They have two bands; the Junior band, and the Senior band. The Junior band are a young band of children aged 12 and under, while the senior band is made up of kids aged up to 21. I used these sessions to bring the kids together in a fun environment, where they played fun music really well, and often even do concerts for the public! On this trip, I worked on the Coldplay music "Viva La Vida" and within one rehearsal the whole band was on their feet dancing to the music!



Musician Calum Macdonald teaching trombone to young musicians in Uganda

The charity not only improves children's lives through music, it supports them for the rest of their lives. It has provided work as teachers for the more advanced students and gives the children a safe haven and a place of happiness, open to them every day of the week. When the children are taught how to play an instrument, they don't just learn how to play an instrument. They improve their learning skills, they learn teamwork and communication skills through playing in a band and gain self-confidence through performing. When I worked with the children and conducted their ensembles, you could just see how happy it made them, that this is their special thing, and that they loved every minute of it. With plans to expand with more projects, both in Uganda and in other countries in Africa, the forward movement for Brass for Africa and music education in Africa looks very bright. I hope to continue my work with the charity and I can't wait to see how much the students improve on my next visit. None of the work the charity does is possible without fundraising and donations. I cannot express in writing how much all this means to these children and the immense gratitude they have for Brass For Africa bringing music into their lives.

Gibraltar Ceremonial Guard Mount

At the beginning of July, six members of the band travelled to Gibraltar to assist The Band and Corps of Drums of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment at a Ceremonial Guard Mount at The Convent. Stepping off the plane we were taken aback with how hot it was despite being 9pm! Thursday morning we were welcomed by the members of the reservist band and the day was spent rehearsing for the forthcoming Guard Mount. As we were still not quite up to marching band strength in the UK, we spent extra time ensuring our drill was perfect and for some, it was the first time they had performed in a marching band parade since leaving phase 2 training. Thankfully the rehearsals went well and Friday we were given time to explore our beautiful surroundings. One of the band members from the Royal Gibraltar Regiment is a qualified World War II Tunnel Guide and very kindly offered to take us all on a tour of the tunnels. The tunnels were excavated during 1939-1944 by the Royal Engineers, and are an extension to The Great Siege Tunnels excavated during The Great Siege of 1779-83. The Rock has a 32 mile-long network of tunnels, of which we saw about a mile and a half. It was a fantastic insight into The Rock and we learnt a lot about the history of Gibraltar and the role that the military have played. Following our tour, another member from their band offered to take us out and enjoy a boat ride. The day was enjoyed by all and we spent the rest of the day drying out on the local beach. Saturday morning was an early start to prepare our uniform, instruments and music ready for the Guard Mount. We travelled to The Convent and were greeted with crowds of people lining the streets. We played, marching along the cobbles with the troops following. We played music throughout the inspection phase and performed to the crowds before the final march off. The audience were fantastic and we left feeling a great sense of pride and achievement. Unfortunately, our trip was very short this time and we returned home to the UK the following morning. Our stay in Gibraltar a memorable one, and we look forward to returning in the near future!



Members of the Signals Band marching through the streets to The Convent, Gibraltar

NEWS FROM TRAINING



2 ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT ARMY TRAINING CENTRE PIRBRIGHT



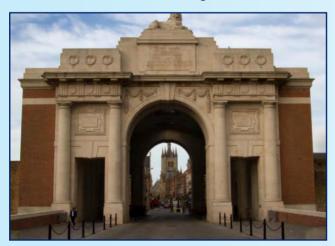
1 (FOWLER) SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj S Devenish SSM WO₂ S Dinsdale

Notes From A New Arrival - by Cpl David Backhouse

Since arriving at ATC(P) from 21 Sig Regt I have been placed in a Troop and allocated another Section Commander as a mentor to show me how things run. I was placed in 'Mather Troop' who were almost at the halfway point of their training and my first week was to deploy on Ex HALFWAY, a confirmatory exercise to test the recruits on everything they had learnt since starting at ATC(P). The recruits were tested on basic admin in the field, fire and manoeuvre, map reading and fieldcraft and were inspected each morning after conducting morning routine. The weather was really nice all week, which was a bonus, so the recruits got to stay dry. Unfortunately for this Troop, they have yet to experience a drop of rain on either exercise or the ranges so far. Notable mention goes to one of the recruits for falling asleep on the 'stalk' requiring the whole training team to send out a search party for him. Upon completion of Ex HALFWAY the recruits and permanent staff received a well-earned 2 weeks off for summer stand-down.

Upon returning from leave, the recruits went on a 2 day Realities of War to Ypres, Belgium. This aim of this was to show the recruits the realities of war in addition to being an added break away from the rigours of standard training. The recruits had the privilege of participating in the Menin Gate memorial ceremony in front of a considerable crowd before doing some chocolate shopping in the early evening. The second day involved visiting a few more memorials and presentations on CBRN and the war graves commission amongst other things. Mather Troop were the only Troop out of three that managed to make the return ferry on time which made for a bit of banter in the evening.



The Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium

The following week was a week of mixed Adventure Training in Brecon known as Soldier Development Week. The recruits learnt about the core values by being pushed out of their comfort zone through the perceived danger that AT presents. The weather was really nice all week – giving the recruits a completely false, first impression of Brecon. The recruits got the chance to go caving, hill walking, rock climbing and paddling as well as attempting the high ropes and completing a navigation test. I went rock climbing on the first day which made for a nice day in the sun eating and climbing. On Wednesday, I was on the NavEx, conducting the MATTs test in the morning followed by the practical walk in the afternoon. A simple sounding job; all I had to do was make sure the recruits were safe walking round the hills of Brecon and follow them. However, some of them were quite navigationally challenged and liked to take the most direct route resulting in a lot of time walking across bogs and getting wet feet. The next day was caving which was a first for me and it was really enjoyable, it meant going into small dark spaces, ensuring that we didn't lose recruits as well as ensuring that they didn't get stuck in any crevices. Staying dry was an additional bonus. The Friday was hill walking and although the weather at the bottom of Pen-y-Fan was sunny when we started, by the time we had our first stop it was extremely windy and visbility was severely limited – at last, they got to see the real Brecon.



Recruits trying to avoid falling off the high ropes

The next couple of weeks will focus on shooting ranges in preparation for the ACMT, an altogether busier period than the couple of weeks that have just passed.

Exercise Eagle Alliance - by Cpl Craig Rose

On Sunday 28 August, 16 personnel from the Army Training Centre (Pirbright) travelled to Fort Benning, an American phase one training establishment, located in Georgia. The aim was to observe the US Army delivering their phase one training in order to try and seek out best practice and more efficient methods of training.



US Army recruits formed up at Fort Benning

Upon arriving at Fort Benning after a fairly uneventful journey we were split into two groups of 8 and proceeded to be escorted around each of the separate stages of US Army phase one training. We were initially introduced to the reception centre, a very well organised and efficient method of ensuring the recruits had all their administration in order before commencing training. Here, they also underwent final medical examinations including in-depth assessments of their flexibility, received any vaccinations required, had eye and hearing tests conducted as well as general admin like uniform issue. At this point they also learnt a small amount of foot drill and badges of rank, meaning that by the time they moved to the next stage; which is the Pick Up, the recruit was 100% ready to undergo and concentrate on, their training.



The ATC(P) team that visited Fort Benning

The Pick Up

This is the day the recruit arrives from the reception centre to their Company for training and indeed the first time they meet their Drill Sgts (OR4/5 equivalent).

The recruits arrive by coach in most cases and Fort Benning is home to over 40,000 troops. On arrival they are divided into their individual Platoons. If there is any uncertainty about what they have joined, they quickly realise they are now in the US Army with 'wake-up' exercises and plenty of verbal encouragement to ensure that they pay attention to what is going on.

Once the Pick Up has been conducted the recruits then commence the Red Phase of training. This includes basic drill, learning the Core Values, weapon handling and PT amongst other minor things. The subsequent phase is called the White Phase. This consists of marksmanship training, familiarity with different types of weapons and pyrotechnics, the obstacle course and a continuation of PT.

The final phase of training is the Blue Phase where the recruits conduct final PT output tests and field exercises. As a group we had a chance to observe all of the different phases and make comparisons between the US Army's methods and our own for their 10 week training process.

The team managed to spend a day and night in Auburn, Alabama over a weekend in between observing training and luckily enough had the chance to watch a College football game taking place. For the final 3 days we travelled down to Destin, Florida for a spot of well-earned RnR.

Overall it was a very good trip that provoked a lot of questions about best practice in a phase one training establishment. Hopefully this will enable us to deliver more effective and efficient training in the future at ATC(P).

1 (Fowler) Squadron Pass Off Parade - by Lt Kyle Macaulay

7 Oct 16 - The long-awaited final day of my first 14 week course had arrived and I approached it with slight apprehension. Two days of drill practice is not quite enough to get this officer up to scratch!

The morning started off with the training teams joining the recruits in the All Ranks cookhouse for breakfast before participating in one last rehearsal. The rehearsal passed without any notable tick-tocking or fainting and I cut away afterwards to change into service dress and await guests and the inspecting officer in the Officers' Mess.

The inspecting officer **Brig Nesmith** arrived on time and was introduced to the CO and reacquainted with Maj Devenish (her former Adjt). After this, the subbies then slipped away to wait with the recruits around the corner from the parade square and await the start of the parade led by the band of the Royal Artillery.



Lt Macaulay introducing Brig Nesmith to Mather Troop

A well-drilled march around the parade square preceded the inspection – where all went to plan apart from Sig Walker requiring one of the Tp Sgts to catch him at the last second before being led off the square. He did however manage to join the parade for the final march-around. In an intake including a range of Cap Badges the prize-giving ceremony resulted in a good haul for the R SIGNALS with several

Signallers being recognised for their performance across the 14 week course. Thus highlighting the talented soldiers we attract as a Corps. After the prize-giving was finished, Brig Nesmith gave a particularly well-received speech; a special mention was reserved for the noticeably rowdy crowd that had gathered to watch their loved-ones pass off the square.



Brig Nesmith presenting Sig Davey with the prizes for 'Soldier's Medal' and 'Best at PT'

The parade ended as well as it had started and all of the recruits went off to meet their families before disappearing to clean the accommodation and pack their kit like they should have done the night before.



Recruits on their final march-around at ATC(P)

R SIGNALS prize-winners:

Mather Tp

Sig Davey - Soldier's Medal

Sig Davey - Best at PT

Sig Upton - Best Shot

Smith Tp

Sig Hoban - Soldier's Medal

Sig Tait - Best at PT

Sig Sokolowski – Best Shot

Waters Tp

Sig Leibrick - Best at PT



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



CO Lt Col S Short RSM **WO1 R Savage**

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC Mai L Kelly SSM WO2 (SSM) J Wignall

Harrogate Cup Round 3 - 21 Sep 16 - by Sgt Fox

Despite the prospect of some bitter weather the sun shone for an afternoon of football and orienteering in Round 3 of the Harrogate Cup.



The winning team – Battleaxe Troop

The football competition saw a good turnout from all Troops, with some even going to the effort of providing a manager, and the round-robin league kicked off with energy and enthusiasm. Rhino Tp, playing 4 games in a row, took a clear lead early on winning 9 points and then had to sit and watch as the main contenders picked their way through the results. After many hopeful claims for free-kicks, penalties and even a goal from a throw-in; which was decisively disallowed by the referee, the league table was squaring up to be a close finish.

Having played all their games Beaufighter Tp sat joint top with Rhino on 9 pts, though they were ahead on goal difference. In the final round of matches Battleaxe sat in 3rd at 7 points and needed a win against Rhino to take overall victory

whereas a draw would seal it for Rhino.

On the other pitch Ulster, in 4th on 6 points, had best hopes of leaping into second if they could score 6 more goals over a struggling Iron Troop in order to increase their goal difference. In the end a 3-1 win saw Ulster at 9 points however it was clear that Rhino vs Battleaxe was not going to end without a goal. Rhino took the initial lead against the run of play however Battleaxe fought back in the second half to 1-1 before sealing the result in the final couple of minutes with a 2-1 victory.

A well fought game that saw Battleaxe top the table with 10 points. All in all it was a good spirited competition in keeping with the Harrogate Cup.

Pos	Team	Points	GD	Harrogate Points
1	Battleaxe	10	+3	6
2	Beaufighter	9	+5	5
3	Ulster	9	+2	4
4	Rhino	9	0	3
5	Lightning	7	0	2
6	Iron	0	-10	1

Meanwhile, 90 eager trainees turned up outside the gymnasium ready for the orienteering competition under the direction of myself. With two courses set up around Blandford Camp the competitors discovered that running with a friend was out of the question. After an initial brief from the DS, the trainees were sent out at two minute intervals, one per route. As always with orienteering there were a few dubious map readers; always a great bonus for any team. As the last runners got going the first were starting to come back in with sweat across their brows, breathing heavily and recording excellent times.

Everyone managed to complete the course and recorded times from 40 minutes up to 1 hour 30 minutes; all apart from one Signaller who managed to get lost on a camp he has lived on for months! With the DS getting ready to deploy out on the ground to go looking for him, he finally turned up after being out for 2 hours and having only managed to find half the check points.

Overall everybody enjoyed the event and the overall team winners were Iron T, 2 Sqn.

The final results were as follows:

Pos	Team	Time
1	Iron, 2 Sqn	6hr 43 mins
2	Battleaxe Tp, 3 Sqn 6hr 48 mins	
3	Rhino Tp, 2 Sqn 6hr 50 mins	
4	Lightning Tp, 3 Sqn 7hr 24 mins	
5	5 Beaufighter Tp, 2 Sqn 7hr 53 mins	
6	Ulster Tp 3, 3 Sqn	8hr 19 mins

The final results will be added to the overall Harrogate Cup scores and 2 Sqn is now looking forward to the Rugby event due to take place this winter.

Exercise CATTERICK CLIMB - by Sig Boyle

Day 1

We started out our first day at around 1100hrs with kit packed and on the vans for 1230hrs. Excited and raring to go we set off on the 6 hour mini-bus ride to Capel Curig. 3 hours in and we were all hungry and needed a leg stretch, so decided it would be wise to take a McDonald's stop. After we were fully revived we jumped back on the mini-bus for the last 3 hour stretch of our journey.

After a long 6 hours of Heart radio we arrived at our accommodation in Capel Curig, a transit camp. We were all really excited for the opportunity to experience accommodation untouched since 1950. After dropping our bags off we set out into the night to the local pub for some food as we missed the evening meal at camp, which I'm sure was no bad thing.

Day 2

We started our second day with an early start and a surprisingly

warm shower. After sorting some admin and having breakfast we set off for our hike up Snowdon, a mean feat for most. After arriving at the bottom I think reality set in as to how high it was.



The weather, looking slightly overcast made us wary and there was a good potential of rain. We were all aware of what the Lanyard teams went through and weren't keen to repeat it. Two hours later we finally made it to the top! Although we couldn't see much beyond the low cloud, we were happy to discover that the cafe was open.

All warmed up with a nice brew, we set off for our descent. As we were reaching the bottom, the clouds cleared enough for the sun to pop out... for a very short time. On the way back to camp we went into the local town for a look around the mountaineering shops, since we now had the taste for it.

Day 3

Our third and final day started just like the rest, quick scoff and we were ready to go for around o8oohrs. After travelling for about an hour we arrived at the mountain bike trails. Warmed up and ready to go, we were comfortable enough with the bikes to start on a nice easy trail with some minor challenges. In typical military fashion we quickly upped the ante and decided to go for one of the most challenging routes! We raced around the hard route for about two hours, overcoming rock sections, hard up-hills, drop offs and after two repairs to the bikes, we finally came back to where we began... the mini bus. After re-packing we set off back to Blandford Camp where our trip would end.



Mount Snowdon

Gordon's Cup - by LCpl Ealash Gurung

Saying goodbye to the summer wasn't easy but it was different this year, we embraced winter with great enthusiasm as numerous fascinating events lay ahead of us. All the military training and team bonding activities we exercised over the summer was soon to be paid off. Gordon's Cup is an annual military event, organised by 4 (Military Training) Sqn, which comprises of various activities demanding a high level of both physical and mental fitness,

robustness, good leadership and team cohesion. This year's Gordon's Cup took place over the period o7 – o8 Oct on the Blandford Training Area.

Teams from 2 (Catterick) Sqn and 3 (Harrogate) Sqn competed for best Section, best Troop and more importantly best Sqn. Altogether 24 teams participated for this year's Gordon's Cup. Each team was composed of upgraders as the section commander and 2IC and the remainder, Phase 2 soldiers. This year to make the competition more interesting we had a team of officers from the Troop Commander's Course and a team from the German Army.

On the evening of 07 Oct, all the participating troops paraded at Pond Bottom with everything ready to go. Immediately after the brief all the troops went onto harbour routine (nontactical). After morning routine in the harbour, everyone marched down to Pond Bottom. Everyone looked energetic, ready to accept any challenges that would come along. Kit inspection was first thing in the morning followed by the Commanding Officer's address to all the exercising troops. Immediately after, the horn sounded marking the start of the event.







With a little encouragement from 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn – anything is possible

There were 8 stands, where 3 sections would compete at a time; upon completion of that stand the section had 15 minutes to get to the next one. The stands were operated on a round-robin arrangement so each section had a clear understanding of where they had to be next. The first stand we did as a section was the "Bayonet-Range" where points were awarded for an individual's aggression and personal weapon drills. The next stand was "DCCT", an indoor simulated shoot at moving targets. The third stand was "Observation and Model Making" followed by a "Rapid-Replen", a 2.2 mile run carrying a number of burdens including your personal kit.

The subsequent event was **CBRN** which tested an individual's IA drill followed by the MATT questionnaire. **BCDT** was next, with simulated casualties requiring emergency treatment depending on the injuries sustained; this required full 9 liners and MISTAT cards filled in and a CASEVAC. This was followed by "**Section Attack**", a stand testing IBS as well as section battle drills as a whole. Our last stand was the "**Obstacle-Course**", the platform to demonstrate one's agility and core strength; something we managed but fatigue was showing in most of the section by this time. All the stands concluded at 163 ohrs after which everyone gathered around Pond Bottom for the prize giving.

Having performed to the highest standard throughout the event we did expect some silverware. **Beaufighter Troop** and 11 Section from the same Troop came 1st in both the Troop and Individual Section competitions. The atmosphere was tense as the best Sqn was about to be announced, 2 (Catterick) Sqn was declared as the winner with 2 of the top 3 sections and the winning Troop. This was a magnificent achievement and vindication of all of our hard work training over the last 4 months at both Troop and Sqn level. Many thanks are owed to our driving force **Capt Hodder** and **SSgt Blackburn** and, of course, the section commanders who led the teams. Overall it was a great event thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC Maj D Galey
SSM WO2 (SSM) C Deal

Exercise HARROGATE FOLLY

The second Ex HARROGATE FOLLY of the year, aimed towards the Phase 2 soldiers of 3 (Harrogate) Sqn was run over the period 23 – 25 Sep 16. Due to circumstances outside of our control, the location was changed at the last minute to the glorious location of Caerwent Training Area. This proved to be very fortunate as it gave us the perfect layout to conduct the ex. The ex was designed around preparing the phase 2 soldiers for their upcoming BCCS (Basic Close Combat Skills) course.

Once the troops arrived in location on the Friday night, they were immediately placed into their nice, warm FOB to begin the ex. Under the constant supervision of their Platoons Commanders, Platoon Sgts and Section Commanders, kindly provided by the Phase 3 upgraders courses across 3 Sqn and the current Troop Commanders Course from 5 (Maresfield) Sqn, they began their FOB routine.

In order to establish a baseline to teach from on the following day, the FOB was inevitably attacked that night with a mixture of small arms fire and simulated IDF. A few valuable lessons

were learnt and the refresh and revise tactic appeared to quickly get the exercise participants into the correct mind set.



What will the day bring?

Saturday saw the start of the learning phase of the ex, with a number of teaching stands placed around the training area. The majority of the stands were specifically designed with the BCCS course in mind including Section Attack stand run by Cpl Wheatley, Cpl Rabakewa and Cpl King, which gave the soldiers the fundamentals of everything from pairs' fire and manoeuvre all the way up to a full Section Attack. The other stands, CBRN by Cpl Bates, Defence of a FOB by LCpl Rai also encompassed the BCCS cse. The addition of the Urban Ops stand, run by Cpl Hodgson, was greeted with great enthusiasm as the majority of the soldiers had never participated in anything like this before. The final stand was CASEVAC under fire and had two elements, the extraction and the medical treatment phase. This was run by our exercise medic, LCpl Baker with the help of Cpl Drury, Cpl Lockey and LCpl Clelland, and was noted as being the most physical stand on the day. The ex was kept at a constant state of readiness thanks to the efforts of Cpl Powell and his SQMS department.



Casevac or excuse for a PT session?

With all the stands completed, all the exercising troops return ed to the FOB and settled into the daily routine. Throughout the night there were several waves of shoot and scoot attacks directed at the FOB, in order to ensure the day's lessons were fully understood. The resulting final attack came in the early hours, with attacks co-ordinated simultaneously against all defensive location around the FOB. The barrage was relentless and enabled every Ph2 soldier to put into practice most of the lessons learnt earlier. A special mention has to go to Battleaxe Troop's Sig Williams, who in the heat of battle managed to put his boots on the wrong feet, but through dedication and pain, continued to dig out for the full attack, but now requires several plasters and a set of flip flops. The exercise concluded in the early hours of Sunday morning with coaches arriving for the triumphant return to Blandford.

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

Maj GLM Dunn

SSM WO2 (SSM) Easterby-Jackson

Gordon's Cup 2016

The Gordon's Cup took place on Sat 8 Oct 15, this now annual event is a military skills competition designed predominately for Phase 2 soldiers. The event is conducted by 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn on behalf of CO 11 (RSS) Sig Regt, Lt Col S Short.

The aim of the competition is twofold, firstly to provide Phase 2 and 3 soldiers with an exciting and demanding military skills ex which in turn enhances their leadership and teamwork. Secondly the CO wanted to see the capability of the Regt in providing a robust communications network including voice and data incorporating full motion video.

Each section was issued a 354 Bowman manpack for sending reports over the net and also for OSPR situational awareness, which was displayed in the CP on various smart screens. Four full motion video feeds were set up, three on the section attack lane and another mounted to a vehicle to observe the Battle PT stand "Rapid Replen", a 2 mile course carrying personal kit and various burdens. This was achieved by repeaters being set up at various locations around camp. WO2 (YofS) Matt McGinn gained some free phys, taking numerous trips up and down Blandford Camp radio tower (nothing to do with forgetting to turn the actual kit on!). The Battlefield Casualty Stand was also fitted with full motion video and voice, using a WiFi bubble from a Falcon detachment set up next to FOB Thorpe, enabling the CO to observe and listen to the stand whilst operating from the CP.

Twenty four sections took part in the competition, made up from 2 (Catterick) Sqn and 3 (Harrogate) Sqn; each Sqn was bolstered by an additional section of which one was from the fresh faced Troop Commanders course and another from the German military. The military element of Gordon's Cup comprised of eight demanding stands located around Blandford camp which the sections rotated through every hour.



German Soldiers

The highlight of the event was the section attack stand which was run by the PNCO Training Team. Three attack lanes were set up and each section was marked on the six section battle drills. Whilst conducting attacks, sections had Full Motion Video cameras attached to either their webbing or weapons so the CP could watch the action unfold. After the attacks the live cameras spent a bit of time on the changeover looking at

the floor, as a gap filler **CpI John Hellwig** took it upon himself to be the entertainment for the CP with the classic penguin bar jokes shown over the cameras.

The bayonet range was met with dread from most of the Phase 2 soldiers, however the "aggressors", led by **Sgt Bev Beverley** made them feel welcome with a comprehensive warm up covering the necessary safety drills and, of course, lots of crawling. Once at the start of the range the tension mounted with shouting and war cries through clouds of smoke and battle simulation bangs. The German section particularly enjoyed the chance to use a Bayonet as they do not conduct bayonet fighting in the German Army, a daunting sight of a German soldier in cam cream sporting a full beard was a sight to behold.

Gordon's Cup 2016 was a resounding success with the military stands testing both the Phase 2 soldiers and the NCO's leading them. The communications for the whole of the event displayed the Regt's capabilities in providing a robust communication network, with faultless full motion video, Bowman data and voice throughout.

A very close fight this year with some very strong sections made for some extremely close scoring. The day culminated in prize giving from the CO who presented the Gordon's Cup Trophy to 2 (Catterick) Sqn, overall winners of the 2016 competition.

TRAILWALKER UK 2016 - by Cpl Nirmal Rai

On a sunny Friday afternoon of 22 Jul 16, ten teams from 11(RSS) SR embarked on a journey of endeavour, the challenge of Trailwalker UK 2016. The teams consisted of willing volunteers from across the Regt; 2 teams from each Sqn (2, 3 and 4), 2 teams from the Royal Signals Tp Comd Course, a female Team named Blandford Beauties and an elite team of 11SR (QGS) Trainees going for gold. This year's TRAILWALKER UK took place over the period 24 Jul - 25 Jul on the South Downs Way.

What is Trailwalker UK?

The ex has its humble origins from the time of the British Colony in Hong Kong. The pioneer of the event, **Brig Mervyn Lee**, established the first ex in 1981 as a training ex for the soldiers of the Queen's Gurkha Signals. Its aim was to test the soldiers' endurance, team work and leadership.

Quickly gaining notoriety, the ex continued until 1985, after which Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust became partners to the event, opening it up to civilian participation from 1986.

Over the years of charitable partnership, the exercise has raised significant funds for Oxfam GB and the Gurkha Welfare Trust, making a real difference to the lives of families and people around the world. Most recently, money raised from the Gurkha 200 edition of Ex TRAILWALKER was instrumental in the reconstruction and relief in the wake of the tragic earthquakes in Nepal.

Preparation

Sgt Saroj's confidence in his team, Team CLM, despite the lack of training could be seen clearly when the team first met, as a team, a day before the event. The determination of every individual in the team and the fact they were all very experienced at endurance events, gave high hopes that the

team would do well. Hence the aim was set – to finish under 13 hours as a team; it was a big ask, nevertheless achievable.

Training for the event was minimal for all teams from the Regt due to the busy schedule of a training establishment. Any serious training conducted was predominantly during the weekend periods. Most notably, the 11 SR (QGS) Team led by **LCpl Kiran Limbu** committed themselves to training on 6 weekends prior to the event, in addition to other training. Therefore it is an understatement to say that they were determined to cross the finish line first on the day.

The introduction of Heat Stress Monitor (WBGT) in the event meant there was a significant risk due to the rising temperature. There were also strict guidelines laid out for the 11 SR teams to mitigate the risks that may have jeopardised the safety of the participants.

D-Day

All ten teams started early at o6oohrs as directed by the Commanding Officer to avoid soaring temperatures at the early stage. Although the heat eventually caught up with the participants, the decision to start early as opposed to o8oohrs for some teams proved vital. As most of the teams, especially the elite teams, raced off the start line quickly as soon as the piper signalled the start of the race; Team CLM seemed a bit anxious stood on the side at the start point with only 3 members present. Cpl Nirmal was nowhere to be seen. They eventually breathed a great sigh of relief to see him 5 minutes later. He happened to be stuck behind the slow moving crowd and was slightly panicking to say the least. Who would blame him though given the circumstances he was faced with? Well, when nature calls, one has to answer it or be prepared to pay a nasty price later. Apart from the little glitch in the beginning for Team CLM all teams started with great energy and enthusiasm.

11 SR (QGS) Team set the early pace alongside other elite teams. It wasn't until CP 4 that the teams started feeling the effects of the scorching heat. The excellent service provided by the admin teams at each CP were the major contributing factors to the teams' morale. They were simply outstanding. The terrain and distance coupled with the weather made it ever so challenging. However, every individual showed immense courage and determination to keep moving despite the difficult conditions.

As the hours passed by, the mileage on the legs increased and so did the pain and fatigue. Despite their valiant effort and grit, some individuals were unable to continue due to injury and heat related issues. In the mean time, Trainee team and Team CLM were progressing well, going from strength to strength. The fact of any endurance challenge is that every individual hits the wall at some point. It was no different to the leading teams. From my personal experience, having completed TRAILWALKER UK previously on 3 different occasions, this year's event was made more challenging by the weather. The winning time of 11 hrs 4 min by 1RGR Team also highlighted the fact.

11 SR (QGS) Team lived up to their billing by crossing the finish line in a time of 11 hrs 49 min coming home third out of nearly 400 teams; overall, the Regt's effort on this year's TRAILWALKER UK was highly commendable. As well as developing team work and leadership it has managed to raise a significant amount of charity for very worthy causes. The strong presence of the Regiment in such a good event wasn't

possible without the support of the chain of command. We are thankful to the Commanding Officer for his support. The presence of the RSM on the CPs was a morale booster of which we are grateful for. Likewise, our sincere thanks go out to Capt Autar Shrestha (Trg Offr, 4(Mil Trg) Sqn) and WO2(SSM(G)) Lalit Thapa for planning and organising it. Moreover, it wouldn't be possible to complete the event without the dedicated support of our Admin Teams.

11 SR TRAILWALKER UK 16 TEAM RESULTS

Ser	Team Name	Team Members	Sqn	Members who Finished	Final Time
1	Wobbly Plodders	SSgt Young SSgt Weatherall Cpl Muchmore Cpl Churchward	2	4	17:32:00
2	Sqn Bulldog	Sgt Pun Sgt Wells Sgt Bintcliffe Cpl Mitchinson	2	3	16:30:00
3	11 SR, 3 Sqn A Team	Sgt Wilkinson Cpl Mchung Cpl Leighton Cpl Lamb	3	2	21:13:00
4	11 SR, 3 Sqn B Team	Sgt Bibby Sgt Bruce LCpl Chemling LCpl Pratikcha	3	2	21:12:00
5	Team CLM	Sgt Saroj Sgt Mcguire Cpl Nirmal Cpl Rogers	4	4	14:36:00
6	Team 611	Sgt Bilsby Cpl Laval-Chesterton Cpl Corbin Cpl Johnson	4	3	20:11:00
7	Swanning Along	2Lt Mould 2Lt Ben 2Lt Salero 2Lt Shortland	Tp Comd Cse	3	18:10:00
8	Not fast but fabulous	2Lt Annable 2Lt Hadfield 2Lt Nicholls 2Lt Marchant	Tp Comd Cse	4	23:26:00
9	Blandford Beauties	Maj Kelly Capt Robinson SSgt Blackburn Sgt Acquah	2	1	19:13:00
10	11 SR (QGS)	LCpl Kiran Limbu Sig Jiwan Rai Sig Rupesh Limbu Sig Mausam Rai	Various	4	11:49:00



NEWS FROM FORMATIONS



HQ 1 (UK) SIGNAL BRIGADE



Exercise ARRCADE CHARGER 16 - by LCpl Akplu

In 2017 HQ ARRC will assume the role of Land Component Command (LCC) for the NATO Response Force 2017 (NRF17). As a result EX TRIDENT JUNCTURE 16 (TRJE16) will take place over 24 Oct – 2 Nov 16 to certify HQ ARRC as ready for the NRF17.

In order to prepare for TRJE16, HQ ARRC conducted Battle Staff Training (BST) over Ex ARRCADE CHARGER 16 (AC16) on 27 Sep – 4 Oct 16 at RAF St Mawgan.

With HQ 1 (UK) Signal Brigade being tasked with providing Close Combat Support (CCS) for both Exercises most personnel from the HQ deployed to RAF St Mawgan on the 21 Sep 16 to enable AC 16; the first series of phases to certify readiness of both ARRC Sp Bn and 22 Sig Regt and HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde for NRF 17. Other staff joined the advance party between the 24- 25 Sept 16.

On arrival, the Brigade Command Post was set up, white boards with information necessary to enable the Exercise and individual workstations were prepared and the staff briefed and reappraised with the Brigade Rhythm. The

remainder of the staff arrived a few days later, bringing with them a fresh boost of morale to continue the Exercise. The Ops SNCO **Sgt Ash O'Brien** led morning runs around the

training area while other personnel squeezed in time between their busy schedule to do some PT. Football in the Station Gymnasium was good, the Brigade youngsters teaching the mature ones a few tricks while allowing them to win some games.

The Exercise itself wasn't smooth sailing; the build laydown had a few rough areas that needed correction, which was followed by communication challenges for various applications and software. After a few complex technical diagrams and deliberations between SO2 Ops Plans Maj Mark Bentley, SO2 Eng Maj Matt Duff and their teams, suggestions were made and tested by the Brigade Commander Brig Paul Griffiths and the Deputy Commander Col Jules Hill.

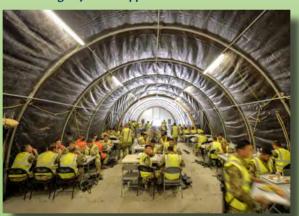
All in all, the Exercise was a success; personnel were tested in both procedure and practical implementation.

Lastly, special mention must be given to the chefs as the food on AC16 was superb.

The Brigade now looks forward to TRJE 16 to be tested again and certified as ready to support HQ ARRC as the NATO standby HQ for 2017.



Pte Singh of ARRC Support battalion on the build



The DFAC at RAF St Mawgan, with culinary support from the Army Reserve provides excellent meals



NEWS FROM REGIMENTS



1st SIGNAL REGIMENT **STAFFORD**



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

Exercise PRAIRIE STORM 1 & 2

Pre-Deployment and Set Up of 20 Armoured Infantry Brigade (20AIX) HQ - by Sgt Andrews



Sgt Andrews directing his troop

After a lengthy 10 hour flight followed by the 4 hour drive to Camp Crowfoot, I was met by the 20 AIX YofS, WO2 (YofS) Burrell. He warned me that we had a busy few days ahead but little did I know that the next 4 weeks was going to be a promotion and demotion rollercoaster ride of fun!

Accommodation was scarce in Camp Crowfoot as the exercising Battlegroup (BG) occupied "ALL" of the space; I did eventually manage to find a space in a 50 man room though, which was to be my home for the next 4 weeks prior to the rest of the Troop arriving. The following morning I met the 20AIX YofS and discussed the future tasks in hand. For those who have served in A Troop, 200 Sig Sqn, you will appreciate the horror on my face when I was told that I was there to set up the 20 AIX Main HQ, from scratch with no kit. 'Treating Myself' were the only 2 words that came to mind. For those who have not served in the Squadron or who have yet to arrive, this was a very big task.

I spent a large part of the week running around many locations, like a Borrower to: speak with every possible department in BATUS, identify and acquire equipment and to secure the 5 x 7767's and 1 x HICON AinU in order to establish the 20AIX Main HQ.

Once this task was complete I then had to find a way to get this kit up to the training area and look inside EXCON to see what I had to play with. Cutting a long, hard, story short I had 3 weeks left before the Brigade staff and my Troop arrived to sort this out. To paint a picture, EXCON is a 40 minute drive from Camp Crowfoot and I could only travel there if it hadn't rained, transport was available and I had a co-driver with me.

But finally the window of opportunity came when I could get all the equipment up to the exercise area to start installing it and the 2 man team were ready to commence the build.

The Arrival Of The Troop - by Sig Slyfield and Sig McMullan

Our job in Canada on Ex PRAIRIE STORM was to DEPLOY. ESTABLISH and MAINTAIN the communication assets in HICON for the 20 AIX staff in order for them to support the 5 RIFLES, 1 PWRR and CSS BGs.

Prior to travelling to Canada there were many things to take into account, such as job role, what communication assets we would be providing, what vehicles we would be using and problems we may face during the exercise period.

As briefed before travel, I knew my job role would be to operate the service desk as a Communication Systems Operator (CS Op) and also to fill some aspects of a Communication Systems Engineer (CS Eng) role owing to our CS Eng not deploying. As a result we got hands on with the ECW server which would normally be under CS Eng control and learnt basic fault finding and the initial set up needed for the HQ. This was good for the newer Signallers as they were able to expand their communication knowledge on something they wouldn't normally work with.

Black Hawk Flight - by LCpl Nevison



The Black Hawk

During our time in Canada on Ex PRAIRIE STORM 1 and 2, we were lucky enough to experience a trip on an American Black Hawk helicopter. With this being my first experience of helicopters, the first thing that struck me upon its landing was the sheer size, with just the rotary blades measuring a total of 55 feet, it really is a big piece of kit!

After the crew had done their initial landing checks and the rotary blades had come to a complete stop, we were allowed to walk over. The crew introduced themselves and each told us their job roles. There were a total of 4 crew members consisting of; the pilot, co-pilot, 1st crew chief and a 2nd crew chief, who can also double up as a door gunner when

suppressing the enemy. After this they gave us a brief on the helicopter and explained:

- A. The helicopter layout.
- B. Actions on hard landings and submersions.
- C. How to enter and exit the helicopter from the 3 and 9 o'clock positions.
- D. Why you should never go near the front, as the blades hung lower and were a hazard.
- E. A brief description of attachments and modifications the helicopter can have such as winches and guns.
- F. That it can be stripped out in the back for medical evacuation purposes.

Initially it seemed to take quite a while to take off whilst the crew did their pre-flight checks. Our flight was roughly 15-20 minutes long and we covered approximately 25km at a cruising speed of 130 knots. During the route there were some twists and turns, highs and lows and definitely some stomach moving acrobatics. I wasn't sick but I am sure a couple of the passengers came close to it. After we landed a few soldiers from the RAMC practised a casualty extraction from the helicopter using the stretcher under guidance from the American crew.

Overall this was a brilliant experience and I would like to say a huge thank you to **FIt Lt Foote** (RAF Regiment) for organising the trip and to the United States Army for taking us on this once in a lifetime experience, which is one I will definitely not forget.

Adventure Training Package 1 - by LCpl Thatcher



The team on the prairie trails

Following the tear down on completion on Ex PRAIRIE STORM 1, **Sgt Andrews** arranged for us to attend AT. We all chose to go on Ex ROUGH RIDE – a horse riding expedition in the Rocky Mountains provided by The Lazy H Ranch, which is co-located with Trails End Camp, the British Army's AT Centre for Canada. The land was pretty amazing to look at, especially considering when the land was purchased in 1980's it was all forest. We stayed in metal cabins for the first 2 nights as we collected kit and met the horses we were going to be riding.

Our horses were chosen by the head wrangler for us, depending on how confident we felt in our riding abilities. We were then shown how to catch our horses, tie them up and put their saddles on. As there were 40 people on the package everyone was split into 4 groups, but luckily we were all in the same group.

On the first day we went for a quick ride to get the feel of our horses. However, as we rode off we realised we were 1 person down. **Sig McMullan** was having a problem getting his horse to move in our direction! The head wrangler, **Gord**, started to ride over to help but at this time **Sig McMullan's** horse decided to ride off quickly in the opposite direction. Poor **Sig McMullan** couldn't hold on and turned his horse riding lesson into a flying lesson; we were not even 2 minutes in!

The following day we packed our kit into vehicles and jumped onto the horses for a 6 hour ride to our campsite in the mountains. We rode mainly along the dried up river bed of The Ghost River. It was very eerie, the horses were mostly quite well behaved but we learnt early on to stay away from **LCpl Nicholas's** horse, **Fiji** who would kick out and bite any horse that came too close. We settled into our camp site and got the camp fire up and running. As there was no electricity or mobile phone reception, everybody had to sit and talk to each other!

The following day we rode to the Devil's Gap Lake which is filled by the glaciers within the Banff National Park. The views along the ride were spectacular. The lake was so clear and also freezing cold, but this did not deter **Sgt Andrews** or **LCpl Boulton** from going for a quick swim. Once back at the campsite we had a BBQ waiting for us and everyone was glad to be off rations and onto good quality food.

In the morning we rode up into the mountains. We had to put a lot of trust into our horses owing to the steep embankments and sheer drops, but the views were amazing and totally worth the journey. The following day we started our long ride back to Lazy H, by this point everybody was a little sore and quite glad to be back on their own 2 feet. We handed all our kit back in and said our final goodbye to the horses and wranglers, we had all thoroughly enjoyed our week away.

Exercise PRAIRIE STORM 2 - by LCpl Nicholas, LCpl Boulton and Sig Douglas

After the 2 week break, we moved back up to EXCON to set up HICON ready for Ex PRAIRIE STORM 2. During PRAIRIE STORM 1, we all realised that there was room for improvement on our Bowman skills which was identified in the SWOT analyses we completed during the first part of the exercise. Consequently, Lt Hurst and Sgt Andrews tasked the rest of the Troop to plan and deliver lessons on HF, VHF, UHF, and the ECW Server. I, LCpl Boulton, had the pleasure to refresh the Troop on the roles of the TAC Signaller because I had spent the most time in the Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV) as the Brigade Commander's TAC Signaller during the first exercise.

It was pretty simple to explain as in one way, shape or form every Signaller has supported someone in the TAC role. The only major difference is that you are on your own, so if you do lose comms, you will have no one there to assist you like you would on a regular FFR Det. Other lessons included: the use of a football to show the different types of wave pattern, crypto handling and accounting and the most military of activities which resulted in the entire Troop holding hands; an exercise which allowed **Sig McMullan** to demonstrate how the HCDR network works.

Having spent 4 days setting up the main HQ, we were then tasked to set up a tented FWD HQ and 12 18x24 sleeping tents

ready for the Brigade Staff to move into when they arrived. We finished our work after just a morning and broke for lunch. Little did we know that all this work would be in vain. When we had finished lunch we stepped outside to see the blackest of clouds circling above our heads and the wind starting to pick up. I looked over towards the FWD HQ build, to see Sgt Andrews and Lt Hurst hanging on to the tent which was trying it's hardest to take off. We ran over to them and tried to save our days' work but the wind was battering the tent and the 2 ton block of concrete couldn't hold it anymore. Very soon, neither could we and the tent took off down towards the prairie.

The wind and rain were relentless, it was borderline hurricane conditions. To make matters worse, LCpl Boulton and I (LCpl Nicholas), realised that we had left our room windows open. So we ran back to the temporary staff block, dodging the tent canvasses and tent poles that were cart-wheeling away in the wind. The storm lasted about 2 hours and was the best thunder and lightning I have ever seen. However, when the time came to go out and assess the damage we came to the realisation that the build might have been a complete waste of time, we were very disheartened. On inspection we found only 2 tents still standing and a buckled mess of tents and tent poles scattered everywhere. It was not the best end to a PACEX!

Once the ex had started and we had reached the first maintenance day, where the BGs break from the ex scenario to fix the BATUS fleet, it was time again to set up the FWD HQ again. This time around we took into consideration the horrors of what happened after the last time we set up and chose to use British 18x24 tent (unlike the Canadian emergency shelter we had used before.) We started the process of securing the tent to the ground as best as we could and after last time we went OTT, we used more ratchet straps, storm lashings, extra concrete blocks and many sandbags. We were then finally able to put in the infrastructure such as tables, lightning etc as per the lay down plan.

The rest of time within HICON/FWD HQ was spent providing the service desk, helping with any faults and assisting the Brigade Staff.

Warrior TAC Signaller - by LCpl Nevison & Sig McMullan

On Ex PRAIRIE STORM 2 our job was not only to maintain comms for HICON but also to provide the Tac Signaller for the Brigade TAC Warrior AFV. Our job role as the Tac Signaller was to maintain voice and data comms, and also to regularly send OSPR's as the VAGR hadn't worked since it was installed, therefore failing to automatically send our GPS location to Brigade HQ.

During the first ex **LCpl Boulton** fulfilled this role but both times something seemed to go wrong. Due to an upcoming storm the ex had been given an air state red alert state, which meant no vehicle moves were permitted on the prairie. The second time the CO ENGR's warrior experienced an engine fire whilst in convoy, leaving LCpl Boulton stranded on the prarie overnight waiting to be recovered by the REME. Therefore as I, LCpl Nevison, set out as the next Tac Signaller, I was somewhat apprehensive.

On my particular ride out, our main aim was to visit the BG as they prepared to move to their next location. We were being accompanied by the Danish Commander (DCOM) LE Col

Jensen whose main effort was to stand in the turret and see how we worked on the ground. However I think it was my input over the next couple of hours that would make his visit a little more interesting.

Soon into the journey, I knew that being a Tac Signaller was a bad idea for me. The only way I can describe my experience is as if I'd been blindfolded on a boat doing 50mph on a rough sea. The motion of the ocean definitely wasn't for me and within 10 minutes my lunch had made a 2nd appearance! Luckily I had managed to contain the majority of said lunch into a large plastic clear bag, whilst maintaining comms at strength 5 throughout.

Once we had reached our location approximately 23km away, I had a chance to get out and take on some well-deserved fresh air and water. The DCOM could do nothing but laugh at my experience and told me I would simply "get used to it".

We watched the BG prepare to move into their next location, which was an amazing sight to see. After about 15 minutes it was time to move back to HICON and boy was I excited, NOT! Without hesitation I jumped back into my seat, put on the headset and strapped on my helmet, keeping an empty sick bag close by.

The journey back was pretty much the same. A very warm tin sweat box that had a slight essence of vomit lingering in the air, but comms were still strength 5 as usual so things were looking good. On the route back, the Warrior Commander Capt Jenkins (SASC), decided to POL at a passing tanker, I seized this opportunity and stepped out of the Warrior to produce more lunch. At this point I could see HICON approximately 2k away in the distance, so in the back of my mind the end was in sight.

Overall the experience of my Tac Signaller role was good, if only I hadn't been so travel sick, I learnt a lot and built confidence in my Bowman skills.

Sig McMullan was kindly volun-TOLD that he was to take over the Tac Signaller role. My mission was to provide data and voice comms back to the Brigade HQ whilst we escorted a broken down vehicle to the REME compound, around 5km away. At first I was looking forward to it, what with it being my first experience inside an armoured vehicle, but soon I knew it was not the job for me, this only took 200 metres to realise.

After hearing about LCpl Nevison's experience I already had a sick bag on standby. This was deployed a lot quicker than expected. The mixture of being thrown about like a dog with a toy, whilst trying to type on a BUDT was too much for me and I couldn't help but projectile vomit in the general direction of the bag. After 15 minutes, we arrived at the location and I sent an OSPR to inform o of our location. I then got out of the back faster than the speed of 1000 gazelles and embraced the fresh air whilst I could. It wasn't much longer until I heard the convoy commander shout "prepare to move". My heart sunk, I was not ready to do it all over again. I was crying on the inside, but kept my brave warrior face on the outside and jumped back in.

As soon as we set off I shut my eyes and I grabbed anything and everything I could to keep me in place. My eyes did not open for the entire journey back and no more breakfast made an appearance. Not long after setting off we arrived back at HICON, and I was delighted that it was over... Until Capt

Jenkins told me we were going out again at 1300hrs later that day. Luckily **LCpl Boulton** stepped back up and deployed again as the Tac Signaller.

Overall, despite the weak stomach issues, it was definitely an experience I will always remember and one I am thankful to have had the opportunity to experience.

Adventure Training Package 2 - by Lt Hurst



The Glaciers

Following a very successful ex, where all of the Troop had an opportunity to develop and hone their communication and leadership skills, the Troop was lucky enough to again spend a week at Trails End Camp on an AT package.

This time as a number of the Troop had already flown back to the UK, 4 members experienced an introduction to Alpine Mountaineering and I had the pleasure of completing the Rock Foundation Course.

With tales of crampons, ice axes, glacier scaling, waterfall abseiling and bear sightings, my week of rock climbing paled into insignificance. Having the opportunity to participate in two AT packages during the deployment was an unexpected highlight to our time in Canada and provided the much needed reward for the time spent at EXCON hill.

Le Comms, Le Cam Et Le Comfort - by Cpl Cunnew

So it was on Wednesday 11 May at 0645hrs, we made our departure on our epic voyage from Beacon Barracks towards Issoire. Not before a spot of nutritious travel food provided by the Golden Arches, a mere two miles from camp. With a minor detour to rescue our illustrious leader, **Lt Hoyland**, from his tweed and vinyl surroundings in London and to bring him onto the 'Char de Corbeau' minibus; we were well on our way.

After finally arriving at 28 Régiment de Transmissions in the early hours of the morning, we were introduced to Sergeant-Chef's **Pierre** and **Michelle**, who would be our guides and chaperones in Issoire and of the workings of the Regiment, Corps and the French Armed forces as a whole.

Early the following morning we rose to be welcomed by the Regimental hierarchy for a traditional breakfast of black coffee, croissants and bad attempts at the French language, after a little bonding session we departed for our tour of the corps museum and a presentation on the strategic placement, history and future of 28 Régiment de Transmission. Shortly after we, as a section, smashed our way through, over and under their NATO assault course; doing our best to show our

allies how it's done. Later we were taken for a round robin on their kit and equipment, many similarities to our own; finishing with a top view of their town from the highest point of the camp.

On Friday 13 May (clue in the date), we took a jolly down to the Regimental swimming pool for an "easy nautical assault course". We soon found out that this was the furthest thing from easy, by the third time around in soaking wet French combats some were suffering. **Sgt Clark** enjoyed it the most due to his skinny stature but **Sig Wykes** found the whole course difficult because of his bulk. In the afternoon we were treated to an indoor range package on the FAMAS after a quick introductory lesson, followed by a WHT. We shot from 200m, 100m, 50m, 25m and 10m to get to grips with the small arms rifle before changing to the pistol shoot with the Beretta 92; where my magazine definitely didn't fall out of my pistol.

The evening culminated in a bit of fun with several other members of the Regt, at a laser tag combat range; here we realised that some of us may require more practise. We then moved onto an evening meal at La Hutte Gauloise before retiring for the evening.



Out for our taste of France experience

Saturday brought about the final event. Reveille was o6oohrs for a tab around and over the Puy de Dome 'Volvic' volcanic mountain range, covering around 16km which proved to be a little too much for **Sgt Clark** who had to have a long sleep on the transport back. Once the sun finally came out we were able to see the real beauty of the surroundings, posing for as many photos as possible. Once reaching the vehicles and returning back to camp, we decided to take our new friends for a decidedly un-traditional evening in an Irish bar to watch the rugby.

Waving goodbye and exchanging gifts and keep-sakes to one another, we departed en route to Stafford; ready for the exchange to be reversed and 1 Sig Regt's turn to return the hospitality shown in Issoire.

MPs Visit to MOD Stafford - by Sgt Mason & LCpl Wilcox-Sampson

In September 2016, 1 Sig Regt greeted 3 Members of Parliament to Beacon Barracks, in order to gain an insight into the equipment and vehicles the Royal Corps of Signals use on operations and exercises; as well as to meet the soldiers of the Corps, learn about the Regt's current commitments and to see how the new MOD site is fairing for service personnel

and their families. Four displays and stands at 30 minute intervals were hosted by the 3 field Sqns and the LAD for each of the MPs to be involved in.

The visiting Members of Parliament to MOD Stafford were Gavin Alexander Wilson CBE MP, a British Conservative Party politician who was elected at the 2010 general election as an MP for South Staffordshire and appointed the Government Chief Whip in Theresa May's new Government on 14 July 2016, Tristram Julian Hunt FRHistS MP a British Labour Party politician, historian and broadcast journalist, who served as an MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central in Staffordshire since the 2010 general election and Jeremy John Elton Lefroy MP a British Conservative Party politician who has been an MP for the Stafford constituency since the 2010 general election.

Capt Keenan was I/C of 200 Sig Sqn's activity, briefing the MPs on the history of the unit, exercises we deploy on and day to day routine. Sgt Mettam was 2 I/C, running the circuit, teaching the basic ground command signals and safety. Cpl Frank produced the tutorial of the basic ground command signals navigating LCpl Sampson around the circuit safely and quickly, as it was a race after all. As expected, there were a few nail biting signals given but nothing that caused too much concern.



Tristram Hunt FRHistS MP at the 201 ICS stand

201 Sig Sqn's stand was presented by Lt Hurst and showcased the Sqn's DRASH capability: albeit a very small part of a much larger and complex HQ build which can be rapidly deployed in support of the VJTF(L) anywhere in the world. Sgt Mason then explained the complexities of the Sqn's Information Communications Systems showcasing one of the Housekeeper detachments not currently deployed in Germany on Exercise VENERABLE GAUNTLET. Sig Farrow happily then explained the key differences in capability for our various detachments and the Members of Parliament seemed very happy and only slightly overwhelmed by the information overload, and comprehending the scale and complexity of tasks that 201 Sig Sqn face on a regular basis.

The stand from 211 Sig Sqn was headed up by Lt Hoyland and had 2 elements; a Falcon CP detachment with Cpl Poulter briefing on the capabilities it can provide to a battle space and the soldiers operating in it, and a Reacher Satcom platform with LCpl Wallington explaining the capabilities his detachment brings to not only a battle space but to also provide the strategic reach back link to the UK. The 3 VIP guests were intrigued by the detachments and how they are utilised by soldiers and it was also a surprise to see that they were not overwhelmed by the technicalities of the equipment.

The LAD stand consisted of the Recce Mech vehicle, a rugby tackle bag and 10 barrels replicating bowling pins. The objective for the MPs was to swing the crane arm holding the tackle bag into the pins and try to get a strike. Although this stand was good fun and immensely enjoyable for the visitors, it also highlights the flexibility of the equipment and how manoeuvrable the crane arm actually is.

Overall, the day was a success with the weather staying warm and dry. All parties learnt something new and enjoyed the morning out of their usual busy working lives to take part in the activities.



Gavin Wilson CBE MP at the 211 FALCON stand

Corps 7's Football Tournament - by Sgt Cameron



The double victorious sides of 1 Sig Regt

The football season has returned after a long summer and there is no better way to start the season than with the Corps 7 a side tournament. Preparation for the season has been tough with the team completing various fitness tests before every training session and with the nature of the 7's tournament, fitness was going to be a key factor.

o83ohrs on a foggy morning and it was time for the Team Captains meeting. Unfortunately only 7 units from across the Corps managed to turn up but with some units entering 2 sides there were sufficient numbers to make it a fantastic day of football. 1 Sig Regt were dubbed as the favourites of the competition, however the previous winners for 2 years 30 Sig Regt were also strong and ready to defend their title. All

team managers were present for the group draw which saw a good mix of teams in both groups and then the games commenced.

1 Sig Regt entered two teams and both were off to a flying start in their respective groups winning their opening games. The A team, captained by **Cpl Sam Agar**, went on to win all 5 of the group games without conceding a goal thanks to some fantastic saves from **SSgt John Marlborough**. This insured our place in the semi-finals for the cup. The B team had a couple of tough games in their group and were narrowly beaten by the holders 30 Sig Regt however they managed to finish third which meant they were now playing in the plate competition. Could 1 unit win both trophies for the first time?

The B team were first up playing against the 'mixed' team which was created for the tournament. Considering they had never met each other before that morning they should be very proud with how they performed throughout the tournament. They even had a member of 1 Sig Regt playing for them, **SSgt Lee Fraser**, who defended knee high throughout the contest. However on this occasion 1 Sig Regt were too strong and progressed to the final. The A team had a tough fixture against 3 Sigs which was a rematch of the Signaller cup final last year. Thankfully the outcome was the same, 1 Sig Regt victorious and in the final!

The time had come; both teams have made it to the final with the dream still alive.

The plate final was first up, 1 Sig Regt vs 16 Sig Regt. With both teams based in Stafford bragging rights were also up for grabs for both sets of players. It was a very tight game with both teams creating chances, **WO1 John Stephenson** and **SSgt Chris Swan** rolling back the years and pushing 16 forward but it wasn't until the dying seconds when **Capt Liam Crane** found himself in the box with the ball at his feet and slowly put it in the back of the net. Seconds later it was over, 1 Sigs had won the Plate.

1 Sig Regt vs 30 Sig Regt, the grudge match, the current champions and the favourites, it was all set up for a great final. It was a cagey start to the game but 1 Sig Regt were the first to strike with a cool finish from LCpl Liam Sanky. A few minutes later 30 Sig Regt were back in the game after what can only be described as a bad step over from Cpl James Poulter gifted the ball to Sig Josh Peacock who rounded the keeper and placed into an open net. 1 Sig Regt were not finished yet, and after some good football found themselves in the lead again thanks to a rare goal from LCpl Kirtis Monson. A couple of minutes to play and 30 SR clawed their way back when a defensive error gifted the ball to Sig Luke Noble who slotted home. The remaining minutes were a little scrappy and after the final whistle was blown we were into extra time. It was now when the pre-season fitness training helped 1 Sig Regt players as they started to dominate the game and then after a good passage of play, the referee awarded a penalty for handball. Last minute in Golden Goal extra time and up steps Cpl Agar who coolly put the ball in the back of the net. 1 Signal Regiment are victorious and are the first unit to win both the Corps 7's Cup and Plate, an outstanding achievement.

The tournament is a great opportunity for the RSFA coaches and manager to take a look at all the talent throughout the Corps and this year was no different with some good talent on display. We look forward to another competitive tournament next season.

RSFA Cyprus Tour 2016 - by Cpl Poulter



The Squad in Cyprus

From 4-11 September, the Royal Signals Football Team embarked on a pre-season training camp in Cyprus in order to prepare for the new season. The tour was the brainchild of Team Manager Capt Dean Boughen, who himself had no interest in organising the tour and instead put it into the capable hands of SSgt Lee Fraser and SSgt John Marlborough.

The team would be based at Ay Nik and the tour would incorporate a gruelling five-day training schedule as well as two matches against military opposition. The training was designed to provide the players with the blueprint of how the coaches want them to play in the forthcoming season, and the matches gave the players a chance to show they could adapt to the new methods.

The squad flew out from Birmingham to Larnaca and there was visible tension amongst the players. At the end of the previous season, all players were weighed and given a target weight to make for the tour. Then, over the closed season, fitness drills were continuously given to the players to keep them in shape, with assessments planned for the tour. So it was to the huge relief of Cpl Jason Bates, who had turned up looking rather portly, that the scales were left at home and the temperature levels were deemed too high to be doing any fitness tests. Due to the heat, training sessions were laid on at o630hrs and 1630hrs which were unfortunately over meal times. Not to worry though, SSgt Lee Fraser covered breakfast each morning with trays of oranges and bananas and one morning even came out with a container full of porridge. In the evenings, the squad would go out for food, the highlight of which was a hot Greek buffet organised by LCpl Rob Farkins. In between sessions, the lads didn't hesitate in trying to top up their tans by the side of the pool or beach and fill their stomachs in the local café.

The first match was played against RAF Cyprus at RAF Akrotiri and the starting eleven included three new recruits who the coaching staff wanted to cast their eye over. Head Coach Barry Rizza set out a team target for the first 45 minutes to play out from the back and through the midfield as well as individual targets for each player, which for the most part the players achieved. The second half saw numerous substitutions and another target was set to keep a clean sheet. Unfortunately the team surrendered a goal with the last kick of the game much to the annoyance of the staff, but the Corps still ran out 11-1 winners, which included an impressive 8-goal haul from Sig Luke Noble. The other scorers were LCpl Liam Sankey (2) and Sig Peter Williams. Unfortunately, the match saw the end of goalkeeper Sig Tom Ross' involvement in the football side of the tour after a collision with the post left him sporting a broken hand for the remainder of the week.

The second match proved to be a much tougher affair against 1 Lancs at Episkopi. Infantry teams always have some decent players and are well known for their aggressive and tenacious attitude on the pitch. This proved to be the case and the match was a feisty affair as 1 Lancs prevented the Corps from having much time on the ball. Nonetheless, the Corps still managed to play some tidy football and eventually prevailed 3-1 winners, despite playing much of the match with 10 men after Cpl Sam Agar had been sent off for a challenge on the touchline. Goals from LCpl Kirtis Monson, Sig Jack May and Cpl Agar with a penalty ensured victory. Credit must go to 41 year old Goalkeeping Coach SSgt Marlborough, who had to play in goals for 90 minutes due to Sig Ross' injury, and he made some important saves including one from a first half penalty.

Friday brought to an end the footballing side of the week and saw the start of the partying side. The players were treated to a barbeque in the afternoon, after having a brief on how the week had gone. They then headed into Ayia Napa where the squad could unwind with a mixture of sun, sand, sea and refreshments.

All in all the tour was a success that left the coaching staff feeling confident heading into the new season, which would start with an away match at Larkhill against the Royal Artillery.



Enjoying some relaxation time

Exercise VENERABLE GAUNTLET CAPABILITY DAY - by Sgt

As part of Ex VENERABLE GAUNTLET 16 an intrepid party from 1 Sig Regt headed out to the Sennelagar training area to take part in a capability day. At a quite reasonable 0745hrs we paraded outside the 20 Armd Inf Bde HQ and got on the big red buses for the escorted trip to the training area.

The first stand involved a strike operation from the Spanish Legion with the aim to capture and to detain an individual. Once securing the entry and exit points to the area, the Spanish Legion came under contact. After a sustained fire fight the Spanish Legion suppressed the firing point. The Spanish MP then extracted the detainee and departed. The Legion then withdrew from the area in good order while keeping back an angry mob.

The second stand involved the Engineering group which consisted of the Danish, Polish, Spanish and British. After watching a number of obstacle crossing demonstrations showing the difference in vehicles and tactics between the various nations we moved onto the third stand.

The third stand involved the amphibious engineers and the most interesting part was watching the AVLB amphibious ferry craft approach the bank of a lake and transform from a road vehicle into a water ferry craft capable of carrying a Warrior AFV. The crew were professional throughout and gave an excellent demonstration of the crafts manoeuvrability and versatility.

The last stand consisted of the Royal Artillery showing off their air defence capabilities with the radar, command and control vehicle and anti-aircraft missile system.

Adventure Training in Germany - by LCpl Small



In the Harz Mountains

During Exercise VENERABLE GAUNTLET 16 an opportunity arose for members of the Sqn to take part in some Adventurous Training; something that over recent years I've been unable to take part in due to various work commitments. I was really looking forward to this as not only does Germany offer some great locations to conduct such training, but I also had the option to gain a foundation rock climbing course within the Harz Mountain region. I found the course very demanding physically at times yet also interesting, learning about various types of rocks and formations that you could climb, along with the basics of how to climb safely and efficiently. With all the training and theory out of the way during the early days it was time to hit the rocks to see what we could achieve. Surprisingly the majority of the group managed to climb up to a European grade 5 plus, which by UK standards equates to very severe climbing. This was very pleasing considering we're all novices. It was such a good week and I wouldn't hesitate should the opportunity ever arise again to take part and possibly take my training further. Unfortunately Friday had arrived too soon and we were brought back down to reality and had to re-join Ex VENERABLE GAUNTLET.

Warrior Gauntlet - by LCpl Fleck

It was 30 degrees and there was not a cloud in the sky as team Iron Fist took part in a multinational cross-fit games competition. The team of six consisting of Cpl Sharman, LCpl Fleck, LCpl Adams, LCpl McGee, LCpl Cawthorne and LCpl **Thorpe** worked together to complete various exercises including deadlifts, rowing, jerry can sprints and tyre flips. Although it looked easy when we arrived we soon found out that it was quite a different matter. With 4 minutes best effort on each exercise and a total of 7 stands, by the end of the competition the whole team were starting to feel the aches and pains of a hard session. Sore backs being the main ailment with the odd sweaty eyeball for good measure. We smashed ourselves against teams from Norway and Spain and in the end after all the hard work and determination we finished as a team in 4th place close behind the Norwegians and the Spanish legion. The effort put in by everybody and most importantly the Iron Fist saw everyone complete all the challenges without any dropouts or injuries.



Team Iron Fist

Mohnesse Lake - by LCpl Thatcher

Just before the Ex VENERABLE GAUNTLET got into full swing there was a not quite so busy day and a few of us were lucky enough to be selected to go to Mohnesse Lake. I had never been before and was really looking forward to a day out on the water to cool off from the hot German summer.

The lakes were only an hour's drive away so we got in the minibus nice and early and drove to Mohnesse. The lake was massive, and looked very pretty with the sun glistening off the water. There was a good selection of water sports open to us and also some mountain bikes. They also had sit-on kayaks both single and double, Canadian canoes, a pedalo, paddle boards, and even sailing boats. We were told to help ourselves to whatever we wanted and to enjoy.

We spent the morning on the lakes trying out every water sport available to us; we also had fun pushing each other in the water when the sun got too warm. In the afternoon we took a bike ride down the famous Mohnesse Dam. We followed the lake around until we found it; it was only six miles away. The dam was pretty impressive and luckily one of our groups remembered some of the history of the dam and told us all about it. We rounded the trip off with an ice cream and returned back to the AT centre to have a final swim in the lake before we headed home.

Everybody had a great relaxing day at the lakes and I would highly recommend to anybody in Germany to take a trip down to Mohnesse Lakes in the summer months.

Wewelsburg Castle

During Ex VENEREABLE GAUNTLET, we were given the opportunity to visit Wewelsburg Castle, better known as the Headquarters for the Nazi SS. Understandably; it had an ominous and imposing structure as we drove up to it from Sennelager. The primary purpose of the visit was to get an

insight into the culture and history of the area we were training near. Fortunately for us, Wewelsburg Castle has now been transformed into a museum detailing the plans of the SS and their role during the atrocities committed by the Nazi party during the Second World War. Of particular importance was Heinrich Himmler's desire to turn Wewelsburg Castle into the 'Centre of the World'. He would achieve this by redesigning the castle, and the surrounding landscape, into a fortification of epic proportions. There was an absolute disregard for the numerous villages that would be raised in order to complete this. The Museum had clearly gone through a lot of effort to create models detailing these plans; this was especially useful given that a lot of the information was in German.

The Museum led into the Castle itself. This took us through the North Tower which houses the SS Generals' Hall as well as the Vault. The displays available at the Museum really immersed us into life during Nazi Germany.

The final room considered the global impact of the Second World War and the aftermath of the Nazi Party. It was harrowing to realise the importance the SS had in empowering the Nazi Party and their impact.

During the museum tour, there were several references to a Concentration Camp held to the North of the Castle – Niederhagen Concentration Camp. I would like to do a further visit to understand the relationship between the SS Castle and the Camp.

Exercise RHINO ADVENTURER - by LCpl Royals

On the 4^{th} of September members of Sp Sqn embarked on an Adventure Training exercise in Capel Curig Training Centre, North Wales to complete 2 x 1 week packages, of which I was on the first week. Rather than the usual multi-activity week it would be a 5 day package on a single activity with individuals able to choose mountaineering, rock climbing or mountain biking.

Mountain Bike Foundation Course



Mountain bikers taking a well earned rest

While I am normally a road cyclist I chose mountain biking along with four other students. **Sgt Dave Bailey**, a MBL, was our instructor and he was assisted by **Sgt Stuart Mason**. The rest us were novice with little or no previous experience and were working towards our JS Mountain Bike Foundation qualification.

On Monday we went to Coed-Y-Brenin to learn the basic skills in the car park. Not quite the hills I had been warned about but it covered the basic lessons of mountain biking; the M check (safety check to ensure bike is serviceable), correct use of gears, effective braking, cornering, front wheel lift and rear wheel lift. In the afternoon we put these basic skills in to practise and it was amazing how these basic skills improved everybody's riding.

The second day started off with the skills park which enabled the group the opportunity to tackle different obstacles and go over some of the lessons from the day before. In the afternoon we did a trail, unfortunately part way round some of our group mis-judged one of the corners, which resulted in a crash. This resulted in the ride being cut short as **LCpl Adam Redwood** had a small cut which unfortunately required stiches. But on the bright side we managed to get *Dominos* pizza delivered as we waited.

Midweek was the best weather, which we spent doing the Marin trail. This was the most challenging day with large ascents; the views at the top were worth it, followed by more technical descents. We stopped at a few hard obstacles to discuss the best way over, on one obstacle I decided the best way to complete it was to fall in a prickly bush.

Before setting out on Thursday we watched some of the videos **Sgt Mason** had taken the previous day to show where we could improve but I was sure that it was the wrong video as the jumps and obstacles looked a lot smaller on the video than they did when speeding towards them. As the weather wasn't the best, we ended up back at Coed-Y-Brenin to revise and consolidate our skill which was followed up on the Friday with a consolidation ride at Llandegla before heading back to Stafford. Happily we all passed the course and all now have the MBF qualification.

Rock Climbing



Two happy climbers and two not-so-happy

It was all a relatively new experience for the rock climbers and their instructor **SSgt Stuart Reid** but they were assisted ably by the guest instructor **WO2** (FofS) Arthur Daley. Despite the slight drizzle they set off to the rock face straight away to gain an introduction to climbing techniques and their first knot, the fairly simple re-threaded figure of eight which everybody got straight away. Everybody managed to get some good climbs in and finished off with an abseil off Union Rock.

Tuesday was forecast to start with rain and then clear up but as with most weather reports for Wales it didn't live up to the promise. Despite not being able to get any climbing done due to the wet rock the time was spent productively learning about the different equipment types, anchoring equipment's

and equipment maintenance. They were also taught some additional knots and re-learned the re-threaded figure of eight which they had mysteriously forgotten overnight.

Thankfully Wednesday was a gorgeous day, which was spent on some hard routes ranging from 5A to 6B's. This really pushed everyone to use the techniques taught and also showed how difficult climbing is. Thursday and Friday were wet days and as such was spent at the Indy climbing wall which allowed the group to gain an introduction to bouldering and to practise on the various climbing climbs. It was capped off with a race on the self-belay climb where technique took second place to getting up as fast as possible, a race which was won by **LCpl Liam Bullard**.

Mountaineering



Mountaineers enjoying a dip

The mountaineering group was a small and compact group headed up by **Sgt Jim Dolan** who incidentally was on his 6th consecutive week of mountaineering! The first day was a straight up and over of Glyderau with **LCpl Andy New** deciding that he wanted to get up close and personal with the land of his birth by kissing the bogs after going off piste.

Similar to the other groups Tuesday was affected by the weather and thick fog on the hills so they took the road West to Holyhead Mountain and in the clearer air took on some micro navigation which obviously went well as they were rewarded with ice cream on the way back to Capel Curig. This was followed by the traditional trek to Snowdon and as the sun was splitting the heather an impromptu swim in the pools on the Watkins path was enjoyed.

Thursday was the big day for the mountaineers with the overnight expedition at a bothy planned and executed by the novice walkers. Despite the rain and all indications from **LCpl Andy New** they set out in good spirits which continued despite the 2 hour ascent to the top of Careddau. However they planned well and once they were up they were up and still had enough energy to enjoy a few hands of Cards Against Humanity and their delicious rations.

The culmination of the hard work put in by all the walkers was suitably rewarded on the Friday morning which consisted of a leisurely walk on the hills followed by replacing all the calories via a fry up in the local café.

Despite the best efforts of the weather it was an excellent week and enjoyment was had by all however I think that everybody was quite happy to get back to their own beds on Friday night to nurse the various tired muscles.

Parachuting Foundation Course - by LCpl Bullard

8 members of 1 Sig Regt got a great opportunity to go parachuting for a week down at Netheravon for adventure training as part of the Parachute Foundation Course. After arriving, there were 25 students in all for the basic course, in which a handful of people had done such things as tandem skydives before but nothing alone, so to all this was an allnew experience.



Parachute Foundation Training Course 14

On the first day of ground training we were spilt into three syndicates A, B and C. It was a long day of learning the basics, how to exit the aircraft door, the body position required once out of the aircraft, how the equipment works and the basic safety do's and don'ts. Like any training the best way for us to learn everything was through drilling it into us and the instructors made sure they did that. With it being such a high risk activity the ground training was very intense, some people grasped it quickly others not so. At the end of the day we were briefed that we had the morning to go over new training then the possibility of jumping in the afternoon, this was when it hit some people that they were jumping out of a plane.

Early Tuesday morning we learnt and went through drills of using the reserve chute if the main canopy didn't deploy, followed by malfunction drills. We then had to practise these techniques in dummy chutes, where you sat in a harness whilst the instructor shouted the commands and you had to execute the correct drill. This was just to prove to the instructors that you were ready. The afternoon came, being in syndicate A we got our kit on and entered the aircraft, at this point nerves were really starting to kick in but as we got to 4000ft the pilot had to cancel the jump as the winds picked up.

In the morning we just went over the drills as the wind at this point was too strong so no jumping was allowed. Thankfully by the afternoon the wind speed had dropped and syndicate A was out in the aircraft preparing ourselves mentally and physically. We quickly reached 4000ft and you could see the nerves were affecting everybody. While waiting for my turn I realised that it wasn't the height that was affecting me but the fact that I was going to be leaving an aircraft that was perfectly good, just relying on a canopy to get me down to the ground. Called forward to the door I somehow managed to forget all the lessons (adrenaline was kicking in) and just leapt out hoping for the best. Once I landed I reflected to myself that what I just did was probably one of the best things I've done in the Army.

The following morning was clear and we went straight into jumping, with everyone still pumped from the day before. However on the second jump we were a lot more nervous,

the instructors did say that the second jump is always the worse. Once up in the air and in the door you soon forgot about it all and just jumped. We managed to get another jump in the afternoon. The wind was back for the Friday so it was lectures and briefs before departing back to Stafford.

Although the wind affected the number of jumps that we managed to complete it was still a brilliant week and I would encourage everybody to take advantage of the JS AT scheme and get themselves on these types of courses.

Corps Inter-Unit Orienteering Competition - by Lt Perry

On Tuesday 20 September seven members of 1 Sig Regt stepped out of uniform for a few days to compete in the Corps Orienteering Championships held near Catterick. We were billeted in Wathgill camp and, lacking phone signal of any denomination, were driven to congregate in the *Dalesman* bar. Around the table were 3 Novices, and 4 experienced Orienteers, each of whom was in a competitive mind set so the tab stayed small.

Wednesday saw the team drive to Hamsterley Forest for the individual event in overcast but mild conditions. Delayed by a map shortage **WO2 Corderry** was the last out from the Regt, and was caught in the rain which came in during the afternoon. That said all the runners from the Regiment were through their courses long before the prize giving at 160ohrs.

The Regt did well, winning 3 age group awards and more runner-up awards. Of particular note was Capt Hollingsworth who was crowned overall Corps Orienteering Champion 2016. Meanwhile in the Novice competition Lt Perry was overall novice champion, and will be the first name on the James Averill memorial Trophy, whilst Sgt Clark was the runner up. All in all it was a great day for the Regt.

On the Thursday the team competition took place in Marne Barracks, with courses over a mix of urban and rural environments, the Regt fielded two male teams and an Ad-hoc female competitor. Whilst the overall standard was good over the second competitive day, fatigue and a couple of severe navigational issues; possibly due to the smaller scale maps, meant that unfortunately no more silver was taken. The champs were a step in the right direction for orienteering in the Regt, proving that the sport for all is helping to breed success.



1 Sig Regt orienteers



2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT YORK



CO Lt Col CJ Lewin MBE RSM WO1 J McMahon

It has been a particularly busy period for the Regt with Sqn's delivering on operations, validating their ability to support ARO 16 readiness requirements, taking time to reinforce their CT 1 credentials and working hard to help AF units develop their working practices on exercises around the world. We have a number of teams and individuals deployed away from York and it has been both reassuring and exciting to read of the good work going on in Canada, Kenya, Iraq, the Falklands and in the Balkans. Only time will tell what 2017 has to offer but in the meanwhile the Regt is also taking the opportunity to reinvigorate sport and Adventurous Training activities and to compete in a number of high profile military competitions. My sincere congratulations go out to the 219 led Cambrian Patrol team who nailed a Bronze award this October and also to the Regimental Badminton team, Mountain Bike team, Football team, Hockey team and Angling stars who have all delivered at Inter Unit and Inter Corps competitions this autumn. Regtl success on LECB (Congratulations to SSM Gopal and RQ Gyanendra), a top finish on PNCO for the recently promoted LCpl Hitesh Gurung and an RSI Master of Signals Award for Sgt Pun have all been particularly noteworthy highlights. Much to look forward to in the run up to Christmas leave and would you believe it Race the Sun 2017 planning is already gathering pace – some exciting changes for competitors next year....

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj J Lawer SSM WO2 C Chilvers

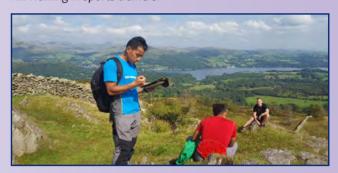
Exercise NORTHERN JORVIK SPLASH - by LCpl Giri

Ex NORTHERN JORVIK SPLASH was an adventure training camp run between the 21-26 Aug 16, with an aim to present the soldiers with challenges they may not face on a regular basis. 18 members from Sp Sqn were deployed to Halton Training Camp, Lancaster on the evening of 20 Aug. We were divided into 3 groups and were issued an itinerary of scheduled activities (such as rock climbing, hill walking, mountain biking and abseiling).

On the first day we awoke to high winds and rain, luckily **Sgt Falinski** had a contingency plan in the form of an indoor climbing wall. We went to Ambleside Climbing Wall and I never realised indoor climbing could be so much fun as we were taught about different climbing techniques and the grades within the climbing walls. We battled with the wall for a couple of hours pushing beyond our previously recognised limits. It was fun to see **LCpl Giri** and **Sig Sameer**, competing with each other and **WO1 FofS Landregan**, not the one to back away from the hurdle, climbing with his massive walking boots due to the unavailability of the correct size.

On the second day, we went out hill walking with **Capt O'Brien**. We went to a route within and around the National
Park covering various terrains and landscapes for an overall
distance of 12 miles. On top of sightseeing, we were taught
how to read features on the map, orientate the map to the

ground and use navigation skills throughout the day. It was overall an amazing experience, from ascending a hill of 400m to getting lost in the swamps and making fun of **LCpl Gaskell**. I hope he has learnt the important lesson of correct kit selection, after his feet got wet in the bogs and swamps while hill walking in sports trainers.



It was finally the time most of us were eagerly waiting for, the mountain biking day. Whinlatter Forest Park has a variety of options for all levels of experience ranging from amateur to advance. After the initial safety brief and emergency procedures, we were straight on the trails. We went through the fast and curvy turns of the blue route with ease and opted to go for the red route next, probably a mistake in my case. It was a pleasant ride downhill for half an hour, followed by an interesting 2 hours of uphill, battling with tired legs and gravity. After a hard day riding, with tired legs and some cuts and bruises it was time for our evening meal and straight to bed but not before carrying out some bike maintenance.



On our final day we opted to go out abseiling in Cathedral Cavern. We couldn't hide our excitement on the day because we had already been there for hill walking and were looking forward to it. When we went to the site, everyone was a bit nervous as we had to abseil through a hole into the cavern with nothing to support our legs. As we entered the cavern the natural beauty was simple outstanding, as we abseiled down.

From the moment we arrived at the Holton Camp to our final day, it had truly been amazing. Everyone attending the adventurous training had something different to try and execute the challenges throughout the week. That being either; WO1 FofS Landregan navigating us through the swamps, LCpl Gaskell falling off the bridge during mountain biking or LCpl Scurr getting scared and trying to pull himself up during abseiling. Everything about this week was special. 2 Sig Regt would like to thank all instructors for volunteering to

make sure this ex was a success. Special thanks to **Sgt Falinski** for her efforts in planning and organisation, ensuring this ex was an unquestionable success and an unforgettable experience for all those who took part.

The Battle of Kohima Remembrance Day of June - by Sgt M Cullip

They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old.

o4 April to 22 June 1944, Kohima, 30 miles from the Burmese border saw nearly 4000 British and Indian soldiers from the 'Forgotten Army' lose their lives in what has been labelled as one of the greatest battles in history.

Members of 2 Sig Regt attended an annual ceremony at York Minster to remember and pay tribute to those that fought in the Battle of Kohima. This was, luckily for me, the second time I had the honour of looking after the 11 veterans of that battle for the day. Tea and coffee in the WOs' and Sgts' mess was followed by a short coach ride to the Kohima memorial at York Minster. Wreaths laid, old friends remembered and tears shed it was back to Imphal Barracks for some reminiscing over lunch and a few drinks. A photo was taken as a momento for the 11 veterans to take away with them, regrettably one less than last year. It's been such an honour looking after these heroes again and we hope to see them all in 2017.

We will remember them.



The Kohima Veterans

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj D Whitworth SSM WO2 J Sheehan

The Sqn would like to say a fond farewell to Maj Matt Jones who departs for MOD London. Also a warm welcome to Maj Dean Whitworth who has moved internally from Support Squadron to take command of 214. The Sqn also says farewell to Acting SSM Phil Stillie who moves on promotion to 1 MI Coy in Catterick. Replacing Phil is WO2 (SSM) Jase Sheehan who returns to the Regt from 32 Sig Regt after a brief stint with the reserves.

Exercise SENTIENT - by Cpl Noble

214 Sig Sqn deployed on Ex SENTIENT in Sept 2016 in support of 11 Lt Infantry Bde (11 Inf Bde). Ex SENTIENT was a CT5 level CAST exercise for which 214 Sig Sqn were tasked to provide a Staff Working Environment (SWE) for 11 Inf Bde. This was the first time 214 Sig Sqn had provided this role, so a lot of lessons

were about to be learnt. To add to the challenge most of the personnel deploying had never provided a SWE, especially the type of configuration that this HQ was.

The Sqn deployed out of Imphal Barracks on 12 Sept up to CAST (N) in Catterick. As soon as we arrived it was all hands to the pump to put the HQ tent up (affectionately known as the BFOT), which consisted of four 18x24 tents stitched together and interlocked, with two 18x24 as the Plans/COS/DCOS working environment and a separate 18x24 as a briefing tent. This configuration when it came to inclement weather, was eventful to say the least.

Once the HQ frame was built, which took a while, it was then down to getting all the communications equipment initialised and the SWE looking the part before the 11X Staff arrived, this was controlled by **Cpl 'Bish' Bishoprick** and **Cpl 'Nobby' Noble**. The Staff arrived on the Thursday morning and conducted a 2 day Question o prep before going live on the Monday morning. The YofS, **WO2 'The Legend' Piff** split the manpower down into teams, watch keeper operators, service desk and the support element. This worked well and saw the guys working long days over the 5 day period.



Lt 'Noob' Reid and SSgt 'Titch' Taylor admiring the leaks coming from the roof of the tent

Once the live phase was running, those who had never been on a HQ supported ex before had their first insight of what happens in a HQ. Whilst the Staff were working there were two Operators on shift supporting the Battle Captain and the Watchkeeper. Our CS Eng support was covered by LCpl 'Brad' Woolley and LCpl 'Andy' Williams, who had very little work to do so they ensured that they were always at the front of the scoff queue.



214 Sig Sqn fully integrated and supporting 11 Inf Bde Staff

Whilst the operators and techs made sure the CIS was up and running, LCpl 'Gav' McBlain and LCpl 'Ashy' Ashton took care of the power, making sure that the burco was always in and working (who knows what would have happened if the Staff were not caffeine fuelled).

Once ENDEX was called, morale was instantly high and the collapse of the HQ began, it is quite astonishing how quickly a tented HQ comes down as opposed to going up! Before the teardown commenced Comd 11 Inf Bde, **Brig Kimber** gathered the lads for a morale boosting chat, thanking them for their hard work and commitment on the 2 week build phase and exercise period. All in all Ex SENTIENT was a success and the first in many exercises that 214 Sig Sqn will conduct with their aligned Brigade, 11 Inf Bde.



Brig Kimber thanking the lads for their efforts over the 2 week exercise

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

Lanyard Trophy - by 2Lt Oliver Hall

Even for a Northern based unit, the terrain surrounding York is a far cry from the Black Mountains. Training, whilst still demanding, would have benefitted from a few more like-for-like hills. No amount of training however could have prepared the teams for the weather in store for them.

The race got off to a good start with the male team deciding to adopt a steady pace that could be sustained throughout. Navigating Brecon's steep terrain and the infamous "babies heads" in the dark though meant that both the male and female teams lost members due to injuries before the first admin point.

A few hours after daybreak, having spent no time "messing around" with contouring, the first admin checkpoint provided the team with a welcome rest. The team was greeted by the equally soaked admin team who provided chocolate, energy drinks and bananas for sustainment. With a boost of energy the team set off for more seemingly endless ascents and descents

Also braving the conditions were the 2 Sig Regt RSM and OC 246 Sig Sqn, who tracked down and found the male team just after checkpoint five, providing plenty of mini-cakes and morale as the team entered the shadow of spot height 802 and checkpoint six. Little did the team know however that greeting them at the peak of the ascent would be even

tougher weather conditions. The wind made walking in a straight line an effort and the rain was continuing to swell the rivers below. The team also encountered a brave group of civilians at the summit, who were there entirely out of choice! With small comfort in the knowledge that the biggest climb was behind them, the team continued on towards checkpoint seven.



2 Sig Regt Reunion in the emergency shelter

The team was not ashamed to admit the joy and relief when the emergency beacon activated telling them to make their way to the nearest checkpoint and that the event had been abandoned. Luckily the closest checkpoint was number 11, the only hard standing across the course. Coincidently the female team was also told to make their way to the same checkpoint, and so a 2 Sig Regt reunion was had with emergency rations and watching "Hexi-TV" to warm up. The final push of Lanyard involved a gentle walk down the track to meet the loyal admin team who had the heaters on full in the minibus waiting for us. Treating Ex LANYARD 2016 as a trial run, all members are looking forward to the opportunity to complete the full course next year.



Both teams at the end of Lanyard Trophy

Exercise CHIMERA WAVE - by LCpl Daly

219 Sig Sqn deployed to Capel Curig in the area of Betws-y-Coed for a week's adventure training.

We arrived in Capel Curig's training camp on Mon 25 Jul which was centrally located to all our weeks' activities. Everyone got settled in their 14 man luxury accommodation, fighting for the one plug socket in the room.

We were split into groups and did our designated activities for the day. On Tuesday our group went mountain biking in the morning. We went to Coed Y Brenin near Dolgellau and started off on the jumps park to get used to the bikes and build our confidence. We then took a couple of the red routes which had some fast, steep and windy paths to ride down. It was fun until we hit the bottom of the run and had to cycle all the way back up to the start. In the afternoon we went to surf Snowdonia which is the world's first commercial artificial surfing lake. Some of us had never been surfing before so couldn't wait to give it a try. We were issued our wetsuits and had a quick introduction on how to mount the board. We were soon in the lake and in came a huge man-made wave every 90 seconds. Safe to say the first few attempts didn't even come close to standing up on the board. We had a 30 minute slot and by the end a lot of us could stand up and even a few people were actually surfing the wave. LCpl Millman boasted how he was the best. While we were there we had a session booked on the water obstacle course and the big blob. We didn't waste much time before we started catapulting people off the blob 2 people at a time to make them fly even higher.

Wednesday we walked up Snowdon. The weather was really nice in the morning and we decided to take the miners trail up. It started off really pleasant round the base of the mountain until we had to climb. At points we were on our hands and knees pulling ourselves up until we joined on the Pygg track which took us to the summit. The higher we got the worse the visibility got and the rain started to come in. By the time we reached the summit we couldn't see anything. So pictures were pointless. The walk down was more enjoyable as we took the Pygg track the whole way back down. Up and down in 5 hours. It was a really good day. That night we had a BBQ laid on for us. Endless amounts of burgers and refreshments. This resulted in a very good night playing drinking games and Sig Billington's favourite, 'chicken goggles.'

Thursday was a full day of mountain biking where we went back to Coed Y Brenin. It was raining heavily and the ground wasn't the best to ride across. We spent most of the morning on the skills park. We decided to try one of the jumps and all of us got over it successfully apart from one. The OTC chap that was with us for the week went straight over his handle bars and decided to pick up the gravel with his face. His helmet was hanging of his head and he was bleeding quite a lot. Needless to say we all went in for a coffee until the rain died down. The afternoon cleared up slightly so went down a few more red routes and spent the rest of the day getting muddy and racing the bikes around. There was an opportunity for a few people that evening to go surfing again as there were spare tickets while the rest stayed behind for the evening. Everyone left Friday morning to return to Imphal bks.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj P Whillis

SSM WO2 Gopal Krishna Saru

246 GSS Celebrates at their Summer Function 2016

- by Cpl Padam Gurung

All York based Gurkhas serving in 246 GSS and outside the Sqn celebrated this year's summer function based on a Hawaiian theme on 01 Jul. The main aim of the function, despite the hectic schedule with the various commitments of the Sqn, was to gather all personnel, including the families of York based Gurkha community, together in order to foster the community bonding in the form of a BBQ function as well as to welcome, bid farewell to some key personalities and congratulate some recent promotees within the Sqn.

As scheduled by the coordinator Cpl Padam, it kicked off at exactly 1600hrs with the arrival of all Sqn personnel and followed by Sqn hierarchies including the main guest of the day, Capt Bharat and family at 163 ohrs. All Sqn personnel were welcomed with a glass of Hawaiian flavoured punch at the entrance gate to the venue by **LCpl Mabin's** (Drink IC) team. Well-dressed attendees in a themed costume became even more cheerful when they were offered a free initial drink. The event quickly started taking up pace after a short welcoming speech and safety brief by the co-ord. Then the appetiser delicacy of delicious momos and barbecued pork was served which was prepared by LCpl Arjun and his team under the close supervision of master chef Sgt Bimal. After food had been served the entertainment phase followed in the form of adult fun games, children's fun games, a round of tombola games and a raffle draw with some attractive prizes which were generously sponsored by Cpls, SNCOs and Officers within the Sqn. A nicely prepared entertainment phase in the theme matching style by LCpl Naresh was a key attraction as well as a key contributor in the event in order to make it a success. The parents were allowed enough time to entertain themselves because all the children were engaged in a magic show, performed by a professional magician.



The ladies enjoying the Hawaiian theme

One of the main aims of the function was the farewell presentation phase by WO2 (SSM) Gopal and OC saheb Maj Paul Whillis. It started by welcoming some individuals to the Sqn and swiftly moved on to farewells. LCpl Gaurav was fortunate enough to not only be posted to Nepal Signals Troop (NST), but also got a farewell from the Sqn at such a big party. Next in the farewell row was Lt Lee Kuzinas who



Lt Lee Kuizinas dazzling with his HAKA

successfully completed his tenure in the Sqn as Troop OC Sek Kong Troop and is now being posted out for his new assignment. Lt Kuzinas has served as troop OC S Tp for two years and he has contributed to the Sqn in various remarkable ways. He wrapped up his farewell speech by performing a famous traditional dance of New Zealand, the 'HAKA'. We as a Sqn would like to wish him the very best of luck for the future.

Then came the turn of our main guest - **Capt Bharat** saheb's farewell presentation.

He served in the Sqn for some years and has managed to leave the Sqn in a better position in terms of soldier's achievements, awards and promotions. They were clearly described by the OC. **Capt Bharat** saheb has done a lot and given his valuable time and effort for the good and benefit of Sqn members. We would like to thank him for what he has done to the Sqn and we wish him good luck for his future assignments.



Flower presentation for the winner of the ladies competition

After the presentation, the main meal of the night was served by **LCpl Arjun** and his team. The food was simply 'A' grade in taste and quality. The' khusiko naach' followed the meal and although the party atmosphere was still going strong, the party came to an end at 2300hrs.



'When you have a Son's of Anarchy party after your Hawaiian one'

As such, this has been one of the best parties I have organised in my army career and I thoroughly enjoyed not only the main day but also the organisation of it. From the perspective of an event co-ordinator, the evening went smoothly and without a glitch. I was lucky enough to have a proactive and hardworking committee that helped me throughout, without their hard work; no way would it have been as successful. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to my committee members for their support. My special thank you goes to the event OIC Capt Bishal saheb and event director WO2 (SSM) Gopal for giving me the opportunity to organise it and offering direction and help when needed. Finally, my thanks go to all who attended for your time and I hope you all enjoyed the evening as much as I did.

Jai 246!

Annual Live Firing Exercise

Despite BFSAI, EUBG and VJTF commitment, a handful of personnel from 246 (Gurkha) Sig Sqn managed to deploy to Warcop Training Area for a week of Live Firing Tactical Training (LFTT) on 12 Jun 16. The package included a Pistol shoot, ACMT, TLFTT and LFTT up to Section level. The Sqn also managed to tick a few other MATTs concurrently during the quieter evening periods.

The first day started with the pistol shoot package, followed by map reading in the late afternoon. The ACMT and TLFTT followed on 2nd and 3rd day. Throughout the ex, the troops were given access to a news feed made by the Safety Staff as a build-up scenario for the final day. The scenario culminated in a vehicle 'Breakdown', meaning the troops had to tactically advance to battle, before completing an assault course and a section attack.

All the hard work over the week was worth it for the excellently prepared BBQ, thanks to the SQMS's team. The Sqn also took this opportunity to wish farewell to 246 Ops Officer Capt Aldred who left after 2 years with the Sqn on his new journey as a Platoon Commander in the prestigious RMA Sandhurst.

Corps Calendar 2017

	corps curchaur 2011		
February			
6-12	Operational Shooting – Corps Concentration Training Camp		
17-19	Ex Lightning Strike		
March			
Tbc	RSI Spring Lecture		
17	RSA Central Committee Meeting		
17	RSA Curry Supper		
18	RSA AGM		
April			
8	White Helmets Opening Show		
May			
3-4	Morrison Cup		
8-14	Force Troops Command Operational Shooting Competition		
21	Eden Camp Parade		
25	Race The Sun – York		
Tbc	Lanyard Trophy		
June			
16	3Rs Dinner		
17	Corps Luncheon		
17-18	Corps Reunion Weekend		
24	Armed Forces Day		
28	Princess Royal Day		
July			
28-30	Ex Trailwalker – South Downs		
August	:		
12	9 th Gathering of the Clans		
Septen	nber		
2	NMA Rededication		
Octobe	October		
19	19 RSA Central Committee		
November			
9	Field of Remembrance Service		
12	Cenotaph Parade		
16	RSI London Lecture & Dinner		
24-26	Project Noel		
December			
7	Apprentice of the Year Awards – Blandford		



3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION SIGNAL REGIMENT BULFORD



CO Lt Col J C Barber RSM WO1 K Mills

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj S Littlefield
SSM WO2 C Shackleton

Regimental Boxing Night - by Sig Vilkhou

On 28 July after weeks of intense training and hard work, fourteen boxers from 3DSR competed in an inter-sqn boxing competition held at Bulford Camp.

To start off with, some of the competitors across the separate sqns had no prior boxing experience or have never had to gain or lose weight to fit a specific weight category ever before and believe me, they had no idea what they were about to be introduced to. In the first few days of training they started right from the basics of footwork, learning to keep a correct stance as well as waiting for medicals to be completed so they could put it all into practise early on with sparring. Might not sound too bad so far, you would think. As training progressed the boxers were learning different punches and combos, ducking and weaving and starting to gain their own individual technique. Even the boxers who had at least one previous bout knew training would only become more difficult.

Over the next few weeks the boxers were becoming "ring fit;" being able to last for the duration of the whole 3 rounds of 2 minutes each round without dropping their guard and tiring out too much, though if you were to ask any of the boxers now about ring fitness, they would only tell you it's a special kind of fitness you don't just gain from running around a track or lifting heavy weights in a gym. On the other hand, there were plenty of moments in sparring where noses became bloody or swollen, ribs were bruised, black eyes appeared and also general aching from all the hard work that was being put in from each boxer.

Even mid training, the boxers took part in Ex KIWI CONNECT alongside the rest of the regt, a 48-hour challenge which ended with the cycling distance from Bulford Camp, Wiltshire to Linton Barracks in New Zealand. Even after taking part in the charity cycle which was raising money for the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, training hadn't taken a break straight into more sparring and pad work, focusing on movement and keeping within range. Not to mention even more nose bleeds as I just cannot grasp moving my head around enough. In the third and fourth weeks of training, each sqn's team visited the Royal School of Signals, Blandford Forum at different times to make use of the full size ring and other facilities in the boxing gym on the camp to get the most out of their training. This was brilliant in order to be comfortable with the space they have in the ring and knowing the limits they have on movement around themselves.

As the fight night was just around the corner, each boxer was starting to hit the correct weight and getting ready to put on

an amazing show for the rest of the regt who they have been working away for the last few weeks. The ring was being built, 206 Sqn's garages were being filled with chairs and lighting and it was all starting to become real. There were photos taken of each fighter for a PowerPoint presentation for the spectators to see with stats such as height, weight and reach of each of the boxers.



The audience waiting eagerly as the first bout is ready to commence between Sig Vilkhou (202 Sqn) and Sig Evans (228 Sqn)

Once the final day had arrived, all fourteen boxers for each of the seven fights were up early for the official weigh-in, with each boxer on the correct weight they had from that point on until the start of the event to go away and train some more, or if you were in 202 Sqn, we decided to go to Nando's for a team lunch. In addition to the 3DSR inter-sqn competition, there were also 2 boxers from 5 Battalion REME who were also staging a bout on the same night. Both of their boxers fought right up until the end of the third round, trading blow for blow which ended with both boxers unfortunately being hospitalised. The first bout started from light welterweight where myself, Sig 'Draco' Vilkhou from 202 Sqn fought against 228 Sqn's Sig 'Rocky' Evans. The event finished with a heavyweight bout with 206 Sqn's Cpl 'Mr T' Macdonald fighting against 202 Sqn's LCpl 'Apollo' Butler. The event ended with 228 Sqn claiming winners of the competition, with Sig 'Tiger' Mitchell from 228 Sqn taking home the award of Best Boxer and myself, Sig 'Draco' Vilkhou, receiving the award of Most Gallant Boxer. After the awards were presented all of the boxers, mostly looking battered and bruised, were invited into the Sgt's mess for celebratory

The Sportsman's Dinner- by SSgt Ward

After an amazing year of Sport at the 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt we all sat down in the WOs and Sgts Mess (Signaller to CO) to enjoy an evening of recognition for our soldiers and their Sporting achievements. The Regt were also the winners of this year's Birtwistle Pennant of Merit for Sport, indicating



The football team: L to R: Sig Lowe, LCpl Elkington, Sig Spencer, Cfn Pye, LCpl Davies, Sgt Fawcett, SSgt Williams, Lt Cantell, Sig May, Sig Hughes, Sgt Wood

that we are the best unit in the whole Corps for sport. With so many teams and individuals doing so well this year handing out only six awards was no easy decision, but that's why the CO is paid the big bucks! The decision to invite the soldiers into the 3DSR mess was a highlight for many, a great reward for all the sportsmen and women and a great end to the sporting season. Not only had we managed to conduct our daily soldiering tasks and requirements we had also participated in a vast array of sports and moved into the Summer Leave period on a high and the dinner helped everyone do that.

The awards went out to the following:

Commanding Officers Cup Winners Support Sqn Sports Personality of the Year Novice LCpl Ravai Sports Personality of the Year Junior LCpl Cross Sports Team of the Year Football Sports Personality of the Year (most contribution) WO₂ Saxton Sports Personality of the Year LCpl Elkington

The Sportspersons Dinner awards night proved a great success, enabled the Regt to identify its key sports teams/ sportspeople, provided them with some much deserved recognition and finalised the results of the highly competitive Commanding Officers Cup.

As the RAPTCI, I have not seen such a motivated and competitive bunch of soldiers during my time in the Army. This was clear to see, not only by the levels at which our soldiers had competed but also by the awards we had received, especially after being awarded the Birtwhistle Pennant for Sport 2016.

All in all the evening was a great success and we should be extremely proud as a Regt for the achievements of our soldiers. It has been a great pleasure witnessing the sporting events and the sterling efforts made to culminate another successful sporting year at 3DSR.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj L Matthews WO₂ G Moffat SSM

Helicopter Underwater Escape Training – by Lt M Shrubb

To further develop the already well bonded troop, Waterloo Tp headed down to RNAS Yeovilton to push themselves

beyond their comfort zones whilst developing lifesaving skills in the Helicopter Underwater Escape Training Unit. The training team teach vital survival techniques required in the event of a helicopter crashing or ditching into water, including the correct bracing position and escape procedures to ensure survival. All course participants conduct four separate ditching simulations in a purpose built helicopter chassis with seat belts and fitted windows. This chassis in lowered into the water with the soldiers inside who must carry out the brace and escape drills, each dunk goes from upright, to upside down and upside down in low light, then total darkness.

A healthy mix of excitement and apprehension was clear to see within the men of Waterloo Tp as they eyed up the helicopter chassis as it dipped and span in the water. Each man donned their 'onesie' flight

suit and rubber boots and those manly enough to show their fear of the water were proudly identifiable with bright red helmets as opposed to the normal white. Concentrating on the drills required and forcing back fear in front of their mates the first group attempted their first dunk, and with great success. The turning of the helicopter during the second dunk changed the game however. Each man's face upon surfacing was a hilarious picture of shock, panic and slight regret.

Some grew confident being in metal boxes underwater and others vowed to never experience this again but all were now trained and equipped with the knowledge and experience of how to react in such an event. Despite Sig Hill failing to eject the window during his dunk and nearly drowning the Troop Commander and Troop Sgt, everyone managed to stay alive and the days training was a success.

Inter-Services Open Water Swimming Championships - by SSgt Boyle

The morning started off wet, windy and overcast – Not the ideal way you would want to start a 1.5km swim in the sea! However, the fact that out of our team of 9 swimmers our composition was Corps triathletes, Corps swimmers and no less than TWO Ironmen we fancied our chances.

The majority of the team captained by Capt Becky 'the fish' Parkinson arrived bright and early just in time to see the results and presentations of the mornings 5km swim competition. The times were impressive to say the least with the winner of this event clocking a time of just over 1 hour. WO1 (YofS) Green having previously assured the team that he would only 'have a couple' at the previous nights end of Yeoman's course dinner in Blandford, then arrived during the registration process and needless to say he was NOT looking forward to what was coming...!!

With the breeze picking up and the waves becoming ever increasingly larger, it was time to get the wet suits on and prepare for the big race. Oh, wait a minute it's been decided that if you want to wear your wet suit then your time won't be counted towards the team result! Ok then... speedos it is. We gathered on the beach for the safety brief and were duly informed that there are no heroes in open water swimming and if you felt like you couldn't continue then it would be best to stop. At this point I caught a wry smile from LCpl 'I'll do anything to get out of PACEX' Murphy and then before we knew it, it was time to wade into the water ready for the mass start.



WO1 (Regt YofS) Green & WO2 (SSM) Riste assessing the calm before the storm

The start was initiated and the carnage ensued with over 150 swimmers going flat out for the first buoy. Pushing, pulling, kicking and fighting to get in front of the next person. Swimming into the current was definitely a challenge and for a novice like myself who has never swam competitively in the sea; I took more than a few mouthfuls of the not so pleasant salty water. It was also at this point I realised that using a lubricant under my arm pits would have been of most benefit!!

First out of the water was **LCpl Murphy** who unfortunately had to take the advice of the organisers due to the extremely painful 'cramp' he sustained in BOTH legs. Next up was Corps triathlete Sgt 'Bobby' Coatsworth who was an impressive 24th overall, followed shortly after by Capt Becky 'the fish' Parkinson. SSgt 'Birthday Boy' Boyle was next followed by the rest of the team with the first 6 on the team counting towards the overall unit team score.



The Swim Team: WO1 (Regt YofS) Green, Capt (TOT) Searle, SSgt Boyle, SSgt Forster, Capt (Adjt) Wallis, WO2 (SSM) Riste, Sgt Coatsworth, Capt Parkinson, LCpl Murphy

After a quick change it was time for the results to be announced with 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt claiming a respectable third place in the Major Unit competition.

Overall, it was a good day out of the office and a great effort by all those who took part. See you next year...

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Mai S Tucker SSM **WO₂ M Turner**

Exercise RED KIWI - by Lt A Boyes

Ex RED KIWI is the Regt's annual two week CT3 training ex, deploying our Headquarters and training and testing individuals on Falcon, Magpie, Bowman, Housekeeper, Reacher and TNG. The pace Ex started well, that is on the third attempt and Falcon was still busy doing uplifts. Nonetheless we managed to power through and tick all the hoxes.



Awaiting Orders

The ex involved deployments to Agen in France, Salisbury Plain Training Area, Piddlehinton camp and Blandford camp airfield. One of the key focuses of the ex was continued training on interoperability with the French systems. After the success of Ex GRIFFIN STRIKE in the spring the Regt were in a unique place to continue this training.

Despite going to France the Agen contingent disembarked the ferry in Spain, where they were met by a very friendly military escort and taken to the French border. Upon arriving in France they had a few days to establish the headquarters prior to HF comms being achieved. As expected the French were on top form with refreshments on hand. At this point it seemed like those in France were going to have a breeze of

Back in "Sunny" Bulford the rest of the Regt were being rained on whilst 'line up' on the parade square commenced. With a bit of training on how to jack up the Falcon Det and remove a tyre, only to find you have 2 minutes to get it back on because the packet has to leave, meant a few members left Bulford a little more flustered than others. Finally all packets leave, destination Blandford Camp. The best comment of the morning was "I've been this route before", however for once we were not off to St Mawgan. Eventually we arrived at Blandford Camp after only taking a slight detour.

228 Sig Sqn thought they were on to a winner when their Bulldogs made it to the Parade square, however the deployment onto Salisbury Plain proved too much with the 228 claiming the second vehicle casualty of the exercise. A few serials into the ex and an ambulance was soon required as a certain solider, who will remain unnamed, decided his head was harder than the Armour. Diving into the back of the Bulldog to retrieve his weapon ended badly with paramedics

being called out. With Bulldogs dropping like flies throughout the ex, 228 saw more of the recovery asset than anyone else and provided some great training opportunities for the LAD. But a 50% attrition rate over two weeks is not too bad for Armour fresh out of storage, as it gets used the better it gets or as the MTO says "the more you love the armour the more it loves you back!"



B Fch

On arrival at Blandford Camp we got out onto the area and parked up, then moved and parked up again, then just because he hadn't yet done it enough moved and parked up one final time, practise makes perfect. Quickly diamond six (SYSCON, NER and RADCON) was erected followed swiftly by the rest of the DRASH. The rest of the build was a blur, mainly because of the long days and relentlessness of the tasks, and the man power only just hit double figures including Tp seniors and officers. Lt Hedouin, Sgt Morley and Sgt Just were kept busy laying fibre in the dark, only to find it was on the wrong side of the site. Turns out the Tp OC is pretty good on the radio too.

Almost immediately after testing HF comms Normandy Tp found themselves ushered out the door to deploy detachments to designated wide area locations. The three WASP detachments which provide the Falcon wide area network, deployed to three locations Corfe Castle, Heath Dairy and Rollington Farm.

WASP061 under the command of Sig Graves which was the best and most reliable detachment on the ex, located on a hill next to Corfe Castle. The location was ideal with clear line of sight in every direction and amazing views. The only problem was the surrounding cows which, for some reason loved the detachment. They repeatedly visited our masts and rubbed themselves against them, loosening pegs and critical guy ropes which held the masts in place. Following this we needed a cow watch to stop the cows from congregating and disturbing the peace. This provided Sig Graves with valuable experience for a career in farming upon leaving the Army.



Cow watch!!!

WASP052 under the command of Sig Smith located at Rollington Farm was a challenging location to work in. After extensive effort dodging trees and foliage they achieved their objective, the only issue we ran into on the ex was the terrible driving skills of Sig Spencer that got the det stuck when redeploying to Ferndown Farm. A reshow on driving for Sig **Spencer** is forthcoming upon return to barracks.

Near the end of the first week the atmosphere started to stabilise and become workable, unlike the HF. Probably because **Sig Nicolson** cut his own frequency, not helped by the fact the antenna was not connected properly. This was a result of the Det being utilised for a fateful trip out to test the HCDR bubble. A new water pump, and belts fitted, the Det was returned, almost as good as new. One area that was spot on was the field kitchen, except there were only 2 chefs. Pan bash time! Probably the best job going as even Officers were getting involved.



Piddlehinton in all its glory

The weekend was very productive with cross training between multiple pieces of equipment taking place. The next couple of days went smoothly and tear down was in sight.

Tear down was quick and efficient, ready to move to Old Carter Barracks for a rolling "not so rolling" replen and a last night in the field by the dets as there wasn't enough tents for all. This was a classic hurry up and wait. After some waiting and new tasks, a guick off road session to the wash point and an epic water fight, we conducted a successful replen. The next day was 1) back in to barracks 2) kit turn around 3) ready the party shoes for the weekend 4) hope the OC doesn't see your shoes and flares on his post Ex inspection. The recovery of those in the UK was slightly more successful than those in the Agen group, a small detachment under the command of 2Lt Raynor, our resident reserve, broke two Land Rovers on the return journey requiring civilian recovery back to the UK.

This was a well-timed departing gift to the Regt from **2Lt Raynor** who's year on FTRS is now over and he departs for the real world.

228 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj R Limbrey
SSM WO2 S Riste

Cross-Country Race - by Cpl Parr

On Wed 6 Oct 16 and with the majority of the Regt deployed on Exercise RED KIWI, a small team of cross-country runners made their way to Bovington camp, for the first of this season's Regional Command (South) Cross-Country League.

To make it even more of a challenge the race clashed with the Army Road Cycling Championships and the Royal Signals Road Cycling Championships in which the Regt also had representation at. However despite these other activities and with manpower located all over Wiltshire and Dorset, we collected together a team of 3 females and 6 males to represent the unit.

The route was predominantly flat and fast but did have five large puddles/streams of water to go through which surely added to the race to provide some cooling to the body or some obstacles to break up the 4 and 6 mile races.

The team raced hard, and competed well amongst the mix of various cap badges from 1 Rifles, ATR Winchester and our fellow scaley's 10 Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, and 21 Sig Regt.

Everyone in the team put in a strong performance with **Cpl Richie Parr** winning, **Sgt Mo Chimanya** 16th, new boy to the team **Cpl Andy Eyers** 28th and Super Vet **Capt Danny Gard** 40th. The Female team consisted of **Sgt Jo Lyle** 19th, **LCpl Ravai** 31st, and **Cpl "Chezza" Johnston** 42nd, more notable performances from the females with two of them taking a day out of exercise after having been "voluntold" they were racing.

Next up for a number of the athletes is the Corps Cross-Country training camp Exercise KESWICK RUNNER which hopefully will provide the means to build on these performances so that the Regt can once again be a force within the Regional Command (South) Cross-Country League.

Alpha Troops Hourse Racing - by Sig 'Jimmy' Nutt

On Thursday 1 September 16 members of Alpha Tp, 228 Sig Sqn embarked on a much deserved change of scenery at Salisbury Racecourse. The decision was made to spend the afternoon out of work by **SSgt 'Fozzy' Forster** as all essential armour maintenance had been completed and there was rare 'white space' found in the 3DSR calendar. Not to mention the constant badgering from **Cpl 'Gaz' Middlecoate**.

The weather was perfect for the beginning of September. The sun was shining bright and the temperature was in the mid 20s. All tp personnel made their own way to the racecourse; the event was dry to military personnel so drivers were aplenty. Typically the junior ranks found the cheapest stand at an £8 entry fee and the seniors (Lt 'Frank' Lockwood, SSgt 'Fozzy' Forster, Sgt 'Mikey' Paynter and Sgt 'Dave' Wingate) found their way to the opposite, more expensive side of the course, far enough away to make it difficult to see them. We found a few benches to sit on, ordered some burgers and

soft drinks and eagerly anticipated 'the off.' The local gambler **LCpl 'Bas' Basra** had the day's racing form guide on his phone and we all huddled around attempting to find the best value from each race. Some found value in the name of the horse and some found form in jockey's jersey colours. Needless to say, none of us were seasoned racing punters; all attempts of finding the edge in the betting were sought.

Some had a better afternoon than others, although none of us were 'up' at the end of the final race. Sgt 'Mikey' Paynter had the best day overall, closely followed by Cpl 'Gaz' Middlecoate and Sig 'Jimmy' Nutt. Sgt 'Dave' Wingate and LCpl 'Laura' Ward did not win a single race and on reflection should have stayed at work.

The afternoon out, as a troop, was a great success and a morale booster to all in attendance. We are hoping for many more organised fun days in the coming months. Hopefully the next outing can be an evening event so that 'pop and crisps' can be replaced by something a little more relaxing.

Families Day - by LCpl Scott

3 Sig Regt's annual families' day was held on 29 July. The event provides soldiers an excellent opportunity to spend time with their families, showcasing the Regimental assets and giving soldiers families an opportunity to see what they do.



WO1 (YofS) Green, Lt Buttery and Cpl Forshaw enjoying the day

Many activities were available for family entertainment. From stands displaying the various vehicles used within the regt, which were popular with the youngsters, to the more usual fairground stands such as a coconut shy and 'beat the goalie'.

Live music was performed by the AGC band and a barbeque was provided by the Regimental Army chefs. The families' day contained a competitive element as well; this saw each sqn compete in a volleyball tournament which was won by Sp Sqn. The day concluded with an obstacle relay race won by 206 Sqn.

As a Regt we would like to thank all those that gave up their day to staff the stalls and activities, and those who had to stand behind a hot barbeque on an already hot day to provide top-quality food throughout.



10th SIGNAL REGIMENT CORSHAM



CO Lt Col B J Fitch OBE RSM WO1 CM Steers

OC Maj C Milligan SSM WO2 (SSM) Blatcher

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Exercise RHEGED STRIDE – An 'alternative' version of the Cumbria Way

15 members of 81 Sig Sqn embarked on a 72 mile, 5 day expedition, roughly following the Cumbria Way in order to encourage exposure to risk, enhance navigation and map reading skills, as well as develop behaviours in line with the Army Leadership Code. The team consisted of the Exercise OIC, Capt Andy 'Goose' Green, along with 2 MLT Instructors, SSgt Jon 'Big un' Helm and SSgt Anton Jones.

The 14 strong team, gathered from all corners of the UK, met at the Army Reserve Centre in Barrow. Once assembled, stores were issued and a number of briefings followed, detailing the planned route and various admin points. It was pointed out that although the intention was to complete the 'Cumbria Way' the DS had taken the liberty of making a few minor tweaks to the official route, in order to make the exped a little bit more challenging. This new route then included some more 'challenging' terrain, over peaks such as Glaramara, Coniston Old Man and Crinkle Crags. Stores and briefings completed, the battle was on for a sleeping spot; as far away from snorers' corner as possible......

Day 1 (Ulverston to Coniston) - 'This is a map' Day

The team sprang into life after a restorative brew and a DIY breakfast of porridge or beans. The transport loaded, we were out to the start point in Ulverston town centre, fittingly enough, as it was about to transpire, the birthplace of **Stan Laurel**. Following the obligatory photo, we were off. After only a few metres roadworks meant a diversion was in place for the first 600 metre section of the walk! Everyone had a little map reading revision and then took a turn leading the group on easy terrain. We were quite true to the Cumbria Way path initially until about lunchtime.....Then **SSgt Helm** suggested to **Sig Cann** that he could liven up the route by adding a bit of a bigger hill.....'but don't worry, it won't add much mileage'....'Just a little height gain' and so we climbed 'Beacon', overlooking Coniston Water.



We made our way down to Coniston Water, back on the Cumbria Way for a pleasant stroll along the lakeside into Coniston itself and some well-earned rehydration. Our accommodation for the night was the football pitch at Coniston Football Club. Chile con Carne was lovingly prepared in advance by Mrs SSgt Helm, our first taste of the Admin teams culinary skills meant that instead of boiled rice, it was accompanied by something more akin to rice pudding. LCpl 'Wilko 2' Wilkinson clearly desperately in need of some practice; It will be a while before he is accepted on Masterchef!

Day 2 (Coniston to Langdale) - The GPS Day

We all felt a bit more refreshed after a night camping away from snorers. However, we did not need alarm clocks as SSgt Richie Lawrence woke us all at some ungodly hour, banging around in the van looking for milk. Packed and ready to go at 0730hrs we were driven to the start point, passed the daily kit check by **SSgt Jones** and were off again. Taking it in turns to navigate on increasingly challenging terrain, we made it to the top of Coniston Old Man but the cloud was low so we were cheated of the view. This was Sig Cann's first English summit so we stopped to celebrate with a Haribo or two and then made our way along the ridge. At the Summit of Great Carrs there was a World War 2 memorial site, in memory of the 8 members of the Royal Canadian Airforce, who crashed whilst flying on a training exercise in a Handley Page Halifax Bomber. Here we held a short memorial service, paid our respects with a minutes silence and, in the mountain mist, laid wreath from the Sqn.



We were met at the Wrynose Pass by the admin team who had cooked bacon butties, before making our way up again to Red Tarn, Great Knott and Crinkle Crags. Here the weather started to change quite quickly, thick mist enveloped us and the heavens opened. We became 'geographically challenged' at this point due to poor visibility. We weren't alone and were also able to assist an ill prepared couple (no map or compass!) to escape poor visibility and move down from Crinkle Crags safely, potentially avoiding a more serious incident and a call to the local Mountain Rescue Team. We were able to use a GPS to rectify our own mistake and a good lesson was learned, regarding how easy it is to become disorientated was learned before we our off the mountains and on to Dungeon Ghyll, where the admin team were once again awaiting our arrival.

We were fed and watered in the Stickle Barn Inn and enjoyed relatively luxurious accommodation in the bunk house (14 of us, split between two rooms that would have comfortably only slept 4). The weather was dreadful and so we weren't complaining... much.

Day 3 (Langdale to Keswick) - The Epic Day

Once again the Scouse alarm clock (**SSgt Lawrence**) made sure we were up bright and early for breakfast and sandwich making in the car park. Apparently there were absolutely no arguments overnight about smelly feet, snoring or whether to have the window open or closed!

The weather had turned again and it was now a glorious day - so glorious that timings were impacted heavily due to the heat, fatigue and terrain. We arrived at our check point 2 hours late. The DS disappeared for a discussion as to how to proceed and the team tucked into their lunch. It was decided by the DS that due to the clear fatigue being shown by more than one member of the team, it would be better if the following section of the walk were reduced, in order to avoid any further risk of the effects of heat and fatigue and to ensure that the team stood the best chance of completing the overall aim.

That evening we stayed at the *Braithwaite Institute* in Keswick where there was initially no hot water and consequently a lot of squealing from the men's showers at the shock. **SSgt Lawrence** and **Cpl Wilkinson** prepared the pinnacle of the meals they served up, that being a BBQ in the car park. They made sure they catered for meat-eaters, veggies and fussy 'can I have the skin off the sausage' eaters. At the daily debrief, the team were given a task to complete prior to march out the following day by the DS. The task was to select one of two routes highlighted. The constraint being that everyone had to agree to t which route was selected and the team had to explain the reasons for their decision, based on terrain, weather, fitness of the group, timings etc.





Day 4 (Keswick to Caldbeck) - The Boggy Day

Day 4 started with a democratic decision on the route: the jury heard the arguments for and against, and it was decided to give Skiddaw a miss in favour of the Cumbria Way proper. This was due to the heat and continued fatigue. **SSgt Helm** was disappointed as it was his birthday and he wanted to go up high. We promised we would take him to the pub later to make up for it.

Timings were restored and we arrived at the meeting place on time, surprising the admin team who were still cooking our bacon butties! Morale was high, **Sig Cann** was leading the way and nearly took us off track by hypnotically following two young ladies in hot pants instead of following the map.

We were now off the rocks and on to boggier ground which brought the midges. We didn't stay long on top of High Pike because of the midges and positively ran down in to Caldbeck.

That night the admin team presented us with a 'hearty stew' of some kind and we stayed the night in a farm field.

Day 5 (Caldbeck to Carlisle) - The Homeward Stretch

We walked straight out of the campsite this morning after a bacon sandwich (this exped has survived on bacon sandwiches!) and into the village via the post office for chocolate and sweets. The terrain changed again today now we were out of the national park and into gently undulating land with large country estates. The bridge at Bellbridge had been washed away so we had to change our route to accommodate it. This was no real problem as the road along the river, whilst closed to cars, was still open to pedestrians.

The SSM (WO2 Tony Blatcher) was unable to walk with the team as he had some really important admin to do. Neither could WO2 Matt Ticehurst, apparently he had a more important engagement in the Alps. WO2 'Bill' Billiard wanted it mentioned that he was the only WO2 who walked for all 5 days and was therefore the 'winner'.

As we walked towards Carlisle the route became more urban with factories and housing estates. **Sig Cann** had to be cajoled with sweets for the last few miles as he was flagging and **Capt Green** was dropping Paracetamol and Ibuprofen like candy. Finally, Carlisle Castle came into view; we turned the corner into the market place and were officially at the expedition end.



Day 6 (Ambleside)

Saturday was spent sorting stores, cleaning equipment and transport. We also had a visit to the Ambleside Mountain Rescue. Volunteers briefed the team about the processes and procedures that they use, as well as getting the chance to examine their equipment and vehicles and ask questions, which was of great interest to all. They introduced us to **Ben**, one of the search and rescue dogs and the visit ended with the presentation of a Regimental plaque to the MRT and the obligatory group photo.



During the ex the team encountered a variety of challenging conditions, both underfoot and in the fast changing weather, which challenged the team's navigation skills on more than one occasion.

The team averaged around 15 miles per day, in weather ranging from 24 °C to driving rain, each member getting numerous opportunities to lead and navigate from point to point, using map, compass, ground appreciation and timings to safely traverse the route.

The team had completed their objective and arrived safely in Carlisle having completed approximately 75 miles in 5 days, ably assisted by the G4 support team providing welcome refreshments at designated points along the route, strongly biased towards the Atkins diet.

Prior to everyone departing for home there was a wash up and lessons learnt session. It was agreed by all that it had been a thoroughly enjoyable week in which everyone improved their skills and learned plenty, and hopefully a similar ex will be repeated next year.

RNLI Donation - by WO2 Matt Ticehurst

It was with great sadness that members of the Sqn mourned the tragic death of Sqn Member LCpl Sean 'Bobby' Sands last year. Bobby was killed in a freak kite surfing accident at Hunstanton Beach, Norfolk, on 7 March 2015 and despite the efforts of fellow surfers, the RNLI and the air ambulance he was unable to be revived. With this in mind SSM Tony Blatcher nominated Hunstanton RNLI as the chosen charity for the year and Sig Spencer 'Spence' Willson, a close friend of Bobby, presented the cheque to Robin Rafferty of Hunstanton RNLI. Some of the crew present had helped in the attempt to revive Bobby at the time and had known him personally prior to the accident.

Thanks were received from the RNLI and from Hunstanton sailing and Surfing Club of whom he had been a well known and popular member.

The picture shows **Sig Willson** presenting the cheque to **Robin Rafferty** the Station Liaison Officer with some of the Hunstanton Crew.



225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj O Finnie
SSM WO2 (SSM) J Barrett

38 (Irish) Brigade Triathlon - by LCpl Horsham

On 24 Aug six members of 225 Sig Sqn (ECM(FP)) took part in the 38 (Irish Bde) Triathlon. The triathlon consisted of a 400m swim, 20km bike ride and a 5km run. 225 Sig Sqn's A Team gained an impressive lead during the swim with Maj Finnie completing the swim with one of the fastest times of the day. This was matched by **LCpl Hampton** holding his own on the bike against a regular Ironman triathlete and finishing the second leg of the triathlon in a close second. This left Squadron PTI **LCpl White** with the task of closing down the gap with 2 Rifles, it took him all of just two minutes to catch up and comfortably pass the leader. His sub 22 minute time gained himself and the team a first place and the gold medal. 225 Sig Sqn's B team were also competing with LCpl Julian managing to get the team off to great start in the pool finishing in 3rd place. This gave **LCpl Horsham** a chance to catch up on the bike. Not only did he hold 3rd place for the team but he managed to reduce the gap significantly to 2 Rifles in 2nd position. The spotlight was then on **Cpl Williams** to finish the race for B team. He managed to do this but unfortunately was beaten in a pulsating dash to the line, finishing just 2 seconds behind 2nd place, securing the bronze medal. SSgt Darlington competed as an individual and finished 8th overall with a time of 1hr 6mins.



LCpl Hamilton, LCpl Julian, LCpl White, Cpl Williams, LCpl Horsham, Maj Finnie, SSgt Darlington

Exercise FINN BRAEMAR - by LCpl Proctor

On 28 August **Sgt 'Will Fix It' Allan** and I, as part of the advance party, left Northern Ireland for a night time drive to Inverness for the start of our multi-activity AT Package in the Cairngorms followed by competing in the Braemar Gathering 2016. The next day after a successful takeover of the camp from a very 'helpful' gentleman named **Bob** we had it all ready for the Exercising Troops to arrive.



LCpl Buchanan, LCpl Horsham, LCpl Hampton, Sgt Wyatt

After being briefed on the next few days activities which consisted of Hill Walking ran by Maj Finnie, Mountain Biking ran by LCpl 'Mumbles' Hall and Kayaking ran by SSgt 'Part-Time' Rowe we were all ready to get stuck in. We had a few bumps on the way (quite literally) such as Cpl Williams thinking he could fly whilst mountain biking and Sgt Wyatt who had a bad groin/calf/hair. However, the award for best fail was for Cpl 'Big Boned' Booth who attempted a wheelie on a flat car park. His was the worst injury of the exercise, which was made worse by the fact that he had only been on the bike for 20 seconds!

On Friday we cleaned all of the AT equipment and got prepped for the Braemar Gathering 2016 being held on the Saturday in which we had entered 2 teams for the Medley Relay race. Team A was made up of **Sgt Wyatt, Cpl Williams, LCpl 'Mumbles' Hall** and **LCpl 'Chalky' Whyte** and Team B was made up of **LCpl Proctor, LCpl Buchanan, LCpl Gill** and **LCpl Hampton**. For the first heat Team A came 3rd with Team B coming 2nd which meant that both teams qualified for the final and received the honour of running in front of the Royal box in which the Queen was present. In the final Team A came 3rd and Team B came 5th in which all members gave 100% and were very honoured in the fact that they had ran in front of the Royal Family.



The Braemar Games

Sunday 4 September was our last day in which we handed back the accommodation to 'Helpful' Bob and had a day of travelling to get back to Northern Ireland for a well-deserved rest.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj A Miller

SSM WO2 (SSM) PJ Brown

Royal Signals Rigger Course - by LCpl Coster

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

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

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

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

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

Exercise SCORPION RIDER - by Sig Addison

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

Day one saw the group excited to leave the chaos and normality behind, embracing the new challenge that lay ahead. After a quick brief from SSgt Andy 'Risk Assessment' Poole, Sig Steven 'BMX' Addison loaded the van with bikes and people, and the group were on their way. In order to ease everyone into it we had a quick cycle around a gentle flat

green, ensuring that everyone was warmed up and there were no hidden issues with the bikes.

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

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

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

Information Application Support (IAS) and 243 Sig Sqn Summer BBQ

The highly anticipated social event eventually arrived at the start of September, when IAS and 243 could get out of the office and enjoy the glowing sunshine.



Unfortunately the whole afternoon was not all fun as we gathered to say goodbye to 'Sgt Cat Lady' Hutchinson.





The entertainment was provided by willing volunteers who have aspirations of appearing on *The X Factor*. There was a vast array of talent, from playing the ukulele to **Batman** singing ballads (without **Robin**) whilst playing the guitar. The costume did little to enhance his overall performance but he certainly got the crowd going. The service desk manger **Mr 'I can make anything disappear' Langford** showcased his magical skills and wowed the crowds. Truly an amazing talent and I am still trying to work out how he does it.



We also had **LCpl 'Muscles' Ampong**, the Sqn PTI give his famous lecture on healthy eating whilst washing down a burger with a bottle of lager. Everyone had a really great day and it was a wonderful opportunity for the departments to get together outside their normal working environment.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj M Cox

SSM WO2 (SSM) N Cansfield

At Capel Curig - by LCpl Cruddas

251 Sig Sqn held their annual Adventure Training (AT) from the 28 Aug- 9 Sept 16 at Capel Curig Training Camp, organised by **Sgt 'Flash' Gordon**. The camp is renowned for its AT facilities and great weather, so much so that you won't find it empty one week of the year, whether it's being used by the military

or the cadets. The activities throughout the two week exercise were rock climbing, hill walking and mountain biking.

After a six hour drive, the Sqn was able to reach Capel Curig. We were then allocated our 5 star 16 man rooms and very quickly got our 'fat ones' down ready for the busy week ahead. The next day after breakfast we had our morning brief from 'Flash' where we chose mountain biking as our first day's activity. At OnePlanet Adventure Centre in Coed Llandegla Forest our mountain biking Instructors Cpl Kitchen and LCpl Easter wasted no time in getting us familiarised with our bikes.

After 30-40 minutes learning how to lean into corners, pedal correctly and control the bike in the air, we were practically experts and headed off on the black routes. It soon became apparent that some of us were more confident than others, as **Cpl 'Wet' Culliford** showed while moaning the whole way up the route and falling off near enough on every corner back down. **Cpl Crosfield** was also showing his skills or lack thereof as he slowed coming down the tracks: walking would have been faster!

Hill walking was Tuesday's activity and our mountain leaders LCpl 'Switched On' Kerr and LCpl Dowson had prepped the route card for us. We had some time to admin ourselves before heading off to Mt. Snowdon and after an hour-long drive we arrived at Rhyd-Ddu train station. At 0920hrs we headed off following the legs on the trusted route card, doing one leg at a time before handing over the responsibility to the next member of the team. Although the route up to the top is made simple for inexperienced walkers, due to the poor visibility and strong winds good navigation and confidence was needed. Visibility very quickly deteriorated to 15 metres.



Detours are worth it for photos...

We reached the summit (1085m) at 1155hrs and were looking forward to a well-deserved brew and snack in the café – but due to the bad weather, the café was closed (shock) as supplies and staff were unable to access it safely. A quick picture, water break and snack from our calorie-filled pack lunch provided by the well trained chefs at Capel Curig TC and we set off back down a different route, again each taking a different leg. After roughly 1 hour 45 minutes, we arrived back at Rhyd-Ddu train station where our trusty driver **Sig 'Preacher' Barry** was waiting for us.

On Wednesday, by process of elimination, we were looking forward to a day of rock climbing. Upon arrival we had a

quick grip-warm-up on the free climb wall, which also tested the ability level of the group and it soon became apparent that just like mountain biking, not everyone was at the same skill level. After the free climb wall, we got into our harnesses and set off on the 2oft climbing wall. It only took 1oft of climbing for LCpl Cruddas to realise his fear of heights was not a joke and that he would have to place a lot of trust into his 'mucker' on the belay. However Cpl 'Wet' Culliford decided that after a 5ft climb, his fear of heights was overwhelming and he had to pull himself off the climb and remain on the relay, although it is worth mentioning that he is 6ft 3inches.



Learning the ropes at the Indy climbing wall

After a hard day's work at the climbing centre, we all agreed that we deserved a break, so we thought we would give the skilled chefs at Capel Curig a break and head out for a meal at 'the local'. The Royal Oak in Betws-y-Coed was very pleasant and after dinner a couple members of the group decided to venture further to Bangor. This is where Sig Adams stepped forward to organise transport to and from Bangor, however after a 30 minute wait the taxi company rang Sig Adams back informing him they were outside the Royal Oak. We couldn't see the taxi anywhere and it soon became apparent that he'd booked the taxi to a different Royal Oak roughly 25 miles away. And to top it off, when he tried to reorder the taxi, the company responded with "sorry you're out of our area".

As Thursday was our final day of AT, we were given a choice of an activity to do and because the temperature was touching 27 degrees, the rock climbing centre was a popular choice. I decided to go mountain biking and because there was only 3 people on it, **LCpl Easter** and **Cpl Kitchen** decided to take the black and red routes again. This was advantageous for them as they could really let loose, however I was just there to keep up and see if I had it in me to tackle the jumps with them as well. As it turns out, I did not: I was reminded to ease off my brakes a lot. However the up-hill climbs were as gruelling if not more due to the weather and it's safe to say that everyone's granny gears were being used a lot. After everyone's activities were finished, we closed the week with a BBQ. Much fun was had by all.

Exercise BRUNO WARRIOR - Cambrian Patrol Training - by Cpl Crammond

During Ex BRUNO WARRIOR, training was conducted to find suitable volunteers for Cambrian Patrol ran by **Sgt 'Daz' Rowe**. On the first day it was hitting 30°C and we did a 'steady run to the beach' which was claimed to be 1.5 miles away. The run was used to gauge the group's overall fitness, 4 miles later we finally came upon the beach, which was nice for the time it took to turn around and run back again.

We were split into two sections and given lessons to research and then teach to the other sections. **Cpl 'Griff' Renouf** leading 1 section and **Cpl 'JT' Tyrrell** 2 Section. The lessons taught included SERE, foreign weapon recognition, POW handling, bergan packing and nutrition.

On Wednesday we got told we were doing a 10 mile steeple race which didn't sound too bad; it wasn't until we got there that we realised it was a full blown competition against many different cap badges from around Northern Ireland. Having done no training at all for it we didn't expect to do very well. It was nice then for both our A and B teams to take 1st and 2nd place among the minor units competing, bringing back medals and in fact beating the first place of the major units too. We were given a pat on the back and a tasty horror bag to celebrate.

Over the next few days we did a Nav Ex around the area to test people's skills with a map and compass. Most of us breezed through the checkpoints, others not so much. We were also given a lesson on river crossing which many of us had not done before. Conducted in a swimming pool it wasn't very realistic however the basic principles were learnt. Then came the battle PT which consisted of a casualty drags, a log race and to finish up a stretcher race too: the DS were feeling kind that day.

On the last day, the best among the volunteers were selected to do a mini Cambrian patrol around the training area which consisted of many different scenarios. There were Civ Pop to make it seem more realistic who gradually gave more and more snippets of information building up a bigger picture of the area. The day finished with the patrol coming under attack and the patrol interpreter **Cpl Dave Crammond** becoming a casualty, which led to a CASEVAC and a fighting withdraw into a woodline.

Overall it was a good insight into the physical and mental challenges that Cambrian Patrol will entail and a good week for learning military skills.

Exercise LANYARD TROPHY 2016 - by Sig Willis

This year 10 Sig Regt entered an eight person mixed team for Ex LANYARD TROPHY, being hosted by last year's winners 14 Sig Regt. With location being the choice of the previous year's winners 14 Sig Regt elected to hold the exercise in the Black Mountains area of South-East Wales.

Throughout the year the Sqn's had been undertaking their own individual build up training, the culmination of which was a two week regimental training package held in the Brecon Beacons, which would also serve as a final selection for the team. Based in Maindy Barracks, Cardiff the keen volunteers set off each day and tabbed different routes throughout the Beacons, under the direction of SSgt (YofS) Bradley and Lt Tonks. With the training designed to be progressive over the two week period, the distance travelled each day, as well as the bergen weight, gradually increased. The one constant being there was always some challenging hills involved. Something that had not been



The long climb ahead

anticipated during this time was that it would be extreme heat which would make the training difficult, as opposed to the usual wind and rain, synonymous with the area.

Following the conclusion of the training package a final eight person team was entered for the exercise, consisting of Lt Tonks (Team Captain), SSgt (YofS) Bradley, Sig Mulvey, Sig Hobbins, Sig Farrell, LCpl Lamb, SSgt Darlington and Sig Willis.

Having been accommodated in Sennybridge Training Camp, the day of the exercise began with a 0300hrs reveille following which all the participants deployed, under their respective admin teams, to the start location. At 0500hrs, under cover of darkness still, the teams were released and it was not long into the march that the weather we all expected from this area moved in.



Great training weather

As the conditions continued to deteriorate throughout the day and the team numbers started to dwindle covering the terrain became slower and slower for all still going. Having been out for some thirteen plus hours with no sign of the severe wind and rain abating and river crossings becoming increasingly treacherous, a message was transmitted over the team tracking beacons announcing the abandonment of the

At the point of the ex being halted our team can take pride from the fact that as well as still continuing we were en route to the eighth checkpoint, some twenty three miles in and as far as any other team had managed to reach. A well done to all involved.

Wellington Cup - by Cpl Turner

The Wellington Cup is a football competition which took place on 24 August between 251 Sig Sqn and the Army Regional Recruiting Development Team, led by 251's SSM WO2 Cansfield and ARTD's Sgt Quow respectively, both were very confident of a win and expected a good, entertaining and vibrant match.



SSM 251 collecting the trophy on behalf of the team

With the overbearing heat beating down on one of the hottest days of the year the match had to be split into quarters instead of halves giving both teams much needed water breaks and chances to regroup. 251 Sig Sqn kicked off and play commenced, both teams had the ball down and playing well with 251 having the majority of possession and if lost they were quick to close down and regain it. Chances came and went but it was not long before the ice was broken, with a star studded strike from 251's Cpl Wayne Crosfield. From the edge of the 18 yard box he was able to find the gap through many defenders into the bottom corner down by the keepers' side.

At 1-0 up 251 then began to press their lead with Cpl Turner

breaking free of the defence before setting up YofS Gurung to slot a second past the ARTD man in the sticks. As the dominance reigned over ARTD, 251's confidence seemed to grow, producing a fantastic ball drilled across the box, falling to LCpl Rush, who didn't need a second chance and blasted it past the keeper. ARTD reacted accordingly and started to up their game with passes and chances aplenty. ARTD were knocking on the door for a solid 10 minutes before a counter attack by 251 and a chance corner provided them with the opportunity to make the game all but out of sight for the ARTD. Crossed in by Cpl Turner towards the penalty spot before pin-balling around the box and landing at the feet of the 251's SSM, WO2 Cansfield, who took great pleasure in ensuring a 4-0 lead over ARTD.

With half time looming ARTD were piling on the pressure once more with many close chances followed by one moment of glory, with confusion appearing between 251's defence and keeper the ball was allowed to bounce over them both and fell to an opportunistic striker who made the leaders pay and made the statement that ARTD would not go quietly.

ARTD kicked off for the second half and enjoyed a good spell of possession and passing, obviously half time had done them well and they had regained their focus with an early goal from a cross and blistering header, 251 were helpless to concede a second. However, with fighting mentality and discipline on their side 251 were never going to let ARTD back in the game. The second half appeared much closer than the first with tackles flying in, crosses over hit and passes not quite finding the mark along with the heat taking its toll on both sides. With 20 minutes remaining 251 were attacking, the ball fell to **Cpl Turner's** feet and he was able to turn and play a perfectly weighted ball into Cpl Hardy's path allowing him to burst into the box without breaking stride and comfortably bury the ball in the back of the net.

With the game at 5-2 it was a thrilling and enthralling match with a great sense of enthusiasm and sportsmanship displayed by both teams. Thanks go out to Sgt Quow from ARTD who had primarily organised the event. Until next year the Wellington Cup will sit snugly in 251's trophy cabinet.



The winning team in all their glory



14th SJGNAL REGJMENT (ELECTRONJE WARFARE) HAVERFORDWEST

CO Lt Col Stoter
RSM WO1 (RSM) Robinson

223 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Francis INT CORPS SSM WO2 (SSM) Wellstead

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Mai Lees

SSM WO2 (SSM) O'Reilly

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Fogarty
SSM WO2 (SSM) Peake

Cardiff Cultural Day Report - by LCpl Menzies

During the month of July, 237 Sig Sqn played host to 12 soldiers from 2 Rad Btn, US Marines. After a considerable

flight from the United States to Heathrow and then getting to see every glorious inch of the M4 our guests were keen to get some down time.

My first thankless task as host was to taxi them to the local supermarket so they could stock up on protein powder and travel adaptors. The following morning they showed off their damning fitness in a filthy Sqn battle PT session that made me question whether one particular American's titanic triceps were just an illusion. (No more protein powder for him!)

Gratefully living on the edge of the world at 14 Sig Regt (Electronic Warfare) we can usually rely on a cheeky Thursday knockoff,



"Did anyone see where that landed?"
Ex DRAGONS WARRIOR 16-2, SENTA
Grenade Range (226 Sqn)

"Follow me boys!" LCpl Bright leading the way on Lanyard Trophy Training (226 Sqn)

The Corps Inter-Unit hockey

The Corps Inter-Unit hockey champions! 14SREW hockey team came first in outdoors and second indoors to win overall Sgt Sidney realising that thistles can 'tickle' on Ex DRAGONS TALON 16 (226 Sqn)

"Surely no one can see that?!" A SELLAR
Sensor head set up on a rare beautiful day
ready for a demonstration (245 Sqn)

"Can you aim a bit lower?! Just had a phone call from a very scared Tim Peake..." - Ex DRACOS FIRE, RWMIK LFTT LFX 1 - 4, Castlemartin (226 Sqn)

however this was not the case for three of us from Tango tp whose Fridays duties were now escorting our US Marine friends to the Welsh capital for a 'Cultural Visit'. We departed Cawdor barracks on a rare sunny Friday morning, back on to the ever familiar M4! Although we arrived at Maindy barracks with our energy reserves depleted a quick lunch rectified this and the group was ready to start its day tour of Cardiff Castle. By mid-afternoon the group were now experts in welsh heraldry and history. It was now time to introduce the Marines to St David's Shopping centre, although the British hosts were more interested in catching fictitious Pokemon using the Pokemon Go app.

The evening meal was at a restaurant called the "Smoke House" and it was commented on by one of the marines that the steaks were a lot bigger in America! Our American friends having consumed lots of meat and a few cheeky drinks started to feel the effects of the long day. However, as good hosts should, we spurred them on and decided that a visit to one of the local entertainment venues would energise them. A few rounds later we decided to call it a night and started to haggle a taxi back to Maindy barracks

The next morning after a quiet and subdued breakfast we left the hustle and bustle of Cardiff and after what seemed like days on the M4 we found ourselves back at Cawdor Barracks with the 'Brawdy Mist' covering the camp, meaning the weather was back to normal.

All in all we highly enjoyed hosting our American brethren and we look forward to seeing if they will return the favour and host us in the future!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Mai Hodges SSM WO₂ (SSM) Craven

SUPPORT SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj Watts

WO2 (SSM) O'Connor SSM

Exercise ATLAS POPPY 1 - Sp Sqn **Visit To Worcester Commandery** - by Cpl Ambrose



The romantic side of Brawdy. A rare sunset like this makes the usual rubbish weather at Brawdy worth it

"Weise beer? Why not!" 245 Sqn enjoying the local German culture on the NATO VJTF exercise,

Ex VENERABLE GAUNTLET

As part of a management day, Seniors and Officers from 245 Sqn went to visit Bletchley Park and saw one of the original Bombe machines

STRIKE (245 Sqn)

"Get to the Choppa!" Cp

the new Wildcat on IRON

On Wednesday 4 May at o6oohrs, after a wonderful Sodexo breakfast. members of Sp Sqn travelled to Worcester from Brawdy Barracks to visit

the Commandery, organised by SSgt 'Charlie' Brown. Originally forty people were meant to be on this tour, however this gradually whittled down to a total of eleven as the remainder had managed to find various reasons not to attend; as least for those who attended it meant extra leg room on the coach.

The Commandery was the Headquarters of King Charles II during the Battle of Worcester in 1651, considered to be the final deciding kinetic action of the English Civil War. It was significant as the battle was one of the few that King Charles II directly opposed Oliver Cromwell on the same battlefield.

We arrived in Worcester mid-morning and then spent a whole thirty minutes simply trying to find a place to park the coach in a hectic morning rush hour. Once in the Commandery we met our tour guide Sam, a very engaging reservist officer of the Mercian Regiment, who proceeded to show us around the historic 'Tardis like' building and described the important role that the area played during the battle. This was the battle that altered the system of British governance and created the democracy we enjoy

We were informed on the strategic picture of how the War had culminated to this point in time and how King Charles II had mustered an army from Scotland and Ireland for what would be, a last ditched effort to win the war against Cromwell. Sam also expanded on the tactical elements, highlighting how the battle featured the first pre-planned flanking manoeuvre and the first use of pontoon bridging.

After the lectures, there was an opportunity to handle the muskets, swords and other gruesome, but enlightening weapons of the era. All this while dressing up in the uniforms of the Civil War and experiencing some of the difficulties the soldiers in their particular roles faced, much to the delight of Pte 'Big John' Bolger who's excitement and sword holding abilities were rather worrying.

Overall the day was a great success as everyone had learnt about the differences and similarities between modern day warfare and how combat has evolved from the 1600's.



15th SIGNAL REGIMENT (INFORMATION SUPPORT) BLANDFORD



CO RSM Maj A Shakespeare WO1 (RSM) CJ Watts

RHQ & SUPPORT SQUADRON

The Regt bids a fond farewell to the CO, Lt Col Toby Courage, who departs to live the life of a student for a year at Exeter University, with the Regt 2IC, Maj Adam Shakespeare steering the ship until Jan 17.

LANYARD TROPHY 2016 - by Sgt Ryan Gosling (Royal Engineers)

Training

Being a Royal Engineer, I had never heard of the Lanyard Trophy before arriving at 15 Sig Regt. However the first time I was made aware about this forty mile event was when the RSM informed me that I'd won a prize... that prize being to organise training for the event, oh - and that I'd also made the team!

Three training camps were planned. The first one of these was along a section of the South West coastal path. The second was based at Okehampton camp utilising Dartmoor training area, while the third was on SENTA.

The South West coastal path training camp was aimed to get the team back in to carrying weight and to start eating up some miles to increase the teams' physical robustness to carry 40lbs over forty miles. We started the training carrying less weight to alleviate injury and we slowly increased the weight as we got closer to the date of the competition. It was so important that the 15 Sig team didn't pick up any injuries as we only just made up one team for the event, and we really didn't want to lose anyone.

The second training camp in Okehampton was the first time the team was really tested. The miles increased and the speed that the team were moving across the ground spiked. It was a four day training package with three days on the hill totalling the events distance, and a hill rep session up Okehampton hill. The team was now looking strong and starting to look ready for the event.

The third and final training camp was in Sennybridge, Wales where the event was being held. It was the most testing of all the training camps, with the weight now at competition weight, and the ground relief greater than what we were currently used to. The week really tested the team's navigation and endurance. Unfortunately we lost two members due to injury. Now left with a team of six we weren't eligible for the trophy, but were granted dispensation by CO 14 Sig Regt to enter.

The Event - by Sgt Ram Gurung (Army Air Corps)

The day came and so the six man team took part in the Lanyard Trophy 2016 held around the Black Mountain within the Brecon Beacons. It was a very early start, woken up by the RSM's alarm clock blasting out heavy metal at 0215hrs. Post breakfast all the teams were ready in their minibuses at 0400hrs for the convoy move to the start point.

It was a mass start at 0500hrs, pitch black and everyone had their head torches on. We had a steady start slowly overtaking a few teams in the darkness on our way to CP1 just to find out we had been marching slightly 'off route' (who let the CO nav!). However after a slight adjustment of bearing we finally reached the CP.

After CP3 we concluded that the Met office had provided us with the correct information - heavy rain and strong winds. The tracks seemed to be non-existent, the ground wet and marshy and full of 'babies-heads'. After a short admin stop at CP4 we were back on the march – a steep incline of 550m followed by a very wet and boggy landscape between us and CP5.

Departing CP5 the rain got even heavier and the wind started to pick up gusting 30 knots plus. The next CP was situated at 802m above sea level. When we arrived at CP6, we could really feel the weather and it made the event extremely challenging. However we fought our way to CP7 just to find out our river crossing drills would be required. We managed to check in at CP7 from the opposite bank of the river and headed west towards CP8 which was the second admin point. At this point the event was cancelled due to the river levels so we moved to CP8 where we were extracted back to Sennybridge.

This was my first experience of the Lanyard Trophy, and I'll definitely be back for more next year.

233 (GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj P Sutcliffe

SSM WO2 (SSM) N Harrison

Exercise MAU NAUTILUS - by LCpl Derrick

In the early hours of 29 August, seven members of 15 Sig Regt (IS) left sunny Blandford to head out on Ex MAU NAUTILUS.

We flew to Gibraltar with the intent of undertaking SCUBA diving and qualifying members of our party to BSAC Sports Diver and Dive Leader levels. After our transfer to Devil's Tower Camp we met with the 8th member of our party, **S/Lt 'Smudge' Smith** (RN (Ret)) and settled ourselves in to our accommodation.

Owing to our arrival on a Bank Holiday there was no transport available until the following day, so we made our way on foot from DTC to JPDU Gunwharf on the advice that "it's not that far.... just over a mile..... just turn left and follow the road until you see a tower." Just short of an hour, and about 40 different types and styles of tower later we arrived at the dive centre to explore the facilities. We soon settled in and 'dived' (no pun) straight into the Collective First Aid Training to ensure all party members were up to speed on current dive emergency practices. This was a refresher for some whilst completely new to others.

Tuesday dawned with bright eyes and smiles in the cookhouse, and after a bit of bouncing around the Isthmus,

LCpl 'Merlin' Derrick and SSgt Phil 'Drive Da Bus' Eaves located the correct person at the MT and managed to collect our battered battle bus. After a lengthy first parade we collected the rest of the divers and headed to the dive centre. With the temperature already climbing past 30°C, WO2 'Awesome' Dawson (SCOTS) signed over the dive store and issued the kit to the students.

Following some safety and security briefings we collected the boat keys, loaded the boat and headed out to sea. The shake-out dive was at Inkwells, which is literally littered with detritus and items, including inkwells, thrown overboard by the Navy through the previous centuries. Both Maj 'I Hate My Dry Suit' Davis (RA) and Cpl 'Tez' Terrett had fantastic dives and displayed very competent skills and drills.



SSgt Eaves demonstrating that more sunglasses = better

The next few days followed a similar pattern – theory first thing, followed by practical training, followed by dives to put it all together and gain experience. We had some challenging dives on the SS Rosslyn, attempting to practice lifts and ascents with a fast current trying to blow us off the wreck, spectacular drift dives along the Detached Mole and around the Seven Sisters formation. By the end of the first week, both Maj Davis and Cpl Terrett had completed their Sports Divers and were turning their attentions towards the theory work for Dive Leader.

WO1 'I'd rather dive in Wine' Smith, WO2 'I'll Be Mother' Hawtree and SSgt Eaves all undertook their Dive Leader theory exams with varied rates of success with the focus being on gaining experience and completing the qualifying dives.

To celebrate the end of theory and the end of the first diving phase, **S/Lt Smith** guided us to his favourite Fish & Chip shop (he mentioned it at least six times a day) and, after they had to go and catch some of our orders fresh, we enjoyed a stress free evening over fish, followed by a quiet drink at an establishment called 'Dusk'.

The following morning being a no-diving day, we set out to explore Gibraltar, heading down the east side of 'the Rock' and locating some beautiful beaches and villages. That evening we enjoyed the musical strains of acts such as **Ne-Yo** and **Jess Glynn** from a distance, which were performing at Gibraltar Festival just down the road. We all had an early night ready to start diving again the following morning.

Sunday dawned clear and bright as ever, the temperature soaring beyond 30 $^{\rm o}{\rm C}$ within hours yet again. The start of the

depth progression phase begins, moving the students down towards our exped maximum of 30m. We dived the MFV Okeanos in the morning, with a max depth being 25m; what a beautiful dive it was with so many parts that could easily be penetrated and so many new signals used to indicate the intent to penetrate. The afternoon dive was on the 482M and Batty's Barge, a site we had dived previously, which featured a good swim through of the engine room where we discovered a massive Conger Eel hiding in a pipe.

Monday being another Bank Holiday (a Spanish one this time) meant the roads were a lot quieter, but the water was a lot busier as people came out in droves on their private power boats and jet skis, making the supervisors and coxswains (S/Lt Smith, WO2 Dawson and LCpl Derrick) work extra hard to ensure the divers' safety in the water. A new site was explored – the MFV Helen, followed by a return to the MFV Okeanos, a dive this time that culminated in drifting off the wreck and making a gradual drift ascent of the Seven Sisters formation.

The final two days of diving featured an addition to our number – we were joined by **Mr Nick Harrington**, the Diving Safety Officer who was out inspecting JPDU (diving centre) and who dictates all of the safety policies we have to follow to stay safe while diving. So this turned into the perfect day to test these policies and procedures. The whole 'rescue' provided the Dive Leaders and Sports Divers with a valuable experience – seeing a whole emergency scenario from initial surface, to recalling divers with 'ocean ears' and a rapid transfer of the 'casualty' to a recompression chamber.



Enjoying the finer things in life......

The final diving day saw us return to the SS Excellent which we had recce dived the day before and affect a penetration of this massive wreck that lies at 30m. At 16 °C the water temperature at that depth was closer to that in the UK, causing some to wear gloves and a few of us to do up our zips. Marine life was in full display with spider crabs, sea slugs, sea snails, shoals of fast moving slivers of silver, a moray eel and all sorts of flora. The afternoon dive saw us have to shift from the planned site of the MFV Helen to the back-up site of the SS Rosslyn due to heavy shipping movement in the South Entrance, next to which lies the Helen. However this was no great loss as we managed to explore the bow section, instead of the stern or mid-ships as before, where the ship remains largely intact (railings and capstans still on deck). We found a gorgeous octopus having a nap coiled up inside a winch drum, completely oblivious to the world around him.

With the end of diving came the flurry of kit cleaning and tidying the store ready to hand back. All divers completed

their intended qualifications, LCpl Derrick also managed to finish the last management elements of his Advanced Diver qualification. The Sports Divers completed the theory lectures and exam for Dive Leader.

Once all stores and accommodation had been handed back we had one final appointment to keep before we left – a tour of the WWII tunnels under 'The Rock'. A fantastic couple of hours were spent going through the command post, hospitals, generator rooms and accommodation areas all buried beneath the behemoth mountain peak that forms Gibraltar.



Sgt Burrell demonstrating textbook manoeuvres!

Day two was completed with the vast majority brimming with confidence. Day three and four

the instructors! With slow

educated about the 'wing'

progression at day one, we were

which is another term used for

the canopy. As day one moved

into day two the weather was

still being kind to us. The initial weather briefing started at

o815hrs, all were present and

was somewhat of a challenge,

due to the fact we had to go

through a series of string pull

the wing to stay above our

and release actions in order for

heads like a kite (this is where

Flt Lt Flower emphasised his

raring to go. Launching the wing

highlighted that this confidence was somewhat misplaced, as **Cpl Sunuwar** will agree! As the week progressed the weather turned with high wind impeding our progress; however, this would not hinder our enjoyment or our spirit and those who were stalling with their progress were able to undertake tandem flights with the instructors.

skill set).

The qualification achieved by most was the Elementary Pilot (EP), which required us to demonstrate competences in difference manoeuvres that culminated with a written assessment. On day five (assessment day) the wind picked up as was expected from the morning brief, this impacted on some of the less confident as the flight assessment is fundamental in order to obtain the EP qualification. The instruction and facilities were beyond our expectation and the week proved a complete success. The majority of those who attended have subsequently expressed a desire to return in order to progress their skills at the earliest opportunity.

After a mad scramble to return the transport, we were picked up and made it to the airport with plenty of time to spare.

262 (LOGISTIC SYSTEMS SUPPORT) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj P Asplen
SSM WO2 Baz McConnell

Paragliding - by Sgt Burrell

It has been an eventful summer for 262 (LSS) Sig Sqn, most notably the Paragliding adventurous training organised by **Cpl Williams** at the Joint Service Paragliding Centre (JSPGC) Crick howell, Wales.

The week started with 8 novices and 1 Paragliding record holder – the 2IC, **FIt Lt Giles Flower**. Generally it was a relaxed week and the "weather was suitable for flying", according to



16th SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO Lt Col B Davenport
RSM WO1 N McDiarmid

Exercise BAHRAIN WARRIOR - by 2Lt Harriet Doyle

Ex BAHRAIN WARRIOR facilitated 255 (Bahrain) Sig Sqn in deploying to Leek and Upper Hulme training area to conduct basic close combat skills (BCCS) over the period 6-9 September. The aim of the ex was to practice all exercising troops in low level tactics and basic soldiering skills in order to complete Collective Training Level 1 (CT1) training objectives and BCCS.

On 9 September a platoon of 21 troops consisting mainly of 255 Sig Sqn, and a handful from 230 Sig Sqn, deployed to Leek and Upper Hulme training area to conduct Ex BAHRAIN WARRIOR. The idea of this ex was to be a bit of a shake off and refresher as a lot of the troops haven't been on exercise in over a year. It was also put in place to prepare the Sqn for the upcoming CT2 ex in November and also the Regtl ex, Ex CRUSADE COMMUNICATOR.

Once arriving at the training area the troops spent a day conducting lessons, covering areas such as the Six Section Battle Drills and CPERS, in order to prepare themselves for the rest of the ex. Lesson phase complete, the platoon deployed into a FOB and moved into routine ready for the exercise phase to begin.



Over the week the platoon was faced with dealing with civilians, CPERS, carrying out deliberate attacks at section level, writing and delivering orders and finalising it all with a successful platoon attack. Overall it was a successful and enjoyable ex, setting a good precedent for the numerous upcoming exercises over the next few months!

Exercise MERCURY CHAMPIONS - by LCpl Ross Fielding

16 Sig Regt attended the Corps Orienteering Champs that took place in Catterick between the 21 – 22 September 2016.

The team, all aboard the banter bus, set off from Stafford at 1600hrs in fine spirits. An hour and a half into the four hour journey **Sig Brew** remembered he wasn't supposed to be on this trip due to a fairly imminent Op tour and the bus screeched to a halt, did a swift U turn and headed back towards Stafford to drop him off.

After journey attempt number 2 aboard the now banterless bus we finally arrived at Wathgill Camp, where we found our accommodation for the two days. The following morning, we travelled to Hamsterly Forest eager to begin day one of the competition. Most members of the team had a brilliant turn out, however **Capt Wells** looked pretty 'webster's' with his blue paint splashed tracksuit bottoms.

After day one prize giving we headed back to Wathgill Camp but again our journey was less than smooth. An extra hour was added to the journey because that's what happens when there are three experienced orienteering talents all trying to navigate a minibus at the same time isn't it Maj Calland, WO1 (FofS) Read and SSgt (FofS) Wright? This resulted in the whole team having some lovely memories of the Yorkshire Dales but empty bellies due to a missed dinner.

On the upside our missed meal meant that as a team we all went out for a team bonding dinner. **LCpl Rogers** made the money he spent on his bill back and then some by winning several bets that he would not be capable of eating the entirety of his enormous for four sharing dessert all by himself, upon completion he felt very proud of himself and a little richer.

Day two brought around the relays which took place at Marne Barracks. 16 Sig Regt absolutely smashed the competition in nearly every category going. Coming in 1^{5t} in three out of the four categories entered, with the U25 team gaining a respectful runner up.



Relay handover

16 Sig Regt dominated the event and won the following events/awards:

Major Units 2016: (Maj Calland, Capt Wells, WO1 (FofS) Read, SSgt (FofS) Ijam, SSgt (FofS(IS)) Wright, LCpl Rogers.)

Novice team: (LCpl Fielding, LCpl Adams, Sig Atherton.)

Womens Team: (Sgt Costello, 2Lt Doyle, Pte Ross.)

Womens overall: (Maj Calland.)

Womens W35: (WO1 FofS Read.)

U 25 Individual: (LCpl Dorward.)

U25 Individual Runner Up: (LCpl Rogers.)



16 Sig Regt Orienteering Team

Exercise CRUSADE COMMUNICATOR - by Lt Miller

On 3 October 16 Sig Regt deployed on its CT2 assessment ex to Swynnerton Training Area. The objective was to deploy elements of 230 and 255 Sig Sqns as they prepare to go into their training year as well as test the FOC times of 12Al X Main HQ.



The ex went smoothly, helped by unseasonably good weather for the majority of the ex, even with the bite of winter making an appearance near the end. For 255 and 230 it was a change of scenery, getting back into the swing of exercise and field conditions.

For 207 (Jerboa) Sig Sqn it was a highly successful ex, with both troops being tested well in their domains, ensuring they

were fully prepared for their encounter with the Brigade staff on Aces High 2.



207 Sig Sqn Bulldogs

255 (BAHRAIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj S Calland SSM WO2 T Earl

Summary

This has been an eventful couple of months for 255 (Bahrain) Sig Sqn as we move out of the committed year and into the training cycle. This change in role has not altered the pace of life with the Sqn deploying on several exercises and two overseas AT expeditions to North America. The Sqn also had a number of Signallers come off the Sig to LCpl Grading Board so warm congratulations to all those who were promoted. There has also been time for sporting achievements with members of the Sqn representing the Army in U23 Hockey, Kayaking and Keelboat racing. We have had individuals represent in Corps rugby league, hockey, football, dinghy sailing, mountain biking and kayaking and orienteering. The pace looks set to remain over the Christmas period and into the New Year. Various exercises and events have been planned over this period in addition to fulfilling the Op TEMPERER commitment. In addition to all this, we must congratulate Sgt Al Croston and his wife on the arrival of their first baby, Elouise.

Exercise BAHRAIN WARRIOR 1

On the morning of 6 Sep, 255 Sig Sqn deployed onto Ex BAHRAIN WARRIOR, a one week CT1 training exercise. The 21 exercising troops were split into 3 sections of 6 men and a HQ element. Training had begun the week before with a two day 'remind and revise' package to maximise the time in the field. Deploying in the early hours to Leek Training Area, the Tp disembarked and patrolled down to the teaching area. Once there, the day was spent going through low level section training.

2Lt Harriet Doyle then delivered an informative set of orders to the Tp after which they patrolled to PB BAHRAIN, which would be home for the next four nights. Once the Tp had settled in and fully taken over the PB they began building defensive positions ready for the attacks of IDF, SA fire and whatever else the DS could throw their way. These types of attacks would increase in their frequency and intensity over the following days and nights as the ex escalated. As a result, 'stand to' was called and **LCpl Ryan Adams** was ready and waiting... for anything!

The Tp then moved into a routine of section patrols, attacks, casualty withdrawals, VCPs and IED 4Cs assessments. These serials were used to build up the G2 picture of the AO and how the Tp performed on each serial would affect subsequent serials. For example, relevant information found on enemy combatants or from searching locals could result in a patrol not being contacted. The reverse could also happen with missed intelligence being



LCpl Adams, stand to

responsible for section attacks and casualty withdrawals.

The ex culminated early Friday morning with a Tp final attack. With the Sqn 2IC and SSM casting their beady eyes on the exercising troops, the Tp began its final deliberate attack of the ex. As the final enemy position was overrun by the vicious yet disciplined horde of well trained personnel from 16SR, the Tp OC was hit unaccountably with IDF, which resulted in a casualty extraction until ENDEX was called.

Once the usual post ex administration had been completed it was back to MOD Stafford for tea, medals and the weekend; **Sig Mick Andrews** working hard for his. All of this is part of the Sqn's training programme and will lead to the CT-2 ex, which will consolidate and develop the knowledge gained so watch out for Ex BAHRAIN WARRIOR... 2!

Exercise DRAGON CRUSADER TREK 5 - 22 Sep 16

SSgt Powell, SSgt Fearn, LCpl Boal and LCpl Constantine all took part in this self-sustained trek along the Appalachian Trail, USA, where in total, 12 members of 16 Sig Regt walked 120 miles North to South over 10 days, finishing in Harper's Ferry. Over arduous terrain and through a demanding climate, the trek was completed by all. During the trek, personnel improved their navigation, personal admin, received survival and mountaineering training, and all gained their SMF qualification in a unique and challenging environment. The expedition phase was followed up with a recuperation and education package in Washington D.C. where the group visited the Pentagon, Arlington Cemetery and the Smithsonian Museums. This expedition took place because the OIC Lt Robins was awarded the Adventurous Training award from the Corps Colonel during her Officer Phase Two training in Blandford.





Cpl Tait



Exercise DRAGON CRUSADER RIDE 9 - 27 SEP 16

A gruelling mountain biking exercise in the Rocky Mountains, Canada, this AT package covered 500km in 14 days, climbing and descending more than 25000m in total. Completed by 16 members of 16 Sig Regt, 5 from 255 (Bahrain) Sig Sqn; Lt Allan-Mclean, Cpl 'old and broken' Hodson, LCpl Greenwood, LCpl Edwards and Sig Fook.



Sicamous to Salmon Arm

This AT package was the culmination of weeks of hard training and smaller expeditions in the UK. Eleven different locations were visited, allowing the participants to access some of the best mountain biking trails in the world. The team was split into different ability groups with both experienced and novice categories. This ensured all members of the expedition were pushed out of their comfort zones and that they improved both their fitness and navigation skills. Cpl Hodson was a case in point, when he successfully negotiated

a Black Diamond trail at Whistler Bike Park, he then proceeded to fall off at the bottom! All riders gained their MBF qualification and instructors gained valuable experience allowing them to take out groups in the future. The expedition also met up with members of the 39th Canadian Sig Regt and rode with them for part of the expedition.



Moraine Lake



Lt Allan-Mclean presenting Lt Col Whitter with 16 Sig Regt Plaque (CO 39th Canadian Sig Regt)



(L to R) LCpl Young, LCpl Greenwood, Cpl Naivalu, Pte Jones, Sig Fook, LCpl Lovegrove, RQ Tiplady, LCpl Edwards, Cfn Norwood, Sig McNamee, Lt Allan-Mclean, Sig Gamble, Lt Col D Whitter, Yeoman Norton, SSgt McGillivray-Jones, Capt G Kataroyan, Cpl Hodson

Lifemaps 10 – 14 Oct - by Cpl Moore, LCpl Towersey-Veal, LCpl Cash and LCpl McGrady

Early Monday morning we watched as 31 giddy schoolchildren disembarked the coach at Swynnerton training camp. Shabby looking and not too eager, we quickly decided to turn things upside down, getting the gaggle into 3 ranks at the side of the road. A short, sharp brief later they soon paid attention and listened in!

What followed was the issuing out of kit, signing for the rooms, organising sections and giving countless briefs, which was all easier said than done when dealing with 14 year olds. After what felt like an eternity we were finally calling lights out for the day at 2145hrs, with nobody being able to keep their eyes open, including us.

Tuesday started early with the section commanders waking up the teenagers for breakfast. It soon became apparent that they did not quite grasp how tidy the Army requires you to be for a block inspection and so it ensued, kit everywhere and mess tins all over the show were thrown down the room, they got the hang of it. After a little military discipline, it was all to play for when they took part in a PFA. Some of the children had not ran more than 150m before this experience, so we all knew this would be a challenge to keep them running. In the first 500m we had a man down, which was quickly dealt with after one member of the section ran back to the start and squared them away. Overall, each section finished with a good time and as a collective they beat the previous record.

Military lessons took them through some key basics which they would need to recall for the ex planned on the Thursday. This included basic soldiering skills such as, cam and concealment, patrolling, hand signals, ground awareness and navigation. The teenagers found this was the perfect opportunity to demonstrate what too much cam cream looks like, resulting in fun team building.

LCpl Norton led the assault course which followed their basic military skills lesson. All of the youths put in a colossal effort tackling the obstacles, regardless of how frightened they



were, which embarrassed **LCpl** Cash, who decided he wouldn't go over any. All sections pulled together at the end showing incredible team work, ensuring everyone made the 300m sprint to the finish together.

After dinner we went back out on a quick Nav Ex to teach some basic map reading skills which, they all grasped very quickly. Even the dark proved no match for the youngsters, who managed to find their way back to the start without any help. To finish the

night, we had a fun quiz as an inter-section competition and they seemed to know more than some of the outreach team. Perhaps something to do with their personal devices.

Wednesday morning was a nice early start and after another block inspection, we boarded a coach and off we went to the National Memorial Arboretum. Upon arrival, the youths sat through an explanation about the Arboretum and this then

led us into a well-designed navigation exercise thanks to LCpl 'day one week one' McGrady. An hour later we decided that was enough and went to visit the painter's tent. All of the youngsters thoroughly enjoyed designing the wooden soldiers to add to the newest attraction at the Arboretum, remembering the Somme.



Following lunch there, we made our way back to Swynnerton Camp to undergo a drill test from the LSM (Lifemaps Sergeant Major) Sgt Richards. We tested them on their marching ability, 2 Section reigned victorious on this occasion.

Thursday arrived and the teenagers were up bright and early for section commanders to commence one last kit check. The initial patrol went extremely well, in the direction of the harbour, which then turned into a snap ambush and after a 15-minute wait, we took control of the harbour. Immediately after this they started setting up bashers and getting their lunch on (which a lot of them weren't too pleased about).

Then serial one of the ex began. A patrol where the section commander had free rein to take their section away to practice their patrolling skills. One of the skills taught was the obstacle crossing. It did not come naturally to them, but they persevered and three attempts later, they had nailed it.

One of the best serials of the day was the vehicle check point, especially for the police officers, PC Sarah Griffiths and PC **Kate Beardmore** who were helping out as the enemy. The sections under their commanders, set up a VCP and started waiting for the vehicles to arrive. All sections were stunned by how difficult the enemy were making the situation, not least PC Beardmore who refused to wind the window down. Once they did cooperate they then bailed on us and ran for the nearest treeline.

Much to the student's surprise was the hidden enemy in the car boot. One of the youngsters opened the boot, saw the enemy and immediately closed it again. When we asked him



why, he explained that he needed a moment to himself. Once composure was regained he re-opened and began to search him. All sections were successful in discovering the enemy's illegal weapon which led to his arrest.

Later that day the final serial was delivered, the aim being to recce an enemy building from start through to finish. Planning started and ended almost as quick and they said the secret was "just don't let them see us"; it was a proud moment as a section commander.

So, following the foolproof plan, we crept up on the building and found a lovely little mound to hide behind, with a perfect view of the building and of the "enemy" within. After about 15 minutes we noticed that 2 of the 3 armed guards were nowhere to be seen, so we decided to start slowly withdrawing in case we had been spotted. All of a sudden we heard an "Allah Akbar", a loud bang and gun fire, so we did what any self-respecting section would do ... run away then patrol back to the harbour for a brew. Another successful Recce under the belt!

After all the sections going through the round robin of serials that were strategically set up by our very own **Sig 'it's mine I signed for it' Harrison**, the children all began to get out their Hexi cookers and get stuck in to scoff. Just as it was starting to get dark, section commanders **CpI Moore** and **LCpI Cash** decided they would take the sections out for one last patrol. So we got to work, those remaining of the team went around the harbour throwing Cyalumes all over the show. The last of the section tasks and the decider for best section was that the children must sneak back into the harbour and collect as many cyalumes as possible before getting spotted by the DS's torches. After lots of "sneaking" about, and us pretending we hadn't seen them, all the cyalumes were in.

After the children had a chat amongst themselves and a nice warm cup of soup and stale bread, it was time for them to get under their bashers and off to bed. Thankfully they were shattered from the day's events and did not give us much trouble.

Finally, Friday had come and the children were all ready to go home. The first priority was getting the children to have their breakfast with them still located in that harbour and cleaning up.

Once we got the children back to Swynnerton Camp, we started getting all the kit back in and accounted for with the help of the Outreach Team. We had all the children sat in a hollow square cleaning mugs, mess tins and polishing boots. Once we were happy with the state of the kit and everything was handed in, bar the overalls, the children went to get washed and ready for their pass off parade.

With some last minute drill practice whilst waiting for all dignitaries to arrive the parade started with the children being marched onto the square by **Sgt Richards**. Once marched onto the square, **SSM Profit** took control after speaking to the CO of 16 Sig Regt, they conducted an inspection (chatted with the children). Once the inspection was complete, the prize giving started for best male, best female, medal of merit, most improved, most positive attitude and best section which were thoroughly deserved. After the parade the **CO**, **RSM** and the police Inspector had a chat to find out what the children thought of the week.

Finally, the time had come and the coaches had arrived ready to take the children away, much to our relief as finally the weekend was here!



21st SIGNAL REGIMENT COLERNE



204 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Simon Gray
SSM WO2 (SSM) Stowell

Station Fete - by LCpl Peart, Alamein Tp

On 10 Sep 16, Colerne Station hosted the Station Fete. An annual event allows families from the surrounding area to come onto the camp and experience a small portion of what the Regt has to offer. Although starting off a wet and windy morning it soon brightened up and the sun started to shine. 204 Sig Sqn was in charge of three stands; the grenade range, the Vallon stand and the stockade stand.

The grenade range offered the chance for the families to get hands on the L111 practice grenades, getting a feel for how heavy a real HE grenade would be, unsurprisingly they all found them heavier than they expected. Then they had an array of targets to choose from to try and get maximum points with three throws.

The Vallon stand gave the families a familiarisation on a Vallon, showing them how we receive them from the stores, how we would put them together and then how to use them.

A mock sandy area was erected to give the families the chance to put their newly learned skills to practice.

The Stockade stand gave anyone, who fancied a bit of pay back, the chance to throw some wet sponges at their Chain of Command and/or family. The willing participants were the OC Sqn and the SSM! We encouraged everyone to step up and give their best throw to soak the restrained participant. Telling them to apply their best war face, intimidate the target with a glaring stare and unleash their best throw, hopefully putting all the practice from the grenade range into action.



Maj Jon Hooker (OC 215 Sig Sqn) receiving some punishment

Overall the day turned out to be a great success with everyone who turned up having a good time and walking away with a little bit of an insight of how the Regt operates and what we have to offer.

215 SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj Jon Hooker SSM WO₂ (SSM) Davies

Exercise ARMY WAR FIGHTING ASSESSMENT 17, Texas - by Sig Watson, B Tp

215 Sig San arrived in Fort Bliss Military Base, home of the 1st Armd Inf Div US Army, on the 24 Aug 16 for Ex AWA 17.

Arriving in El Paso International airport the experience began. After being picked up from the airport by SSgt Barn, we were transported to Fort Bliss to be shown to our accommodation. Everyone was surprised by the luxuriousness of the blocks we were staying in for the next 10 weeks. The following day we were informed that the building we were using for the ex could not be accessed for a further two weeks: as you can imagine many were pleasantly surprised!

We used this opportunity to explore El Paso and many took advantage of the amazing facilities. The base has a brilliant gym and aquatics centre and SSgt (FofS (IS)) Neil 'I'll start tomorrow' Pope enjoyed the spinning classes which are held there regularly. We also discovered the UTEP University Texas El Paso American football team, better known as the Miner's had an opening season game. It was fantastic and everyone enjoyed themselves, getting involved with the locals and the atmosphere on the day was amazing.



SSgt Barn, LCpl Philpot, LCpl Shann and Sig Watson on the pitch after one of the games

We also had the opportunity to do some Adventurous Training and trekked up the Franklin Mountains early one Sunday morning.

We also visited a famous sight in Arizona called Tombstone. Home of the O K Corral - a very historic place that offers the chance to show what the old Wild West used to look like. The team started to get things in place ready for 1st Armd Inf Bde staff to deploy and commence Ex AWA 17. Starting with unloading the 11 tonnes of kit required. After a painful but successful day for all, we managed to get all of the kit into the rooms in just one day, which was fantastic considering it was 34 degrees Celsius outside. Once all the kit was issued the build began, everyone got stuck in and set up the kit they were assigned to deliver, whether that be OTES, LDG, Bowman or VOIP. After which we managed to prove interoperability with all our services internally and externally

to three different nations: America, Australia and Canada, a difficult task that was achieved faster than thought. This had a massive effect on the team's morale. Even with the long days and the hard work that was needed we were still in very high spirits and thoroughly enjoying our time in Fort Bliss.



SSgt 'Uncle Bob' Barn and LCpl 'Son of Uncle Bob' Coulter posing half way up the Franklin Mountains

Exercise LOFOTEN ROCK

Week 1 - by Sig Tregaskis

Ex LOFOTEN ROCK was a 2 week Rock Climbing AT Expedition to Norway. We first made our way to Bodo, before embarking on a hair-raising ride to the port. Once at the ferry crossing at Bognes we had an hour rest before hitting the road in Lodognes for another two hours before having to call it a night (24 hour daylight shocked us all) at midnight.

With another early morning, we continued our journey down to a campsite on the island of Leknes and set up camp. We took it easy on the first day with 10m routes at a sea cliff. The second day was a complete shock, we were going to climb an n5 (HVS) route with 8 pitches, all about 50 metres apart in a total of 355m. It took us nearly 7 hours to do the route as there weren't many gear placements for anchors. The scenery was stunning - I had never seen the water so calm before with the beautiful background of rolling mountains and little fishing boats in the distance I could not think of a better view in my life. For the next couple of days we climbed easier routes to rest before hitting another big route. We enjoyed a great BBQ and a very cold swim in the North Sea before visiting a Viking museum on our rest day.

Week 2 - by LCpl Mackail

On Sunday, the weather was poor across the islands so all groups headed to Paradiset for its quick drying high friction rock. All teams were climbing various grades up to 5+, we also used the day to be taught things like setting up stances and belays. We were also treated to a masterclass in complex top rope setups by WO2 Lee Magowan.

On Monday we all climbed the Svolvaer Goat, a 3 pitch route, although no one could muster the confidence to complete the leap of faith at the top! The abseil down off the top was challenging -with climbers needing to hang underneath each other before abseiling off. Luckily for Lt Sam Scott I was on the ball so when he dropped his belay plate without realising, I managed to catch it.

We then attempted different multi pitch routes like Ladies Jigsaw and Bare Blåbær. This 7 pitch 5- route is one of the top 50 in Lofoten featuring a crack from the bottom almost to the top. This walk looked even further on the way back, however nothing will cool you down more than a dip in a fjord followed by an ice cream. Our final day of climbing came on Thursday with two groups heading back to Paradiset to do more single pitch climbs and having a go at leading for the first time.

This was a fantastic AT Exped with some challenging climbs in a beautiful location.



Lt Sam Scott conducting training during the expedition

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Pete Wright SSM WO2 (SSM) Neil Dinsdale

Exercise KERNOW SCORPION - by LCpl Llewellyn, Shaibah Tp

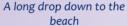
Ex KERNOW SCORPION was a 2 day AT package consisting of hill walking and mountain biking, conducted in the charming county of Cornwall. As part of the hill walking group on day one, our destination was the coastal village of Porthcothan, located on the West Coast. Our goal for the afternoon was to walk the coastal path to Newquay; the route provided several inclines and the number of precarious vertical drops to the sea below provided a sense of height.

The walk provided a number of photo opportunities and spectacular views of the beautiful, rugged Cornish coastline. While overcast with occasional bouts of drizzle, the weather was nevertheless suitable. After stopping for lunch, the final few miles went by rather quickly before arriving at our destination in Porth having walked a little under nine miles.

The mountain biking contingent travelled to Cardinham Woods, located just east of Bodmin. After the previous night's thunderstorm the weather was sunny and warm, ideal conditions for a day of mountain biking. The route for the day was a blue route, relatively easy for complete novices like myself, who had not ridden a bicycle for fifteen years at least. It consisted of several short ascents through the woods, with a number of descents easily navigable for beginners. Options existed throughout the route to undertake more challenging red routes, which everyone opted for on at least one occasion. These red routes, while not necessarily steeper than a blue, would often have rockier terrain underfoot, which made controlled descents and good use of the brakes a priority when tackling them. We then attempted what became a long, tiring climb, which saw most of us walking our bikes to the top! The ascent was worth it, as the descent put into practice everything we had been taught throughout the day and provided a significant challenge.

The ex highlighted the importance of adventure training as a Sgn and introducing complete novices to disciplines and sports they might otherwise overlook. It provided invaluable team building and personal development experience to everyone taking part.







Maj Pete Wright, Cpl Laxman Rai and LCpl Mark Tovey enjoying the coastal route



LCpl Joel Franks pulls an interesting face as the group pauses to take in the scenery

Exercise MERCURY DEFENDER - Royal Signals Cyber Challenge - by Cpl Laxman Rai, Bost Tp

The MoD has become one of the most digitally targeted organisations in the world. The R SIGNALS have recently led on several projects and exercises to promote cyber security and facilitate defensive and offensive capabilities.

Ex MERCURY DEFENDER was organised by 11 Sig Regt to raise awareness of cyber within the Corps and to learn and enhance cyber skills. It was held in Blandford Camp during the period of 25-29 Jul 16. Nine teams of 6 participated including 21 Sig Regt, led by SSgt Russell.

The 5 day exercise included both teaching and testing. We were introduced to the cyber framework, legal issues and the cyber kit used to collect data and analyse information.

On the testing phase, each team had a dedicated network we were tasked to find a flaw and try and rectify it. As a team we managed to do pretty well and patched almost all of the vulnerabilities. We were also tested on Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) where we had to track an individual. We then tackled Offensive Cyber Operations (OCO) when we tried to infiltrate a network and gather information.

Overall the cyber challenge was a really good week and gave us more awareness of cyber within the R SIGNALS and the MoD. It also enhanced our cyber skills and has encouraged everyone to commit more on cyber arena. I look forward to more cyber challenges in the future.

No photographs could be taken due to equipment security classifications.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj Overton SSM WO2 (SSM) Dolan

Sp Sqn continues to work hard supporting, enabling, fixing, repairing and accounting, in addition to soldiers being deployed on pre-deployment courses and attending Ex BEAFIGHTER WARRIOR. EC continues to dominate much of what many of Sp Sqn depts do, with vehicles and eqpt moving internally and externally – all needing to be kept taskworthy. Capt 'Dougie' Icke and Sgt 'Lee' Pell continue to interrogate MOSS for EC management checks and training by our many SMEs with the OC - Maj 'Karl' Overton and the TOT- Capt 'Bill' Bailey giving suitable encouragement and nods of approval.

We have said farewell to WO2 (FofS) Ross Beattie after a job well done, and welcomed WO2 (FofS) Thapa as her replacement in Eng Tp. We have lost Pte 'Marty' Goffin from our Sqn HR Dept as he was poached for 215 Sig Sqn, but we have inherited Pte 'Amy' McCoy who we already know has a law degree so we are avoiding getting into any arguments with her. Lastly, we have congratulated the following Sp Sqn soldiers on their selection for promotion from Sig/Pte/Cfn to LCpl: Sig Beardmore, Sig 'Scouse' Hulse, Sig Mardon, Sig 'Maggie' Thatcher, Cfn Platt and Pte George.

21 Signal Regiment Station Fete 2016 - by Capt Tom Woodall

It is said, "If you build it, they will come", so we did and they most certainly appeared; despite Mother Nature's best intentions!! The annual Colerne Station Fete and Party in the Park took place at Azimghur Barracks on 10 Sep with guests arriving from 1100hrs and many staying the course of the whole day; the combined event was a huge success. The extremely 'changeable' weather did nothing to dampen the spirits, in true British fashion the Fete goers simply donned their best inclement weather gear and enjoyed a full day of entertainment. With a bit of something for everyone, the Fete once more brought together the community of Colerne in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.

This year's event took the form of a Ye Olde English village fete which went down a storm with both the military and civilian community. Sgt 'Big Si' Garrett fully understanding the vision for the day from the outset, pulled together a selection of attractions sympathetic to the overall intent; think last of the summer wine versus country file versus the Vicar of Dibley on steroids. There were donkey rides for the kids (and bigger kids), a falconer, Morris dancers, The Mangled Wurzels tribute band, archery, a plethora of creative Regimental stalls, inflatables, clay target shooting, a military

marching band and as much straw and hay to keep all the cattle in Wiltshire fed through the coming winter months. With an enthused effort from the fatigue party, under the guidance of SSgt 'don't hassle the Moff' Moffat, The Regimental Rugby pitch was transformed into an unrecognisable middle England showground much to the dismay of OIC Rugby, Capt 'Bill the power' Bailey.

Of course no Regimental Fete is ever complete without some form of high octane endurance competition. This year's event afforded the opportunity for the sub-units to face each other in a battle of both brawn and brain, as they competed to accrue points towards the coveted Commanding Officer's Cup. Battle number one was the brain child of SSgt 'the muscles from Brussels' Bambury, who invented a particularly gruelling series of obstacles and burdens he ingeniously named 'Super Champs'. This was followed shortly by the more sedentary ready steady cook competition, where in the field kitchen under the watchful eye of Sgt 'the naked chef' Middleton, four soldiers prepared dishes to be both edible and presentable from a selection of previously undisclosed produce within an hour. This proved to be a great crowd puller and produced some surprisingly good results; although as I write, the adjudicator is still complaining of gastric disturbance!



Sp Sqn Grand National runners negotiate some of the easier obstacles



SSgt 'Johno' Johnson at the front and Cpl 'Asa' Connon at the back giving it all they've got! If only they did this in work...

And finally onto the grand finale, the climax of the Fete, everyone's favourite, the Regimental tug of war contest. As the crowds of Fete goers with glasses of warm cider in hand, cheered on the heaving, sweating, tight shorted super troops of the Squadrons, the clouds finally gave way to beaming sunshine. We couldn't have timed it any better! On top of all of the fun, frolics and entertainment of the day, the community also managed to raise £1500 for the Royal British Legion through charitable donations and the raffle prize draw; a fantastic achievement by all who gave. With the PXR submitted we look forward in earnest to next year's Fete. If there is one work on point for next year however - Padre, OIC weather booker!

Permissive Land Survival Course - by Sgt Pell

Earlier this year, I applied to attend the Permissive Land Survival (PLS) Course, held in September, as it is one of the pre-requisites to becoming a Level B Unit SERE Instructor (USI), of which I aim to become for 21 Sig Regt. The course is five days long and held at RAF St Mawgan in sunny Newquay, although most of the training is conducted in rainy Bodmin Moor, and is designed to teach the fundamentals of land survival in a temperate climate, during peace times.

The PLS is one of the most unique courses I have done in my career, and therefore probably the most interesting. Students arrived at RAF St Mawgan on the first day and were immediately issued a selection of simple tools such as a knife, an infamously blunt axe and a few key elements from MoD issue survival kits. Much to the surprise of everyone on the course, we were then told that after a morning of theory lessons, we would be deploying into the field and not returning until the Friday morning! We were then informed that the issued equipment, along with the clothes we were standing in and a bit of warm and wet kit, would be the only things we were allowed to take with us. This meant no extra food, no extra personal equipment and definitely no electronics... including phones.

The students were given an hour to prepare themselves, make a last minute phone call home and told to take on board some much needed calories, as we shouldn't be expecting to eat much throughout the week. This was where the fun began, and after a shirt trip to the moors, we were placed in groups and began the training.

The course is designed around learning the basic principles of survival - Protection, Location, Water and Food, and each day is allocated to covering these principles in detail. The first day was 'Protection' and involved building a group shelter and producing a sustainable fire. A short interest lesson was given on some of the various emergency ration packs and each student was given a portion of one of these packs, which equated to about 300 calories each. At the end of the lessons, the groups were given a 'project' that must be completed in order to acquire a helpful tool for each individual. We had to use a 'Commando wire saw' to build a simple hand saw which could then be exchanged for a modern folding saw. This was an absolute necessity for building shelters and processing fire wood. Each day, the course were given a small project that each student had to complete by the end of the week, which made up part of the final assessment.

The second day, the students learnt about the various aspects of enabling a search and rescue team to find our location and, as a group, we had to build a signal fire. If the group was successful in lighting the fire within two minutes, each member would receive a chocolate bar. Unfortunately for us, damp cotton wool doesn't seem to take a spark too well and it took over twelve minutes to get the fire going. Apparently, by that time, any low flying aircraft would have just flown straight past us.

For the third day of the course things got very interesting, as we moved onto our solo phase. From here, each student was given a portion of a woodblock and had to essentially survive by themselves for the remainder of the course. We were pretty much under our own steam, except for an hour or two to meet up and learn some more survival skills. The lessons now involved collecting water and acquiring food, including the preparation of raw fish, rabbit and chicken. Each student was left with a whole mackerel and a portion of rabbit and chicken to cook and eat. Unfortunately, the live cricket shop was closed, so instead of being given insects to eat, we each got given a king prawn to eat. It was definitely a highlight of the week sitting in an 'A' frame shelter watching my king prawn cook on a raging fire!

The course ended with the assessment day on the Friday, where each individual had to have produced an adequate shelter, sustainable fire, means of showing their location and various aids to collecting water and catching food. Ultimately, I would recommend this course to anyone and everyone. It is rewarding, challenging, and above all, great fun. Not only does it lead onto the Level B SERE training but students who pass the PLS can also return and complete the Land Survival Instructors course and conduct training of this type within their sub-units.



PLS End of Course Photo – Sgt Lee Pell is the one with silver hair and stubble!

PTI Course - by Cpl Tatman

On 17 July I arrived at St Omar Barracks in Aldershot ready for the All Arms PTI course. I was allocated a room, onsite, built in wardrobes and a garden view on the top floor. I got all my kit from my car, ate a tasty snack and got my head down. Monday 18, this was the big day, from the front gate at Fox lines you run everywhere on camp. I ran to Fox Gym with pressed shorts and t-shirt on hangers and trainers in my bag. After a brief, 150 of us had to get changed into PT kit and started the PFA. Not everyone passed (on a PTI course!), those that didn't got a retest on Wednesday. After the PFA the first week consisted of more briefs, an AFT, OFT training and lessons.

Those that needed, completed their DIT, and we were given the lessons we needed to plan for the next few weeks, ranging from flexibility to river crossings. Every Friday is the Flag competition, an inter-section competition with the end goal to win the esteemed PT Corps Flag. During the 8 weeks, I learnt about Health and Safety, Anatomy and Physiology, Functional Fitness, Lesson Planning and Risk Assessments. I met some great people, had a few laughs, continued to improve my personal fitness and qualified as an All Arms PTI.

My first week back I was recruited to conduct S&C for the Corps Rugby Team which was a great opportunity for me, and

upon returning to my unit my first lesson was potted sports - so we had a good turn out with lots of smiley faces. I'm looking forward to helping to maintain and improve the units' mental and physical fitness, and hopefully encourage others to apply for the All Arms PTI course.

Amport House Visit - by Padre Hiney

Thirty of 21 Sig Regt's junior and senior commanders, including the CO, Lt Col Mike Morton and his four OCs, went to Amport House on 15 Sept for 24 hours, led by their unit Padre, Tom Hiney. The intent was to use this splendid Defence Academy resource (sadly now on the list of MOD properties for sale) as a place for some deeper-than-usual thinking around Ethics, Leadership, and Trust. As well as being the spiritual home of the Joint Services Chaplaincy departments, Amport House has been well used over the years as a picturesque conference facility by Army HQ, as well as a venue for TRiMM, VO and NO training.

The Padre kicked off the study sessions with a presentation entitled 'What is Ethical Soldiering?'; a reference to the CGS's interest in changing 'appropriate' for 'ethical' in the wording of the Army Standards. LOAC, social media and shifting public and political attitudes towards war have ratcheted up the need for British Soldiers to be ethical, both off and on duty. It has, in fact, become a strategic necessity and not just a morally desirable state. So, what are ethics? Do ethics change? Are soldiers arriving at Basic Training from a culture that values courage, integrity and loyalty less than our forebears? How could we be energised rather than overwhelmed by the growing political need to have zero tolerance against unethical behaviour in our ranks? These were the kind of questions teased out.

In his session, the RSM, **WO1 Steve Kelly**, offered the Army Leadership Code as a currently under-valued resource for

applying ethical or 'values-based' leadership at a shop floor level. Ethics isn't just about whether to shoot non-combatants in Hollywood moments of slip-second intensity – it's about the climate and tone in which all Army business is done.

The CO wrapped up these sessions with an emphasis on positivity and trust. Junior soldiers need to know that whatever changes have taken place to pay and pension, and whatever the challenges of recruitment and manning, the British Army, and the Royal Corps of Signals, are still forces for good and good places to work and develop oneself.

Command tasks in the Amport grounds in the late afternoon, led by **Cpl Matthew Johnston**, promoted some good unit cohesion before the evening serial of dinner and drinks. The group dispersed after breakfast. The impact of days like this on the morale component of a Regt are only felt in the weeks and months ahead, but are becoming increasingly popular across the Army.



Capt 'Tom' Woodall is always at his happiest when allowed to wear his 'temporary' arm tattoos



22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO Lt Col E Byfield
RSM WO1 (RSM) D Seymour

217 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj I Peers

SSM WO2 (SSM) D McDermott

217 Signal Squadron London Visit - by SSgt (FofS) Lee Ebdon

The Sqn Officers and SNCOs were London bound for an educational visit to the Imperial War Museum, in preparation for our upcoming deployment to Germany on Exercise NOBLE LEDGER.

Pre-booked seats on Virgin West Coast main line ensured everyone had a seat, at least on the way there - we won't mention the SQMS **SSgt Chaffer** losing his return tickets after being in the capital for only 5 minutes. Neither will we note that **Lt Athow-Frost** led a small group the wrong way on the underground.

Now, I know what you're all thinking, "educational visit, aye right!", however, much to our surprise too, this genuinely was

the intent of the OC, **Maj Peers**. The visit was to develop a better understanding of the horrific events that took place during the Holocaust in order for us to impart our knowledge to the Sqn personnel during our planned visit to Bergen Belsen concentration camp in November.

Broken down into small syndicates, we set about conducting research into our question set intended to complement our pre-reading prior to the event (all of which was done, genuinely!)

The exhibition within the Imperial War Museum was exceptional and gave an insight into the culture of the German military, both in the lead up to and during the shocking persecution of the Jewish community throughout Europe in the Second World War. This furthered our critical analysis of the Army Leadership Code, which constituted our discussion groups for the afternoon (told you we weren't on the lash!)

This genuinely turned out to be a valuable experience for all the Sqn personnel and is an activity we would highly recommend to any unit who has the opportunity. Special mention has to go to WO2 (FofS (IS)) Berry for his

incredible cultural awareness of all those involved on the day, **SSgt Jagat** for being able to fit a twenty minute presentation onto one piece of A5 paper and **Sgt Cox** for his pre-reading which mainly involved swiping left!

217 Signal Squadron Summer BBQ - by Cpl Suman

Tuesday morning, the sky looked cloudy with sunny spells while a team of 217 Sig Sqn members led by **Cpl Nabin** were rushing to finish a final touch-up of the venue for the sqn summer BBQ at Beacon Barracks, MOD Stafford. The event was organised by **Cpl Suman** and was aimed to socialise and strengthen team bonding prior to deployment on the autumn series exercises, leading towards Ex NOBLE LEDGER 16.

The day started with an inter-Tp football competition. Members of SHQ team were lucky enough to escape the competition due to various commitments. But that did not stop the enthusiasm of the rest of the Tps from showing off their 'not so skilled' talents on the ground. Having only 20 minutes to play for a game, each team with 7 players had a common magical strategy; run fast and strike the ball towards the goal with full strength. It didn't turn out the best for everyone but Charlie Tp managed to secure the title of winning team of the day, beating Alpha and Bravo Tps.

The second phase of the event was a BBQ in the afternoon. All available personnel from the Sqn and some families and children arrived at the venue at 1530hrs. The weather dramatically changed with delightful sunshine. Soft drinks were served while chefs were busy producing smoke from the BBQ stands. The long-awaited food was cooked over the redhot charcoal with smoky flavour. As I delivered a safety brief, the food was ready to be served under the tent. After a delicious BBQ, everyone was recharged with energy. There were some fun activities to test individual abilities. A volleyball net, football score board and nail and hammer were waiting for a challenge to be accepted. Kids were having fun running around the field while LCpl Boumer was busy teaching some volleyball skills to unwilling players. Many were busy chatting before realising the food had gone cold again. Despite the variety of activities and interactions, it was the best time to catch up with work colleagues in a relaxed environment and have fun with each other.

Maj Peers, OC 217 Sqn with members of Sqn Ops team joined us for the evening. Having been unable to take part in the football fun in the afternoon; it was nice to catch up with them and chat about the current affairs of the sqn. The excitement sparked amongst the crowd as he announced his contribution behind the drinks bar for free drinks. I was amongst the lucky ones to grab a drink without having to touch my back pocket.

In conclusion, it was a very fruitful day that started with a sports challenge leading towards good socialising and team bonding activities in the afternoon. Everyone had fun and a laugh that certainly cooled the minds off before getting busy towards exercise preparation.

217 Signal Squadron Leadership and Command Development - by Sgt Davies

This training exercise was carried out over 28-29 September at Swynnerton Training Camp. The aim of the ex was to enhance and develop the Sqn's Signallers and JNCO's in various areas of leadership, enforcing the skills and attributes that are required to successfully pass PNCO and JCLM.

During the two day ex the exercising troops were tested both mentally and physically on a number of different activities. Leaderless command tasks were first up, starting with basic command tasks and developing to more advanced and demanding ones. From the very start natural leaders were coming to the fore and showing good command presence. Next up was an orienteering exercise with a few mental brain teasers thrown in for good measure.

As Swynnerton has a very good and demanding obstacle course I saw this as an ideal opportunity to test the exercising troops on this facility. A couple of hours of introduction to the obstacle course then ensued, going through all the correct techniques and methods for completing each obstacle.

The second day of training began in the classroom and involved discussion groups on various subjects, with each discussion subject being led by one of the exercising troops. Hotly discussed topics saw some of the more reserved soldiers come out of their shell and talk passionately about subjects that mattered to them. Next up and still in the classroom environment, the soldiers were tested on what they already knew about the Army Leadership Code and what it meant to them. Groups then came up with all the personal and physical attributes they felt were key to being a good leader. I covered basic military knowledge, such as six section battle drills, principles of defence, values and standards, and many others. All of these are vital to being successful on PNCO and JCLM courses.

The next round of command tasks then started with much more advanced and complicated tasks. These were leader led tasks and began to really test the exercising troops in a number of different areas of leadership. Tasks were now becoming more physically demanding and taking soldiers out of their comfort zone. All of these tasks were being completed by exercising troops in Combat Fighting Order carrying 15kg with their personal weapon. Once all the command tasks had been completed it was time to put all that the soldiers had learned into principle with a final PLD. After a hard warm-up each section began a burden retrieval over a set route. Once their leader had successfully collected all the items and navigated their section to the RV point it was pretty clear what was next; section versus section over the obstacle course. It was neck and neck the whole way through a long and demanding course and this is where their leadership skills came to the fore from several members of each section. Teamwork skills and a 'never give up' attitude were shown by the sections during this final part of the PLD. A great way to finish what had been a very demanding but also rewarding couple of days out of the hangars and garages.



PLDs

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj S Macpherson
SSM WO2 (SSM) J Kennaugh

Exercise Trident Charger - by Sig Holloway

On 31 Aug 16, 22 Sig Regt deployed to St Mawgan on ARRC led Ex TRIDENT CHARGER. This was to carry out the build phase for the main ex commencing 17 Oct 16 where Staff Officers from around the world would come to test out their defence tactics against foreign forces and test the ability of the equipment provided.

With only 16 days to carry out the initial build phase, ARRC Support Battalion and 22 Sig Regt had to rapidly lay out tents and communications equipment in time for the staff readiness check. Though a difficult task with long hours and extra shifts the task was carried out and completed in good time despite being low on man power.

The Installation Technicians took the lead on the ground; laying down all the cables needed for the comms equipment. With over 900 UAD's and 250+ IP Phones being laid out, each with a desired name and affiliation to each table, 222 Sig Sqn had their work cut out but with brave faces and iron hearts they managed it.

With every soldier working hard and help from subject matter experts, tests were under way and carried out on some specialist equipment not yet deployed to the British Army. Trying to integrate this kit into our own Magpie and Falcon systems proved more than a simple task, with a lot of red faces and bald patches from tugged hair.

Despite the work being hard, 22 Sig Regt managed to keep morale high and smiling faces all round, Sqn Ops even set up some adventure training for all which involved surfing and cliff diving. Spirits were further lifted when 4 soldiers (Sig Miller, Sig Grand, Sig Nevitt and Sig Anderson) came off the board for promotion.

22 Sig Regt has a busy schedule for the rest of the year with the Ex TRIDENT JUNCTURE and the correct packing of kit and equipment for being R1 ready in 2017. With the next year coming fast, we as a Regt are looking forward to smashing

courses and Adventure training, which in turn will help us progress in our career and friendship with other colleagues.

248 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj B Price

SSM WO2 (SSM) R Laxmanbabu

Deep Sea Fishing Expedition - by Shipmate Omprakash Magar

The whole Regt was in preparation for the year's final push – Ex AUTUMN SERIES 2016 in St Mawgan. Having already spent the majority of the year in St Mawgan we were no strangers to the sunny climes of Cornwall and had bold plans for consolidating our squatters' rights upon the county, starting with a spot of fishing.

Sun, sea, sand, ships and smiles – the plan was flawless and when we got within sight of the coast the sea was like glass and a bright sun was beating down. By the time we had strolled down to the quayside the wind was starting to pick up, but undaunted we put to sea, many of us excited to be angling for the first time.

Cruising over the undulating waves of the Cornish sea, sighting beautiful seagulls flying overhead and magnificent shades of blues in the mystic sea - everything seemed fine and **Leading Hand Sanjeep** was heard planning to buy a trawler and get into the fishing industry. Then our boat got anchored and the ferocious winds brought powerful waves, shaking the craft about like a toy. Our helmsmen was teaching us his sure-fire strategies for the rods, baits, tackle and techniques; but many of the boys were unable to focus on anything except the movement of the boat and were soon experiencing sudden dizziness and were nauseous. Most of my Gurkha shipmates, who had been eager to get hands-on the rod, were only to be found lying on the deck. The saying 'Bravest of the brave, from the towering mountains and hills' didn't seem particularly apt when atop the ocean wave – the Nepalese navy's flagship was decimated...

We had visualised that it would be a fish-bonanza - after no time at all, Cabin Boy Ryan Booth had the first catch of the day - a size 9 Airmax - but despite the many 'bait bombs' released by some of the less healthy members of the team it was a while before Admiral Ben Price followed up on this success with a mackerel. As the day went on almost everyone got something on their hook, from decent sized mackerel to numerous dogfish, which were swarming around Cap'n Kev Boyband East.

With a couple of changes of location almost everyone had had a bite – less those who were rendered unfit - so the pressure was solely on me as I was the only enduring Gurkha from the group. After ages of waiting, desperate and focused, I finally had a bite. It was a beautiful Pollock – a very rare catch. I was extremely pleased with myself that I had a good catch in the end.

The sun was about to touch the horizon. The warm ambient lights dominated the blue skies and fluffy clouds, seagulls were flying back home and so were we. Well, that pretty much summed up the day. Everyone enjoyed what the

Cornwall coast had to offer, although I felt pity for my mates, who spent the entire day lying sickly on the deck.

A Hawaiian farewell to the Commanding Officer - by Sgt Shankar
Gurung

248 Gurkha Sig Sqn (GSS) residing within 22 Sig Regt (22SR) based in Stafford bade farewell to their Commanding Officer (CO), Lt Col A R Fawcett and his family, on 28 Jul 16. The event was held next to the gym, on an open ground, where all the Stafford based Gurkhas with their families and children enjoyed the Hawaiian theme BBQ and finally said goodbye to the CO and his family, wishing them a successful future.



Lt Col Fawcett (CO 22SR) and his family being bid farewell by 248 GSS



Maj Price, OC 248 GSS, presenting a token of appreciation to CO 22SR

"To meet and to depart is the way of life". This is true and common in the Army life, as we see the change over of many commanders over the period. It was time for Lt Col Fawcett, CO 22SR, to move onto the next level of promotion as a Colonel and leave the job of commanding 22 Sig Regt. Therefore, 248 GSS under the direction of Capt Rajeev Shrestha, 2IC 248 GSS and the main lead of Sgt Shankar Gurung, had organized a Hawaiian theme BBQ for all Stafford based Gurkhas and their families in order to celebrate the successful tenure of CO 22SR and enjoy the family togetherness after being away on various exercises.

The day was blessed with an azure sky, the air above the ground was full of BBQ smell and the atmosphere was colourful. The military tents and gazeboes were decorated with bunting and Hawaiian crafts. The swimming pool was positioned in the middle of the tents on a sandy island as a centrepiece of attraction for the children. Amongst those tents, drinks bar and shisha bar were seen to be crowded mostly. The tropical welcome-drink at the gate dragged everyone to step into the sandy isle and enjoy the adventurous fun games composed by **Cpl Sanjoyhang**. The most spectacular game of all, was the "Blind Husband River Crossing" where all the husbands were blind folded and were given PRR radios to communicate with their wives to cross a river by walking on the mine-taped path.

Once everyone got tired after playing beach volleyball and fun games, perhaps the BBQ stored earlier might have melted in the tummy, it was time for fuelling up the tank with delicious Gurkha Curry and some remaining BBQ that the junior boys were still cooking on top of the smoky charcoal. With the set

of the sun, the light bulbs and fire-wood flames were seen brighter amongst the crowd that had gathered around in a C-circle in front of the VIP lounge. The CO, dressed in Hawaiian outfit, then addressed the 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn and the assembled families for the last time and reminded everyone of all the significant achievements, the sense of striding together and leading the Regt to the everest of its fine success. He also admired the strong bonding power within the Gurkha Community and thanked everyone including the families for their superb support throughout his tenure, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn would like to thank him for all that he has done during his tenure in Command and wish him, his wife **Rachel** and the boys all the best for their future endeavours, wherever that may take them.

252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj N Coombes SSM WO2 (SSM) B McLean

Ain't No Mountain High Enough - by Cpl Marson

This year 252 Sig Sqn's adventure training took place in and around Lancaster and the Lake District. Activities included: hill walking (standard!), mountain biking and rock climbing all taking place over a 4-day period. On arrival at Halton training camp we were briefed and issued our kit ready for the various activities starting first thing Monday morning. We quickly realised that standing in the rain would be a warmer option than using the showers on camp! It was with great delight then that our group was to go hill walking first. This was to take place over two days staying on Churchstile campsite in tents and eating "rations" (local pub grub just outside of the campsite). However, working showers were available which was a bonus.

The hill walking was taken by **SSgt Sam Martin**. She would lead us up Scafell Pike on Monday and Eskdale Fell on Tuesday as well as regaling us with her adventures as a young Signaller in Germany, of which no amount of mind bleach will ever erase the horrors we heard! On arrival at the campsite we quickly set up our tents and set off for our first walk. In true British hill walking fashion the weather was absolutely awful so on arrival at the top of Scarfel we could just about see the person in front of us! Unperturbed we turned around and quickly descended, or fell depending on who you ask, back to the car park and on to the campsite.

Morale was quickly restored with a quick visit to the local pub for some great home cooked food. After a good night's sleep we set off on our next walk around Eskdale Fell. The day's



CO 22SR with Stafford based Gurkha Community during Hawaiian theme BBQ

weather was much improved and the peak provided us with fantastic views.

Day 3 was our turn to tackle some of the trails in Gisburn forest, the day was led by our illustrious mountain bike instructor Sgt Sidorowicz. Maintaining his ethos of leading from the front he showed us his awesome "jump skills" and face planted a rock whilst breaking the front wheel of his very expensive mountain bike! Once we'd confirmed that Sgt Sid was still alive and was able to fix his bike, we decided to ride around the jump and carry on around the course. Although the group encountered some technical sections the instructor was still the only injury that day.



252 personnel 'rocking' out!

Our final day of AT was spent at Trowbarrow quarry where on arrival we were greeted by our instructors WO2 (SSM) Bri Mclean and SSgt Fruity Fielding. We experienced various climbs using bottom rope and top rope belaying then finished off with an abseil back down to the bottom of the old quarry. Although not part of our group I have been asked to make special mention of Sig Rimmel who showed true grit and determination in the face of fear. After an hour of being coerced into attempting the abseil (being told he wasn't leaving the quarry until he'd done it) by the SSM, he decided to employ his own brand of abseiling which involved sliding down using his whole body as a point of contact. There are still finger marks at the top of the rock from him holding on. The abseil section of the quarry has been renamed to Rimmel Rock in his honour. A very enjoyable adventure training was finished off by a well-deserved meal out in Lancaster.

A Plain Sailing Adventure Training Exped - by Lt D MacLachlan

With a free week of sailing up for grabs in the glamour of the Solent, we were under the impression that the exped would be over-subscribed by an influx of soldiers from the Regt who are always complaining about never being able to go anywhere or do anything different, and sometimes if the offer is there the personal contribution would be too expensive for them. Due to limitations on trained personnel, the exped was aiming to take two boats of 7 people each, for some reason unbeknown to all involved, the exped struggled to get enough personnel to legally take the boat out! We ended up setting sail with only 4 people led by a day skipper who had never been in control of a vessel before and a couple of seniors who were practically forced to go! Luckily for the relatively inexperienced skipper he had a proficient crew to support him formed up of a (barely) 'competent crew' of whom 2 out of 3 were complete sailing neophytes... what could possibly go wrong?

The week started out miserably with a shower of rain out across Portsmouth harbour but as soon as the danger of death was preached by the safety team at Joint Services Sailing Centre, the crew seemed to have a touch more spark to them. The first day on the yacht consisted of very little sailing as by the time we had signed it over, it was early afternoon and we were obliged to provide some basic safety training and hands on experience on the yacht within the relative safety of the marina before we could be let loose on the Solent. By sunset we had travelled a mighty 6om down the harbour to another berth where we stayed for our first night in our 1991 sailing palace.



The yacht was rather aged but just about did the job of keeping us afloat!

The week started off with very little wind which obviously makes sailing rather tough, but it was ideal for the novice crew to have a gentle exposure to life on the water. Day two saw us take to the sea like a duck to... well... water. Our skills were shaky to begin with and the crew weren't exactly the sure footed band of sailors you see in Master and Commander but we ploughed on through the day with a healthy dose of digestives and sea shanties provided by SQMS SSgt Kev Smith!

As the week progressed, the sun and the wind both got stronger and it got to the point that we thought we had taken a wrong turn and would end up in the Med! Luckily, WO2 McLean had brought his passport and Euros just in case. With a stronger wind came more arduous sailing which by the last day materialised into a life or death scenario on more than one occasion such as Lt Mac trying to pull in the head sail whilst a strong gust of wind was coming in and he got



SSM "Elmer Fudd" McLean struggling to find his inner seaman

pulled off the deck like Mary Poppins. Fortunately, SSM McLean was on hand to do... absolutely nothing as the young Troop Commander stared death in the face, luckily he said "not today!" and safely landed back on two feet. With the

wild winds picking up, the yacht would keel over to one side as we raced down the Solent. It's fair to say that the rookie crew were pushed somewhat out of their comfort zone during this leg of the journey.

Even if the crew didn't have much faith in the skipper Capt Craig 'The Flapper' Hickmott who forgot how to tie a knot on the first day, he managed to get us all back to Gosport in one piece or thereabouts. A great week of new skills gained, challenges overcome and unforgettable sea shanties was had by all and it even sparked an interest in sailing in the originally unwilling volunteers.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj N Pollit

SSM WO2 (SSM) J Jennings

SHQ Cohesion Event- 7 Sep

- by WO2 (SSM) J Jennings

Sp Sqn SHQ had a rare opportunity to detach from the tether of DII in order to attend a cohesion event at Cannock Chase. The event was arranged by Pte Perrine (aka Lady V of the CHRS dept).

The day started great with a 3 hour purge of emails before stepping off to 'Go Ape' at Cannock Chase Visitors centre. The idea behind the event is to move you out of that secure 'comfort zone' and into the unknown. Well in some occasions literally jump into the unknown, personal development and cohesion being key.

Cpl Rigby was certainly not in his comfort zone from the minute the first ladder was climbed to the point of returning to solid ground after 2 hours in the trees. He has no aspirations of Rock Leader Training apparently. **Pte Pradip** was doing so well until he reached the last obstacle where he needed some strong encouragement from the other team members to eventually take the jump and overcome his fear of heights.

Maj Pollitt, WO2 (SSM) Jennings and Cpl 'Monty'Singh flew through the trees like they were on an assault course not wanting to show any fear at all but there were certainly the odd loud 'gulp' heard across the site.



Sp Sqn team

Exercise HADRIAN'S BEACON 26-30 Sep 16

Members of Sp Sqn deployed on Ex HADRIAN'S BEACON for a cultural visit and an arduous Hill Walking trip to cross Hadrian's Wall, the route went from west to east starting in Solway and finishing in Newcastle. The event was organised by **Cpl Singh**.

The trip started in a wet, cold pub car park....and continued in this fashion for the duration. We arrived at the start point in Burgh on Sands. **LCpl Lafferty** was prepped for what he thought was going to be an endurance run with his Trainers, Shorts and T-Shirt. This he later regretted as the weather closed in. The group were relieved to arrive at the first camp site where the admin team had set up the main tents with power and lights and a hot burco was boiling away for a brew. After a quick turnaround the group headed out to get hydrated in the local town.



The first day

The next challenge occurred the next morning as people started to rise out of their beds with stiff legs, after sorting their admin out for the day, the group hoped for a better day of seeing the sites along Hadrian's Wall instead of just fields and fields of cow pats.

The next campsite didn't live up to its name 'Windshields', with a night of high winds and rain everything was set up close to the only bit of shelter afforded at the campsite. The group arrived in good time for the 16ish miles covered that day. Upon arrival half the group opted to pay some extra money for an upgrade to live in the heated Bunkhouse #weak!



Day 2

Most of the group awoke a little worse for wear due to the lack of sleep from the previous night from the howling winds. Luckily no one was blown away. The years of tent building in the Army had paid off. Also lucky for them it was a short day, only 9 miles needed to be covered. **LCpl Lafferty** and **LCpl Martin** donned their shorts again trying to work on their lily white legs and top up their wind burn. This was one of the best days for this event many sites to see as the groups photos flooded whatsapp. Onwards to the next site where another teasing option to stay in a bunkhouse promoted itself as the group dug deep into their pockets to pay up.



The last day

After a nice long rest the biggest and longest day had arrived, the dreaded 25 Miler of Death. There was light at the end of the tunnel with the promise of a nice comfy bed, Wi-Fi and some beers in the group's final stop Newcastle and a hotel as a campsite. As the weather man promised the day started well with sideways rain but soon cleared away to reveal the bustling city of Newcastle and a steady walk along the river following the wall. The group were met by the admin team at a local watering hole for a pit stop. The night promised delight for **Cpl Singh** as he would be in heaven being able to relish some proper Indian food at the group's celebration meal.

The final leg of the journey took us for a group photo standing beside the Angel of the North. Job well done!!!!!

Stafford 10k Run - by Cpl Adeboga

Soldiers from 22 Sig Regt across the rank spectrum showed their great support for Stafford borough council by participating in the inaugural Stafford 10k run. Key personalities across the Regt were involved; Sp Sqn SSM, Unit Welfare Officer, 248 Sqn 2IC, to mention but a few; all took part in the run. **Sgt Wilson** from Sp Sqn coordinated the application process and provided all the ten participants with the scheme of manoeuvre for the event in advance.

The Stafford borough council hosted the 10k event which took place on the 25 Sept 16. The event followed in similar footsteps to the Stafford half marathon providing runners, spectators and residents with happy experiences in addition to seeing the sights of Stafford. Residents from Stafford and the neighbouring borough congregated at the Stafford market square, which is the Start/Finish area to cheer the participants on this fairly cold Sunday morning.

The race began with a short speech from the Stafford borough councillor, a heavily chorused countdown from Ten to zero from the crowd, the klaxon sounded and the runners set off for the 10k run. The Stafford residents in their usual supportive way, lined the running route from start to finish, applauding the runners as we raced through.

Welfare facilities were made available to runners all through the race; water station on the halfway point, mobile toilet to answer nature's call if needed and the St John Ambulance Brigade to provide first aid assistance and immediate evacuation of participants in case of an emergency.

Runners from 22 Sig Regt gave a good account of themselves by finishing in good time across the gender and age group. WO2 (SSM) Jay Jennings finished in Second position with a time of 34:01 of all the 1437 runners in the event. OC Sp Sqn, Maj Pollitt finished a creditable 1:12:07, beaten (just) by his wife.

All runners were treated to light refreshments and presented with medals for their great effort as they crossed the finish line. The event finished on a very satisfactory note without a modicum of doubt and I look forward to the next Stafford 10k.

Trailwalker 2016 - by LCpl Lafferty

The day had arrived, Trailwalker 2016 was finally upon us. As the sweat seeped up out of the old gym mats like the dew on grass on a vibrant spring morning, team support were up and ready to go. An exquisite night's sleep in the gym of Thorney Island was the final touch to our perfect preparation for what lay ahead; 100 arduous kilometres in a maximum 36hrs across the South Downs, finishing at Brighton racecourse.

Sp Sqn, 22 Sig Regt had 3 teams entered, RHQ, LAD and the dream team, Team Support made up from the elite athletes, Maj Armstrong (Dental Officer) Sgt Wilson (QM's) LCpl Lafferty (QM's) and Pte Kruffie (CAT) with LCpl Martin and Sig Taylor on hand as our support team attending to our every need throughout.

As the teams formed up at the start line, good to go for the o63ohrs start and eagerly awaiting what lay ahead the starter horn sounded and off we went. Training hadn't gone exactly to plan due to respective work commitments and after a grand total of zero training sessions as a team. Team support were off to a strong start, upping the pace immediately and leaving the two other Sp Sqn teams behind to enjoy their day. Checkpoints soon passed as we arrived at checkpoint 4 in quick time. The team was still feeling fresh and morale was high as **Sgt Wilson** reached into his admin box to grab a pre prepared bagel. The struggle was real as the sun beat down and the realisation of the dryness of said bagel was written all over his face. He chomped on regardless and off we went.

By the afternoon the temperature was soaring and a lot of the teams were starting to struggle. **Pte Kruffie** needed regular stretches and the odd massage to help with cramps caused by lack of salt. This was quickly rectified at the next checkpoint after munching one of the teams' price reduced Morrisons cheese and onion pasties.

As we arrived at the next checkpoint, admin team ready and waiting with much needed supplies, **Sig Taylor** gladly massaged sun cream into the back of **LCpl Lafferty** not fazed by the dripping sweat at all. Event staff at this point informed us that if the heat was to continue to rise then the event could potentially be called off.

On we went, eager to push out the remaining miles regardless of how fatigued people were starting to become. We were on for a 12 hour finish at one point but the heat did take its toll and by the last few checkpoints it was just a matter of finishing safely as a team.

As we came into Brighton and the end was in sight morale was once again sky high as we crossed over the finish line in a very respectable 14hrs 47 minutes. A great team effort and a total of £1700 raised for Oxfam and the Ghurkha Welfare trust. Off we went for a much needed massage and an ice cold beer. Roll on next year!



30th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRAMCOTE



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

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AIR SUPPORT)

OC Maj O Ford

SSM WO2 (SSM) Cloney

Exercise BLACK ALLIGATOR - by Sig Husbands

On 27 Aug 16, Romeo Tp deployed from RAF Brize Norton to support 4 AAC on Ex BLACK ALLIGATOR in Twenty Nine Palms, California. Romeo Tp's role on the ex was to prove our at readiness capability, while providing reach back communications with 4 AAC's rear party.

After a long journey starting from Gamecock Barracks, via Wattisham, we arrived at the enormous Twenty Nine Palms training area. We were greeted by our advance party headed up by the always cheerful **Sgt Steane**, who showed us to our sleeps building, where even during the night the temperature was a change from early Autumn in the UK.

The Tp quickly set up in our Network Equipment Room adjacent to the HQ; power at the proper voltage was swiftly implemented by **Sig Nesbitt**. We encountered some difficulties with our CCT-120 but these were soon ironed out by our CCT operator, **Sig Tipping**, who also ensured good siting of the antenna to combat the effects of the blazing sun. We were soon in and working across all of our Falcon, Housekeeper, Magpie and OLRT equipment.

Once in the normal ex routine we then split into 3 shifts, each headed up by **Sgt Nimmo**, **Sgt Steane** and **Sgt Withers**. Each shift would rotate through the range package provided by 4AAC, a cultural visit, and an adventurous training package.

The range package proved to be good training for many of the more junior members of the Tp. It culminated in a live firing section attack. This was a good opportunity for us to practice some infantry skills and progress on with our own personal administration.

Our cultural visit was to Los Angeles. The trip included a trip to the well-kept Los Angeles National Cemetery, a 114 acre cemetery, with veterans interred from the Mexican-American war through to present day, and the USS Iowa Battleship. The ship saw service in World War 2, the Korean War, and the Cold War. It is now retired and used as a museum. Some members of the Tp were so impressed they managed to get a second cultural visit, so they could see them again for a second time.

The highlight of the ex for most of us was the adventurous training package. We were housed in a hostel right on the sea front in Pacific Beach, San Diego. We took part in sea kayaking, rock climbing, hill walking, paddle boarding and mountain biking.

In summary, the ex proved to be helpful for all members of the Tp. Valuable ICS cross training was achieved as well as improving our core soldiering skills. We were particularly pleased to have proven our capability to deploy at readiness, and our ability to operate in a challenging environment.



R Tp deployed

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj DA Lish

SSM WO2 (SSM) Indra Thapa

Exercise RAM PEAKS by LCpl Wilkinson

On 3 Sep 16, members of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn gathered to welcome the new Gurkha Major (GM), **Maj Om Pun**, the new OC Sqn, **Major David Lish** and their families as per our Gurkha traditions. The event was also an opportunity to formally introduce them to all of the 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn personnel and their families.

The event was held at the Himali bar in Bramcote and was organised by Victor Tp. The event was set as per QG SIGNALS tradition and all families had arrived before the guests. The pipers, Officers, SNCOs and families stood outside of the hall to welcome our guests of the evening. The 2IC Sqn, Capt Nim, received both families at the main entrance and ushered them into the main hall. While having starters, the GM and OC Sahebs walked around the hall to meet and talk with members of the Sqn. The GM is the most senior appointment of the QG SIGNALS and he is more than familiar with the customs, but it was a new and exciting experience for the new OC Sqn and his family too. The OC Saheb was both humbled and happy by the welcome for him and his family. After a delicious Gurkha curry, the Sqn 2IC Saheb welcomed both of them with Khatas and bouquets for the ladies. In addition, Tongba, a typical Nepalese alcoholic drink, was offered to the guests. After the formal presentation, a cultural team entertained the guests and attendees. The main attraction of the event was a musical. The event came to end with "khusi ko nach". All the personnel danced and enjoyed the night with immense pleasure and cherished each and every moment.

The function was a huge success with the help of all the members of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn who took part and showed great team cohesion to facilitate the event and strengthen the camaraderie. Big thanks goes to **Cpl Khagendra** and his team for organising such a wonderful evening. Everybody is

looking forward to working with new GM and OC in the coming months.

Project Chautara - by Sgt Mohansingh Rai

A Chautara is a traditional Nepalese resting place for travellers in the hills and Himalayas of Nepal, where walkers come to sit and rest. These places can also be used for social gatherings and meetings. Tradition dictates that it is necessary to have two holy trees, Bar (also known as Banyan) and Pipal (also known as Sacred fig) which provide shade and comfort for those who come to rest at these places.

The initial idea to build a Chautara at Gamecock Bks came from Maj TJC Walton (former OC 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn). This project was then taken up by Sgt Mohan as the Project manager.

After different quotes from several suppliers, the raw materials were finally dropped off at the site by Travis Perkins on 15 Jul. The work started on the same day and volunteers included not only Gurkha soldiers but CarillionAmey staff too. The construction work had to take place out of hours due to work commitments and exercises running at that time. The Chautara was unveiled by Maj Walton in the presence of Maj Om Pun (Gurkha Major QG SIGNALS) and Maj Wettenhall (Regt 2IC) on 29 Jul 16. The unveiling attracted a crowd from across the Regt as well as Gurkha personnel, families and children.

Overall the project went smoothly, especially with the help of CarillionAmey staff and all of the volunteers from the local Gurkha community. I would like to thank Maj Walton Saheb for giving me the opportunity and sincere thanks to HQBG, 30 Sig Regt, The QGS and 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn for helping to fund the project. Without this support the project would not have been possible.



Opening the Chautara

Exercise JORVIK LOOK 16 - by SSgt Robin Rai

Ex JORVIC LOOK is an annual ex which is run by the Vanguard Field Hospital (VFH). This year's ex was led by 34 Field Hospital and held over the period 7 – 24 Sep 16 in RAF Dishforth. The ex set to accomplish three strands; deploy and validate Air Deliverable Medical Treatment facility (MTF), support Ex JORVIK MIRROR and Ex INTEROPERABLE SERPENT, the hospital to a larger configuration.

Whiskey Tp's ICS Det, led by SSgt Robin, was deployed to fulfil its commitment to the VFH by providing ICS support. The ex was considerably longer than in previous years, allowing

the ICS Det to be involved with the building of the Role 2 facility, which was managed by 34 Field Hospital. This was later uplifted with the support of 204 Field Hospital (Reserve Unit), 243 Field Hospital (Reserve Unit) and US Forces. Whilst delivering the full complement of ICS services within the HQ many teething problems were faced and overcome. The ICS Det were able to provide the VFH with both voice and data communications over a variety of classifications.

Overall, this proved to be a very successful exercise with the ICS Det, overcoming many technical difficulties and ensuring robust ICS was available and delivered in both of the types of hospital. Additionally this ex also saw an opportunity to build an interpersonal and interoperable relationship with Reserve Units and US Forces.



SHQ visit the exercise

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

 Ω C Maj I Kirk

SSM WO2 (SSM) Wildman

Exercise RAM DRAGON ADVENTURE - by Cpl Subash

15 members of 256 Sig Sqn along with 2 instructors went to Wales for Ex RAM DRAGON ADVENTURE, a Sqn level AT package organised by SSgt Ward. We were divided into 3 groups as per the activities. These were hill walking, rock climbing and kayaking. Each group would do their chosen event all week and receive a qualification.

We left Gamecock Barracks in the early morning of 29 Aug and arrived at Capel Curig Training Camp after a 3 hour drive. After receiving our accommodation and a quick brief from SSgt Ward, all 3 groups dispersed under their group instructors. Rock climbing was led by WO2(YofS) Dudley, Sgt Vernon for kayaking and 256's very own Capt Macdonald for hill walking.

Necessary kits were issued out and we all headed straight to conduct our activities. The First day consisted of introductory lessons. Rock climbers were using the climbing facility inside the camp whilst kayakers were taken to nearby still lake at Caernarfron, where Sgt Vernon gave them detailed descriptions of the kayak itself and different types of strokes to manipulate the kayak. He also talked about water plants and lime which the guys found fascinating, especially Sig Cross. Hill walkers made their way to the top of Tryfan, famous for two 'twin' pillars where people jump the 1m leap from one pillar to the next. LCpl Hughes decided he was not man enough for this jump and so opted to 'sit this one out'. Sig Phillips on the other hand was simply glad to be at the top and not hanging out crawling up the face of the

mountain. When coming down the mountain, **LCpl Hughes**, who was the lead navigator, decided to take a short cut and cross what he described as a small stream. It turned out the stream happened to be a river and there was no man made crossing.

As each day progressed, so did our ability and consequently we were given more and more challenges to do, including kayak slalom races, capsizing and safety drills for kayakers. Hill walkers had to lead a leg of the route, practicing navigational skills and often stopping to demonstrate various aspects of map reading and also learning about the local terrain and areas. Each of them also had to micro-navigate to individual contour lines and craggy rock features off of the beaten track that really tested the skills and abilities they had learned during the previous days. Similarly rock climbers were also tested to their limits. Climbs were getting higher with increasing difficulty. Completing 4-5 climbs per day was pushing all climbers physically and mentally making Cpl **Subash** realise that he had to work on his upper body strength upon returning back to camp. Also, climbing in the rain was not enjoyable.

It was not all walking up and down huge mountains or climbing all day though. We often took the chance to go into nearby Betws-y-coed and have a brew or share a pint after the day's activities, not only to socialise but also to use the wifi.

By the end of the week, rock climbers were awarded with Rock Climbing Single Pitch Foundation (RSF) and Kayakers with Inland Kayak 2 Star Foundation (K2F). Not only had we gained valuable qualifications, we also learned about JSAT scheme and the importance of AT in improving morale and operational effectiveness. All in all, it was an excellent AT package that we all thoroughly enjoyed.

Exercise DRAGON HIGHLAND SWAN - by LCpl Dip

Located west of Scotland, a scenic and beautiful backdrop awaited us for some well-earned adventure training at Tom McLean's Highland Outdoor Centre. Everyone was very excited for the 10 hour drive and after much deliberation of services and repeated playlists, we arrived at Maillaig. Contrary to **Sig Wright**, Maillaig is not named after a Scottish man taking a tumble then shouting "ow me leg". However, it is the set of the Harry Potter Films and where JK Rowling wrote her books. From here we loaded the ferry with all the provisions along with the drivers who rightly deserved a rest. For the rest of us, only a 6km walk across arduous terrain stood in the way of our final destination and as always, slips and muddy bums made great entertainment at the expense of the less fortunate.

With the sun just setting we arrived at Ardintigh and amongst the picturesque wilderness the thing that caught everyone's attention was the giant boat in the shape of a whale, moored only a few hundred metres from the cabin. We were soon greeted by **Tom McClean**, an admirable man aged 74. Fit as a fiddle his tales would immerse you and leave you hanging on his every word. Later on in the week we would learn more about the boat and **Tom**, but for now everyone was only focused on two things...scoff and bed.

Day one

After the usual bacon, sausage and egg we broke down into our three groups and with smug faces as we were first to use the wet suits, we swaggered down to the jetty for some kayaking. For many of us this was our first opportunity to try out the seemingly relaxing watersport. However, after a lesson on capsize drills and wrestling dry decks this was going to prove more of a challenge. Once in the loch we went through some basic strokes including sweep and back paddle. The less experienced among us tended to precariously wallow around spinning in circles desperate not to take a swim. After grasping the basics we ventured beyond the peninsula towards Tarbet but with the strong winds and currents our attempts were thwarted and we retreated for calmer waters. On the way back we noticed something bobbing up and down 100m or so away. Much to our delight it was not the offspring from a mythical loch monster, but seals! In the afternoon the sun shone bright and we made light work of the paddles convincing the chef to join us. Excited with sightings of aguatic locals, Private Small confidently entered the water demonstrating his powerful strokes and inability to stay in the kayak. Unfortunately this cost him two encounters in the space of five minutes with the freezing water.



Kayaking at its best!

Evening entertainment consisted of "Watch Your Mouth", a game designed to restrict the movements of the mouth, thus giving impaired speech, whilst attempting to read out lines on a card a partner would try and guess what the other was saying. Frustrating for those taking part but hysterical for the spectators, it proved to keep morale high. Additional amusement came from watching others crush cans for recycling with a heavy weight, earning LCpl Miller the title 'Can Crusher Karl'.

Day Two

Gifted with another sunny and dry day conditions were

per hea less bell nob a sl out oth rop wal sen foll neg

Interesting scenery!

perfect for rock climbing. We headed down to the cabin for a lesson on the harness and how the belay rope should be knotted; nobody said anything but there was a slight look of worry when we found out we would be belaying each other. Once loaded up with the ropes, we headed for Tarbet. The walk took around an hour and with a sense of adventure we decided to follow the coastline and carefully negotiate the rocks with the sea splashing beneath our feet. With enough encouragement and

shaky knees **LCpl Evans** conquered his fears and reached the top.

In the evening we climbed aboard the much anticipated whale boat and were greeted by our host, **Tom**. He explained to us that he had created the boat and sailed around coastal harbours raising awareness of Whales and how they are endangered. He also told us how he held the record for sailing the Atlantic in a 9ft boat and how he stayed on a remote island called Rockall for 40 days and nights to affirm Britain's claim. Everyone listened in admiration of his achievements, while all the time the tide had come back in leaving us to wade back to shore.

Day Three

Adventurous training would not be adventurous training without hill walking, so we focused our efforts on reaching a peak 600m high. After three hours of panting and scrambling we neared the pinnacle and stopped for a rest. To our surprise we could hear a peculiar noise coming from the summit. In the words of **LCpl Hampton** the noise was described as a chain saw or deer; as we were in the Scottish Highlands either of those options were possible. We quietly made our way round to catch a glimpse of a majestic stag standing right at the top, with the sun shining and a glorious view; picture perfect for a whisky bottle label.

Day Four

Nervous faces surrounded the breakfast table with the anticipation of the Signaller to Lance Corporal Board results. Good news was delivered by phone to **Sig Powney**. After handshakes, congratulations and pats on the back there was opportunity to do your favorite activity again. With the kayaking, early attempts to get around the peninsula had been unsuccessful but today we knew it would be different. The current was gentle and the wind was in our favour. We reached Tarbet then carried the kayaks 1km across land to Loch Morar; considered the deepest fresh water lake in Europe, it was well worth the trip.

Upon returning, we celebrated a successful and enjoyable week with a BBQ and fire on the beach. Many watched the sunset and gazed upon the vast display of stars not usually visible from more populated parts of the world.

Special thanks goes out to **SSgt Worrall** who organised the exercise, to **Wo2 Dudley**, **Sgt Wright**, **Sgt Vernon** for instructing, and most importantly to **Private Small**, our chef for the week.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj J Long
SSM WO2 (SSM) Wood

Exercise COBB RING 16 - by LCpl Stickings

Ex COBB RING was conducted in Tampa Bay, Florida, between 258 Sig Sqn and 2 JCSE with the main objective being to prove interoperability between UK/US comms kit and personnel. The main body of the ex arrived in Tampa on Friday 2 Sep. On the Saturday there was a college football game in the evening

courtesy of our hosts. Sunday was a beach day riding jet skis and watching the dance festival. All in all it was a successful first weekend for everyone involved.

The working week commenced by attending the US PT sessions every day at 0700hrs then straight into a PACEX on the kit. We started the build of Magpie OLRT, HF, Falcon, Swedish CCT120s and Tacsat. To begin with there were a number of issues with all the different parts of the kit, however, it was quickly overcome using both UK/US personnel and by the end of the week all but the Falcon was up and running. Falcon had been damaged during transit and was out of action for the duration despite our best efforts.

On the Wednesday the Americans took us through M4 and M9 Beretta training preparing us for the field phase in the Everglades. We had a few expert marksmen on the weapons (36/40 targets hit) which was incredible as the majority of people had never used the weapon systems before that day. Some of our guys even beat the US personnel. LCpl Castle and LCpl Stickings were experts on the M4. LCpl Lea and LCpl Farrington were experts on the M9.

The Friday PT session was a 5k memorial run for 9/11 with **SSgt Kingshott** coming in second place out of all the runners. There was a photo taken of all the UK junior ranks running which has been put up in the Americans' gym.

The Saturday was a group day out to the Florida Aquarium, known as the largest aquarium in the state, then onto a dolphin cruise around the bay where we had dolphins jumping and swimming all-round the boat.

The second week was the main comms phase of the ex having just finished the PACEX. There was an attempt to start up the Falcon again but it was met with a bang from inside as the PSU blew up. It was completely out of action from this point. The week started slow, hindered by faults, but progress quickly picked up. By the end of the comms phase HF managed a 6772km shot with clear voice (the maximum recommended range is 3000km), Magpie OLRT had one way voice with the American equivalent, Bices, for the first time ever, Tacsat achieved a connection to a US laptop via IP and was played out of the speakers.

On the Sunday we moved to the Altair Training Solutions facility in the south of Florida, in the Everglades. The first 2 days were under thorough instruction receiving extensive M4 and M9 Beretta training, ranging from static shooting in different positions to pairs fire and manoeuvre on the first

day. The second day moved to more advanced training, starting with transitioning from the pistol to the rifle and gradually building up to a 4 vehicle convoy coming under heavy fire, and how to deal with it appropriately. This part of the ex was enjoyed by everyone because it gave a chance to test different firing techniques and gain confidence in the weapons. Wednesday and Thursday of this week was learning all the different comms kit that both UK and US personnel brought down with them. There was a round robin of lessons and a competition where the best team on every bit of kit was rewarded a prize.



CQM Training

The Friday commenced with an airboat ride round the Everglades, where we saw poisonous spiders, raccoons and alligators. We then packed up the kit and headed back to the MacDill Airbase. Everyone was praised by both the training staff and the Chain of Command for their hard work so a long weekend off was the reward.



A trip around the everglades

The last week was pack up and AT. This consisted of a 12 mile hike around the Floridian outback, where we saw a snake, many large spiders, mosquitos, an armadillo and a few mosquitos. Then later on in the week was a canoeing trip down the Withlacoochee River, stopping at every chance available to jump out of trees into the crystal clear and cool spring water. There were even manatees swimming gently up the river underneath our canoes. It was an incredible experience that everyone agreed was their favourite day. The ex was then over, so we packed up and journeyed home. The ex was a massive success as almost every objective was achieved. There was excellent integration with the Americans and everyone learned a great deal about how our ally operates.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC Maj M Eastman
SSM WO2 (SSM) Munslow

Exercise DRAGON VENTURE 16

September was here already and Sp Sqn was in need of some well-earned Adventurous Training (AT) and team bonding after a very busy year thus far. **Sgt Connelly** from the LAD kindly volunteered to organise the AT package, which included mountain biking, hill walking, rock climbing, surfing and coasteering. On 4 Sep we set off on the long 5 hour drive from Bramcote to Okehampton Camp.

Day one was Mountain Biking through Dartmoor National Park led by our instructor **Sgt lain Cording**. The start and finish point was a small town called Princetown. Our route turned out to be a challenging but enjoyable 25 mile circuit. The uphill climbs and downhill descents were made a little easier with the fantastic, new 'Bird' mountain bikes, recently purchased by the Regt.

Day two consisted of another early start and a half hour drive into Chudleigh to begin a day of hill walking led by **Sgt Allen**. The route would again take us through the picturesque National Park of Dartmoor. **Sgt Allen** managed to incorporate facts about old tin mines and ancient limestone train tracks into the walk... only some of us found this interesting! The walk was one to remember for **LCpl Brundle** as it gave him an opportunity to face his fear of Cows. There did seem to be a large number of free roaming cows that day, which unluckily

for him we took a direct bearing towards. With the walk fortuitously finishing at one of the local pubs, we all enjoyed one of the locally brewed ales and a bite to eat. **Sgt Allen** seemed to enjoy telling us later that night that the pub was filled wall to wall with something or other.



A brief pause during hill walking

Day three began with a short drive, again into Chudleigh, where there was an abundance of outdoor rocks and walls to choose from we participated in a day of Rock Climbing with WO2 (YofS) Dudley. This being a great place to climb the guys climbed a few of the rock faces which LCpl Brundle surprisingly enjoyed considering he was afraid of heights. We did question if there was anything he was not scared of.

Day four was a trip into Newquay where **Sgt Connelly** had booked us in with EBO Adventure for a day of surfing and

coasteering. We began with coasteering which was absolutely terrifying but highly enjoyable at the same time. It was a big test for Sgt Allen, who had a fear of heights but managed to throw himself off some of the highest rock faces on the Newquay coastline... a good effort and a great example of facing your fears head on. We also made a new friend in the form of a seal who was intrigued to see what 11 grown men dressed in neoprene and helmets were doing screaming like school girls flailing around in his patch of



Coasteering at Newquay, SSgt Ratna watches Cfn Vosper's leap of faith

water. The afternoon was a little less extreme but a lot more tiring on the surf boards. The waves were relentless and after 15 minutes battling against them trying to get a reasonable distance from the beach it seemed to be a very quick 5 seconds back to start the process all over again. Most of us seemed to get the hang of it after a while and we all managed to stand up on the boards, some took longer than others though.



Sig Hem, SSgt Ratna, Cfn Vosper, Sig Yugesh and LCpl Dennis all contemplating the waves



32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT **GLASGOW**



COLt Col R Jones **RSM** WO1 (RSM) J Blowes

Since the last edition of The Wire, it has been an extremely busy period for 32 Sig Regt. A new Commanding Officer, Lt Col R Jones, has taken up the appointment after the three months of stewardship from Maj S Lockwood. The previous CO, Lt Col Jim Knight MBE, has moved on to a much grander location (CENTCOM, Tampa, Florida). He departed with a 'spring in his step', perhaps he was looking forward to it.

Every CO will tell you that there is no greater honour than to promote your soldiers and this is how it began for Lt Col R Jones during the initial parade for Ex NORTHERN CHARGE 16 (Annual Continuous Training (ACT)). The following soldiers were promoted from LCpl to Cpl:

LCpl Grice (52 Sp Sqn) LCpl Keddie (52 Sp Sqn) LCpl Oliver (52 Sp Sqn) LCpl Browne (40 NIH Sig Sqn)



The new CO promotes Cpl Keddie

In addition, LCpls Walton and Freer were awarded their Volunteer Reserve Service Medals (VRSM) for 10 years loyal service.

The ACT ex 2016 was designed to be multi-faceted, delivering trained soldiers with qualifications in the following areas:

FALCON - RAF Leeming REEBOK - Garelochhead Training Camp. Driver Training - Garelochhead Training Area. Multi-Activity Adventurous Training – Various Locations SERE(B) Combat Recovery - Garelochhead Training Area.

The ex took place during the period 1-16 Sep, mostly delivered from Garelochhead Training Camp and the surrounding areas. A massive pat on the back must go to the Regt'l Ops and the QM's G4 teams for planning and sustaining such a beast, that grew arms and legs as it evolved.

For the duration of ACT, we received various visits but the highlights were Comd 11 Sig & WM Bde and Comd 2 Sig Gp, both under expert tuition from the Ops Spvr WO1 Ingles.



Col Cooper visits the exercise

51 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Maj H Lawrie

WO2 (SSM) D Mackenzie SSM

Exercise NORTHERN GUARDIAN 3 (NG3)

NG3 was conducted at RAF Spadeadam and was a mixture of communications training and military skills scenarios. The ex was attended by both 51 & 52 Sig Sqns and in good numbers. This was an excellent refresher for soldiers wishing to go on CLM courses. The exercising troops arrived late on the Friday night, so it was dark on the training area, which meant there was no opportunity to see the lay of the land until the next day. The enemy, who knew the area, could get to good defensive positions without being seen, giving them the upper hand.

This was the first time the Unit had used Spadeadam as a training area and the Sqn was in awe, the area had old tanks and other vehicles plotted around. There was even a jet in the wooded area and Sgt Paul McLaughlin is still trying to work out how it got there!

The Sqn went straight into the ex after the O-Group, which was constant comms and Mil Skills from start to finish. All sightings and contacts were reported back through the Bowman radios to the HQ which enabled SHQ to have good C2. The Ex culminated in a big attack on the enemy which, after a long firefight, resulted in both parties running out of ammunition. A terrific ex and the benchmark for future training of this type.

Annual Deployment Exercise (ADE) 2016

The Sgn went to Garelochhead in Scotland for their ADE to carry out some confirmation training and exercises, some cross training, survival skills and some well-earned AT.

LFFB

During ACT, **Sgt Carol Ballantyne** was one of the chosen to go to RM Condor to carry out some training with 2 Sig Sqn on the Low Frequency Fall Back (LFFB) Aerodynamic Static Balloon or Bertha to the operators. The first day started with some briefings about the equipment and some H&S. They were then split into two teams and given the opportunity to erect and dismantle the equipment. On the second day there was an actual hands-on session with the Aerostat itself, learning how to connect the guy ropes safely and correctly, and the correct procedure on how to inflate the Aerostat.

On the final day, as personnel were now trained, we were allowed onto the platform to practice the launch and recovery procedure. This involved **Sgt Ballantyne** dangling off the platform, 15ft up in harnesses with large fishing poles to assist in the recovery. While **WO2 Andy Tochel** had the helm as he had been placed in charge of the recovery and docking of big Bertha's nose.

Highlights of the training were; a comfy bed, good food, earning the white helmet (Blue helmet is for untrained personnel), watching the Aerostat deploy and watching how the Aerostat ¾ the size of a jumbo jet fits when folded into a box not much bigger than an MFO. An excellent training experience was had by all.

Survival

The four-day survival course was facilitated by external instructors. The training included; living off the land (e.g. what berries and fungi are edible and water purifying and filtering), how to make improvised clothing, some navigation, building a shelter, starting and maintaining a fire, fishing and how to make a trap. Food preparation was also covered including killing and cooking rabbits, chickens and fish. In the early hours of day three, after some sleep deprivation, the SERE (Survive Evade Resist Extract) test began.

We were woken in the pitch dark in a simulated capture. Hungry and tired, we were taken out into the forest and had to survive with what we had. **Cpl Steph Morris** also added that this may be a good way to stay trim for her wedding.

Each team were then given a live chicken to look after for 24 hours, which they had to name and build a cage for. They then had to put all their lessons into practice and turn the poor fellow into a stew for their dinner.



Tired and hungry, the survivors gather

REEBOK Training

WO1 John Inglis ran the Reebok training which involved an insight into REEBOK 2 (Coming Soon), some self-maintenance, which included making network cables and splicing fibre. Sgt Euan Leslie's attempt did not go unnoticed as it was the only one which did not work.

Adventurous Training

The Adventurous Training phase was really challenging and took the form of climbing, mountaineering and mountain biking. The climbing was an opportunity for individuals to gain a civilian certificate and allow them to use climbing facilities in the future without supervision.

The mountaineering was very arduous and challenging, however enjoyable with the opportunity to bag 4 Munros, allowing avid walkers to add them to their log. The mountains included Ben Lomond, Beinn Vane, Beinn Ime, Beinn Narnain. Ben Arthur (The Cobbler) which is on the West Highland Way, was also ascended and, although not a Munro, was still a very challenging climb.

The mountain biking was held at Cathkin Braes, a site purposely built for the Commonwealth Games and provided runs to test bikers and push them out of their comfort zone, with some riders picking up some minor injuries on the way. Gladly all got back on and continued with the biking.

SSgt Craigie Douglas was one of the unfortunate few to be involved in an incident. Alarm bells should have sounded when one of the instructors, whilst demonstrating, who shall remain nameless (Casper) became unseated to the amusement of everyone else. This was short lived as, for the remainder of the training, all students became unseated at one time or another. Everyone who took part in the AT package felt they benefitted and were pushed well beyond their comfort zone.



Hanging on for dear life

40 (NORTHERN IRISH HORSE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Stevenson** SSM **WO2 L Gamble**

Exercise NORTHERN CHARGE SURVIVOR 16

The ex commenced on Monday 5 Sept at Strone Camp, Garelochead Training area. The participants were placed into sections of 4 or 5 and asked to work together for the remainder of the ex with the main objective of 'survival'

before being extracted. Elements of survival (Protection, Location, Water and Food) both theory and practical were delivered before the sections were deployed into an unfamiliar environment and expected to meet key objectives within a 32hr period.

In the early hours of the third day we got a very early wake-up call (0300hrs) and were told to grab a few bits and pieces and make our way outside, only to be faced with attack dogs and police. We were quickly loaded into TCVs, taken into the hills that surround Strone camp and dumped in the middle of nowhere.

The only thing we were told was to make this home for the next 48hrs. First was to get a fire started and get everyone some heat, so after the fire was burning nicely, we started to construct a form of shelter to keep us warm and dry for the next 48hrs.

It was evident that we needed to be in a routine and it became a race between the groups to see which team could build the best and biggest home. During this time, we got lessons on how to catch and cook food in the field and there were a number of live chickens being handed to each group and told to enjoy, soon people had food in their belly and were looking to get their heads down for the night.

It was clear in the morning and by the looks on peoples' faces, which groups had built the best shelters and enjoyed some sleep.

Overall the course was highly enjoyable with an excellent level of instruction, and we achieved a SERE B level qualification, with some life skills that will stay with me in the rest of my AR career.

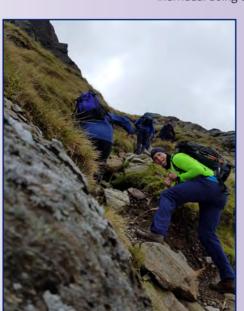
50 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj N Coatsworth SSM WO2(SSM) D Ross

Exercise NORTHERN CHARGE 2016

Having enjoyed ACT with 37 Sig Regt last year, I was looking forward to experiencing how 32 Sig Regt's efforts would differ, and differ they did. This was to be a completely different style altogether; an ex that mixed communications training and certification, driving familiarization training, an excellent AT package and an extremely popular survival ex to great effect.

The Sqn managed to get four of its members 'Falcon' certified at RAF Leeming, another four were converted to enable them to drive MANN SV trucks, with many more of our soldiers enjoying a very informative Falcon Introduction and Fibre Optic training package. Apart from the training, everyone made the most of the 24 hour 'Sqn Comd's Disposal' at Braehead Arena, enjoying the ski slope, laser quest and amusements.



Why pick the easy route?

Numerous activities were available on the AT front including Hill (Mountain) Walking, Mountain (Hill) Biking and the use of a fabulous indoor climbing wall. Unfortunately the Scottish weather proved to be very Scottish indeed and hindered the views somewhat but made the climbing even more challenging. Interestingly, it provided the first opportunity for most of us to scramble over 3,000ft and bag our first ever 'Munro'.

LCpl Jordan, 'Twisty' Twist can usually be relied upon to produce a comedy moment at the drop of a hat and this year was no different. Descending the mountain bike trail at considerable speed, Twisty decided - for some inexplicable reason - to ignore his brakes, choosing instead to slide back off his seat and use his nether regions to apply pressure on the rear tyre. This turned out to be a very effective braking method, but not one any of the other cyclists chose to adopt. Needless to say, he is still walking a little gingerly even now.

The survival phase of the ex was almost certainly the most popular activity of the entire two weeks. The subject was extremely interesting and the instruction delivered very well. Subjects ranging from 'improvised shelters' to 'improvised traps' and everything in-between were well received and all of this culminated in a rude awakening on morning three, when attack dogs from Faslane replaced the traditional alarm call.

So, it was a quick change of underwear and out into the field to forage and build our new homes. Chickens captured, fires lit and construction well underway, **Sig Kai Stewart** and his partner, **Padre Chris Rowe**, were going great guns but their shelter just required one final branch to support a very attractively garnished roof section. Having found a branch that just required trimming a little, the Padre decided to hold it whilst **Kai** cut the offending article to the desired length.

Now, if I am to offer anyone in a survival situation any advice at all, it would be this: never offer to hold a branch whilst an ex-Infanteer, who is wielding a razor sharp Machete, is attempting to cut it to length. Furthermore, I would advise against doing this in fading light, and particularly when the individual doing the chopping is hungry enough to eat

anything meat-based.....including a Padre's Thumb evidently.

After what had been a most enjoyable and challenging ACT, all that remained for us to do, was get back into our vehicles and return to that place from whence we came. That meant several hours on the road, southwards-bound towards England and Darlington, finally arriving mid-afternoon.

A very quiet night and social evening in the bar was followed by a well-earned sleep and an early start the next day in order to ensure all our kit and equipment was accounted for and 'turned around'. We were finally released back to our families and homes on Sunday morning and so ended our first ACT since finding ourselves, once again, under the command of 32 Sig Regt.

I wonder if the rumours of next year's ACT being in Kenya are true?

(No they are not, kindest regards RSM)



37th SIGNAL REGIMENT REDDITCH



CO Lt Col R J Lovett
RSM WO1 (RSM) Morrison

It has been a busy summer, culminating in the Regt deploying on Ex GLOBAL TOTAL 16 over the period 10 - 24 Sept; this year's Annual Continuous Training (ACT) ex took place in Sennybridge, Wales and had 3 key elements including CIS training, Military Skills and an Adventurous Training phase. Other activity has seen the Regt run the latest Reserves Trade Camp, deploy personnel to the Falkland Islands, compete in the Nijmegen Marches and send 2 YOs to participate in the Young Reserve Officers' (YRO) Summer Congress organised by CIOR, a NATO affiliated organisation.

The top corridor has seen a change of faces over the summer and a warm welcome goes out to the new Commanding Officer Lt Col Bob Lovett and Ops Maj Mac McDonald. Dave Taylor is welcomed back as the RCMO and SSgt Georgie Lodge into the Ops team. Farewell to the outgoing CO, Lt Col Teri Downes – from all ranks at Team 37: thank you for your commitment to the Regt and best of luck for the future. Best wishes also go to SSgt Coley after his 3 years with the Regt "keep cycling"!

Congratulations to members of the Regt who participated in the sixth and final round of this year's Army 2016 inter unit mountain bike cross country race series held at Aldershot; the race also incorporated the Army cross country championships. The course was testing with short, sharp and fast downhill sections, with plenty of roots and sand thrown in to test all riders abilities to the limit. **Maj Sandy Hennis** (UESO) came in second female in round 6 of the series and third female in the Army Championships. The overall series female champion was **Capt Lucy Sewell** (2IC 48 Sig Sqn) with **SSgt Smith** taking the runners up prize. Fantastic results on the event and the series results overall. Congratulations also go to the Regt's road cycling team who won the Minor Units road race title at the Corps championships, held at 30 Sig Regt on Wed 5 Oct 16.



37 Sig Regt Cross Country Mountain Bike Team

Recruiting has been maintained over the summer with a variety of events and the Regt supported the renamed, Reserves Day, with a number of Reservists proudly wearing their Uniform to Work and promoting the Reserves: quote below from JLR and Photo of **LCpl Oliver** and **LCpl Bailey** outside JLR in Coventry.

'JLR is extremely proud of its long history of engagement with the Armed Services and has created a people-focused military project which incorporates a number of initiatives. The relationship has been strengthened by involvement in events such as Invictus Games and our commitments made under the Corporate Covenant which we signed up to in 2014.

Our support for Reservists across the services has been strong for many years and is a key part of ongoing involvement. We have a clear policy supporting reservist activity in terms of release for both training and deployment as well as facilitating recruitment events across our sites.

We were very proud to receive the Ministry of Defence Gold award earlier this year in recognition of our support for the Armed Services.'



Reserves Day at JLR



Sig James Bowers pictured with his two managers David Hackett and Dalvir Bains at RBS on Army Reserves Day

54 (QOWWY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC: Maj D Dewfall SSM: SSgt P Hall

Since the last issue of The Wire, the Sqn has been beavering away at a wide range of training activities, including Phase 1 and Phase 2 trade training for the junior members. Congratulations to Sigs Hegarty, Gascoigne, McPhillips and Ranford upon completion of Ph1 training toward the end of August; Sigs Marshall, Blake and Thompson who completed their trade training at Blandford, with Sig Marshall being awarded top student.

The Sqn Adventure Training weekend, held at Capel Curig at the end of August, was a great success, with our soldiers taking part in mountain biking, extreme camping and quad biking. Notably, **Sig Parker** received the thanks of the Bde Comd after he led a party of civilians to safety, after they had become lost and disorientated as well as suffering the effects of the inclement weather.

The Sqn sent a cohort to ACT where they took part in comms, mil skills and AT serials in Sennybridge and are all keenly looking forward to testing their new found skills on the next training weekend. The SSM (WO2 Hall) and Sig Thompson have travelled to the Falkland Islands to provide essential maintenance support to the garrison's Bowman assets; we wish them luck and hope they don't run into danger with the local penguin population! Meanwhile, LCpls Harris and Jones along with Sig Gough, joined the RQMS (WO2 Robertson) on the annual Nijmegen marches. Most of the team completed the full march and LCpl Harris (Sqn PTI) is not at all embarrassed about dropping out!

Finally, many congratulations to **Sgt Russ Taylor** and **Jade** on the birth of their son **Harry**.

The Nijmegen Marches: Chapter 2 Trial by Fire

"Never let the fear of failure stop you from trying" – Arnold Schwarzenegger

Some teams fly, most take the ferry across and some unlucky ones go through the morale vacuum that is the Euro Tunnel... so after a crack of dawn start, a scary customs crossing and the tube of fun, we arrived in Europe. It seemed like the RQMS (WO2 Robertson) was intent on showing us every street in Antwerp, including the show stopping Krishna festival, as he reminisced on days of old! Upon arrival, 'Nijmegen Veteran' Cpl Hewitt familiarised everyone with the surroundings and prepped the team for their 3 day 'acclimatisation' - which even included the RQ's cultural visits around town, talking with every local... and I mean every local!

Flags flying, crowds going wild and music in the streets; to describe it to a newcomer never does it justice and most of the team were experiencing this for the very first time. For those that don't know, Nijmegen Marches covers a distance of 100 miles over a 4 day period and is a great challenge. We set a pace Lanyard runners would be proud of, in fact, being named the fastest reserve team in the running at one point. On the morning of day two, unfortunately we lost two members whose injuries had worsened overnight. Then at rest stop one, we almost lost another due to a medical injury, but the... brave... individual saw the 'jack wagon', refused it and proceeded to run the 8 miles to catch up with his team

and continue with the march. The fact that two PTIs were injured in this event NEVER came up honest! The non-runners were quickly put to work as admin, whether it be feet tapers, foot rubbers or physios, but none took the role of "chief torturer of muscles", that remained firmly with **LCpl Brooks**.

Each leg that is completed is finished in the International tent with a display from each team, Day 1 we 'Hi' Ho'ed' our presence into there, Day 2 'Another one bites the dust' was our chosen tune and went down extremely well and finally, the best reception was met when the RQ performed a Dutch bath time song, along with his backup singers, sending the entire tent up in stitches. A special mention to **Eric** (I don't get blisters it's just fluid under the skin), who wore NBC boots and also beat the RQ in the 'who has the most game'.

Our pace remained unyielding for the first 3 days and we all believed it would drop down on the last. Little did we know however, that our pace setter **Sgt Trish C/W** put us through what can only be described as 'a death march', hurtling



Nijmegen Marches revisited

through the teams and crowds to the finish line. Formed up, flags raised, we marched our victory march through the village, crowds cheering and kids high fiving. The Nijmegen Marches has now been running for 100 years and is a fantastic experience that cannot truly be read about or told as a story, it can only be that... an experience. On the return journey, there was already talk of training plans for next year's event... once the swellings have gone down and the toe nails regrown of course "it's just a walk after all"!

33 (LANCASHIRE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC: Maj A Bowdler SSM: WO2 (SSM) Jolliffe

Adventure Training on Ex GLOBAL TOTAL 16

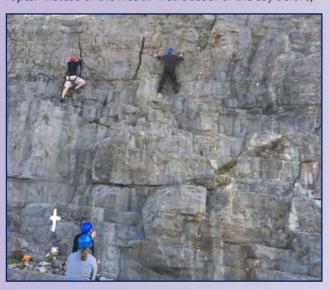
- by LCpl Mike Morley

We were fortunate enough to enter the AT phase of this year's ACT deployment first. The AT phase consisted of rock climbing, hiking, and mountain biking and I, for one, love AT! In my time in the Army I have learnt to rock climb, scuba dive, and been offshore sailing. I have even taken part in Exercise TRANSGLOBE which saw me sail from Gosport to Lanzarote last year (it is as awesome as it sounds). I haven't been climbing for several years though due to an accident on another bit of AT, which had me jumping out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft (as stupid as it sounds), which was great fun until the bones in my right leg ended up getting shattered on my 4th jump (I would still recommend it though). Even so,

I dusted off my harness and boots and was really keen to drag my hulking carcass up a sheer rock face. Out of the three activities, this was the one that floats my boat so to speak. I don't class walking as adventurous since I have been doing it for around 36 years (although in this case I will admit, I was very wrong).

So, opting for the climbing first, we ended up in a quarry in deepest Wales. After a briefing we were ready to climb... and inevitably it started to rain, turning the once dry rock into a slimy, dripping mess, which even the world's supply of chalk wouldn't allow you to stick to. That said Sig Moses 'Sticky Fingers' Ogutu managed all but one of the climbs. I can't take it away from him, that guy can climb! After a well-earned cup of tea at lunch, we went on to the abseiling phase of the day's activities. This is an activity in which nearly everybody took part; of special note was Sgt Helen Toft. Someone once said "that courage isn't about having a lack of fear; it is about overcoming that fear and doing what needs to be done in spite of it" - if that is the case, **Sgt Toft** is extremely courageous. Despite being terrified of heights she attempted all the climbs of the day and the abseil; which saw her practically in nervous shock at the end of it all. For this and for her calm actions handling a medical emergency in the second phase of the Annual Deployment she was awarded the CO's coin; an honour that she well and truly deserved.

The second day's climbing saw us on a different quarry. The approach to the top of the rock face was most unpleasant, needing 3 points of contact at all times, without the use of ropes! Instead of the nice 20 metre abseil of the day before,



Rock Climbing and Abseiling on Ex GLOBAL TOTAL 16

this one was closer to 50 metres and a real challenge. Day three of the AT package and I couldn't go climbing again. This was annoying since this was the only completely dry day we had. Instead, I was to go up Pen-y Fan (it was a good trek). At around the 7 mile point I felt a click in my left knee, accompanied by a shooting pain. After around 30 seconds to a minute the pain subsided and I thought nothing more of it and proceeded up to the top of Pen-y Fan. The descent took its toll on me though. Approximately 3 miles of downhill to the Story Arms, jarring my knees all the way, saw me in clip state by the end, giving me over a week of walking like Herr Flick from 'Allo 'Allo.

All in all the AT package was great in spite of the injuries suffered, and given the chance, I would be back again

tomorrow. Thanks to all the staff that supported this phase. 48 (CITY OF BIRMINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj S Cherry
SSM WO2 (SSM) Fowler

Young Reserve Officers' Workshop at CIOR Summer Congress 29 July – 07 August

Recently, 2Lt Charlie Atkinson from 48 Sig Sqn, participated

in the Young Reserve Officers' (YRO) Summer Congress organised by CIOR, a NATO affiliated organisation. Part of this included a workshop that brought together 60 international reserve officers from NATO and other allied countries, as far afield as South Africa and Canada. The congress and workshop provided a valuable opportunity to work in a multi-national environment. Starting off with a pre-deployment weekend at RMAS, officers spent 9 days learning about compromise and diplomacy in particular. Mainly



2Lt Atkinson and Wilson – Young Reserve Officers' Summer Congress

through practical sessions, but also experiencing a NATO style debating chamber in operation and gaining an understanding of how Reserves are employed in other countries.

The United Kingdom was well-represented with a 17-strong contingent and the Royal Signals making up 5 participants in total. **2Lt Atkinson** was one of 3 Royal Signals officers who delivered the brief on the UK reserves, including another officer from the Regt, **2Lt Lucy Wilson**.

After several days' build up with presentations on NATO, the host and other nations, the YROs moved onto interactive activities. The highlight and culmination of these was a daylong tripartite negotiation simulation. Due to 2Lt Atkinson's experience of negotiations from a previous seminar, she acted as cultural advisor for the ex, which gave her an opportunity to coach and provide feedback to other participants.

Another highlight was the chance to take part in a multinational teambuilding ex, where groups had one hour to navigate their way out of a locked room cracking codes and deciphering clues. A Danish army fitness test and an Israeli self-defence lesson also proved an entertaining challenge in the 35 degree heat!

However, the week was not all work as the Spanish hosts put on a variety of networking evenings that ranged from bull-fighting displays in the Spanish countryside, to wreath-laying ceremonies and a full VIP dinner in mess attire. As is the Spanish way, these rarely ended much before the early hours of the morning, so the ability to operate intellectually on a sleep deficit was required!

All in all, the congress was an intense, challenging and valuable week, spent learning how to collaborate effectively

with our allies in a cross-cultural environment. The week also gave 2Lt Atkinson an opportunity to put her MLA qualification in Spanish to the test, which proved handy on more than one



British contingent at the VIP dinner with representatives from the Dutch, Danish and Swiss reserves

occasion! **64 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC Mai McHenery SSM WO₂(SSM) Howes

Parish Notices - by WO2 (SSM) P Howes

I must start with hearty congratulations to Cpl Mark Randall for his sterling efforts to attain the Top Student on his recent SCLM (Res) in July. Not only did he do us proud on that, but he also made time to regularly update a Defence Connect blog on 37 Sig Regt's CLM mini-site too. With Defence Connect fast becoming the communication method of choice for many Reservists, he has helped create a great resource for our juniors and seniors alike.

All good things come to an end and it is with much reluctance that our Nottingham Tp and the Sqn as a whole, say goodbye to Cpl Alex 'Ratty' Ratcliffe. He's decided to hang up his boots and beret despite our many protests. The lure of scuba diving has become too much and we wish him well and many a lung full of compressed air in the future. Thank you for all your efforts over the last ten years or so; we'll still be here if you change your mind! We say hello to an incoming transfer from the Army Air Corps, ATpr Akehurst. She is really a Signaller in disguise though, as she was previously with 1 Sig Sqn in Rugby before their demise a few years ago. On moving house to the Nottingham area, she has decided to re-badge again and get back to Bowman, after all the glitz and glamour of Apache helicopter ground crew operations. Welcome back to the Corps.

Exercise GLOBAL TOTAL 16 10 - 24 September - by WO2 (SSM) P Howes

This year's Annual Continuous Training (ACT) Exercise saw the Regt make its way down to the sunny climate of Sennybridge (seriously, the weather was nice on the whole and I didn't wear my waterproofs until the last two days). The Regt Ops team laid on a range of activities, with a little bit of everything to keep the interest level up for all. Obviously, when we got

there, the planning gremlin paid a visit and the running order for the MEL changed slightly; no plan survives contact etc. With the running order re-jigged, 64 Sqn welcomed 15 or so members of 33 Sqn to swell our ranks for the upcoming 2 weeks. We would cycle through three phases in this order: Adventure Training, UK Ops and TACCIS.

Our first full day saw the troops PACEX, signing over and familiarising themselves with CSTs in readiness for later that week, but more about UK Ops and CSTs later. The first full rotation meant a trip over to Merthyr Tydfil to stay in the slightly cramped but not totally dire surroundings of an ACF detachment. The parking was tight as was the amount of space to be found in the dining area; it being more used to cadets than the more generous size of a reservist or two! Over our three days there, we were treated to mountain biking, rock climbing and hill walking and all thoroughly enjoyed the challenges. A few people pushed themselves and got right out of their comfort zones, which is what AT is all about.

After a drivers rest day in which many of us attempted to catch up on the sleep missed out on at Merthyr Tydfil (30 plus blokes & half-a-dozen hard-core snorers = sleep deprivation!), the Sqn rotated onto the UK Ops phase for the next three days. The scenario demanded that the Sqn man and deploy up to 6x CSTs and coordinate efforts using the ISOC37 set-up. This was headed up by WO2 (FofS) Ishwor Gurung and WO2 Barry Baldwin as our DS at ISOC37 and a number of our SPSIs out on the ground playing the part of various users. The Regimental 2IC, Maj Mayell was also on hand to offer advice or play devil's advocate as the situation demanded. The scenario injects came thick and fast for ISOC37, with the two shifts needing to HO/TO each morning and evening, effectively and efficiently to ensure continuity of information and services. Key learning points identified were; the logging of information has to be timely and accurate for watchkeepers and operators; everyone needs to be aware of the "what ifs" in case certain means drop out or have faults; and RFIs help fill in the gaps if the initial picture is sketchy or unclear. It has been a fair while since I operated in a CP environment and nowadays bandwidth is king in delivering the services to our users and orchestrating our own efforts too. The poor BGAN was creaking at times, trying to deliver video conferencing, RChat and SharePoint, so juggling service priorities was a constant consideration!

By now we had got to the second Sunday of the fortnight. With the UK Ops phase at an end, we handed over ISOC37 to the DS, recovered our CST assets and did a HO/TO of them to the next group. We rushed off to receive Orders and scenario brief for the TACCIS phase from WO1 (YofS) Kev Tharby MBE. We were to provide Comms asset support in the Black Mountain corridor near the inner German Border; the kind of scenario very familiar to those of us of a Cold War vintage. The Warning Order went out and the process of formulating the Orders fell to Capt Emma Holt. Five hours later, and with a Bowman PACEX nearly completed, the Orders were delivered under the watchful eyes of the CO, Ops Major and our accompanying DS. Our hot debrief afterwards identified a few things that we could improve upon next time around.

Finally out on the ground on Monday morning, we rolled up to the NSPs and pyro demo. A little drizzle did not spoil the mood as we bombed up and went through the drills with a few practice trip flares and parachute illuminations. Back on the wagons, the convoy braced itself for the next 48hours. There was a glint in his eye when the safety vest wearing SSgt John Norton said; "anything could happen..." He wasn't in a sharing mood when I quizzed him for details, so much for Sqn loyalty!! A few hours later, Commander 11 Sig & WM Bde is stood in front of me and I'm briefing him on the ground that we are operating over as part of the scenario. The Sqn CP element is holed up in Farm 9's main barn, looking around, the Brigadier commented that he could get a whole armoured Bde HQ in there; he'd be right about that as our MAN wagon, GS



Entering the final phase of TACCIS there's just time for a group photo

Landover and 9x9 tent were dwarfed by the surroundings! Meanwhile, SSgt John Norton and SSgt Nickie Moxon were shedding their DS safety vests to become the bad guys; the two deployed Bowman Dets with their protective sections were attacked in quick succession and the Net was alive with Contact Reports, as well as the R2 we would expect to hear. Excon was eager to get in on the act with a number of challenging tasks to get the CP team thinking too. The sections on the ground also had DS with them to monitor their progress and mentor them through the first 24 hours. WO2 (SSM) Suresh Gurung and SSgt Pete Ramejkis took on their roles with great enthusiasm and gave great advice and guidance throughout. They noted that the performances of the sections improved markedly and that their latent infantry skills sharpened. We moved early the next day and occupied new locations at the far end of the training area: clear,



Our intrepid TACCIS DS - WO2 (SSM) Suresh Gurung and SSgt Pete Ramejkis ready for action!

occupy, clear, comms, comfort etc.
The last test was the platoon attack on the final morning, triggered by an ambush on our convoy. I found myself in a section ready to take on the enemy! After rolling through the first enemy position the section commander, Sgt Nick James was taken out of the battle, leaving the 2IC, Sig 'PNCO soon' Densmore in the hot seat. After nominating LCpl 'Scouse' Clarke as his new 2IC we moved into dead ground and assaulted the next position. Regrouping a second time, the other section moved up and through our position to mount an attack on the third enemy position. I found myself leopard crawling across a track and nearly tripping up SSgt Nicki Moxon in the bargain; somehow I didn't see her despite the safety vest she was wearing... or did I?

Finally the words many were waiting to hear were shouted out; "STOP, STOP, STOP!!!" A flurry of commands and hot de-brief from the RSM. Later the troops picked up the brass, emptied the last few remaining rounds and boxed them up for the QM and RQMS, who appeared Mr Benn-like from apparently nowhere. In a more relaxed frame of mind, the convoy dropped off the training area and made its way back to Sennybridge via the outskirts of the town of Brecon. Weapon cleaning, det turnaround and other admin tasks awaited us, but the mood was cheerful and the sun shining, yes really!

Over the two weeks it was clear that the personnel from 33 and 64 Sqns gelled and worked really well together. Initially we clung to familiar groups but the subsequent UK Ops and TACCIS phases opened things up and allowed new bonds to be formed that we can take forward in the future. My thanks go out to the DS and 33 Sqn contingent and I look forward to working with you again soon.



39th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRISTOL



CO Lt Col N C Bruce
RSM WO1 (RSM) P Griffiths

Exercise LYNX PLATO - A Battlefield Tour to Arnhem

On Sunday 17 September 1944 the greatest airborne operation of all time got underway from airfields in southern England. 1st Airborne Division was launched from airfields in Lincolnshire and Wiltshire and followed the most northerly of two routes over the Channel and into Holland. The first men of the Division began to land on the DZs shortly after midday. Divisional HQ landed at Renkum Heath amongst 1st Air

Landing Brigade and 1st Parachute Brigade who were using the same DZs. The landings were not effectively disrupted by the enemy and Divisional Signals were soon involved in setting up a skeleton Divisional HQ. Communications were quickly established with 1st Parachute Brigade as they set off eastwards on three battalion routes towards the Arnhem Bridge.

72 years later, **Sgt Kris Grace**, **LCpl Chris Plater** and **LCpl Iain Hazelgrove** joined colleagues from 39 Sig Regt for a battlefield tour to Arnhem to learn more about the operation which was codenamed 'Operation MARKET GARDEN' and to

pay their respects. **LCpl Chris Plater** said that the experience was very moving and that he learnt a great deal from the exercise. 'First stop was Joe's Bridge on the Meuse-Escaut Canal, the launch of the campaign and the start of the ground advance through the Valkensvaard tank ambushes to Eindhoven. We explored the 1st Airborne Division landings West of Arnhem and its attempts to reach the bridge across the lower Rhine. Then we learnt and discussed the capture of the Arnhem bridge by 2 Para against attacks by SS infantry and panzers. Finally, we visited the Hartenstein 1st Airborne Division Headquarters and Airborne Museum. In the evening, we raised a glass and toasted the heroes of Arnhem, reminiscing stories of the day. Albeit brief, this was a brilliant and insightful battlefield tour which everybody should experience if they get the chance.'

Exercise SOMERSET WARRIOR, 5 - 7 Aug 16

93 (North Somerset Yeomanry) Sp Sqn deployed with attachments from 43 and 94 Sig Sqns to Caerwent training area over the weekend 5 - 7 Aug 16 with the aim to remind, revise and practise infantry tactics and skills. The ex was planned and implemented by Maj Andy Morris, Capt Gaz Topps and WO2 (SSM) Rich Vise.

The exercising troop deployed with 2Lt Elise Sharp and Sgt lan Bailey at the helm. SSgt Cassie Downs and Cpl Peter **Sellers** were selected as section commanders for the exercise to lead, assist and develop the junior members of the exercising troops. The scenario was set and directed by WO2 (SSM) Rich Vise which gave the ex a real flavour of realism in the current environment and it was dynamically adapted throughout the weekend in reaction to the exercising troop's actions and interventions on the ground.

After setting up the harbour area, patrols were sent out to locate and observe enemy sites or movements and to report on their findings to allow future operations to be planned. This phase of the ex allowed everyone the opportunity to get their boots on the ground and get involved in the preparation of orders, route planning, map reading, cam and concealment, recce patrols and standing patrols to name a few skills that were put to the test.

The ex finished in a flourish with a platoon attack on an enemy position held by SSgt Ollie Neeve and Sgt Dennis Long. The attack was initiated by the attacking section setting off a cunningly placed trip flare on their approach. Quick to react, SSgt Cassie Downs pushed her section into position whilst the fire support from Cpl Peter Sellers' section roared into action to provide cover for the assault.

A depth position tested 2Lt Elise Sharp and Sgt Ian Bailey with the need to develop a new plan for a further assault and for an ammo replen to take place. They dealt with the situation, taking the surprise in their stride. New orders were issued and the position was destroyed quickly and effectively. It was clear that all those that attended the exercise were enthusiastic and motivated. Lots of infantry skills that were once rusty were polished and tested. The Sqn plans to hold another infantry based exercise to take our soldiers infantry skills and knowledge to the next level.

From the soldier's point of view - by Sig Willy Thorne

This was a weekend where, regardless of rank, we would all be taken back to the basic soldiering skills we learnt in basic training. For me, this meant learning lots of new skills from the experienced soldiers and officers around me.

Surprisingly for Wales the weather was brilliant, really hot, and after waking up at first light on the Saturday we made our way to our new harbour area. After getting our admin together we started the day with an introduction in how to use various weapons such as smoke grenades and trip flares. This was a revision session for most of the group, but a completely new insight for me and one which I found to be very interesting.

After receiving orders from 2Lt Elise Sharp and Sgt Ian Bailey later in the day we went on a recce patrol. I was thrown in the deep end and told that I would be point man for our section. Although we only covered a small area, the concentration level needed to guide the rest of the section into position and know exactly where we were on the map was actually quite testing - something I am sure gets easier with time, or so I'm told!



Later that night after we had finished our admin and got settled down for the evening in our bashers we got bumped. For those of us who were illprepared you could see red lights come on and hear the mad scrambling for kit: a lesson well learnt and it just goes to show the importance of good administration in the field.

Sig Willis on patrol

The following day we carried out section attacks on the enemy, a great exercise that put all our skills to the test. The sweat was dripping off us all by the end of the ex! I think we all gained lots from these few days away and I know I certainly gained a lot from the weekend. A great deal of hard work and a great deal of fun; I am looking forward to the next time!



Sgt Grace and Sig Willis get their orders

Exercise LYNX ACCIPIO, 10 - 24 Sep

39 Sig Regt's Annual Continuous Training (ACT) took place at Penally Camp in West Wales. All of the sqns convened at the Camp on Saturday 10 Sep, 53 Sig Sqn having the shortest journey to an exercise site for once. Kicking off Ex LYNX ACCIPIO, the Regimental 2IC, Maj Mell and Exercise Director Mai Morris gave a welcome brief setting the tone for a challenging, relevant and fun 15 day training package. Like all good exercises, a slick 7 phase plan had been carefully crafted by Major's M&M and now it was time for execution. The plan was simple: (1) Deploy; (2) Prep for Ex LEADING FREEDOM; (3) Ex LEADING FREEDOM; (4) OC's Disposal Day (aka R&R in old money); (5) Regimental Day; (6) Course week; (7) Recovery. This essentially split the two weeks into a military skills buildup and exercise phase during the first week, and a second week of courses allowing soldiers to gain new skills and qualifications in both civilian and military courses.

Phase 1 – Deploy: Upon arrival at Penally Camp, a Regimental CP was quickly established by Capt Saunders and her team, WO2 (FofS) Eastwood-Bell, LCpl Tanuku and the Camp Sergeant Major WO2 (SSM) Knock, who soon got into routine and had a fully functioning, buzzing CP. Cunningly, to compensate for the ZBZo mobile signal (with the exception of Vodafone users), the CP was fitted with a wireless router. This proved to be an extremely valuable and essential asset and one for the CP admin box for all future exercises. Co-located at CP39 was G4, run by Capt Gaz Topps with a vast repertoire of jokes and MTWO WO2 Stockwell.

Phase 2 – Prep for Ex LEADING FREEDOM: In preparation for the forthcoming field exercise, the Regt 2IC held an O Gp setting troops to task. The juniors were split into sections mixing up people from all the Sqns to complete the first week's training. This gave opportunities for Sqn members to mix with other soldiers they had not worked closely with previously. 2Lt Elliot took the Platoon Command appointment support by SSgt Welsh as the Platoon Sergeant. Three sections were formed and the revise, remind and battle prep began. This included infantry skills & drills, section attacks, fighting withdrawals, harbour drills, BCDT, CBRN and C-EO. Training was led by the Regt's SPSIs who were the section DS for the duration of the exercise: SSgt Joyce, SSgt Cooke, SSgt Hayes, SSgt Torode, SSgt Simpson and SSgt Chapman.

All troops completed WHTs on the Glock, GMPG and L86 A2 before moving onto Templeton training area and completing the range package for the Glock and GPMG, promptly followed by a pyro demonstration. Some junior soldiers had not used the GPMG or Glock previously so many new skills were gained. The day ended with a VHF manpack lesson from

SSgt Rachel Prosser. The sections were now primed and ready. On return to camp everyone enjoyed a briefing from our visiting US Army soldier, **SSgt Nick Kaiser**, who had come over to experience how the British Army Reserve operates. **Sgt Hari Gurung** had already been to the USA earlier in the year as part of an exchange program. **SSgt Kaiser** showed some of the kit and equipment used by the US Army and some of the different activities those in Wisconsin get up to

Phase 3 - Ex LEADING FREEDOM: In the province of 'Chen', there were two brothers who were in disagreement from funding they were receiving from the country of 'Tusha', a dominant local world power. Tusha had invested millions of dollars in the infrastructure of Chen, including road building and nuclear power stations. Mr Y, one of the brothers, was unhappy with this investment as he believed that his country was worse off from receiving this investment. However, Mr X had profited from this investment and became very wealthy, much to Mr Y's disgust. Mr Y's family received death threats from militia supporting Mr X and therefore decided to flee to the UK where he had other family. Mr Y paid for security in order to flee Chen safely. Intelligence found that during this journey Mr Y lost communications with his family in the UK. His last movements were towards a province aligned to Mr X.

Working within this scenario, a troop of the Regt's personnel was tasked to ID civilians within the AO in order to allow assistance and a safe passage through. This was to be a discrete operation in the province of Templeton and deployment orders were given by 2Lt Elliot on 13 Sep. The tp was tasked to recce, secure and occupy a harbour area in order to find these civilians. Deployment commenced early morning 14 Sep and a harbour area quickly recce'd and secured. Once routine was established, tasks were given to individual sections. During the day, sections were required to gather intelligence by conducting a variety of patrols. Enemy were found to be operating in the area and at times they contacted the sections which tested reactions and withdrawal SOPs. The intelligence that was gathered found that Mr X was actually operating on the dark web and had terrorist organisation dealing with drugs and toxic chemicals.

On the morning of 15 Sep, it appeared that the harbour location had been compromised resulting in a quick withdrawal and relocation to an alternative operating base. Intelligence continued to be gathered and it was found that the civilians were no longer travelling at free will. A vehicle accident was found on the area containing toxic chemicals causing the CBRN threat level to be increased to full ROMEO. Once the new platoon commander, 2Lt Sharp, was content that the threat had passed, the CBRN dress state decreased. Further tasks were given including a C-EO scenario to test the troops' TTPs. The intelligence gathered led the troop to



39 Signal Regiment on exercise with members of the Worshipful Company of Skinners

believe that the civilians, now hostages, were being kept in one location by a local militia organisation. This area was then recce'd by the new platoon commander, 2Lt Griffiths and orders were given on the evening of the 15 Sep to destroy the enemy and rescue the hostages. A dawn attack ensued and three hostages were found in a critical condition, resulting in 3 x CASEVACs to a pre-determined HLS location. This was, of course, the obligatory stretcher race to end the ex, all of which was being watched by 11 Sig & WM Bde Commander, Brig Anderton-Brown who was visiting that morning. Thankfully, at ENDEX, the Regimental chefs then pulled out all the stops to provide a Regimental breakfast in the field kitchen before the troops were bussed back to camp, via the ranges for a pistol competition.

After the ex admin and turnaround were completed, everyone enjoyed a Regimental BBQ and a well-earned pint where awards were presented: 'Best Endeavour' went to LCpl Aharon Mulreid (53 Sig Sqn); 'Best Shot' was awarded to Sig Connor Taylor (53 Sig Sqn); and the 'Soldiers' Soldier' award went to Sig Langham (43 Sig Sqn). Throughout the field phase of the ex, the troops worked hard and gained valuable skills and knowledge that will benefit them as they move through their next stages of their careers, whether this is PNCO, JCLM or SCLM.

Phase 4 - OC's Disposal Day: A well-deserved and enjoyable day out of green kit! 94 Sig Sqn hit the quad bikes in Tenby, whilst 53 Sig Sqn and 93 Sp Sqn enjoyed go-karting, apparently ploughing into the course, rather than racing around it! Notable drivers included SSgt 'Miss Daisy' Prosser for the slowest lap(s) and LCpl Aharon Mulreid for winning the race. 43 Sig Sqn relaxed at Pembroke Castle, before hitting the beach in Tenby. This was also an opportunity to welcome Lt Neil MacInnes and Sgt Indra Gurung, who joined for the second part of the exercise.



OC 94 leads the muddy way

Phase 5 - Regimental Day: AKA Ironman Wales! Road closures all around Tenby had an impact on guests arriving for the Regimental Day. The MWTO was quick to plan diversion routes and met our honoured guests from the Worshipful Company of Skinners and our Regimental Honorary Colonel en route, guiding them to Penally camp. The RAWO, WO2 Steve Baylis and RAO Maj Richard Collins set off at 0200hrs from Bristol to beat the closures, arriving in plenty of time to coordinate the Regtl photograph. Padre Stone led a full congregation with the hymn 'Abide With Me' at the Regimental church Service. The dulcet tones of 53 Sig Sqn

roared above the crowd with 'Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer' which seemed to be a Sqn favourite. This was also the chance to present the Skinners' Awards to this year's winners: 'Best Recruit' went to Sig Henry Griffey, whilst 'Best Endeavour' was presented to Sig Stuart Gayther.

the ex was focussed on



Padre Stone getting ready to raise Phase 6 - Course week: the roof The second week of

providing courses and training to soldiers. A number of courses were available to the troops: DITs, First Aid at Work, Combat Health Duties, ETL, Mountain Biking and C-EO Assistant Instructor. This opportunity to gain qualifications which would benefit both military and civilian employment was greatly received and the Regt now boasts a significant increase in qualified personnel.

All in all, Ex LYNX ACCIPIO proved to be a testing but highly enjoyable ex which made good use of the two week deployment to cram in a mix of basic soldiering skills during the field phase, courses and adventure training which will prove immensely useful over the forthcoming training year as well as a healthy dose of AT and social activities. Everyone enjoyed themselves and it is safe to say that everyone left having learnt new skills.

Op FORTIFY Update

Op FORTIFY continues to be the 'Main Effort' of the Regt, with all four Squadrons conducting a wealth of recruiting activities across the south of England and Wales. Below is just a snapshot of what 94 Sig Sqn's Recruiting Team has been up to recently:

94 Sig Sqn's recruiting team has been hard at work under the leadership of WO2 Chapman, taking every opportunity to attract and inspire potential recruits with a passion to join the Army Reserve. In a bid to raise the Sqn's profile in the local area, and in partnership with Windsor Leisure Centre, the team has run a series of recruitment stands at the centre itself, followed up with Tuesday night induction training. As a result, the flow of potential recruits on a Tuesday evening has increased significantly. There is definitely no rest for SSgt Welsh, Cpl Brownlees and Sig Smith as they introduce candidates to Physical Training, Battlefield First Aid, Values and Standards, Command Tasks, Badges of Rank, 24 hour clock and Phonetic Alphabet. Candidates are so keen, that they have requested additional training – they 'just can't get enough'!

We also had a presence at the Bournemouth Airshow where Sig Smith hit the limelight and became the star of HOT 102.8 Radio in Poole, during an impromptu radio interview! In addition, the team have continued to support the weekly BAME recruiting in Slough Town Centre and delivered a number of Reserves familiarisation visits to Regular soldiers, just before they leave the Regular service with the details of the 'Regular to Reserve' offer and the opportunities it can deliver.



71st (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH



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

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

OC Maj Alexander Orr SSM WO2 (SSM) Simon May

OC Update

The Sqn has been fortunate enough to have two promotions in recent weeks and congratulations must go to **Cpl Corfield** and **Sgt Ewbank**, both of whom have done extremely well. We wish **Cpl Corfield** the best of luck in his upcoming Class 1 course and **Sgt Ewbank** all the best of luck in her new post with ATU Pirbright. Congratulations must also go to **Cpl Glass** with the new addition to his family. The Sqn had a very successful AT weekend involving skiing, mountain biking and a bit of indoor skydiving thrown in to boot!



Cpl Corfield on his promotion

Annual Continuous Training (ACT) 2016 - by Cpl Young

This year's ACT saw the Sqn deploy to St. Martins plain for what promised to be some interesting and challenging training. The Sqn was not disappointed as just after arriving they were informed of a surprise AFT! The training broke down into 3 distinct phases; the range package, the 4 day comms exercise and AT and Sports days.

The range package was all a reservist could hope for and more. It began with basic skills and drills followed by grouping and zeroing, it then progressed to the rifle ACMT and the more challenging shoots in the shape of the Individual Battle Skills Range (IBSR); all this on the first day! Over the next few days the ranges saw a friendly rivalry develop between Maj Orr and Capt Cooper. There were automatic shoots at varying ranges, a night shoot; pistol shoots with the new Glock 17, and live pairs fire and manoeuvre. It also covered defence of an entrenched position during which all concerned expressed great satisfaction in seeing targets they engaged "fall when hit". The highlight of the range package for all concerned was the defence of a building by day and night. Whether engaging targets at up to 600m, taking care not to engage any non-combatants or up to 200m at night where targets were only really visible in short bursts of light

as they popped up. This was definitely the most shooting that had been conducted by members of the Sqn for a long time!



Elements of the Regiment after IBSR Shoot

The comms ex was just as challenging as it was fully tactical with maximum utilisation of both personal and vehicle camouflage. With the whole of the South-East as the Sqn's training area, balancing radio shifts, sentry duties and drivers hours proved to be quite taxing. The Sqn moved four times in as many days, requiring recces of various sites for possible exploitation, establishing positions and defending them from enemy attacks, one which occurred during the night and involved dealing with a casualty. After this attack had been dealt with one Det was sent out on a solo tasking. Upon reaching the grid reference it quickly established and settled into routine. Expecting an attack at any time 'minimise' was heard on the net, the Det turned the generator off and strict silence was observed even though Sig Evans commented that Cpl Young's snoring was loud enough to attract the enemy without the aid of flares! The flares went up individually for about ½ an hour then in desperation or frustration 6 were sent up at once. The detachment camouflage was successful though and it was not located.

After recovery back to St Martin's plain to carry out post exercise maintenance and inspections the Sqn enjoyed a wellearned break with an evening barbecue and a couple of (well deserved) beers. This was followed by a day of AT including challenges such as reverse Land Rover driving (steer left you go right and vice versa), command tasks, 'don't drop the football' Quad bike obstacle courses and laser clay pigeon shooting. Probably the hardest but most fun was the 'Gun run'. This involved assembling an old school cannon that broke down into 6 pieces (2 wheels, the main body, a barrel and two halves of the gun shield), dragging it 500 metres to a water crossing, where it was disassembled and put on a raft that half of the team had been building while the gun was brought up. After the gun was reassembled another run of about 100 metres and finally wheeling the gun into its firing position. Up against the permanent staff, also known as 'Team SF', the Sqn team arrived at the raft before them, so all was looking good, however by some miracle (not cheating of course) they managed to get their gun over the river before us, and the team was beaten by a small margin. It was massive fun and there wasn't a dry one of us by the end.

All in all it was a hugely successful ACT; much was learned especially shooting, prompting all to look forward to 'trying out' for the shooting team next year!

36 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Stuart Rowson SSM WO2 (SSM) Tara Pun

OC Update

One of the Sqn's main efforts is to ensure it is fully recruited and ensure those Soldiers newly attested continue onto Phase 1 & 2 training within the first year of joining. This hopefully ends with them attending the CS Op trade course in Blandford to become fully qualified. Happily the Sqn can currently count it's recruiting statistics from the period Apr-Sep 16 as: 8 new Soldiers attested, 8 currently under Phase 1 training, 9 attending CS Op or CMT trade courses, and a further 3 Ex Regular and 2 Reserve transfers. With a target of 30 to recruit by 31 Mar 17 the Sqn is currently well on track with a further 11 in the process of selections and medicals.

Brief History of 36 (Essex Yeomanry) Signal Squadron - by Capt Amis

In Apr 14 36 (Eastern) Sig Sqn moved from 37 Sig Regt to form part of 71 (City of London) Yeo Sig Regt to become 36 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn. This brought about a few changes with the introduction of a new stable belt and various badges to the No2 dress. The Sqn also inherited the history of Essex Yeomanry with elements dating back as far as the Battle of Agincourt on 25 Oct 1415.

More recently the 13 May 1915 is an important historical date for the Essex Yeomanry as it was on this day that the Essex Yeomanry made a dismounted bayonet charge to re-capture enemy front line trenches during the Battle of Frezenberg Ridge. 51 were killed including the Commanding Officer Lt Col Deacon, 91 were wounded with a further 19 missing. Most of the casualties are commemorated on the Menin Gate and therefore, a small contingent from 36 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn recently travelled out to Ypres for the centenary.



Capt Raj Sherchan BEM Tp Comd 845 Tp at Menin Gate

One of the Essex Yeomanry most famous Commanding Officers was Sir Francis Whitmore, KCB, CMG, DSO, TD, JP and the Sqn were approached by Thurrock BC to be involved in the dedication of a memorial to him on the 10 Sep 15 as he was the Commanding Officer of the Essex Yeomanry, Honorary Colonel, Lord Lieutenant of Essex and President of the RFCA.

Francis Henry Douglas Charlton Whitmore was born on 20 Apr 1872 at Gumley Hall, Leicestershire, the son of Capt Thomas Charles Douglas Whitmore, late of the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues), and Louisa Cradock Hartopp. In 1890, Capt Whitmore moved to Orsett Hall, near Grays, Essex, a dilapidated mansion on the Orsett Estate bequeathed to him on the death in 1884, of Captain Digby Hanmer Wingfield, a fellow officer in The Blues. This ostensibly generous settlement of an 'honourable debt' between Captains Wingfield and Whitmore was not all it seemed. The Orsett Estate of 8,500 acres was heavily in debt and young Francis, on seeing Orsett Hall for the first time had described it as an uninhabitable shell, without light, water or sanitation'. Francis was educated at Eton but had to forego a place at university to return to Orsett Hall at only 18 years of age to begin the unenviable task of reviving the Orsett Estate and restoring Orsett Hall. He assumed total control of the estate in 1896 and his Herculean efforts over the following years, using both his agricultural and commercial acumen, turned the hall into a fine country residence and the estate into a thriving farming enterprise. When Francis' mother died in 1892, his father lost interest in Orsett and retired to his London home with an annuity from the estate, dying in 1907.

Sir Francis Whitmore, KCB, CMG, DSO, TD, JP died on 12 Jun 1962 at Orsett and was buried with full military honours at Orsett parish church. His coffin was draped with the Union Flag upon which were laid his orders and decorations and his Lord Lieutenant's cocked hat. It was borne to St. Giles and All Saints on a gun carriage and carried into the church on the shoulders of six Essex Yeomen attended by the Regimental Sergeant Major. Members of the Regt and Old Comrades lined the processional route while family, friends, military colleagues and county dignitaries paid tribute to this Grand Old Man of Essex. Sir John Whitmore, the 2nd Baronet, lived a very different life to his father, and became a prominent racing driver with the Ford Motor company, although he did serve for a time in 304 (Essex Yeomanry) Field Regiment, RA (TA). He decided, initially, to carry on with the estate-farming tradition of his father, but, although successful, his heart was not in agriculture and he sold the Orsett Estate in 1968.

An oil painting of a be-medalled officer in the khaki service dress uniform of the Essex Yeomanry hangs in what was the headquarters of 70 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn at Chelmsford

now part 36 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn 907 Tp. The demeanour and steady gaze of the subject; marking him out as a leader of men, has been captured splendidly by the artist. The two gold vertical stripes on the lower sleeve of his tunic testify that he was twice wounded in action during 'The Great War' of 1914 -1918. He grips a riding crop in front of him with both hands; behind him hang two flags emblazoned with regimental badges. To his right is a lead stained glass window, a panel in which bears his coat of arms, beneath it a Latin



Sir Francis Whitmore, KCB, CMG, DSO, TD, JP

inscription proclaims - INCORRUPT A FIDES (Incorruptible Faith). This portrait, painted about 1920 by the eminent artist **Sir Frank Dicksee** (1853-1928), depicts **Colonel F.H.D.C. Whitmore** one of the most distinguished Commanding Officers of the Essex Yeomanry, who later became a dedicated Honorary Colonel of the Regt and a devoted patron of the Essex Yeomanry Association.

68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC Maj Scott Bumby
SSM WO2 (SSM) Regina Cullumbine

Exercise PHOENIX FOCUS 2016 - by SSM Cullumbine

This year's annual collective training was certainly one to be remembered. No time to 'hurry up and wait' in this training package as the Sqn deployed at first light, and this set the tone for the following 16 days. All 4 of 68 Sig Sqn's PTIs Cpl Michael, LCpl Teslenko, Sig Vickers and Sig Asamoah enjoyed themselves as the Regt kicked off the training with an AFT along Shorncliffe seafront entertaining the locals as we passed by. Well done to all those that pushed through the 6 mile point and onto 8 miles. Then it was time to hit the ranges and there certainly was plenty to do. Building on from Grouping and Zeroing to fire and movement on to IBSR at



A pose of PTIs

Hyde Ranges, 68's PTIs again proved they are a force to be reckoned with. As they formed their fire team the general consensus from the San is that the collective noun for a group of PTIs is a 'POSE' this was confirmed by **LCpl** McCarthy with evidence of far too many PTI selfies. It was a fantastic package with so much variety and training value. Every range developed our skills and knowledge. The culmination of our training was the platoon defence at the platoon house at Lydd Ranges which led into a spectacular night shoot. Extremely loud and very realistic.

No time to waste as LCpl Bundy arrived and we moved straight into the PACEX for Ex SEAGULL FOCUS, the communications phase of our training and again lots of challenging tasks lay before the Sqn. The Sqn deployed 3 Bowman Detachments and SCP 68. It was good to see Bob and Jim, local informants that looked like relatives of SQMS 68 SSgt Goodwin and SQMS 36 SSgt Thumwood. After sharing some sweeties with these local lads, they were more than happy giving us all the information on the enemy activity. A big thank you to the Merlin pilot for nicely relocating the camouflage system into the next field, we must have more tent pegs next time! Meanwhile on Cpl Sharp's Det all was running smoothly (as always) with Sig Okafor managing 8 hours sleep for the first time on ex. The enemy tried to surprise SCP 68 as we were moving into location, they had managed to slip by our notional troops that we were delivering communications for, and pop a few rounds at us.

However we were ready and sent them packing. They tried to catch their breath but in hot pursuit was the new OC 68 Sig **Sqn Maj Bumby** and **Sig Cordova**.

Moving on swiftly the Sqn transited from field to adventure. We spent a day of quad biking, clay shooting, command tasks and team gun run over a water crossing. The water crossing proved too much for **Sig Asamoah's** phone as he took the plunge and killed his 4th phone this year. The results of the day were under close guard as we moved onto the sports tournament. Volleyball, football ... 4 PTIs ... how could we lose???? Answer ... 68 is just too lean for tug-of-war. The Sqn didn't go without a few successes though; **Cpl Michael** received a CO's coin for his culinary delights in the Chef's Competition for the VIP day and **Sig Asamoah** was also awarded a CO's coin for positive attitude and his achievements throughout ACT.



The 'Extreme' quad biking team

All good things must come to an end and our last thing to do before heading home to our families was to say farewell to our PSIT **SSgt Brown**. All piling into his office (as he doesn't like a fuss) and presenting him a rare 68 Sig Sqn Devil, reserved for only those that have gone over and above in their service and support to 68 Sig Sqn. Staff, 68 Sig Sqn thank you and wish you all the best for the future.

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

OC Maj Baker TD
SSM WO2 (SSM) Springer

OC Update

It has been an extremely busy period for the Sqn since hosting a successful Veterans Day here at the Army Reserve Centre, Bexleyheath in July. Preparation for the Regimental Annual Continuous Training was top of the agenda, ensuring the BOWMAN, CST and the REEBOK platforms were in good order to deploy. Sterling work from the SPSI and PSI (T) SSgt Donaldson and Sgt Fraser on the Regimental "plug up" week ensured the communication detachments were fit for deployment. The Sgn has seen 2 new key arrivals, 2 Lt Ranny Wei fresh from London UOTC, who takes on the role as Log Sp / comms Tp Cmdr along with newly appointed SSgt Lapidge as the Tp SSgt and Sgt Sutton as the new Tp Sgt. A new SSM was also appointed, WO2 Springer, moving sideways from the recruiting Warrant Officer position to take on the appointment as the new SSM. Good luck for the future in your new appointments gentlemen. Congratulations on passing her driving test (at last) goes out to our chef LCpl

Akarbil and also to Sig Baker on passing his Phase 1 recruit course in Pirbright. Additional congratulations go to the OC Maj Baker on receiving his Lord Lieutenant's certificate for service in his previous unit, well done.



Maj Baker receiving his Lord Lieutenant's Certificate

Exercise PHOENIX FOCUS 2016 - by Capt Slaney

The Sqn's main effort for this reporting period was the deployment of all Sqn assets onto the Annual Continuous Training (ACT) exercise, which was held at St Martin's Training area near Folkestone, Kent. The Quartermaster ensured that SMP was taken over with a small team from the collective G4 team consisting of the collective Sqn SQMS's, MT reps and the RQMS. A small G4 cell and Regimental Ops were set up to receive the 4 main Sqns from Uxbridge, Bexleyheath, Colchester and Whipps Cross totalling over 100 participants.

An exciting ACT lay ahead consisting of an intensive range package run by the RSM WO1 Robertson, a pre deployment check package run by WO2 (YofS) Simpson, a tactical green site communications exercise run by Regimental Ops, and an Equipment Care / turn around run by WO2 (FofS) Gurung.



Capt Mackay during the Equipment Care phase of ACT

This was followed by a comprehensive Adventure Training package finishing off with a sports competition which saw 265 Sp Sqn blow away competition from the other Sqn's to win everything! Another main point for the Regt was the visitor's day where the Sqn associations and livery companies were invited to see and meet members of the Regt in the field and on the ranges. During the visitors day a silver service Regimental lunch was organised in the field by the Quartermaster Capt Greenwood and RAO Maj Robinson where the 4 main Regimental chefs, under the watchful eye of **Sgt Mann** produced a superb "Master Chef Competition style lunch". The hardnosed judging panel consisted of the Commanding Officer, Master Draper and the Regimental Honorary Colonel, selected for their culinary expertise and experience.

The winning pair was **Cpl Michaels** from 68 Sig Sqn and **Pte** Burbridge from 31 Sig Sqn, Well done lads. Each mess held successful functions, the Warrant Officers' & Sgts' mess were looked after in the Garrison Mess and the Officers' mess entertained Comd 2 Sig Gp at a local Gurkha restaurant.



71 Sig Regt on Exercise PHOENIX FOCUS

NEWS FROM SQUADRONS



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



OC RSM Maj Nicklin MBE WO1 (RSM) Marshall

75 years since the formation of an Airborne Brigade brings poignancy to Caythorpe and Arnhem commemorations this year. Every Airborne soldier, parachute trained or not, is part of an unparalleled history and it is a privilege that demands humility of spirit and action. This Sqn remains more than individual effort, continuing to build on the immense sacrifice of those who have gone before. Moving forward and capitalising on a significant exercising period over the summer has seen some much needed respite to this busy Sqn; taking advantage of this opportunity has seen three teams on Ex LEAPFEST in the USA, multi-national parachuting at Arnhem, two teams preparing for Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL, and consolidation of core skills. This reset will prepare the Sqn for a demanding exercise season,

balanced by the requirements of Extremely and Very High Readiness – an internal validation exercise in November will see the Sqn delivered by parachute, air dispatch, and aviation on Salisbury plain testing the communications, air manoeuvre, military skills, and support pillars upon which we are built.



The 216 (Para) Sig Sqn Leapfest team

For anyone out there who wishes to serve in a busy, rewarding, and effective organisation – there are gaps at every rank and in every trade. Requesting a posting to 216 (Parachute) Sig Sqn will set you up for success in any environment – you don't need to wait until the end of your current tour – register your interest now with your chain of command and ask to come here. For those who have completed All Arms Pre-Parachute Selection, there is no excuse – we have parachute trained 30 people in the past nine months in this Sqn – you will not get parachute trained

216 on Ex LEAPFEST

anywhere else than supporting this Brigade. The gaps are here and APC are awaiting your posting preferences.

A TROOP

OC Lt Dorling SSgt SSgt Sloan Sgt Sgt Wood

Caythorpe Reunion Weekend

- by Lt Dorling

The annual Airborne Signals Association Reunion Weekend took place over the weekend of 9 – 11 September following a successful MATT training camp in Beckingham.

216 (Para) Sig Sqn's connection with the village of Caythorpe dates as far back as the Second World War, when the 1st Airborne Division was billeted in the local area and Caythorpe Court was

commandeered for use as the Divisional Headquarters. After the war a few veterans returned to Caythorpe to remember their fallen comrades and this is a tradition that continues until this day.

The weekend is heavily supported by the local community and would not be possible without their input. Each year sees the Sqn playing the local football team and this year was no different, with a resounding victory for 216. The Sqn also helps to run the village fete with each Troop providing a stand to keep the local children entertained.

This year marked the 60th anniversary of Op MUSKETEER which saw members of the Sqn jump into the El Gemel airfield during the height of the Suez Crisis. We were lucky enough to have several veterans of the Op present this year that were able to provide the currently serving members of the Sqn with their personal reflections of the event. What was most striking was the fact that the issues that they faced: lack of airframes, temperamental equipment and last minute changes to the plan, were all problems that any soldier serving in today's airborne forces would be familiar with.

On the Saturday evening the Sqn is then split between two locations, namely Caythorpe Court and the Waggon and Horses pub. The former provides the venue for the Airborne Signals Association Dinner Night and allows members of the village, those currently serving and veterans of the Squadron to sit down and enjoy a formal meal (and of course a raffle!) together. For those unable to attend the meal there is a hog roast provided by the Waggon and Horses pub which allows soldiers and veterans to mix in a more informal setting and spin each other their favourite dits!

Every year on the final day of the weekend we attend a church service to remember those that have fallen that have served in 216 (Para) Sig Sqn throughout the years. This event allows those still serving to reflect on what it means to be a member of the Airborne Forces and allows for a period of quiet contemplation. For those veterans that have made the annual pilgrimage to the village it allows them to pay their respects to their fallen comrades in a more formal setting. This year also saw a service to remember the crew of the Lancaster bomber who died whilst on a training flight just outside of the village.

Once again we thank the village and the veterans for their support and look forward to returning next year.

B TROOP

OC Lt Landon SSgt Mitchell SSgt Sgt Nelson Sgt

Arnhem - by Lt Landon

This September 16 members of 216 (Para) Sig Sqn travelled to Holland to take part in ceremonies and Parachute Jumps in memory of Operation MARKET GARDEN and those who died in Arnhem.

The visit was split into two tranches with the first half travelling there for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and the second half for Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Many other nations took part including Germany, Italy, Canada, USA, Poland, Denmark and of course Holland. Importantly there were also a number of foreign wings up for grabs if you were lucky enough to be assigned to a foreign aircraft.

The first few days were a great success with the summer weather holding out, providing blue skies and almost no wind - a parachutist's paradise! Despite the good weather the Polish procedures, or lack thereof, gave several British troops more than enough to worry about. The fact that they feel it necessary to include a knife in case you became entangled or had a line over was particularly discomforting.

Following the first day of successful Para (with even those using the Polish parachute landing safely) a number of soldiers from the Sqn decided to visit the Airborne Museum, a short drive down the road. The detail of the history collected, particularly the first-hand accounts and messages written on doors and cupboards that still survive today was fascinating, everyone left with a renewed sense of purpose for the exercise (and several bottles of Airborne Beer from the museum shop).

That evening we received our next set of parachute allocations for the second day of jumping. Several member of the Sqn were informed they would be jumping the infamous Canadian chute, which they proudly told us brought you down faster than any other parachute and gave you "the hardest landing you'd ever get". A Canadian then showed us the scars on his leg where his shin bone was left protruding from

his leg after a jump the winter before; everyone slept well that night.

The following day saw several members of the Sqn jump Canadian and a few more jump Polish. Sgt Maj Dunn was lucky enough to be first in the door for his stick and the Polish Jump-Master took some brilliant footage of the jump on a go-Pro which has since been viewed a few thousand times on the Internet. Lt Landon also took some great footage on his go-pro, if anyone ever finds one with a snapped helmet mount on Ginklesheide DZ please return it to him.

Following the jump, all units completed a march down the insertion route from the DZ to the Bridge in the centre of Arnhem - the original main objective. On the way there were

several stands, briefings and a mock hospital set up complete with re-enactors. It was particularly humbling to see the number of Pegasus flags on the local houses on route, they were flying in their thousands throughout the local area. Tranch 1's visit was culminated with an "Airborne Disco" hosted by the Dutch which included an all you can eat BBQ, beers and live music. This was a great experience and the "European disco" theme was "interesting", particularly the

impromptu German vs. Canadian rugby scrum.



Lt Landon and SSgt Conley at the Arnhem memorial

Jumping in Arnhem

Tranche 2's arrival coincided with that of several hundred Americans; unfortunately they had no U.S. aircraft to jump from on this occasion. A swift accommodation HOTO and brief on the best local pubs took place before it was straight out to ground training on your assigned chute. Unfortunately the jump was cancelled due to low cloud, soldiers were kitted up and standing in the door 1000ft above the DZ only to be flown back to the airbase. The RAF screwed the nut and offered to fly lower at 600ft to get their incumbents out but the offer was turned down by the Dutch organisers.

The next day saw everyone re-parade at the hangar for their last chance to get a

jump in, the majority of 216 were on Belgium or Dutch planes. The result was mixed; lift one was initially cancelled again, all pax in lift two were then bumped to make room for them. Lift two was then rushed to the DZ to take part in the ceremony that was supposed to follow the first jump. Everyone on the second lift had a spectacular view of lift 1 landing. 216 were fortunate that everyone who hadn't yet jumped in Arnhem managed to get out the door on that last day and everyone came away with a new set of foreign wings.

That night the entire city of Arnhem put on a party complete with live music and decorating the entire town centre, soldiers of all nations were welcomed into town and greeted by the locals. The warm reception, enthusiasm and support of the locals for all Airborne Forces was incredible and I would thoroughly recommend a visit to anyone.

The following day we attended a ceremony at the Oosterbeck Airborne Cemetery, it was attended by many dignitaries and locals. Hundreds of local children laid flowers on the graves to symbolise the respect the people of Arnhem have for the sacrifice the British, U.S. and Polish airborne forces made in 1944.



Lt Landon with the Foreign Sec., Rt Hon Boris Johnson, in Arnhem

216 (Para) Sig Sqn left Arnhem with 13 sets of German wings, 6 Canadian wings, 5 Dutch wings, 8 Belgium wings and 8 Polish wings. Crucially two members of the Sqn who have been away for a few years also managed to complete re-fresher jumps, the new QM – **Pete Watson** and Bravo Troop Staff Sergeant – **Alex Mitchell** are once more combat ready.

C Tp

Comd Lt Balfour SSgt SSgt Corbett Sgt Sgt Woollan

Lanyard Training 2016 - by Lt Balfour

With another year flying past it seemed all too soon that the Sqn was once again faced with the prospect of rummaging up a merry band of individuals to compete in our illustrious Lanyard Trophy. With the competition taking place at the beginning of September we were faced with a threefold quandary;

- First, if we wished to achieve the results we knew we were capable of we would have to get ourselves away from the flats and fenns of Essex and Suffolk and get amongst some hills.
- Secondly if we hoped to gain the effects of these hills we would have to spend a fairly decent length of time amongst them.
- And last but most certainly not least because the event was the first week after the Sqns summer leave period we would have to ask men to sacrifice their holidays.

For some, these obstacles may have proven terminal but with the gentle and not so gentle coercion tactics of WO2 'l've more Lanyards than you've had hot dinners' Dunn we eventually managed to whittle down our select band of men. They were as follows;

Sgt Major 'Dad' Dunn, SSgt 'the Mother Load' Sloan, Sgt 'Minibus' Woollon, LCpl Monaghan, Sig 'Lock up your mothers' Morgan, Sig 'Battle Buddy' McKay, Sig 'Cafeteria' Jones, Sig 'Where's Rowan' Russel, Lt 'Where's my Son' Landon, Lt 'Big Lifter' Balfour and last and certainly least Cpl 'Token effort' Hunter.

Due to the management being frightfully good sports, members of the team were allowed to take leave and it was down to the individual's to decide how much or how little of the training they wanted to attend; the team for the day would be selected on an individuals speed over the hills, mental robustness, physical reliability and most importantly that you could finish at 8th out of 11 on any given tab. The training kicked off on Monday 8 August, the intent was to spend 3 weeks out training on the hills and leaving the final week leading into the competition on admin and getting our heads right. Due to the staggered nature of arrivals the first week was fairly thin on the ground, the total of 5 men making the training; this was bolstered the following week up to 9 and by the final week the arrivals of Sig 'better late than never' Russel and Cpl 'Admin Team' Hunter took the number up to 11.

The weeks of training followed a fairly standard format, we would look to achieve long tabs on both Monday and Wednesdays, the Tuesdays and Thursdays would be spent covering ground with day sacks to try and familiarise ourselves with as much of the area as possible before the competition, Fridays would compromise a shakeout /old man's run or if felt particularly generous a weighted run up the Fan. The Tuesday and Thursday session tended to be not only very useful in terms of getting familiar with the area but they also provided us with some excellent days out. One particular thing that seemed to emerge was whenever within the vicinity of any vertically stimulated water features one particular Sgt Maj Type (that shall not be named here) would often fail to resist the urge to go chasing waterfalls; on a couple of occasions this attribute led us into some excellent shenanigans, even if the distances that were intended to be travelled mysteriously lengthened drastically.



Throughout the training we had chosen SENTA Camp as our base of operations; although not *The Ritz* we managed to transform the block into a perfectly liveable space, its incredible what a TV and a brew station can achieve. When not in training our evenings would be spent either watching films in the block, eating chicken goujons in Sennybridge or more often than not heading down to Brecon and drinking milkshakes whilst exploiting free internet.

Another noteworthy yarn is that of **Sig 'the Candy Man' Mckay**, at the beginning of our month in Brecon the earnest
Signaller was on average getting through at least one pack of
Benson's a day, and it would be fair to say he was not at the
front of the pack over the first week; what happened next
can only be described as mesmeric, the young Signaller
bought himself a book! Although this fact alone is surprising it
was the content of the book that earns this stories place here,
it was a chapter by chapter guide on how to quit smoking.

Over the following 2 weeks the transformation was mental, the less Cigarettes **McKay** smoked the faster he became, and by the competition **Sig Mckay** had well and truly earned himself a spot of the 216 Lanyard trophy team, an excellent achievement, his issue now was that he needs to find another book on how to quit Mars Bars!

So coming to the end of our training with the competition looming we had to select a team, the team management all sat down and put their heads together to decide the team, after much debate all settle of this;

Team Capt- Lt 'Second times a Charm' Landon
Team Senior- SSgt '10 Mile' Sloan
Sgt Maj 'I remember when these Hills were Volcanoes' Dunn
Cpl 'I aint reading no book' Monaghan
Lt 'Bod Town' Balfour
Sig Morgan 'Spiced'
Sig 'Jack' Russell
Sig McKay 'Biscuits'

The competition came and went, and we all know how swimmingly enjoyable it was. To all the men that came to Wales and gave up their precious holidays we salute you.

Sp Tp

QM Capt Watson
RQMS WO2 (RQMS) Watson

SQMS SSgt Wood

All Arms Pre Parachute Selection - by LCpl Bourne

P-company for me was a very challenging experience, but one that I relished and felt I was in a good position to pass. I knew everything that was to come on the gruelling seven and a half weeks so I was fully prepared mentally and physically to hit P-company head on and put 100% effort in to succeed. The course outline itself was split into three phases, two weeks for Block 1 in Colchester followed by Block 2 and 3 with test week incorporated all up in Catterick Garrison. The whole time you are challenged to your limits so it's in your own mind set to keep going and achieve the end goal which is to serve successfully within the Airborne Forces. At the end of the day its only yourself in the way of a success or a failure on P-company, waking up every day knowing you'll put 100% into every session will see you through to the end and with that all important pass.

Block 1

I started block 1 fresh and raring to go with the right attitude and will to succeed. Straight from the off it began with a PFA and AFT which are the wider army fitness tests that we should all be able to pass. For the PFA they expected at least a 9:30 but at most a 9:45 to start you off on Block 1. The sessions within block 1 were to a high standard, challenging but rewarding. The training fully prepared you for the 2 miler which would be our final test to see whether we were good enough to make it to Catterick and the start of Block 2.

Block 2

Upon completion of the 2 miler the successful candidates were sent on their way to Catterick and the intensity within every session increased to another level, less sessions than Block 1 per day but to a lot higher standard. The course on Block 2 is designed to fatigue and condition you. The P Coy team are looking at your mental robustness and physical

ability to push you to new limits and show yourself that you can do things you never would have imagined. Block 2 was also good in the fact it allowed everyone to get a taste for the training area and where we would be spending the next five and a half weeks.

Each session throughout the two weeks was getting harder and harder. The pace picked up showing who had the mentality to keep themselves going when they were in a weakened physical condition over those who would quit as soon as they found it slightly difficult. The final test that we faced on Block 2 was the 10 miler, all those that were successful were accepted onto Block 3 where P-company officially started, as I was one of those I felt a massive sense of relief that I had made it this far, far further than I imagined when I set out 4 weeks earlier.



Block 3

Upon completion of Block 2 we all began on Block 3; first test, the 2 miler which we had done many times followed by the PFA which we have been tested on throughout or careers. All those that met the required times had a brief from the OC who described that the next two and a half weeks was the meat of the course and those that succeed were those that give 100% every session. I felt massive pride in myself for having been issued my number which was 12. Block 3 was a massive step up in physical activity, not only in my Army career but elsewhere too and within each session there would be many cut off points. These would be usually on the runs or tabs where the PTI would step it up and you would need to catch him to be back with the pack within the two minutes or else you would be given a performance card for that session. Three performance cards meant you would have to leave the course and come back and try again. I found Block 3 extremely challenging but upon completion I felt a massive sense of relief to finally be on test week without having received a performance card and only having eight more challenges to face on test week.

Test week

Reaching test week was a massive milestone, it was something that I wanted to achieve in my career and I never believed I would get the chance so early. With 5 more days of tough tests to go I believed it was very achievable now. The first day of test week began with the 10 miler, although very difficult and challenging I completed this test. It was great to know I had begun with maximum points. To finish the first day of test week we had the trainasium which was the aerial confidence course which I found challenging. I completed everything with no difficulties. This test is a straight pass or fail. So to come through each stage first time was very

rewarding; day one ticked off. Thursday was the most challenging day I faced during P-company. The log race and steeplechase were the events of the day. The log race was very challenging and I found it extremely difficult but I gave it everything I had left. I managed to pull through keeping in mind that if it was a casualty on the battlefield I wouldn't give up so I knew I couldn't let anyone down. The steeplechase was also a difficult test and after the log race I was still very fatigued. It took the last of my energy to pull through this event and fortunately I came through within the required time; full points again!



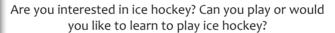
event, I needed to demonstrate I would keep pushing forward and not giving up even if your opponent was much stronger than yourself and that you had the moral fibre and aggression to keep fighting. The weekend came just in time, the two days recovery gave me everything I needed to push through the last two events which would be the 20 miler on the Monday and the last test on Tuesday was the stretcher race. The 20 miler was very long but I knew all I needed to do was to keep plodding along and making sure I stayed with the stretcher and did my part in carrying it.

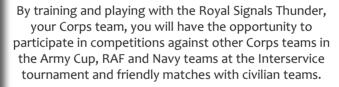
Knowing that I only needed to do five more miles to finish P-company pass or fail I felt great. The stretcher race was the final push, although massively fatigued and I felt I had nothing left, I pushed through and completed the course.

To be given a pass on the final day and receiving the coveted maroon beret will go down as one of the best days of my life and my career.

The week finished with the 2 miler best effort and the milling. The 2 miler was one of my favourite events. I knew I could run well with weight and sustain a good pace for the distance required I was in within the required time. With 5 events down I only need to get through three more to finally complete the course. The milling was a different kind of

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For more information contact **Cpl Mark Morrison** on 07827226908 or email mark_morrison1165@outlook.com

OBITUARY

CONNOR - Sgt Thomas Connor died 19 August 2016.

Thomas Connor, ex Sergeant, 1962 – 1986, commenced his service in the Black Watch and transferred to the Royal Signals. He served in the UK, Cyprus, Middle East, Far East and obtained his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Tommy was a well respected member of the Glasgow Branch of the RSA, having been a member for over 16 years. He regularly attended social events and involved himself with the Branch until he suffered a stroke about 4 years ago.

Tom is survived by his three daughters, Karen, Tricia and Marie Claire, their children and his partner Mary and daughter Andrea. His well attended funeral was held at St James Catholic Church, Renfrew and then to Woodside Crematorium, Paisley.

OTHER UNITS



UK MOD SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM



Saudi Arabian National Guard Communications Project Team Programme Director: **Brigadier Pete Drew**

Hajj 2016 - by Capt Jim Healey

The honour of coordinating the SANGCOM project support for the annual Hajj pilgrimage fell to me for a second year running. Every year the SANGCOM support the Saudi Arabia National Guard Signal Corps during their Hajj deployment which is a fascinating event to be involved in.

The fifth pillar of Islam commands all Muslims, that are physically and financially able, to conduct Hajj or pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime. Hajj is associated with the life of the Holy Prophet Mohammed who first came to Makkah (Mecca) to undertake Hajj but is considered to stretch back to the times of Ibrahim (Abraham). The full history of Hajj is too lengthy for this article but suffice to say, makes for interesting reading and having lived and breathed it for two years running, I can fully commend it to all.

My part in this event is centred on the support and as with every year, planning for the Hajj mission begins in earnest after Eid Al Fitr, the holiday that ends Ramadan. Due to the tragic crush that occurred during Hajj 1436, killing over 700 pilgrims and injuring 800, the Hajj management team have looked closely at mitigating any similar events in the future. This has led to a much more streamlined Command structure for delivering Hajj and has seen some significant changes to the real estate offered to the Nation Guard. As a result of this, all the communication plans needed to be revisited and necessary adjustments made.

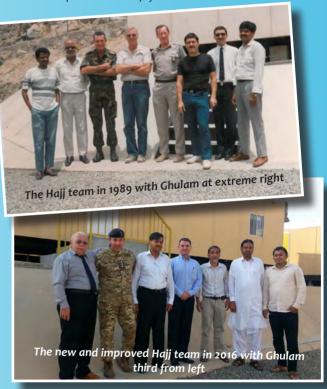
This translated into significant infrastructure changes which in turn meant capturing the requirements, gaining financial approval and initiating the commercial process. Of course this is all bread and butter for a Project Officer and all aspects of the project were completed in good time which allowed the work to begin. Having completed the work, also in good time, the National Guard deployed to their Hajj locations and delivered yet another successful event.

On a more personal level, Hajj 1437 was the final time that **Mr Ghulam Murtaza** will support the National Guard. **Ghulam** is the Regional Support Manager for the Western Sector within the ranks of the Prime Contractor GPT. **Ghulam** started supporting the National Guard in 1986 when, as a young 34 year old, he started at, what was then known as, Cable and Wireless. Over the last 30 years he has supported every Hajj along with the SANGCOM Western Region's Liaison Officer of the day.

Ghulam has been a consummate professional throughout his time in Saudi Arabia and will be sorely missed by everyone in the West and indeed, the entire SANGCOM team. His encyclopaedic knowledge of the region has often saved the day especially with the regular turnover of the military team in Jeddah. We all wish him and his family well for his

future as he returns to Pakistan to start a well deserved retirement.

Ghulam's replacement is the eminently proficient and dedicated **Scott Stevens** who only recently left SANGCOM and the Corps after 37 years Colour Service. He has returned to take up the Regional Director post working for GPT and is already proving to be a valuable asset. We all look forward to working with **Scott** and continuing the strong working relationship which we enjoy with GPT.



All Change Please - by Maj Robin Foster

"Change is inevitable, growth is intentional" - Glenda Cloud

Like any military unit, summer 2016 has been a period of flux for SANGCOM. Of course there have been the usual military postings associated with personnel coming to the end of their tour and their replacements arriving thick and fast.

However, SANGCOM has also embarked on a period of growth to meet the demanding challenges we face. In order to ensure successful delivery of the current and future programme, the SANGCOM team is being sufficiently resourced across all departments. Of course this is easier said than done and a number of in-depth study periods were conducted in order to analyse SANGCOM's current resource baseline and make proposals for the future organisation. This involved rebalancing resources and responsibilities so that business priorities could be better served. Key to this work was ensuring SANGCOM has appropriate skills in place across

all portfolios with enough resilience to manage the competing priorities that come with a demanding programme. With bold changes come risks but with everyone in SANGCOM focussed on contributing to the success of the programme, the impact of all the changes has been minimal.

More personally, the SANGCOM team have said farewell to the following individuals:

Capt Kieron Scott Col John Adams Lt Col Stu Gillespie **Capt Graeme Campbell Dan Jones YofS Mick Sutton Russ McArthur Kelly Sutton** Maj Shaun Wilson **Ann-Marie Perry** Andrew O'Callaghan Yasser Jeewooth **Jackie McArthur Chris Brand**

We wish them and their families all the best for the future. We've then had the pleasure of welcoming the following new staff, and their families, into the team:

Col Tim Allen Norman Machokoto Lt Col Crawford Maclellan Dave Adamson Lt Col Phil Deans **Capt Sunil Kandola Capt Paul Lester Jason Clarke Steve Appleyard FofS Iain Good** Maj Muz Murray **Carol Appleyard Toby Heath**



Dave Adamson, enjoying his new role

and Hajj now a distant memory, everyone is focussed on the next quarter and ensuring the milestone targets are achieved. But it's not all work; now that the weather has started to cool the running season has kicked in with the first three races already out of the way.

The triathlon club is up and running with a number of events completed. Various football fixtures are being planned with our Saudi Arabian National Guard colleagues and we're ever hopeful that we can beat them at least once this season.

Looking ahead, we have the Princess Royal Day celebration to look forward to as well as the winter ball. Planning for the SANGCOM Charity Half Marathon and Fun Run has started in earnest with some good initiatives underway. In summary, the good work in SANGCOM continues with a decent balance between the work and play.



BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT KENYA



Bridge International Academy Visit - by Sig Bikash Gurung

On 30 September 2016, BATUK CIS personnel organised a charity day at Bridge International Academy in Nanyuki, Kenya, in order to build public relations and broaden cultural horizons. Upon arrival, our team was warmly welcomed with a cheerful and loving atmosphere as the children and staff greeted us with songs. There was an unforgettable feeling of happiness and joy that was felt by all, in a moment we will always cherish. In order to return the love and build a strong relationship, we organised various kinds of activities to interact with the children.



Back to School

We briefed the children and our team were assigned to run different tasks. The tasks involved the following activities: British Bulldog (LBdr Birch-Rogerson and LBdr Grice-Low), Pictionary (Cpl Jade Davies, Sig Bikash Gurung and LCpl Vivake Gurung), Noughts and Crosses (LCpl Jack Newsome and LCpl Jake Wiles), various sports events (LCpl Chris

Duncan and LCpl Chris Blackburn), and an educational maths class run in Swahili by Bdr Maina. All of the 200 school children took part in these activities.

These activities gave the opportunity for the young children to enjoy and learn various skills and games. Overall, I felt the activities we implemented were successful; the children enjoyed it and displayed various qualities amongst themselves, such as good sportsmanship and comradeship. They seemed very excited to play, what surprised us was that they were happy enough just to participate, rather than compete in order to win. It also helped the children boost their self confidence; they were quiet in the beginning. Nonetheless, throughout the day they managed to shed their shyness and interact with colleagues very well.



Thirsty work



Picture perfect

The day ended with an exciting football match with the school team and led to a relaxed environment for the children, as well as the adults. It was a pleasure to see the strong sense of camaraderie amongst the children, and their peers, as they worked together. Their culture and actions definitely brought happiness to us and made us realise how something we view so small, can mean so much to others. It showed us gratitude and an importance of mindfulness which we often forget as we are mostly occupied in our daily lives.

It was truly an amazing experience in which we will never forget and felt truly blessed to be fortunate enough to be part of the event whilst in BATUK.

1ST NATO SIGNAL BATTALION



Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU Army) Bn 2IC Maj James Lyons R Signals **RSM** CWO Steve Base (CAN Army)

1st NATO Signal Battalion Sports Day - by LCpl Harris

The start of another glorious week in the Royal Corps, 12 September saw the majority of 1NSB including those from the murky corners of camp participate in a Battalion sports day. Everyone tipped up in sports kit for ogoohrs including Maj Jim Lyons, who promptly briefed us with some great words of wisdom.

The day was set out with 7 events: 3 legged, skipping and sack race, egg & spoon, pillow fight with a twist, British bulldog and football.

We were broken down into 8 teams ranging from different nations, ages and sections. I was placed into team 1 which had the composure of a veteran's convention and the excitement levels of someone arriving at Blandford camp. Within our teams we were broken down yet again in to "strings" A, B and C. LCpl Andy Holmes and I were placed into string C and were given our time table for the day, so we set of like Frodo Baggins and Sam to save the shire, or merely our decrepit team.

Mine and Andy's first event was the 50m sack race; between ourselves we decided that Andy was best suited for this event as gravity is not on my side. Whilst looking around at our foe we had a feeling we had this one in the "bag", literally. Andy

prepped himself in the sack, looking comfortable and ready to spring in to action. The intense countdown began 3.... 2.... 1.... Go! He pulled the sack close to his chest, squatted down like an Afghan elder and sprung his entire body forward resembling a javelin being thrown, however it was a poor start and now in 4th he had some catching up to do. I could see in his eyes that he wanted to win, and then out of nowhere he became a state sponsored Russian Olympian and powered himself in to 2nd crossing the line and scoring us 7 points, what a hero!

LCpl Andy Holmes takes it in the kisser

The sun was beating down and our next event was in sight; pillow fight with a "twist". Eager to find out what this mysterious "twist" was we ran over to the station it was an ice cream van arriving on my local council estate. We were greeted by a large figure of a man who resembled **Sloth** from the goonies, the sun dipped behind the tree line and I could finally see. It was of course Cpl Andy Southwood. He explained the event to us which was simple; one person from each team sits on the balance beam; they hit one another with a pillow until someone falls off. Similar to the game show Gladiators, just (hopefully) without the spandex. The twist was the other team members pelted water balloons at the other competitor, in turn helping your team mate by lubricating the enemy. Andy insisted he would go on the balance beam, forgetting he has the strength and centre of gravity like a gazebo in a storm. The whistle blew; Andy smothered our opponent with the soft feathered pillow while I threw the water balloons but this was quickly fired back by Andy Wedge the NATO Civilian we were fighting. Holmes took a blow to the head and his body slumped to the ground as if a demo charge had been placed on his spine. Andy quickly recovered and picked himself up but only for a short time, before we knew it he was back on the floor. We scored a disappointing 2 points.

Surely we could win our next event, the skipping race. We quickly tested the ropes and decided I would participate in this event as during our practices I was clearly the elegant eagle. I set my self up on the line and waited for the countdown. Go! I raised my arms like a butterfly, stepped off like a fairy, hopped over the rope like Rocky and tangled

> myself up like bedding. I clearly was not as angelic as I thought I was. I came 7th out of 8 scoring us nil points.

Down but not out, we quickly reinvigorated ourselves with Corps Ethos and moved on to the 3 legged race. We tourniqueted our legs together, set ourselves up yet again on the start line, eyed up the invaders and whispered to one another "outside feet first". The countdown started, ready.... Steady.... GO! We pushed ourselves over the line, synched

like crypto and within a heartbeat we crossed the line in first place! Emotional and ecstatic we left with a glorious 10 points. The egg and spoon race was next and with **Andy's** rather large stride, we knew he was the man for the job. He clutched his spoon like a junkie, balanced his egg with the precision of a cockpit instrument and set off with the face of a mad man who loved his egg. He was so far ahead; we could both taste the glory of a boiled egg! But then with just 10m remaining the egg slipped from the spoon and everything went in slow motion as our dreams came to an abrupt end. Andy picked up the egg and crossed the line in 5th but in his anger at having let the team, the Signals and most importantly himself down he threw the egg on the floor, disqualifying us and scoring o points. What a silly sausage!

For our foreign counterparts a bit of old school British bulldog was next, involving all 70 odd of us. One person from each team started off as the catchers and started dwindling us all down to just five. It didn't take long for the five champions to be left, two of which were from Team 1, scoring us 20 points. Lunch time had snuck up on us quickly and we headed of for an hour to catch a breath and reframe ourselves from the morning's excitement.

The 5-aside football tournament started soon after lunch even though the heat was excruciating. Briefed by **Sgt Kris Dunn** and told that we were playing 8 minute halves, all of my team had somehow become biffed and it was only me who was left to play. I was placed into team 3 as they were short of numbers and we managed to make a team with no subs, now known as team 1/3. We kicked off the first match and somehow by a miracle won the first game on penalties. We were through to the semis. But this would be our last match losing 7-1; still we received a generous sum of points.

The sun had dimmed to gold and the day was almost over, the missing personalities from the day: WO2 (CSM) Tony Muers,

Maj Lyons and the CO Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU Army) all tipped up to see our final challenge, tug of war; which to no surprise was officers & seniors vs. Juniors. As you can guess the juniors won with the encouragement and leadership of Cpl Navin 'Nav' Gurung, although he did not participate he still took full glory.



Nav coaches the tug o'war team to victory

The day had sadly come to an end. Now showered and changed into civvies we headed over for a BBQ. Before we could scoff we quickly gathered in a squad for the prize giving and did the usual and rather awkward "NATO drill". The prizes were for 1St place team, tug of war and British bulldogs champions. My team had finished second overall but we did not receive a prize, if only **LCpl Andy Holmes** did not drop that egg...

Leave a Gift in Your Will

Your legacy can help us safeguard the Royal Signals Community

Every year the RSBF helps hundreds of serving and retired Signallers in need or distress. This includes serving Signallers injured on operations, the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, members of the Corps who need assistance with specialist medical care for their children, or veterans who need help in maintaining their mobility and independence.

Help others in their time of need

There has been a long-standing saying that the "Corps looks after its own" and we help wherever we can. In the past five years the RSBF has granted approximately £2 million to help fellow serving and retired signallers and their families in times of need

We help anyone who has served or is serving with The Corps, officer or soldier and their dependants. Any case brought to us will be considered with expert support from any of SSAFA, The Royal British Legion and the Army Benevolent Fund.

You can help too - by leaving a legacy in your will. It's simple to do and can make all the difference to someone who has worn the same cap badge.

If you would like to make a difference please contact the RSBF or RSA. We will be happy to provide information on how to leave a legacy so that others from the Corps might benefit from your generosity.

Contact: enquiries@royalsignals.org





Out, back and home - by WO1 (FofS IS) Owen Trimble

n November 15, for the first time in the establishment's history, the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) based at Imjin Barracks, Innsworth applied to compete in the long standing Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) Field Gun competition hosted at HMS Collingwood, Portsmouth on 4 June 16. As there were only 22 serviceable 12lb field guns available, the ARRC were placed as a reserve crew due to a lack of seniority in the competition. However, a day before the last Battery meeting, in February 16 the ARRC managed to secure a place in the competition due to a last minute drop-out. Even though the crew was named ARRC, it consisted of personnel from HQ ARRC, ARRC Support Battalion, 252 Signal Squadron (22 Signal Regiment), Joint Service Signals Unit (Cheltenham), Joint Cyber Unit (Cheltenham) and 42 Engineer Regiment. Further diversifying the crew, the eclectic mix of volunteers were from the Army (Royal Signals, RE, REME, Int Corps, AGC(SPS), RA, RLC), Royal Marines, RAF and US Army – a very Joint venture.

The RNRMC Field Gun competition was born from the historic events of the Boer War, namely the battle for Ladysmith in 1899. The Naval Brigade from HMS Powerful and Terrible adapted deck guns and manhandled them across difficult terrain against impossible odds in order to successfully support the British Garrison in Ladysmith. In 1907, the Royal Navy partook in a display that told of the legendary tale which had teams from various Royal Navy commands compete for the Brickwood's Trophy. To date, the annual RNRMC Field Gun event has only been marred by the two world wars. Predominantly a Royal Navy competition, teams from the Army, RAF, Royal Marines, Joint Force Command and even NATO have participated. Last year, the coveted Brickwood's Trophy was awarded to the crew from HMS Heron, with a time of 1 minute 17.69 seconds, setting a new world record.

HMS Collingwood has been host to the RNRMC Field Gun competition for many years, annually attracting up to 8000 people during a public open day. The open day takes pride of place in the establishment's calendar, with the RNRMC Field Gun competition taking centre stage and running throughout the day.



The Field Gun season requires a high degree of commitment from the crew members and management team. The crew No.1 Trainer, WO1 (FofS IS) Owen Trimble faced the monumental task of originally seeking approval and support for entry into the competition as well as recruiting a crew from the various units residing at Imjin Barracks, which wasn't as straight-forward as it seemed. Volunteers came, which was very promising initially. But then professional and personal justifications forced some to leave the crew, with out-of-hours training sessions commonly resulting in a low turn-out. A worrying thought initially, as 18 were required for a running crew, and the numbers were nowhere near. Fortunately, with a lot of hope and a drive to gain interest and with the support and much needed administration of the Field Gun Officer (Capt (Tfc EW) Dave Janvier), a crew was in place, with the addition of two reserves, two track judges, two time keepers and a sports therapist.

The physical conditioning prior to the event was no walk in the park. For 2 hours (sometimes more) after work, Monday to Thursday, the crew were engaged in arduous plyometric, strength and speed training, in order to attain a level of conditioning that the event demanded. After six weeks of conditioning training, led by the No.1 Trainer and the Crew Skipper (LCpl Nick Cooper RE), the Crew eventually got their hands onto the equipment for the very first time. From this point the training consisted of bit drill after bit drill. This ensured that each specific crew member knew what their roles were and that their individual drills contributed to a well-oiled machine. "18 as 1" being the key phrase for any Field Gun crew.



As the weeks progressed, and after various departures and additions, a crew was formed. The path to forming this crew proved to be literally painful, as certain members gained various injuries. It appeared to be a competition between CSgt Gav Bage (RM) and Sgt Claire Ham (AGC) into who could achieve the greatest number of injuries. But neither could beat the style of SSgt Neil Gilpin (Int Corps), who earned the nickname of 'Speed Bump' after having the 1.2T gun run over both of his legs. A very worthwhile, but memorable reason to drop out of the running team and fortunately no permanent injury sustained.

It was only a few weeks before the competition date that the team could be named as "Field Gunners"; this was due to the fact that they had to complete a full run before earning this title. Bit drilling with breaks was hard enough, but nothing compared to completing a full run, where a break wasn't earned until the

crew crossed the finish line and the No. 1 Trainer released them from the start/finish line. It may not have been the quickest of times, but the crew proved that they could put it all together and work as one. The times improved greatly over time, when full runs were conducted almost every day (depending if the crew turnout was sufficient).

It eventually came to the day when the crew got to show off in front of their first crowd, a week prior to the journey down to HMS Collingwood. The crowd, including Commander ARRC (Lt Gen T Evans OBE DSO) and the Comd Sgt Maj (WO1 (CSM) Pete Batley (RE)) added to those who were available to attend from Imjin Barracks, circa 200 pax. Sgt Ben 'Compere' Pearmain kindly volunteered to compere the occasion briefing the history of the Field Gun as well as the present day competition. The demonstration was broken down into two parts - a full run broken down into individual drills, so the audience were aware of what the run involved in slow time; then a full run done best effort. The full run didn't go as planned, both wheels were forced off the limber (ammunition carriage) while being pulled swiftly down the 85-yard track. Fortunately, the audience were not aware that this wasn't part of the race, so the crew managed to fight through, get the wheels back on and complete the demonstration run. Once the demonstration was completed, the crew formed up and marched off the track to a huge round of applause from all in attendance. Lt Gen T Evans met with the crew afterwards and offered supportive words and luck in the competition. The demonstration left all impressed and wiser to the efforts of all that volunteered – Sgt Carl 'Corsham' Tinsley who was accidentally seen running the perimeter of Imjin Barracks in a Corsham Field Gun t-shirt may have been voluntold after promoting a different crew. Hopefully, the demonstration will gain more interest for 2017.

The crew deployed to HMS Collingwood on the morning of 29 May 16. Split between 2 minibuses, along with the gun and limber loaded on a DROPS. On arrival, it was straight over to the tented village to find our plot, erect the 18 x 24, then unload the gun and limber into the tent. Taking a walk over to and gaining a glimpse of the battle ground (or the tracks), the ARRC crew witnessed the Naples crew already carrying out training. A first look into the competition before the crew made their way to Southwick Park, where the accommodation was provided for the week. It has to be pointed out that the route between Southwick Park and HMS Collingwood should be a nice scenic drive, along twisty country lanes. But **WO1 John Freeman** (RLC) and **SSgt Sally-Ann Martin-Keene** (AGC(SPS)) saw this as a rally track to see who could get to the other end first. The passengers needed more than their seatbelts to keep themselves on their seats.



Monday to Thursday saw the crew training 6 times daily. Under the watchful eye of the No.1 Trainer, each 40-minute session on the track, although brutal was used to further brush up on crew drills. The smallest of improvements in each drill could see 10+ seconds off a full run. This was a demanding week both physically and mentally; Field Gun is often referred to as one of the most physically demanding team events in the world. The ARRC crew were being observed from the side lines by the other 21 crews; they all took an interest in the newbies to the competition and compliments came flooding in for the speed and efficiency of the drill. The crew were continually driven by the No.1 Trainer in order to further improve track fitness and efficiency, almost to breaking point. Training didn't go without incident, when **Cpl Leon 'Alex' Hopkins** managed to lose control of his wheel during a gun turn and lose the tip of his finger. After a trip to A&E and some subsequent plastic surgery, **Alex** fought to get back on the running crew, which he successfully did as a drag number.

On Friday 03 June, it was the start of the heats; an aggregate time from a series of seven runs determined which group the crews would race in for the finals. Five of these runs would be completed on this day, with the last two the following day whilst on public display. The fastest six crews would run in the Brickwood's Final. The following six in Plate 1, then Plate 2, with the slowest five teams in Plate 3. As a new crew and with a lot to prove, ARRC did not want to be placed in Plate 3. All 23 (a Barbarians team was

Demonstrating the physical demands during the run home

created last minute) crews donned their competition tops, taped themselves up, then warmed up, ready to give their all. After the seven runs, with only one very questionable penalty of three seconds, the crew successfully guaranteed a place in the Plate 2 final, a gargantuan achievement for the first season. ARRC were absolute underdogs in this group (the slowest aggregate time in the Plate 2 final), having not broached the 1 minute 30 second barrier all season (1:30.1 being the closest).

So it was time; on the afternoon of 4 June, all the crews gathered together out of view from the public, getting ready for their very last run of the season. It could be forgotten that these 23 crews were competing against each other at this

moment, as spirits were high and only the greatest of respect and comradery was shown to each other. Then the time came when all the crews marched out in front of the public, receiving nothing but cheer and applause. Emotions were high throughout the ARRC crew, as they all knew that this long and arduous season was coming to an end. The full crew walked out with pride: the running 18, reserves, track judges and time keepers. Not to forget the two mascots who came in the form of **Sgt Sarah Porter's** (REME) daughters sat on the Limber, who had come along to support their mum's team.

After the march past, the crews returned to their holding area where attention was refocussed on their appropriate final, knowing that this was it. Each of the final groups went out one at a time and gave it their all for their last race. For the ARRC crew in Plate 2, they took their place on track 5. Racing against them were the crews of MoD Corsham, the Maritime Reserves, HMS Neptune, Gibraltar and HMS Sultan. With all the equipment laid out and the crew waiting ready to go on the start line, the Battery Commander ignited the flashbang. The crews shouted "Burning, 1, 2, 3, Standby", a slight pause and then the bang

- the crews were off. For a crew who had yet to break the 1:30 barrier, they did so on their final and most important run. With a time of 1:27.90 seconds, the ARRC Field Gun crew came in a very close second (only 1/8 of a second) behind MoD Corsham (WO1 (FofS IS) Owen Trimble's previous crew) narrowly missing out on the Plate 2 trophy. This didn't matter to the ARRC crew; the fact that they got on that track as a new crew and proved that they had what it took to make an impact in an event that has been running for over a century. And an impact it made, the "Trainer of the Year" award was presented to WO1 (FofS IS) Owen Trimble; a huge achievement, as this was the first time it had been awarded to a non-Naval Trainer.

With spirits remaining high throughout the tented village, food and drinks were enjoyed by all, then later a well-deserved night out in Portsmouth. The end of season dinner, hosted by the ARRC Officers' Mess and Presided over by **Brig A McLeod** (ARRC DCOS SP), gave the crew a chance to commemorate what they had achieved through such a tough yet rewarding time. The ARRC Field Gunner of the year 2016 was presented to the crew Skipper, **LCpl Nick Cooper**, for his dedication, determination and leadership throughout the season.

2016 Royal Signals Field Gunners – WO1 (FofS IS) Owen Trimble (No.1 Trainer), Capt (Tfc EW) Dave 'OAP' Janvier (Wheel & FGO), Capt (Tfc EW) Phil 'Clean Slate' Berry (Slat), Sgt Carl 'Corsham' Tinsley (Heavy End), Sgt Dan 'Dangerous' Hine (Drive Back), Sgt Ben 'Compere' Pearmain (Track Judge), Cpl Mark 'Taped Fingers' Taylor (Firer), Cpl Alex 'High 9' Hopkins (Drag), Sig Barney 'Loud Man' Lewis (Back of the Box) and Sig Jonathan 'Wet' Walsh (Pin).

The finals were attended by Commander ARRC (Lt Gen T Evans) and the ARRC sponsor (SPLUNK) to whom the ARRC Field Gun crew offer their immense gratitude for the support throughout the season and without whom we would not have competed. It is positive that **Brig A McLeod** has kindly endorsed the 2017 ARRC Field Gun Season, and hopefully many more to come. After such a successful 2016, it is expected a much better turnout for next year.

No.1 Trainer of the Year

KITESURFING

If you don't know what kitesurfing is – you're missing out. It's a mixture of windsurfing and sailing combined with snowboarding and wakeboarding. A truly exhilarating experience. And yes – before you ask, you can kitesurf with the Army. The Army Sailing Association (ASA) http://sailarmy.co.uk/kitesurfing/ runs the only non-commercial school, out of Thorney Island on the south coast of England.

The (ASA) conducted its annual team freestyle concentration 02 – 16 Jul 2016 in Kalpitiya, Sri Lanka: Ex ADVANCED EAGLE 16. The 10 man squad was selected from the best of a 500 strong army club. We undertook specific training to advance freestyle competition kitesurfing in order to improve results at the annual interservices championships. Freestyle Kitesurfing remains the central strand of competition within competitive Kitesurfing and similar training camps held by the RAF and Navy have delivered significant rider improvements and subsequently, championship wins.

The 10 person squad included a mixture of Officer's, Senior and Junior NCO's from across the Army. A freestyle coach, alongside club instructors was employed in order to develop structured learning plans for each rider. Video analysis was also be used, along with ground based training, to develop muscle memory, improve posture and style.

The Kalpitiya Lagoon, Sri Lanka, was chosen as the training camp location due to over 90% probability of useable wind with an average of 18-20 knots daily; critically the location facilities are vastly superior. The lagoon area remains uncrowned, key for structured freestyle training and a trait that many European locations struggle with, due to the sports growth and popularity.

Most days started with a fruitful breakfast, with omelettes and pancakes at request. We then loaded our kit onto the boat and made the eventful lagoon crossing from our accommodation to the launch point. Consistent wind of above 20 kts meant every kiter was able to spend at least 3

hours in the morning and 4 hours in the afternoon on the water every single day. The morning sessions consisted of structured learning at a two to one ratio with the aid of video and photographs to support coaching. This ensured every Army kiter pushed themselves outside their comfort zone to try new and more challenging tricks/moves. There was a clear difference between every rider's ability from the first day to the very last day of the Ex. Every single kiter progressed in their own way, whether that be landing their first back roll, front roll, first kite loop or even first unhook session.

We returned back to the accommodation for lunch each day where we indulged in the local cuisine, this mainly consisted of Rice, Mush, Curry and occasionally seafood.

The afternoon sessions consisted of a practice session and friendly competitions between all kiters. Everyone offered constructive feedback and friendly banter throughout. The wind would die down in the evening which brought the afternoons session to a natural end.

Most evenings started with a friendly international Volleyball game between Sri Lanka, Germany, Austria and England. (Like I said we were here to kitesurf so I will leave the results of the volleyball out of the chapter).

Kitesurfing as a sport is growing – not just in the Army but across the globe. The current world champion is British and people are getting involved in the sport every day. If you would like to get involved in Kitesurfing, The Corps are looking to create a Royal Signals Kitesurfing Club. This will allow us to compete against other Corps and have a strong presence at the Inter-services.

Get in touch.

Cpl Copley

Royal Signals, Senior Instructor British Kite Sport Association http://sailarmy.co.uk/kitesurfing/





ROYAL SIGNALS RUGBY UNION

his year's R SIGNALS rugby union club tour was organised to travel to Ibiza 14-21 Jun to take part in the Rugby Spy Ibiza 10s tournament.

When all of the team had eventually arrived at the Reserve Centre in London, all the kit was distributed amongst the players and we all loaded onto the coach to take us to the airport for our late night flight to Ibiza. For some unbeknownst reason, **LCpI Adams** felt a little poorly on this flight and upon arriving at our hotel in San Antonio, she had to have a little lay down before she joined the rest of the squad at one of the Sports Bar's sponsoring the rugby tournament.

The next day was an acclimatisation day for the team, with many members keeping up their fitness in the swimming pool or else taking full advantage of the rest day on the loungers. One such member was **Lt Hoyland** who, even after being reminded several times to put a stronger sun cream on decided that factor 8 was good enough. Needless to say, there was a lobster on our touring party after this.

Day 3 was to be the first training day, so after waiting out for the midday sun to pass, the team were transported to the stadium for our training session ran by **SSgt Bates** and **Sgt Harrison.** Even though the team waited until the day became cooler to train, it was still a blisteringly hot 30 °C and many a bottle of water was drunk, ably provided by the water boy **LCpl Holmes.**

The next day was pretty much a repeat of the previous day with the exception of an even earlier and hotter training session. Both teams started to look like a structured 10s team by this point and were hopeful of some quality rugby from both the male and the female teams.

The tournament began on the next day and the R SIGNALS mens team were fortunate enough to open the tournament against Ashkelon, a touring side from Israel. This was a good run out game for them against an inexperienced opposition. The team played some good rugby, but there was definite room for progression. However it was still a victory with a score of 29-5; tries coming from SSgt Bates (twice), SSgt (FofS) Vernon, Sgt Harrison and Cpl Dawson.

The final match for the men on day 1 was against *Sigonella Hoplites*, a team of the US Navy, who were more used to the contacts in American Football than those within the rules on a rugby pitch. Again this game gave the team another chance to try different players in different positions. After a nice run out the team were again victorious. Final score being 24-7; tries from **Sig Cheung**, **SSgt Bates**, **LCpl Holmyard** and **LCpl Peck**.

The female team also had 2 matches on day one. The first of which was against the *Moody Cows*; a specialist charity 7s and 10s team that included international rugby players in their ranks. This was always going to be a hard match for our ladies team and even with some brave defence; the final score was a 43-0 loss. The second game for the ladies was against Blackrock Ladies, an Irish team with some real pedigree and history. Again the ladies of the R SIGNALS showed some great determination and mettle, but they were beaten again; 32-0 the final score.

Day 2 of the tournament and the men's team were sitting pretty at the top of the group on joint points with the *Dambusters*; a team pulled together from *Blackheath RFC* – a National 1 side. The final game of the group was to be against the *Dambusters*. So after a long wait and a nervy warm-up the R SIGNALS kicked off the match. This was an extremely physical and demanding game, and by half-time the R SIGNALS were losing 7-19. However, after a rallying half time talk from the skipper, **WO1 (FofS) Jackson** and other senior players, the team came out all guns blazing. The pressure that the men's team put onto *Dambusters* throughout that second half was unbelievable and with nearly all the possession, which they converted into 2 extremely well worked tries, the final score was another victory at 21-19; tries from **SSgt (FofS) Vernon, LCpl Holmyard** and **WO1 (FofS) Jackson.**

This victory meant the R SIGNALS topped the group and would be playing the bottom placed team in Group B, the *Houston Oilers*. As their name suggests, this was another US team. The R SIGNALS started this match with a completely changed line-up, to allow those who had expended so much energy in the previous match a little respite. This new line-up showed why they are Corps level players and completely dominated the bigger opposition in all facets of the game, coming away with another victory. Final score being 43-0; tries from **LCpl Holmyard**, **LCpl Jones**, **Cpl Briggs**, **Sig Cheung**, **LCpl Peck**, **Sig Billington** and **Cpl Dawson**. It was onto the semi-final match which would be on Day 3 of the tournament.

The ladies side played another 2 matches on Day 2 of the competition, against *Dames Rugby*; a specialist 10s team from the Netherlands. This side were extremely experienced and had the upper hand on fitness and size, and although our girls pressured the oppositions try line a few times, they were unable to convert it into any points. Final score was a loss of 37-0. The second match for the ladies on day 2 was another match against the *Moody Cows*. This specialist team showed why they are so revered throughout the 7s and 10s circuits, having lost none of their energy and flair at any stage



WO1 (FofS) Jackson and LCpl Jones covering defence



The ladies team

throughout the tournament. Even the substitutes they brought on were just as drilled and had the same well-tuned bodies of the rest of the squad; something which **SSgt Bates** and **Sgt Harrison** were very quick to point out. Again our girls, who were feeling the constant pressure by this point, lost out to a greatly experienced team. Final score was 41-0.

Finals day proved to be the hottest playing day so far and **LCpl Holmes** showed his effectiveness as a water boy throughout the day. The expected opponent for the men in the semi-final were actually knocked out in the previous round by *Sigonella Hoplites*; an unexpected result, but one which the men's side took heed of. Clearly the US team had organised themselves and were beginning to play some top quality rugby. The men's team went into this game a little short in terms of being mentally prepared and were caught on the back foot within the first few minutes. This was just the action that they needed to jar them back into their senses, and they once again resumed the calm and assured attitude and pressure; equalling the scores by half time. After a great half time speech by **Sgt Oates**, our resident OAP who sustained an injury to his back on the first training day, the team came out flying in the second half with **Lt Hoyland** receiving the ball and scoring from the kick-off. The pressure continued throughout the match and the final score ended with a 31-7 victory; tries from **SSgt Bates** (twice), **Cpl Dawson** (twice) and **Lt Hoyland**.

So it was onto the final where R SIGNALS men's team would play Wyvern Harlequins, another National 1 team who had beaten Dambusters in the other semi-final. The two sides were equally matched in nearly all facets of the game, with Wyvern Harlequins a little more ruthless in attack but R SIGNALS quicker in defence and a little fitter overall. However, even with some great rugby by the R SIGNALS and pressure applied throughout; it was the small mistakes that paid dividends in the end and allowed Wyvern Harlequins to capitalise. The final score being a 7-0 loss for the R SIGNALS meaning they were tournament runners-up. A prize money of €250 was earned by the R SIGNALS, which was donated to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

There was only one more competition held by the tournament organisers left to go, which was the dinosaur race. The runners had to dress in an inflatable dinosaur costume and run one and a half pitch lengths. The winner earning his team two beers each for the after party. This was **LCpl Holmes'** big chance to make amends for not being able to play all tournament; so it was with a lot of pressure and anticipation that he got into his dinosaur. **Cpl Burton** would be running for the female team and **LCpl Holmes** was more than a little worried of her reputation as an Army level sprinter. However he hitched his dinosaur suit up and ran like the wind; bringing him and his T-Rex home in first place to the joyous cheers of the team.

Overall the tournament and the tour proved a huge success for not only team-bonding and player development, it also highlighted some great young talent coming through the ranks, and we were also able to raise some more for our Corps charity; as well as let our hair down after some tough rugby.

A thank you to Lt Col Gunning and Lt Col Kennedy for supporting this tour and to SSgt Chadwick for providing medical cover, as well as a fair few rub-downs throughout the week; and a special mention for WO1 (FofS) Jackson for the hard work and commitment he showed in not only organising all elements of the tour beforehand, but for also being Mother Hen to the team whilst in Ibiza.

EXERCISE DRAGONS TREK

by Capt Chris McGrath

x DRAGONS TREK was a Regimental Level 3 Mountaineering / Trekking expedition to the Everest Region of Nepal for members of 14 Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare). The team consisted of 3 Officers and Warrant Officers, 3 Seniors and 8 Juniors who were spread across R Signals, AGC, RLC and Int Corps. The primary aim of the expedition was for the team to reach Everest Base Camp (5364m).

We departed Cawdor Barracks, in West Wales at o8oohrs and made a few stops on the way down the M4 for convenient collection and to allow people maximum time at home prior to the long time away. From London Heathrow it was over 12 hours in the air and after a brief stop in Qatar we arrived safely in Kathmandu. There were quite a few members of the expedition that had never travelled outside Europe so arriving in Nepal was quite an eye opener. The airport was small by UK standards and pretty crowded. We were met by Bhai the owner of the trekking company and we were given flowery necklaces to wear which bemused some of the younger lads. The route through Kathmandu was busy with queues of traffic waiting for fuel due to the impact of a fuel embargo by India. Our hotel was nice but we soon found out that there was no electricity each day until 170ohrs. We were on the 5th Floor and it was embarrassingly hard work to get to our rooms especially given that we were heading to Everest Base Camp. The hotel stood at 1400m so with 20m achieved, we still had 3944m to go!

The next day we had money to collect from the British Ghurkhas Nepal (BGN) and phones and briefs to be received from the British Embassy, we split into two groups, my 2IC and I went to the Embassy and Maj Guy Davies the RAO went to the BGN with some of the team. All went as planned and we were soon back in the Thamel district, shopping and listening to some excellent live music.

Trekking Day 1 – Flight to Lukla (2840m) and Trek to Phakding (2610m).

The mountain flight into Lukla was spectacular and the landing an exciting beginning to the trek given that the runway was only 60m long. Once in Lukla, we headed through pine and cedar woods following the Dudh Koshi River to Phakding. A few members of the group had the D of D&V and so stopped in almost every toilet on the way, which came in many different forms (western, eastern, long drop, short drop, back shed, front shed, behind rocks, behind trees and behind bushes to name but a few).

Trekking Day 2 – Trek from Phakding (2610m) to Namche Bazaar (3440m), reach 3000m.

We started deep in the valley and the views just got better and better throughout the day. There were lots of porters carrying incredible loads up the valley. We had to give way to Yak trains and donkeys in the region's version of the M4. We crossed a number of amazing suspension bridges with the jokers jumping up and down and trying to cross the swaying bridge with no hands. The last couple of hours involved a 600m climb into Namche Bazaar. It is the largest town in the region with lots of shops, cafes and bars. We had a strict no drinking policy during the ascent but we still had a great time, we even had the option of hot showers.

Trekking Day 3 – Acclimatisation Trek to the Everest View Hotel (388om).

The day was fairly short but enjoyable. We got our first, spectacular views of Mount Everest and Ama Dablam and had a nice hot chocolate when we reached the highest hotel in the world where one night costs US\$164 (£100 approx) in comparison to staying in a lodge where it can be as cheap as £3.

Trekking Day 4 - Trek from Namche Bazaar (3440m) to Deboche (3820m).

The 6-7 hr trek to Tengboche was very beautiful, the Dudh Koshi River far below the path until we crossed the suspension bridge at Phunki Tenga. The views of Thamserku, Kantenga, Lhotse and Everest coupled with mild weather made it a truly unforgettable day. Past Phunki Tenga (3250m) we took the steady climb to Tengboche (3860m) and we were appreciative of the rest when we got there. We visited the monastery in Tengboche, a beautiful building with lots of colourful historic scenes inside. Unfortunately, the café in Tengboche was closed so we pushed on to Deboche for some well needed rest. It was the last place that we stayed that did not have a heater on in the communal area so we were pretty chilly that evening.

Trekking Day 5 – Trek from Deboche (3820m) to Dingboche (4410m), reach 4000m.

Snow fell during the night and down in the valley it felt very cold. The trail rose above the tree line and entered alpine meadows of scrub juniper. From Dingboche the views of Ama Dablam and other mountains were outstanding. **Sgt 'Moz' Morris** and **Sgt Danny Parker** had a go at briefly carrying a load of supplies when a woman carrying it was having a rest. They were amazed at the weight and the strength the locals must have in their necks.



Sgt Danny Parker sharing the load

Trekking Day 6 - Acclimatisation Trek to reach 5000m.

We split into two groups to ascend the Nang Tshang spur. This was due to our senior instructor and camera man, **Capt Guy Davies**, wanting to get some early morning photos. After a short meander through the village we began our ascent. It was mostly steady all

the way to the 5000m point with ground getting pretty rocky for the last 50m. **LCpl 'Fish' Fisher** had the longest restroom break of the expedition with a 25 minute stop behind a rock. There were great views of Ama Dablam, Pokalde and Island Peak during the day.

Trekking Day 7 – Trek from Dingboche (4410m) to Luboche (4910m).

After the long and largely flat trek to the base of the infamous Khumbu Glacier the trail climbed up to Dughla where there were a number of lodges where we had lunch. **LCpl Lisa Jones** led the way in the ascent and in a further 30 minutes we had reached the Stone Memorials – a very moving collection of monuments to remember the fallen. After that there was only a short walk flanking the Glacier into Lobuche. From there some of the group pushed on to visit the High Altitude Research Centre run by the Italian government. A thoroughly worthwhile visit which took us up to the 5000m point for a second time.

Trekking Day 8 – Trek from Luboche (4910m) to Gorak Shep (5018m), reach EBC (5364m).

With great views of Pumo Ri and Nuptse the day involved a long and steady trek up to Gorak Shep. By this point it was consistently below freezing which made drinking water less enjoyable as it was slush at best. Those with camel backs were having issues with the water in the hose freezing. The route up to Everest Base Camp was filled with eager anticipation with views of the towering mountains around with the tranquillity periodically interrupted by the sound of small avalanches. There was a large quantity of prayer flags which gave a great back drop for the photos to mark the achievement.

YofS (EW) Marty 'WO in Waiting' Campbell as well as the rest of the team were in awe of moment. Everyone was grateful of having the opportunity to achieve something memorable and to do it for work was even more special.

Trekking Day 9 – Ascend Kalapathar (5550m), trek from Gorak Shep (5018m) to Pheriche (4340m).

It was a 0430hrs start in the pitch black so it was head torches with lots of warm kit as the temperature had dropped to -14 degrees Celsius. It was a steady climb all the way but with most in the group feeling the fatigue. WO2 (SSM) Jamie O'Reilly made it look easy as we made our way to the top. As the morning got lighter there were lots of opportunities for amazing panoramic views which got even better with the sun rising over Mount Everest at 0700hrs. The trek to Pheriche was long with the broken clouds as we descended giving us some of the best views of the Thamserku, Kantega, Malanphulan ridge line.

Trekking Days 10 to 13 – Trek from Pheriche (4340m) to Gokyo (4790m).

Unlike the route from Lukla to Everest Base Camp where we were passing many fellow mountaineers along the way, on this part of the trek we did not pass a soul between Phortse and Gokyo. From Nha we ascended a short path up to Phang to have lunch after which we climbed up the path at the bottom of the Ngozumpa Glacier. The lateral moraine from this glacier allowed for the creation of the lakes that we passed on the way.



The team ascends to the Memorial Stones



Capt Chris McGrath, LCpl Wez Martindale and LCpl Kris York at Everest Base Camp



Maj Guy Davies explaining glacial formation to LCpl Dan Evans

Once we arrived at Gokyo we were feeling spritely enough to decide to climb Gokyo Ri in the afternoon in order to get a late start the following morning. We reached 5100m before an unexpected blizzard meant that visibility dropped to within 50m. In light of the fact that we were not going to have any nice views and that weather conditions were often more favourable in the morning we decided to abandon our ascent for the day.

Trekking Day 14 - Ascend Gokyo Ri (5360m) and trek from Gokyo (4790m) to Phortse Tenga (368om).

We awoke early with temperatures back down to -14 degrees Celsius. We set off at o500hrs in order to be at the summit of Gokyo Ri by 0700hrs. We were the first to walk in the fresh snow from the day before which was very atmospheric. As all the mountains were white, the views were once again unique and incredible. Soon we were above 5000m once again and there was a further 360m to go to get to the summit. During this trek we passed a number of people who were unbelievably unprepared for the short ascent with many with no warm kit and one man with no water who begged Maj Davies for some as he was so dehydrated. This was a common theme with many trekking on their own with little preparation or thought of personal safety.

Trekking Days 15 to 16 - Trek from Phortse Tenga (3680m) to Lukla (2840m).

From Phortse Tenga there was a 320m incline to the village of Mong that was not as hard as we had imagined given that our legs were strong and our bodies fully acclimatised. The day was pretty warm and we got a bit of a sweat on during the long undulating trek from Mong to Namche Bazaar. The next day we trekked fast and enjoyed the low valley. It seemed like a long time had passed since we had passed through these trails on our ascent. That evening we stayed in a lodge a stone's throw from the airport and enjoyed a nice meal where we got to eat meat again which had been off the menu for us as its hygiene could not be guaranteed. The Yak steaks were very good. We marked our appreciation for the guides: Kumar, Jambo, Boram and young yak-man Sila with tips and thanks and there was much rejoicing.

Once back in Kathmandu we had a couple of days to relax over the weekend enjoing the shops, cultural sites and food of the Capital until we took to the skies once again. Overall, an amazing expedition enjoyed by all and I would recommend it to anyone!



YofS EW Marty Campbell as Instructor crossing a suspension bridge

DINGHY SAILING, THE LAGOS TROPHY 2016

- by Maj R Clayton

he Lagos Trophy 2016, the annual Inter-Corps Team Racing Championship, was held at the Army Inshore Sail Training Centre, Thorney Island - a great venue with ideal facilities for training and racing. We started the event with two days of training, expertly delivered by Maj Rachel Limbrey. Explanation of tactics and rules was followed by plenty of chances to put it all into practice with some on-the-water training. By the end of the two days the teams were selected and crews confirmed. Everyone was raring to go, and having had a chance to scope out our competitors, ready to face them in the actual competition. The teams for this year's championship were:



A Team:

Maj Rachel Limbrey & Maj Rachel Clayton **Cpl Chris Eccles & Maj Alex Hutton LCpl Richie Curran & LCpl Emily Towersey-Veal** Lt Col Julian Bunce & Cpl Matt Donnison **Cpl Dene Ford & Sgt Dale Smith Cpl Gareth Middlecoate & LCpl Matty Farrell**

Wednesday arrived with slightly torrential rain - not quite what we had signed up for when agreeing to come sailing in July - but fortunately it cleared quickly and left us with plenty of wind and even some sunshine. Ready to race, we started the competition with a face-off between our own A and B teams. This gave us some good practice and we were warmed up and ready to let our competitive sides show against the REME, RE and RA teams. Soon into the swing of things, the A team were able to keep their edge, managing to win all but one of the races in the round robin stage. The B team were hot on the heels of the other teams, giving some real competition to the RA and RE 'A' teams. With a mixture of wins and losses, the B team had a good day and proved the value of having a development squad to train our future A team sailors.

B Team:

Thursday brought less rain, less wind and more sunshine for finals day – good conditions for the R SIGNALS A Team who were somewhat lighter than the REME team they faced (less indulgence at Wednesday night's hog roast I think). Wednesday's races obviously provided some great practice for the team and they were able to secure victory with a 3-0 win. Champions for the 5th year in a row, the development scheme within the Corps racing team is working really well and producing some excellent sailors. Well done to both teams!

EXERCISE AFRICAN DIVE TIGER

by Cpl R Curchward

he day had finally arrived; 11 (RSS) Signal Regiment were to deploy to South Africa to undertake the sort of adventure training most would believe to be an Army recruiting myth. However, it was made very clear this was not the case from the amount of pre requisite training and time that had been dedicated to pool dives, classroom theory, open water instruction and medicals to qualify everyone to a minimum of Ocean Diver.

A sociable departure time from Blandford Camp, a smooth transition to the airport and collection of tickets at check-in meant the journey to Umkomaas SA, was almost too good to be true; however, for **Sig Knight** it was, when the airline lost his baggage. Despite the loss of bags everyone arrived at the Blue Ocean Dive Resort in high spirits and were keen to start diving the very next day.

Any anxiety anyone had at the prospect of diving with sharks was hit head on with the first dive, and really set the tone for the rest of the trip. Both boat launches came into contact with ragged tooth sharks circling a cave, although they seemed surprisingly disinterested in our presence, which put a lot of people at ease. Everyone also got the opportunity to swim with Giant Turtles, Mantarays, Stingrays and an abundance of coral fish. That is everyone of course aside from **Sig Walker**, who gets nose bleeds just looking at the ocean and couldn't clear his ears in a bath tub. Ilt also became evident why Aliwal Shoal is considered one of the hardest RIB launch sites in the world as at least 2/3rds of the group were seen hanging over the edge of the RIB at one point or another. An intriguing, sombre and thought-provoking trip to the battlefield sites of Islandwana and Rourke's Drift marked the halfway point for the trip.

The second phase of the AT package was located at Port St Johns, the site for the Sardine Run. This annual spectacle sees a vast migration of baitfish and its subsequent attraction of huge apex predators such as whales and sharks. This part of the trip consisted mostly of snorkelling and gave everyone the chance to swim with dolphins and humpback whales.

It would seem though that for **SSgt Weatherill** the real highlight of the trip could be found at the dinner table, and in Port St Johns he really came into his own, single handedly laying waste to the South African cattle industry. **Sig Possnett** even enjoyed this section of the trip so much that he handed his bank card details over to the locals so they could help him spend his money. One of the aims of the expedition was for all divers to obtain their Sports diver qualification; this allows dives up to 35m as well as unsupervised dives with another sports diver. **Capt Girdler** the deep dive guru took the lead with the Sports Dive theory lessons and ensured everyone that required it met the standard and passed the test mid trip.

With everyone now qualified sports divers the return to Aliwal Shoal meant the deep dives on ship wrecks and the dreaded shark baited dive could take place. At this point of the trip the pre dive prep was slick and even **Sig Wood** managed to get in the water without having to be rescued. Even **Cpl Churchward** managed to keep tags on all his kit. The highly anticipated baited shark dive did not disappoint and was quite possibly the pinnacle of the package. One of the main directives for Adventurous Training is to take people out of their comfort zone, diving into the ocean while the boat is circled by approximately 20 hungry sharks certainly achieves that.

Overall Ex AFRICAN TIGER was a success challenging all involved and pushing people's limits beyond what they believed themselves capable of, with the majority wanting to continue to pursue diving after the trip. The highly accommodating staff at Ocean Blue Dive Resort even put on a Braai (South African BBQ) and the trip certainly ended on a high. **Maj Kelly** can finally sleep easy knowing she doesn't have to be concerned anymore about sharks attacking phase as, if everyone has their dive kit or even where Sig Smith has ended up



EXERCISE DRAGON TRAIL

by Sig's Lloyd and Lloyd-Matejicek

he morning of 2 July saw 13 members of 39 Sig Regt deploying on a level 3 expedition, an adventurous training expedition of the Pyrenees in Spain. The ex was to allow members to conduct arduous training and provide an opportunity to develop unit cohesion and leadership skills within a challenging environment. The ex would consist of five days hill walking and one day white water rafting.

At 1930hrs, troops deployed from multiple locations along the M4 corridor to the location of 39 Sig Regt RHQ. Upon arrival to Bristol ARC, a short brief on what to expect the next day was given as well as a final kit inspection conducted by WO1 Micky Durrant.

The following morning, 3 June, we arrived at Bristol Airport at roughly 0400hrs, in order to fly to Barcelona at 0700hrs. Once landed in Barcelona at 1010hrs, we began our journey to Espot which involved a 4 hour bus ride through surrounding villages leading to the Pyrenees. Eventually we arrived at our intended destination, La Mola Camp, where we were greeted by the Advanced Party who had deployed days earlier in order to transport all personal equipment and stores. They had also taken the time and effort to build base camp which consisted of 7 tents and a 12x12 which would be used as an admin area. We were then given 2 hours for personal admin and familiarisation of the camp site/swimming pool. Maj Graeme Smith then conducted an hour long safety and personal hygiene-on-the-hills brief. This was very informative as we learnt never to 'double dip' in the Vaseline (don't ask). The final lesson of the day was from SSgt Cooke on foot care and how to look after your feet prior to hill-walking. Finally we had the evening to ourselves in which we went out for a nice evening meal to bond and fill up on carbs.

Day 1: Campsite La Mola - Refuge Estany Llong. We began our day with a nice hearty breakfast supplied by the advance party as well as making our own packed lunches for the day's hill walk. We set off at 0900hrs led by Maj Smith and this would be the longest walk of the week totalling 24kms and a gain of 1400m in height. It started out with a gentle walk through the local village ESPOT and then went straight into an incline for 2.5 hours which would take us to Lake Muarici. We had our packed lunch here and a nice hour break with beautiful views. After lunch, we set off again gaining even more height. Deep into the walk with 3 quarters of the day complete, a few individuals were struggling with the heat and their hill fitness, slowing the group down. However, this was not an issue as we were ahead of time and did not have to check into the refuge until 1900hrs. We arrived at 1730hrs where we were given an hour to do some personal admin and explore the surrounding area. Dinner was a shock to the system; it was a 4 course meal that was not your average meal as it consisted of watery soup for a starter, followed by tuna salad, followed by chick peas and finally a piece of fruit. The refuge had one warm and one cold shower but the queue for the warm shower was as long as a Justin Bieber concert queue. The living arrangements consisted of a gigantic mattress where you were assigned a bed space in between 30 other people. Basically the only separation between yourself and the person next to you was a sleeping bag.



Day 2: Refuge Estany Llong - Refuge Ventosa. After a restless night, we were all up at 0630hrs in order to get washed and shaven before breakfast commenced at 0700hrs. Breakfast was bread, butter, jam and more bread. This would prove to be the hardest day

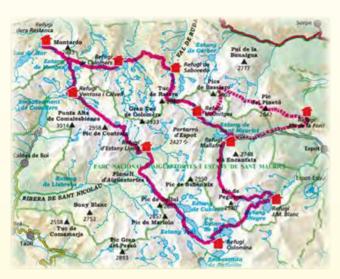


walking as we had to cross a boulder field, there were boulders everywhere! The instructors had a meeting and decided to send 2 individuals back with one of the instructors to conduct an easier route due to levels of fitness. The remainder set off at o800hrs and had an extremely steep first few hours gaining 1200m over boulders and rocks. This is where the group accidently split in half due to uphill speed. The one team continued to follow the correct route while Sgt 'Wrong' Long directed his few followers 500m in the wrong direction. Eventually after spotting the remainder of the group and realising they had gone slightly off track, they had to traverse the mountain to re-join the group. The route then took us up a ridge caked in snow – this was near vertical and proved very challenging among a few individuals, Sig 'Jayne' Yeoman's was Sig 'Charlotte' Halsey's personal snow guide where she was literally making steps up the side of the mountain as Charlotte found this very difficult and at one point she refused to move. The final challenge of the day was the boulder field which was 6km of boulders the size of cars. We had been previously warned of how challenging some will find it. Sig 'Magic' Lloyd-Matejicek and Sig 'Connor' Taylor went off with SSgt Cooke as they enjoyed this part of the day. After a long hard day, the refuge appeared out of nowhere and everyone was over the moon. The refuge turned out to be nicer and bigger than the first; however it lacked hot water so it was cold water showers for most but some resided to the lake as it was slightly warmer. The food that night was very similar to the first refuge but with a little bit more taste to it and more bread.

Day 3: Refuge Ventosa to Refuge Colomers. After the group all woke up at the same time and had breakfast, prepared and ready for the days walk we set off at o815hrs. We understood that we would be passing 7 lakes on the way to our destination; a few were counting how many lakes we passed along the way to distract them in expectance for a long, tiring walk. Although we covered 13kms it was a surprisingly short day and the whole group was relieved to find that the next refuge was closer than we thought.

There were two refuge sites near each other, one looking a lot more appealing. There was a small debate on which one it was, most expecting the worst. We were shocked to understand that it was not too good to be true and made our way to the nicer refuge. It also included an HLS where we all ended up sunbathing and socialising after dealing with our admin. The food and sleeping arrangements were exceptionally better that the previous refuges as the main meal consisted of a whole fish yet similar starting courses followed by chocolate mousse. The bed spaces were separated by rooms per group so the other groups did not have to worry about our snoring and Sig 'Magic' Lloyd-Matejicek, Sig 'Connor' Taylor and Sig 'Toni' Lloyd all comfortably 'cwtched' up with SSgt Cooke and enjoyed a movie night on his tablet. This was the most morale filled day we had so far.





Day 4: Refuge Colomers to Refuge d'Armitges. The following morning, everyone felt well rested thanks to comfortable surroundings and the fact that we had a decent full meal inside us. Morale flowing and breakfast finished we were ready for another day. Consisting of a 13km walk with very steep climbs, we had to be a bit more aware of our map reading because previously there were sign posts leading us in the general direction as opposed to this day where we had to rely more on our map. The day's walk concluded with a steep downhill and into the refuge. The first thing we all noticed and were relieved to find was that there was an open Wi-Fi connection that we did not have to pay for and that the showers included hot water this time. This day the 3 people that were divided to a different route at the start had met up with us at the refuge site to spend the night before the walk off the hill the next day. The evening meal was by far the most pleasant as we were served pork brisket and potatoes. It seemed that all the hard work kept paying off as the refuges just kept getting better. We enjoyed the rest of the day with a fun social amongst the group and enjoyed the beautiful, wide Mountain View. We took

full advantage of the free Wi-Fi and used our phones to speak with family and catch up with friends. We concluded the night with another movie night with **SSgt Cookie** and had a good night's sleep eager to make the last walk the following morning.

Day 5: Refuge d'Armitges to Campsite La Mola. After everyone was fed and took advantage of the hot showers the walk was a simple 15km walk off the hills, although two people from the group had to get a lift back to the campsite due to feeling unwell. We made our way down Lake Muarici and all had a group photo to show off our tans and happy faces. We met at the local village before midday and got back into the campsite with the remainder of the day for R&R. Although it was the only day of rain during the whole week, all there was to do was sort out admin. Most of the group were excited for the white water rafting the following day. We had a relaxed evening and got our heads down.





Day 6: White water rafting. After a night back in the campsite everyone was looking forward to the white water rafting. A short drive away at Llavorsi saw the group undergo 14km of downstream rafting. A brilliant way to end the week of hard hill walking and climbing. For the duration of time in the raft Sig 'Connor' Taylor had a Go Pro attached to his chest and was able to capture some footage of the experience. A few of the group enjoyed creating a chain in the water whilst going down the river even though Pte 'Penny' James grazed her knees on the rocks and bled in the raft. Even though some were sceptical, the whole team ended up enjoying the experience. As soon as we got back to the campsite the camp was pulled down and packed away in the minibus ready for the long drive home. The rest of the group had a quiet evening to themselves ready for the flight home the next day and set up their sleeping bags

on the lounge chairs surrounding the pool under the stars awaiting the awkward encounter with the pool guy the next morning.

Day 7: Homeward bound. After a surprisingly comfortable night's rest the group sorted out their admin and waited for the bus driver. We set off for Barcelona and had fun seeing the Barcelona Football Stadium as well as visiting a museum and buying souvenirs for loved ones. Once it came to 1900hrs we took the train over to the Barcelona Airport and made our way back to Bristol.

It was an absolute pleasure to be on Ex DRAGON TRAIL as we were able to meet new people and bond with those we already knew. I would like to sincerely thank **SSgt 'Cookie' Cooke** for arranging the trip, an experience of a lifetime, and the instructors for their resourcefulness.



by LCpl Ramsay



On 10 June, 16 AFF students and 8 experienced skydivers deployed on Exercise TITIM SPEIR II. 32 Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt, 3 Sig Regt, and 30 Sigs were all represented in the group, with people travelling from all over the UK to congregate at Larkhill and Netheravon to start their epic journey of self-discovery and personal development.



While the students were at Netheravon completing their initial ground training, the experienced jumpers were at Basingstoke Airkix perfecting some of their Formation Skydiving skills in the indoor wind tunnel. This was to prepare the guys and girls ready for further training in the states and work towards their Formation Skydiving One (FS1) qualification. Wind tunnels recreate the free-fall experience so as to develop formation or free flying skills: each minute in the tunnel equates to roughly one skydive. However this is a huge part of the safe system of training and allows everyone to progress their skills in a less stressful, controlled and safe



With new skills in place and ground training complete, the group flew to Los Angeles from London Heathrow to begin the much sunnier part of the exercise. Having settled into the hotel, it was time to try out their new found skills at Skydive Elsinore. Within the first couple of days, all the students had done their first couple of jumps and their nerves were starting to settle a little. Sgt O'Donnell, LCpl Dodds, and LCpl Morris of 32 Sig Regt also gained their FS1 qualification fairly rapidly after all the hard work in the wind tunnel paying off. This then left them to jump with each other and ditch their coaches for the first time. They then had the next task of gaining a total of 50 skydives into their log books to allow them to qualify for their B licence but only after they had finished their Jump Master One qualification which was programmed in later into the exercise.

After some time in the sky, it was the students turn to visit the wind tunnel at Perris Valley which was only 20 mins from the exercise location. This gave them an opportunity to try out some of the basic body positions, and correct any minor issues; before carrying on with their AFF course but this time the progression really kicks in and they will be jumping with only one AFF instructor rather than two.

The sun was scorching for most of the trip, but spirits were high as the students progressed through their levels. The heat was starting to cause some dangerous 'dust devils' by early afternoon, so the days started earlier and earlier to squeeze in as much valuable jumping time as possible whilst conditions allowed. Most days we were at the DZ by o630hrs each day and then not leaving until the sun was setting. However each day we had a goal set by our Chief Instructor SSgt Andy 'the unicorn' Clark and each day we met those goals. The hard work, determination and patience from all individuals was really paying off.

The experienced jumpers tried out various fun jumps with some funky exits from the plane with suitably qualified individuals as a really interesting way to gain jump numbers for their B-licence. Others did solo jumps, or worked on two and three-way jumps with coaches to develop their formation skills. Capt Tom 'R1' Macdonald, 30 Sigs, also progressed to back-flying with the help of free fly coach Christopher 'The Judge' Arrowsmith.



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Following completion of level 7, the students moved on to consolidation jumps. This meant 10 jumps on their own, without any instructors jumping with them. Despite being a little apprehensive, every student reported these as being by far the most fun. Some tried out unstable exits; that is curling into a ball and being pushed backwards out of the plane. With the AFF students moving on to their consolidation jumps and some of the experienced started to reach their B-licence goals. As the instructors were now able to be freed up to take the guys and girls through their Jump Master One qualification lessons. By this time we had been working solidly in the heat each day from sunrise to sunset so it was time to take some well-deserved and needed R & R; here it was fantastic for everyone involved to take some respite and take account of everything they had been doing for the last ten days. It fell in good time as the DZ was holding an event which meant we couldn't achieve much due to how busy it was. This was a natural break which fell at the perfect time.

Most of the group took a road trip to Las Vegas to take in some cultural sights: but also to lounge by the pool with ice cold drinks, and talk about skydiving every two mins!

Everyone was back at Skydive Elsinore on Sunday morning, for the final push towards all their qualifications. While everyone was smashing out jumps, **SSgt Heighton** was arranging a trip to Perris the following day to allow the group to drop out the back of a sky van! This created some amazing new opportunities for people to try interesting exits and practice landing on a different drop zone. They were also fortunate enough to witness a 91-year lady be carried from her wheelchair by her tandem instructor in order to complete her first ever skydive. Lots of high-fives and tears all round! She was such a character and a true inspiration to everyone around her.

On Tuesday morning, the experienced group got up at 0400hrs to make their way to Perris again. As they had gained their B-license, they were now qualified to try jumping from a hot air balloon. The sun was just starting to break through the skies and the silence throughout the journey up to altitude was incredible. Then as they dropped from the basket: the stillness was a completely different sensation to jumping from a noisy plane travelling at speed and usually you have to shout to have a conversation. An incredible and beautiful experience for all involved!

The expedition drew to a close with Cpl 'Old Man' Campbell (32 Sigs), Lt 'R2' MacDonald (32 Sigs), Sig Thompson (32 Sigs), Sig Workman (32 Sigs), Pte Ferns (32 Sigs), Pte Norbury (32 Sigs), LCpl Thompson (32 Sigs), LCpl Grice (32 Sigs), Sig Sanderson (32 Sigs), WO2 Cowan (32 Sigs), Cpl Holden (2 Sigs), Sig Ford (2 Sigs), Sig Smith (3 Div), Sig Casson (3 Div), LCpl Winchester (3 Div), and LCpl Dickinson (3 Div) achieving their A-licence.







Furthermore, Sgt O'Donnell (32 Sigs), LCpl Morris (32 Sigs), LCpl Dodds (32 Sigs), Cpl Aitken (32 Sigs), LCpl Ramsay (32 Sigs), and Sig Forbez (32 Sigs) completed the necessary qualifications for their B-licence.

Finally Sgt O'Donnell (32 Sigs), LCpl Morris (32 Sigs), LCpl Dodds (32 Sigs), LCpl Ramsay (32 Sigs) gained their FS1 and Tracking 1 (TR1) qualifications.

With all the exercise and adventure training aims met, it was time to host the Drop Zone staff at a BBQ to thank them for all their help and support over the time we had spent there. The guys and girls at Lake Elsinore DZ were absolutely amazing and always go above and beyond to support military exercises.

After over 1000 jumps completed by the whole exercise over the 16 days we spent in California the group left Lake Elsinore the following day to start the long journey back to various parts of the UK, armed with amazing memories, videos and photographs of their legendary

To view a snippet of our exercise please visit the following link to see 32 Sig Regt TSII exercise video:

https://vimeo.com/175156831



EXERCISE FINN DESCENT

by LCpl Gomes

was very fortunate to take part in this amazing diving expedition to the Ascension Island which took place 14-16 August; one because it meant my Ocean Diver qualification would be bumped up to Sports Diver and two because it is such an amazing place to be with breathtaking views and plenty of marine life to keep us entertained.



The Ascension Island is a very small and isolated volcanic island in the South Atlantic Ocean located between Brazil and Africa just below the Equator Line, making it very hot and sunny most of the year round.

Before setting off to Ascension we met up at 241 Sig Sqn at Bicester to get our kit issued and have a few refresher lessons and familiarisation with some of the equipment. We also got the opportunity to do the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) course which was delivered by **SSgt 'Wullie' Wilson.** We then set off to Brize Norton for check-in and a long wait for our flight.

Upon arrival at the Island we were greeted by our contact in the RAF and sorted out vehicles, accommodation and had the "dive shack" signed over to us. The "dive shack" is the RAF Sub-Aqua Expedition Centre, a building on the north of the island just up from English Bay where we spent most of our time preparing and cleaning our kit; as well as filling the cylinders and having theory lessons for our crossover from Ocean Diver to Sports Diver.

The first couple of days were mainly focused on getting people used to diving again, as some of them had not dived for years, we went through all the security and emergency drills and got ourselves familiarised with our selected "diving buddy", which is the person you would be partnered to dive next to for the next few days.

The range of diving experience in our group varied from Ocean Divers and PADI Open Water qualification to BSAC Advanced Divers which were our instructors, but everyone was looking forward to enjoying the sights and dives of the Ascension Island and further their diving qualification and experience.

As the expedition progressed we started to dive at a lot of different sites, utilising the small RiBs and the jetty at English Bay. We would take it in turns to lead the dive in our groups as it was one of the key development points from Ocean Divers to Sports Divers. The current Sports Divers and Advanced Divers would tick a few boxes for their development too and get more dives logged. We were doing two dives a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon as well as a couple of night dives.

We would dive for four days then have one day off to reduce the Nitrogen build up in the blood stream. Dives were carefully and meticulously planned by "Uncle Roy" (our Dive supervisor) which reduced any risk of diving related illness.

On the days we were not diving, we did have some diving admin to sort out, and have a couple of theory lessons, and then given the option to go trekking with SSgt "Big Bad Rod" Rouchy our JSMEL or have some free time for ourselves. Myself, LCpl "Sheena Cheyne" Rawlins, Sgt "Blue Runner Jase" Brown and WO1 "SAS Dave" Garvan spent pretty much all of our free time sea fishing; every evening we would spend hours down the pier fishing pretty big fish and only to be

spoiled by the massive Galapagos sharks which were around all the time. These sharks would go for our hooks or the fish we caught and snap the line like hot knife on butter. Until of course **Sgt "Blue Runner Jase" Brown** used some heavy tackle and wire traces and the shark literally took about 300 yards of his line only to be snapped leaving him shaking with adrenaline and a smoking reel. We lost so many lures and hooks that the sharks around Ascension must be swimming about full of bling.

But we later found out from the Conservation department that it was not acceptable to fish for sharks. This in turn led to a quiet word in the OIC's ear on how business is done on the island. The island has many amazing and breath taking views from the different mountains, which some of us spent hours and hours trekking across, some with more enthusiasm than others. The "Green Mountain" was a very interesting mountain to go up, it is the highest point on the island at 859 metres and you can only drive up to a certain point before it starts to get quite dangerous with really tight corners and a sheer drop to the side and hoping our Land Rovers would not fail. After parking the car and walking past a variety of habitats including woodland, grassland and shrub land, different from anywhere in the island where it's all dry volcanic rocks and dirt. Different types of wildlife could be spotted quite easily too,





sheep, rabbits, land crabs and plenty of rats (which were accidentally introduced by passing ships). Some of the scenery reminded you of something like Avatar, amazing tropical green plants, trees and thousands of bamboo. This is all thanks to a British plant collector that visited the island in 1865 and proposed a plan to plant the island with vegetation to attempt to increase rainfall to make life easier for the garrison stationed there at the time, this resulted in it having its own ecosystem and thriving with different species of fauna and flora.

Our night dive was very interesting too, something most of us had not experienced before. We prepped the kit by the jetty after dinner and waited a while until it got quite dark before jumping in and exploring the area we were quite familiar with as we had dived there plenty of times during the day. We went in two waves and I was on the first one with Capt 'Dory' Eldridge taking the lead. At night you have totally different marine activity; conger eels are swimming freely instead of being in between rocks, plenty of sleeping fish (literally on their side sound

asleep), and the fish were not bothered about you swimming around them with a torch so you

could get very close to them, even touching them and they wouldn't mind. It is particularly difficult to navigate on the night dive, because all you can see is where your torch will reach and you can't really see the prominent points you see during the day. That led us to get a little navigationally challanged and come up before the planned time and having to swim back to where it was originally planned.

My favourite dive of the expedition was on our last day of diving and everyone was confident with all their skills and drills. We set off first thing in the morning in two small Ribs, taking 45 minutes to get to Botswain Bird Island, the landscape looked incredible and I felt like I was in a totally different part of the world, the pre historic gigantic volcanic landscape around us and this rock island with thousands of birds flying in and out.

We anchored the boats and after the safety checks and going through the plan, we went in small groups to explore the area, although **WO2 Steve 'Air Supper' Crutchley** was always the first one to surface because his air would be used up faster than anyone else. To our luck the area was full of small sharks which we were all really keen to see since day one of diving, as well as plenty of other marine life to appreciate, and on our way back we also had a pod of dolphins follow us for a little while just to finish our last dive of the expedition on a high.

The only time we had to have some sort of "social media" contact with our friends and family were in the evenings at the NAAFI bar, although the internet was quite expensive and very slow, so most of us opted to have this break from our phones and it was great.

On the last day some of us arranged to organise a fishing trip in the deep sea. We had heard stories of people fishing tuna which were bigger than their boat, which is actually true given all the photographic evidence, so we were all excited to see what we would get lucky with. After trawling for a couple of hours we finally got lucky and struck our first fish, the nearest person to the rod was SSgt 'Big Bad Rod' Rouchy who was quickly on his feet and started reeling in the fish before any sharks got hold of it. When he finally managed to get it into the boat we were all amazed by the 20kg "Wahoo" fish which according to the skipper would cost you £55 per kilo of this fish in Harrods. Rod was a very happy man as he was in the Ascension Island 20 years previous to this and had caught the exact same type of fish then.

The whole trip was a success with everyone having benefited from a few days away from work commitments, social media and modern civilization. Everyone was taken out of their comfort zone one way or another, pushed to learn different skills and get more experience as divers. I am looking forward to developing my qualification in the future and look to get my Dive Leader in a couple of years.













Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Brig DA Hargreaves

Royal Signals Association



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Membership Secretary: Mrs CA Addison

Grant Co-ordinator: Mrs L Sizeland

At the end of September, I went to Exmouth and joined those who used to belong to the RSA branch in the town to lay up their standard. The service in All Saints Church was well attended and followed by lunch in the Railway Social Club. The group is sad to close the branch, but is planning to continue meeting regularly on an informal basis.

The photograph shows the standard on the altar of the church following the service.



Exmouth Branch Standard

As usual at this time of year we joined with the National ceremonies of Remembrance in London. Since last year, after representations to the RBL, our plot at the Opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey has been enlarged and our number of tickets increased. It was good to see all 25 tickets allocated. Remembrance Sunday saw 48 of us make up the Corps contingent to march smartly past the Cenotaph and we were joined by **Gen Stokoe**. Next year, the Opening of the Field of Remembrance will take place on 9 November and Remembrance Sunday will be on 12 November.

For your opportunity to attend, please email: rsa@royalsignals.org in the New Year.



Field of Remembrance

The Project Noel VII, in Liverpool:

http://projectnoelfest.co.uk/ will begin the festive season (albeit slightly early) along with, later in December, many other branch Christmas dinners and celebrations. I hope you will all have a very good Christmas and look forward to seeing you at one of the events taking place in 2017.

The 2017 Newsletter for Retired Officers and Association Members will be published in the New Year. Following publication, a.pdf copy will be on the website at: http://www.royalsignals.org/rsa-newsletter-downloads

New Life Members. A warm welcome to the following members, enrolled since the last issue of the WIRE;

Col Graham Addley	1987/16	Sgt Mark Harper	1970/82	Sig Keith Rutherford	1976/81
Sig Georgina Beardmore	2003/13	SSgt Robin Harvey	1992/16	LCpl Michael Scott	1996/14
Maj Narayan Bhandari	1985/16	Sig David Howells	1983/88	Cpl James St John	1969/92
Sig Stanley Buzer	1950/52	Sig David Jones	2004/08	WO2 Paul Thomas-Peter	1976/92
LCpl William Collier	1956/59	SSgt Jason Kent	1992/16	Cpl Gavin Towler-Wilson	2003/16
Sig Stephen Collins	1980/84	Cpl Scott Nairn	1992/16	Cpl Peter Turner	1974/97
Sgt Victor Cowell	1962/93	Sig Shirley Parker	1974/80	Sig Martin Venters	1955/57
WO ₂ Christopher Cowley	1989/16	Maj Cameron Payn	1968/10	Cpl Alan Wood	1962/74
Cpl Gordon Evans	1974/84	LCpl David Peacock	1970/92	LCpl Shaun Woodward	1999/08
Sig Donovan Ferns	1975/80	Sig Peter Pinch	1968/73	WO2 William Young	1980/04
Sgt Thomas Haddock	1971/86	Cpl Michael Quirk	1958/64		. , , , , ,
Cpl Paul Harding	1976/89	Cpl Jonathan Rowe	1985/99		

19 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

President Brig Russell Maxfield
Chairman Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward
Secretary Mr John Horne

Reunion 2016 was again well received although the promised sunny weather did not materialise! Unfortunately four members had to cancel during the week before the reunion due to various 'health issues. Hotel management was very understanding and no cancellation charges have been levied.

On Saturday morning we arrived early for our cruise along the River Avon aboard the Rita Ellen. A day or so previously we had been asked if we would be inconvenienced if the cruise were to be extended from 45 minutes to an hour at no extra cost. An executive decision had been made on the spot and the extra time allowed us to travel further up river. Our tour guide, Romeo, was a walking encyclopedia on things Shakespearean and pointed out waterside features of that we would certainly not have otherwise appreciated. He quickly summed up the mood of our group and responded with equal banter!

After a period of retail therapy in Stratford we returned to the hotel and assembled for dinner at 0730hrs sharp. As we have grown to expect the food was good, the service impeccable and the company sparkling. The evening was tinged with sadness as two staunch supporters had died since our last reunion. Pearl Strange, widow of Bernard, accompanied by son and daughter-in-law, was greeted by a spontaneous round of applause. A letter from Mrs Pat Cank, very recently widowed, was read out followed by news that she had treated us to Port for our toasts. This, again, was greeted by sympathetic applause. Ray and Pat's son, Joshua, and daughter, Chelsea, and their partners. It is very heartening to see the children and grandchildren of our members enjoying our company.

Committee members met on Sunday morning and some reported that members had gone out of their way to comment favourably on the hotel, staff and meals. After very short discussion it was decided to return to Warwick again next year and the second weekend in September (8th-10th) has already been booked. A number of members had taken the opportunity to book in a day early this year thus missing the Friday traffic jams and having an extra day to explore the area. Next year's booking forms will include the opportunity, for those who wish, to book in on Thursday.

John and **Joyce Horne** undertook to visit *Johnson's Coaches* and seek their advice regarding places to visit on the Saturday morning.

John Hill, association webmaster, reported on his work to produce a comprehensive association website and gave us an address where the site can be pre-viewed. What **John** has achieved so far is very impressive but it is still very much work-in-progress.

A copy of the Association Roll-of-Honour had been on display in the dining room. This project is now sensibly complete apart from adding new names as they are received and of finding a more appropriate, hardback binder.

Frank Smith reported that Association funds are still in a healthy state and that the value of the Bond, purchased in March 2014, has at last almost recovered to its purchase value. It is expected to provide an income in the order of 3.3% again during this financial year.

LAST POST

1961/85	21-Sep-16
1951/79	21-Oct-16
1956/58	15-Jul-16
1958/67	27-Apr-16
1970/86	15-Sep-16
1964/86	19-Aug-16
1953/80	30-Oct-16
1978/02	22-Sep-16
1954/56	14-Aug-16
	21-Aug-16
	08-Oct-16
1950/79	08-Sep-16
1968/77	24-Aug-16
1985/98	08-Sep-16
1954/94	28-Oct-16
1968/77	28-Aug-16
	13-Nov-16
1975/97	05-Oct-16
1960/99	10-Sep-16
1981/82	25-Sep-16
1989/16	21-Nov-16
1942/77	28-Aug-16
1982/89	18-Aug-16
1951/74	28-Aug-16
1952/54	15-Sep-16
	22-Sep-16
1953/65	02-Oct-16
1965/93	08-Nov-16
1976/16	21-Nov-16
	1951/79 1956/58 1956/58 1958/67 1970/86 1964/86 1953/80 1978/02 1954/56 1970/98 1942/47 1950/79 1968/77 1985/98 1954/94 1968/77 1956/97 1975/97 1960/99 1981/82 1989/16 1942/77 1982/89 1951/74 1952/54 1949/73 1953/65 1965/93

The Royal Signals

WHITE HELMETS

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January 23rd - 29th 2017

For PD18 details please contact Vicki Carpenter on

01258 48 2967

HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS

In the build up to the Corps Centenary in 2020 we intend to publish a series of articles on objects which have formed part of the history of Signalling in general and the Corps in particular. This will be a challenge and we may not achieve our target in the time available but the aim is to entertain and inform and we will use a combination of The Wire and Digital Media to do so. Whilst the bulk of the objects are held by the Museum, some will not be and we would be happy to consider short articles with photographs of other object from serving or former members of the Corps. We hope that you enjoy the series.



Fullerphone





The Fullerphone was devised in 1915 by Captain (later Major General) A C Fuller as a solution to the the problem of interception of messages by the enemy that had severely hindered operations in the early stages of World War One. The Fullerphone wasn't a telephone at all (although early models incorporated a standard telephone handset which itself was not immune to intercept - a fact that staff officers had to be repeatedly reminded of!) but basically a DC line Morse telegraph which employed a chopping device which interrupted a constant current at an audible frequency and was practically immune to interception. Initial issues were constructed from converted field telephone sets but these early sets were not a great success. The Mark I Fullerphone was introduced into service in 1916 followed by the Mark II and by the end of 1916 the Fullerphone was firmly established as the preferred method of communication in forward areas.

The Mark III was introduced into service towards the end of the war and following the Armistice in 1918 further improvements and modification were made. The Mark III remained in service for most of the inter-war years and in 1937 a fully redesigned set, the Mark IV, was brought into service and this and future variations were the most successful not only being more sensitive than earlier models but also having a simplified buzzer-chopper and was easier to use as it carried no telephone.

Although the Fullerphone was devised for static warfare it was widely used in World War Two because of its capability to work simultaneously with a telephone over the same line and it was able to work through very long and leaky lines where other means of sending telephone or telegraph traffic was impossible.

The Fullerphone remained in service well into the 1950's but the basic principle of operation remained the same throughout its 40 plus years of service.

